Demarketing as a tool for managing visitor demand in national parks – An Australian case study

Christine Luise Kern

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Abstract

Nature-based tourism and recreation is a growing phenomenon around the world. In Australia, nature-based tourism represents an important part of the tourism sector and is to a large extent dependent on protected areas such as World Heritage areas, marine parks and national parks. While tourism and recreation can benefit protected areas, some are under pressure from visitation and marketing should play a role in managing visitor demand. To this end, a number of authors have suggested demarketing as a management tool to address situations of excess visitor demand, however, research on demarketing in protected areas is limited. To address this research gap, this thesis examines the use of demarketing in Australian national parks that face excess visitor demand using a case study on the Blue Mountains National Park. The thesis investigates factors that contribute to high visitor demand for the park, the use of demarketing to manage demand and factors that influence when and how demarketing is applied. Demarketing is that aspect of marketing that deals with discouraging customers in general or a certain class of customers in particular on either a temporary or permanent basis. In protected areas specifically, demarketing is concerned with reducing visitor numbers in total or selectively and redistributing demand spatially or temporarily.

Six factors that contribute to high visitor demand for the national park were identified including the attractiveness of the park, its proximity to Sydney and the fact that the park is a renowned destination with icon sites. It was established that no holistic demarketing strategy is currently employed in the park and that the demarketing measures that are applied are not consciously used as demarketing. The measures used in the Blue Mountains National Park were discussed according to their association with the marketing mix components (4 Ps). Demarketing measures related to ‘product’ include limiting recreational activities by defining specific areas where they can be conducted, limiting the duration of activities and closures of sites or features in the park. The measures related to ‘place’ are the use of a booking system, limiting visitor numbers and group sizes, commercial licensing and limiting signage. Measures related to ‘price’ are not extensively used in the park. The promotional demarketing measures applied include stressing restrictions and appropriate environmental behaviour in promotional material and non-promotion of certain areas or experiences in the park. Importantly, these demarketing
measures are not employed across the whole park or for all user groups, but are used for certain experiences in specific contexts and circumstances.

Three types of factors influence the use of demarketing in the Blue Mountains National Park: pragmatic considerations, resource considerations and stakeholder interests. *Pragmatic considerations* include the feasibility and effectiveness of certain demarketing measures, which are influenced by the specific context of the national park. *Resource considerations* relate to financial, human and temporal resources and the findings suggest that a lack of resources influences and at times inhibits the use of demarketing measures. It was also found that various *stakeholders* have a profound influence on the use of demarketing measures. The stakeholder groups have diverse interests and therefore influence the use of demarketing in different ways by supporting or impeding certain measures.

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, recommendations for government and future research are made. These emphasise among others the need for more consistent and comprehensive collection of visitor information to tailor management actions more effectively. It is also suggested that a more conscious and holistic application of demarketing measures may help to manage visitor demand to parks proactively to ensure that the resource remains for future generations.
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**Acronyms**

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<td>ACT</td>
<td>Australian Capital Territory</td>
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<tr>
<td>BMNP</td>
<td>Blue Mountains National Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>e-mail</td>
<td>electronic mail</td>
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<tr>
<td>IUCN</td>
<td>International Union for Conservation and Nature and Natural Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– the World Conservation Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGA</td>
<td>Local government area</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>NP</td>
<td>National Park</td>
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<td>NSW</td>
<td>New South Wales</td>
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<td>New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service</td>
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<td>TAPAF</td>
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Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1 Introduction
This chapter provides the background, rationale and aim and objectives of this research. It briefly outlines the scope of the study, the methods that were used and the limitations that are inherent in the research. To conclude, the thesis structure is outlined.

1.2 Background to the research
Nature-based tourism and recreation, or nature tourism as it is also known, is recognized as a growing phenomenon around the world (Commonwealth of Australia, 2003; Huybers and Bennett, 2003; Worboys and Pickering, 2004; Pickering and Weaver, 2003; Tourism Victoria, 2000). The precise dimensions of this type of tourism depend on the definition that is adopted. Pickering and Weaver (2003:7) note that ‘… nature-based tourism is an extremely diverse sector’ and consequently, experiences associated with it can be ‘educational, passive, adventur[ous], cultural or heritage related or in many cases a combination of several in the one trip’ (Tourism Victoria, 2000:6). The diversity of nature-based tourism may be one reason why no commonly accepted definition exists and no definite international figures are available on the number of people participating in this type of tourism (Buckley, 2003b; Weaver, Faulkner and Lawton, 1999).

Fluker and Richardson (2004:71), for instance, define nature-based tourism as ‘the broad term used to describe tourism having contact with the natural environment’. A more detailed definition is given in the New South Wales Nature Tourism Discussion Paper which states that nature-based tourism includes:

Ways to experience natural places, typically through outdoor activities. Nature tourism includes adventure tourism, ecotourism and companion activities (Missing Link Tourism Consultants, 2001:8).

It goes onto say that companion activities are experiences which are considerably enhanced by the ‘natural values of a place’ such as indigenous tourism or fishing. Importantly, the above definition identifies ecotourism along with adventure tourism as a sub-set of nature-
based tourism, not as an interchangeable concept. This is important as ecotourism focuses on education and interpretation of the natural environment and is by definition sustainable, whereas nature-based tourism is more broadly concerned with the experience and appreciation of nature (Weaver, 2001). Newsome, Moore and Dowling (2002:13) give a narrower definition of nature-based tourism:

Nature-based tourism occurs in natural settings. [It] has the added emphasis of fostering understanding and conservation of the natural environment. In addition it embraces viewing of nature as the primary objective.

In the Australian context nature-based tourism is generally used in the broader sense as reflected in the *New South Wales Nature Tourism Discussion Paper* (for example Blamey and Hatch, 1996; Environment ACT, 2000; Pickering and Weaver, 2003; Tourism Victoria, 2000) so this definition will be adopted for this research. Although the author acknowledges that there are differences between ‘tourism’ and ‘recreation’, for simplicity these terms will be treated largely interchangeably.

Nature-based tourism in New South Wales (NSW) generates economic value of estimated $8.2 billion and about one-third of all Australian visitors to the state engage in nature tourism activities (Tourism New South Wales, 2003). While some figures exist on certain activities that can be related to nature-based tourism - for example in 2002 about 1,864,000 international visitors visited national/state parks, reserves and caves and 8,667,00 domestic visitors made overnight trips to national/state parks which involved bush or rainforest walks (Bureau of Tourism Research, 2002 cited in Commonwealth of Australia, 2003) - to the author’s knowledge, no comprehensive national figures on the broader nature-based tourism sector are available. Nevertheless, it is estimated that the nature-based tourism segment accounts for at least one-third of the total value of the country’s travel and tourism sector (Buckley and Sommer, 2000). Furthermore, it has been noted that nature-based tourism in Australia is largely dependent on protected areas such as national parks, marine parks and World Heritage areas (Buckley and Sommer, 2000; Bushell, 2003; Commonwealth of Australia, 2003; Missing Link Tourism Consultants, 2001; Worboys and De Lacy, 2003). Estimates by protected area management agencies suggest that around 80 million people visited national parks in 2002-2003 (Griffin and Vacaflores, 2004). Worboys and De Lacy (2003:12) point out that ‘national parks occupy only 8 [per cent] of the country, but they are the single greatest visitor destination for Australia’.
Several factors contribute to high demand for visitation to protected areas in Australia including the growing population density in Australian metropolitan areas which encourages people to seek solitude in nature (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2002a; Wearing and Bowden, 1999), the increasing interest in adventure recreation (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2002a; 2002b), the fact that Australian natural landscape and heritage are major drawcards particularly for international visitors (Griffin and Vacaflores, 2004; Worboys and Pickering, 2004), marketing campaigns that promote protected areas as tourism destinations (Beeton 2001; Bushell, 2003; NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2002a) and World Heritage (WH) status as a magnet for tourists (Burns and Howard, 2003; Shackley, 1998). The latter factor, however, is contested by Buckley (2002b and 2004) who argues that due to the lack of methodological and complete trend data on visitor numbers even for very prominent Australian WH sites, it cannot be claimed that the WH status of an area has definite effects on visitor demand and numbers.

Considering the management of national parks world-wide, including Australia, the dual purpose of protecting and conserving the natural environment, while providing opportunities for nature-based tourism and recreation is important. This dual purpose is manifest in the management objectives established by the International Union for Conservation and Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) for protected area category II (national park) (IUCN, 2003). A national park is defined by the IUCN (1994:19) as:

[A] natural area of land/or sea, designated to (a) protect the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations, (b) exclude exploitation or occupation inimical to the purposes of designation of the area, and (c) provide a foundation for the spiritual, educational, recreational and visitor opportunities, all of which must be environmentally and culturally compatible.

Balancing the different functions of national parks has presented a conservation/recreation conflict for protected area managers (Hardiman, 2003). On the one hand, tourism and recreation are one raison d’être for national parks, as they justify in economic terms the retention of relatively undisturbed natural areas. On the other, national parks are under increasing pressure from tourism and recreation. In the Australian context, Wearing and Archer (2001:35) suggest that ‘many national parks and protected areas … are facing crowding and carrying capacity problems across a range of visitor experiences and types of recreation’. It has to be acknowledged that not all Australian national parks are facing issues of excess demand and Wearing and Nelson (2004) note low awareness of many
national parks among potential visitors. It appears that the so-called ‘icon parks’
experience over-crowding and environmental impacts from visitation, while other less well
known parks are not necessarily confronted with these problems (Wearing and Nelson,
2004). Furthermore, as indicated by Wearing and Archer (2001), issues of excess demand
relate frequently to specific experiences or activities within a park, rather than to the whole
national park. As conservation is a prime objective and tourism and recreation also depend
on the quality of the natural and cultural resources of these estates, it is particularly
important that visitor demand is proactively managed to prevent negative impacts.

Authors like Beeton (2001; 2003), Beeton and Benfield (2002), Groff (1998) and Wearing
and Archer (2001; 2005) have pointed out that appropriate marketing, in particular
demarketing, offers protected area managers a proactive tool for managing visitor demand
by influencing, redistributing and in specific cases reducing demand. This approach
implies that managers can achieve a better balance between demand and supply without
being confined to changing and adapting the protected area resource. Research on
demarketing as a tool for managing excess demand in protected areas is limited and it is
this issue that this research aims to examine.

1.3 Statement of the problem
It is increasingly being recognized that marketing should play a role in managing visitor
demand in protected areas such as national parks. To this end, a number of authors have
suggested demarketing as a management tool to address situations of excess visitor
demand, however, research on demarketing in protected areas is limited. In particular,
empirical data on the actual use of demarketing is limited, and potential factors that
influence when and how demarketing is applied have also received little research attention.

Demarketing is that aspect of marketing that deals with discouraging customers in general
or a certain class of customers in particular on either a temporary or permanent basis. In
protected areas specifically, demarketing is concerned with reducing visitor numbers in
total or selectively and redistributing demand spatially or temporarily. The concept of
demarketing will be further examined in chapter two.
A better understanding about the concept of demarketing in national parks would be of value for practitioners involved in tourism and recreation management. Examples of the use of demarketing and information about factors that influence when and how demarketing measures are applied will assist managers in making more informed decisions about whether or not this concept and particular measures are useful. Therefore, this research aims to contribute to knowledge in this area.

1.4 Research aim and objectives

The aim of the research is to investigate the use of demarketing in managing demand in Australian national parks that face excess visitor demand based on theoretical discussion and empirical analysis. Managing demand includes managing visitor use levels, visitor types, expectations and behaviour. The project focuses on one Australian national park that experiences excess visitor demand. To achieve the aim the research addresses five objectives:

1. To review and discuss existing literature related to the use of demarketing as a tool for demand management focusing on protected area management situations;
2. To identify factors that contribute to high visitor demand for Australian national parks with specific focus on a park that experiences excessive demand;
3. To investigate the use of demarketing in managing visitor demand in this national park;
4. To identify what factors influence management decisions about how and when to use demarketing measures for visitor demand management; and
5. To develop a set of conclusions and recommendations regarding the use of demarketing in national parks.

1.5 Scope, methods and limitations of the study

This research is based on an interpretive paradigm and a qualitative research methodology. It investigates the use of demarketing in Australian national parks via a case study on one national park. A Delphi study was used to select the case study park. The Delphi study was conducted via e-mail with Australian academics and members of the Tourism in Australia’s Protected Areas Forum (TAPAF), an informal collaboration between representatives of protected area management agencies and tourism agencies. The aim of this Delphi study was to identify a range of Australian parks facing the greatest pressure
from excess visitor demand from which a single park could be chosen. The second phase of data collection involved ten semi-structured interviews with staff from the identified park agency.

This research employed a single case study of an Australian national park to investigate the use of demarketing. The decision to focus on only one case ensured that the research project was manageable financially, practically and temporally. It also meant that one case could be examined in depth rather than several cases superficially. Using a multiple case study would have provided the opportunity to compare and contrast findings between the parks, which might have generated further issues for interpretation, but as indicated this was not feasible for this research exercise. While various stakeholders are involved in or influence marketing and demarketing of protected areas such as national parks, this research focuses on the park management perspective on demarketing. This research did not include interviews with other stakeholders such as tourism industry members or park visitors which might have added further insights. Finally, as the research investigates dynamic management processes the study can only comment on findings about the use of demarketing at a particular point in time.

1.6 Outline of thesis structure

The thesis has six chapters. This chapter provided the background, rationale and aim and objectives of this research and briefly outlined the scope of the study, the methods used and the inherent limitations. Chapter two reviews and discusses the relevant literature providing the theoretical basis for this study. It introduces key concepts and definitions and situates the study in the literature. Chapter three presents and discusses the research design including the methodological framework and the methods adopted. It also outlines the ethical considerations as well as limitations that derive from the qualitative methodology and case study method. Chapter four reports and discusses the results of the Delphi study which assisted the case selection and provides background information on the selected national park including an overview of tourism and recreation and a brief outline of the management context. Chapter five presents and discusses the findings deriving from the primary and secondary data gathered on the national park and links them to the literature reviewed in chapter two. Chapter six summarizes the key research findings, draws conclusions and provides recommendations for government and further research.
Chapter 2

Literature review

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a focused understanding of the research area by critically reviewing relevant material. The chapter introduces key concepts and definitions relevant to the research topic and situates this study in the literature. Firstly, marketing as a tool for demand management is explored, including important concepts like the marketing mix, different demand states and demarketing. Then marketing is considered in the Australian park management context, followed by a closer examination of the concept of demarketing. The chapter then discusses research on demarketing in different fields including health care, tourism and finally tourism and recreation in protected areas.

2.2 Marketing as a tool for demand management

The popular conception of marketing is that it is a management technique designed to stimulate and increase demand and/or sales by manipulation of price, place and promotion variables. Different authors have observed that growth is therefore implicitly seen as a central element of successful marketing practice (Cullwick, 1975; Gallagher, 1994; Kotler, 2000; Kotler and Armstrong, 2001; Mark and Brennan, 1995). It has been argued, however, that this is a narrow perspective of marketing (for example Beeton, 2003; Dinan and Sargeant, 2000; Hall and McArthur, 1998; Kotler and Armstrong, 2001; Kotler and Levy, 1971). Kotler and Levy (1971:75) explain that this perspective arose ‘in a period of goods oversupply’ and marketing has been too closely linked to a buyers market.

Kotler and Levy (1971:76) refine the concept of marketing as ‘the business function concerned with controlling the level and composition of demand facing the company’. This refined conception implies that marketing is as relevant to controlling and/or reducing demand as it is for increasing demand. Through appropriate marketing the level, timing and character of demand for a product or service can be managed according to the objectives of the organisation (Kotler, 2000). As such, marketing is much more than building sales volume, it is a matter of demand management. In this sense Cullwick
(1975:51) explains that ‘the marketer’s task is to shape demand to conform with long-term objectives rather than blindly engineer increases in sales without regard to such objectives’.

This broadened conception of marketing is especially valuable when considering finite or scarce resources, and hence protected areas. In regard to national parks, Wearing and Nelson (2004:7) note that ‘the marketing mix can be manipulated to achieve a balance between visitation, revenue and sustainability’. The concept of the marketing mix will be explained in the following section.

2.2.1 The marketing mix

The marketing mix is an elemental concept in the marketing environment. It constitutes the blend of controllable marketing variables, namely product, place (also termed distribution), price and promotion that an organisation uses to achieve its objectives and serve its market (Kotler, 1982). In the context of tourism, Weaver and Lawton (2002:222) furthermore state that the marketing mix comprises ‘the critical components that determine the demand for a business or destination product’. Although originally developed for physical products, in recent decades the marketing mix has been recognized as applicable to services such as tourism and recreation (Seaton and Bennett, 1996). The ‘4 Ps’ will be briefly explained and related to recreation and tourism in national parks based on Hall and McArthur (1998), Howard and Crompton (1980), Wearing and Neil (1999) and Wearing and Nelson (2004).

**Product**

In marketing terms a product is ‘anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use or consumption that might satisfy a want or need’ (Kotler, Bowen and Makens, 2006:304). It includes physical objects, services, places, organisations and ideas. In this research the product includes the national parks as destinations, facilities offered in the parks and the visitor experiences available in or near them.

**Place (distribution)**

Place or distribution in marketing is concerned with the accessibility and availability of products and services (Kotler, 1982). This may include the physical accessibility of parks or facilities and experiences within them. It also includes all other aspects that are related to how visitors can access the national park product and services.
Price
Price can be defined as ‘the sum of the values consumers exchange for the benefits of having or using the product or service’ (Kotler et al., 2006:447). It includes how much money visitors have to pay for park entry, experiences and use of facilities and the opportunity and energy costs involved.

Promotion
Weaver and Lawton (2002) note that promotion is seen by many people as synonymous with marketing; it is however only one of the marketing mix components. Promotion relates to the dissemination of ‘pertinent information about product, price, and distribution’ to customers and potential customers (Kotler, 1982:332). Promotion is seen as having an important role in tourism and recreation as it emphasises the special features of the product, thus reducing the intangibility that is inherent in all service products (Seaton and Bennett, 1996). Several authors have noted that promotion for protected areas is a particularly valuable tool for managing demand including visitor use levels, visitor types, expectations and so forth (Beeton and Benfield, 2002; Wearing and Archer, 2005; Wearing and Neil, 1999). Given the importance of promotion, this marketing mix component will be further examined regarding its application for national parks in section 2.3.1.

The 4 Ps model has been extended to 8 Ps in the tourism context to include:

- People
- Packaging
- Programming
- Partnership  

Seaton and Bennett (1996:19) note that these additional marketing mix components can be considered ‘aspects of product design and delivery’ and are implicitly included in the first and second Ps of the original marketing mix (i.e. product and place), so for the purpose of this study the marketing mix components are confined to the initial 4 Ps.
2.2.2 Marketing and different demand states

Kotler (1973) identified the importance of the relationship between marketing and different demand states by defining eight states based on the level of actual versus desired demand:

**Negative demand:** A state in which all or most of the important segments of the potential market dislike the product and in fact might conceivably pay a price to avoid it.

**No demand:** A state in which all or important segments of a potential market are uninterested or indifferent to a particular product.

**Latent demand:** A state [that exists] when a substantial number of people share a strong need for something which does not exist as an actual product.

**Faltering demand:** A state in which the demand for a product is less than its former level and where further decline is expected in the absence of remedial efforts to revise the target market, product and/or marketing effort.

**Full demand:** A state in which the current level and timing of demand is equal to the desired level and timing of demand.

**Irregular demand:** A state in which the current pattern of demand is marked by seasonal or volatile fluctuations that depart from the pattern of supply.

**Overfull demand:** A state in which demand exceeds the level at which the marketer feels able or motivated to supply it.

**Unwholesome demand:** A state in which any positive level of demand is felt to be excessive because of undesirable qualities associated with the product.

After Kotler (1973:43)
According to Kotler (1973; 2000), each demand state gives rise to a specific marketing approach that aims to balance actual with desired demand. The last three demand states (irregular, overfull and unwholesome demand) are particularly relevant for national park management, as they all can lead to negative environmental and/or social impacts (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Demand states and corresponding facets of marketing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demand state</th>
<th>In a national park context</th>
<th>Facets of marketing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overfull demand</td>
<td>Overfull demand occurs when the demand for a site or experience within a park reaches a level which results in negative environmental and/or social impacts and degradation of the enjoyment of the visitors.</td>
<td>Demarketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The task of marketing is to permanently or temporarily discourage customers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irregular demand</td>
<td>Irregular demand means variations of demand on a seasonal, daily or hourly basis that can lead to problems of temporal overfull demand.</td>
<td>Synchronmarketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The task of marketing is to bring the movements of supply and demand into better synchronization.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwholesome demand</td>
<td>Unwholesome demand constitutes facility-related use or types of user behaviours that are considered damaging to the resource, the facility or user (for instance, vandalism and illegal activities like hunting).</td>
<td>Countermarketing (or unselling)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The task of marketing is to destroy demand.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 2.1 shows that irregular demand and overfull demand are related in that irregular demand is a temporary state of overfull demand and calls for similar demarketing measures. In protected areas, overfull demand is often called excess demand, excessive demand or overuse. Thus, these terms will be used interchangeably in this document.
2.3 Marketing and Australian park management

Several authors have noted that marketing as a management concept has a relatively short history in Australian park management agencies (Archer and Wearing, 2001; 2002; Hall and McArthur, 1996b; Jenkins and McArthur, 1996; Wearing and Archer, 2001; 2005; Wearing and Bowden, 1999). Hall and McArthur (1996b) argue that this short history is due to park management agencies viewing marketing too narrowly as a ‘commercial’ tool linked to selling and increasing demand; similar to the popular misconception explained in section 2.2. This view is supported by Archer and Wearing (2001; 2002), Wearing and Archer (2001) and Watkinson (2002). There has been ‘a perception among some within park management that the larger interests of the community and environment are at risk of being overwhelmed by market-place and commercial interests’ if marketing ideas are implemented into park management (Archer and Wearing, 2002:3).

Lack of marketing expertise within park management agencies and resource constraints have been mentioned as further reasons for the disinclination to include marketing strategies in park management (Archer and Wearing, 2001; 2002; Wearing and Archer, 2001; Wearing and Bowden, 1999; Watkinson, 2002). However, as argued in section 2.2, marketing in its broader sense, is valuable in managing scarce resources such as protected areas because it is a tool for actively managing demand such as managing visitor use levels, visitor types, behaviour and expectations.

Marketing has gradually established itself as a valuable management tool in Australian protected areas and several factors have been suggested for its adoption. First, cut backs in government funding have raised the importance of income from others sources including visitor fees. Several authors have noted the increased pressure from reductions in funding (for example Archer and Wearing, 2001; 2002; Bushell, 2003; Wearing and Archer, 2005). Related to this first point, increased accountability and requirements to meet performance criteria (such as visitor satisfaction) made park management agencies shift towards more strategic management approaches that considered marketing (Archer and Wearing, 2001; 2002; Wearing and Archer, 2001; Wearing and Bowden, 1999). To that end, ‘corporate plans now typically recognize the need to establish a more market-driven strategic direction…’ which includes developing partnerships with tourism stakeholders (Archer and Wearing, 2002:34).
In this shift to strategic management stakeholders have been identified that may influence the planning and management of recreation and tourism in national parks (Figure 2.1). As marketing is increasingly becoming a part of protected area management, these stakeholders may equally influence the marketing and/or demarketing of parks.

**Figure 2.1: Stakeholders that may influence the marketing of national parks**

Involvement of stakeholders in planning and management of tourism and recreation is commonly regarded as important in achieving sustainable results and minimising conflict (Baud-Bovy and Lawson, 1998; Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage, 2004; Hall and McArthur, 1996a; Sautter and Leisen, 1999; Wearing and Archer, 2001; 2005). Hall and McArthur (1996a:28) note that ‘while managing stakeholders without trying to incorporate their values and interests into heritage management is one strategy of attempting to deal with them, it will normally not be very successful in the long term’. The authors also highlight that given the ‘ownership’ of natural and/or cultural heritage by a number of groups, it is especially important to consult stakeholders and to consider their interests in decision-making.

Although involvement of stakeholders may be desirable, it is can be a difficult and complicated process because stakeholder groups often have different values and interests.
Stakeholder groups are also not always homogeneous groups, for instance groups like local community or domestic visitors may comprise individuals who have quite different views about protected areas and attach different values to them. Dependent on their interests the various stakeholders may influence the use of marketing and demarketing in different ways directly, through involvement and cooperation, or indirectly through their perceptions and their action.

2.3.1 Promotion of national parks

The promotion of protected areas includes ‘material that is broadcast about the parks as destinations’ (Wearing and Nelson, 2004:7) and includes brochures, guidebooks, media advertising, the internet and word of mouth (Wearing and Nelson, 2004). This range of media indicates that a mix of public and private sector players is involved in the promotion of parks, not solely or primarily park management agencies. Indeed, Bushell (2003:198) notes that ‘national and state tourism authorities are marketing Australia very actively as [a] nature-based tourism destination, with special emphasis on the nation’s many national parks and … World Heritage Areas …’. Wearing and Nelson (2004) identify the major players that produce and disseminate material that promotes Australian national parks:

- The tourism industry on a national and international level;
- State and regional tourism organisations;
- Commercial tour companies through websites and brochures;
- National park management agencies;
- Outdoor leisure groups;
- Conservation groups;
- Special interest and independent authors and publishers of guidebooks and websites.
An important point noted by Wearing and Nelson (2004) is the lack of control of park management agencies over promotion of national parks by external marketers:

While protected area managers may be able to control the messages conveyed to visitors on-site, such as through signage, maps and leaflets, they have far less control over any external promotion and messages circulating about the Protected Areas through film, guide-books, tourist brochures and the like (Wearing and Nelson, 2004:10).

Such lack of control over certain promotional channels could be significant in relation to demarketing if external promotional messages counteract demarketing efforts by park management agencies. Wearing and Archer (2005:14) also list a ‘lack of control over mass and other media sources used by visitors’ as an issue in overall marketing of protected areas.

Cooperation in promotion is widely considered to be the most effective means of influencing how national parks are promoted by the different parties (Wearing and Nelson, 2004). The authors provide best practice examples of cooperative promotion between protected area agencies and tourism stakeholders such as tourism operators and regional, state and national tourism organisations. Examples of cooperative promotional efforts with special interest groups as well as private publishers and authors of guide books and magazines are not given. These groups may be important promoters of parks but attempts to involve them in cooperative approaches may be particularly challenging, as they may be manifold and difficult to identify for a specific park.

In addition to considering how national parks are promoted and by whom, it is important to reflect on how visitors and potential visitors use the promotional material to plan their visit. Wearing and Nelson (2004:15) identify that park visitors can be sub-segmented based on ‘information-search and trip planning behaviours’ into trip planners and non-planners or visitors who just turn up. The former are said to undertake a fair amount of research prior to their visit and to look for detailed information about the protected areas they plan to visit. On the contrary non-planners have ad hoc travel plans and do not spend much time seeking information prior to their visit (Wearing and Nelson, 2004). Research undertaken in New South Wales (NSW) for the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service found that while word of mouth, visitor centres, websites and specialised books were the main media used to obtain information about parks, ‘many visitors preferred to explore
without researching the destination prior to visiting’ (Blue Moon Research and Planning P/L, 2001 cited in Wearing and Nelson, 2004:18). This non-planning behaviour may have implications for the effectiveness of demarketing through promotion because the measures may not reach this type of park visitor.

The promotional media most commonly used by visitors that do seek information prior to their visits are word-of-mouth, brochures, travel guides, travel agents and the internet. In cases where parks are popular tourist destinations travel agents and tour operators are particularly important as is the internet for well known, high profile parks (Wearing and Nelson, 2004). Several authors have noted the increasing importance of the internet as a source of pre-trip information for visitors to national parks in general (for example Beeton, 2001; 2003; Griffin and Vacaflores, 2004; Wearing and Nelson, 2004). However, regarding the use of websites Wearing and Nelson (2004:12) argue:

...a key issue is that these [park agency] websites are not well publicised and it is questionable whether a mainstream tourist would be aware of the information available and whether visiting such websites is integrated into their information search for trip planning.

This again may have implications for the effectiveness of promotional demarketing measures that make use of the internet as a distribution channel.

2.3.2 Marketing for visitor demand management in national parks

Returning to marketing in general, it is increasingly being noted in policy documents, reports and other documentary sources that marketing has to play an active role in managing, influencing, redistributing and in specific cases reducing visitor demand (for example NSW Department of Environment and Conservation, 2004b; Eagles, McCool and Haynes, 2002; Inglis, Whitelaw and Pearlman, 2003; Parks Canada Agency, 2000; Wearing and Nelson, 2004). Wearing and Nelson (2004:8) state that ‘effective promotion practices can influence visitation by ...managing visitors, especially by influencing their expectations, activity, site choice and on-site behaviour; [and by] encouraging or discouraging specific markets to a national park’. Similarly, the NSW Department of Environment and Conservation (2004b:24) identify in Living Parks – A draft sustainable visitation strategy for NSW national parks that the major functions of promotion and marketing include:
• Managing the total level of visitation to a park by encouraging or discouraging demand;
• Encouraging or discouraging specific types of visitors from visiting a certain area or site;
• Creating understanding of the need for visitor management measures such as site hardening or exclusion from sensitive areas.

Furthermore, the term ‘demarketing’ increasingly appears in this context (Eagles, McCool and Haynes, 2002; Inglis, Whitelaw and Pearlman, 2003; Parks Canada Agency, 2000; Wearing and Nelson, 2004). Given this, it is interesting that research on marketing and demarketing as tools for demand management in protected areas is still limited. This research aims to contribute to knowledge on demarketing in national parks by investigating the use of demarketing measures and by examining what factors influence when and how demarketing is used to manage demand. To better understand the concept of demarketing, especially in a national park context, the following section explains and defines the concept in more detail.

2.4 The concept of demarketing

The concept of demarketing was first introduced by Kotler and Levy in 1971. They define demarketing as ‘that aspect of marketing that deals with discouraging customers in general or a certain class of customers in particular on either a temporary or permanent basis’ (Kotler and Levy, 1971:76). It is important to note that demarketing as such is not the opposite of marketing, but rather ‘an integral part of general marketing’ (Cullwick, 1975:53). Demarketing is sometimes equated with countermarketing (for example Golden and Suder, 1994; Groff, 1998; Moore, 2005; Wall, 2005). This author believes that it is important, however, to clarify the distinction between the two marketing approaches, as they address different demand situations. Gallagher (1994) indicates that both are used to reduce demand, but that countermarketing is applied in situations where the product is inherently unwholesome and where the marketer aims to destroy demand. Tobacco products, for example, have been subject to governmental countermarketing programs as has unhealthy social behaviour like ‘binge’ drinking, drink-driving and unsafe sex. The aim of demarketing, as Kotler and Armstrong (2001:14) point out, ‘is not to destroy demand but only to reduce or shift it’. Demarketing is used when the demand for the
product is perceived to be too high (not necessarily by the consumer, but rather by the provider) (Gallagher, 1994). This differentiation is important as the objective of the marketer is different in each situation; in the former demand is to be destroyed, in the latter demand is to be reduced or shifted without damaging the image of the provider or the product itself. The purpose of demarketing might in fact be to enhance the quality while (and by) reducing the quantity.

In their seminal piece on demarketing Kotler and Levy (1971) describe four different types of demarketing: general, selective, ostensible and unintentional demarketing. General demarketing is required when the goal is to reduce the total demand. Selective demarketing is used when demand from a certain customer group needs to be reduced. By giving the appearance of aiming to reduce demand for a product ostensible demarketing is actually meant to initiate the contrary, which is an increase in demand. Unintentional demarketing occurs when attempts to increase demand, actually result in driving customers away (Kotler and Levy, 1971). This research will not be concerned with ostensible or unintentional demarketing, since these are not concepts that are applicable in a situation addressing excess demand.

Excess demand in protected areas is a very complex issue. It does not simply mean that the total level of visitation is too high for a park or reserve. As previously indicated in section 1.2 and also shown by Groff (1998) excess demand often relates to specific experiences or activities within a national park and also frequently relates to specific sites, rather than to the whole estate. Demarketing in national parks is therefore concerned with reducing visitor numbers in total or selectively and redistributing demand spatially or temporarily. Groff (1998) identified three specific situations of excess demand in parks in which the park management agency may use demarketing measures:

Temporary shortages – as a result of either a lack of supply (park lands are finite resources and visitation may peak around certain times of the year) or underestimation by the management of demand for particular sites or programs and experiences;

Chronic overpopularity – the popularity of a park or specific area or experience can seriously threaten the quality of the visitor experience and also damage the natural resource that attracts the visitors;
Conflicting use – includes issues surrounding visitor safety, compatibility of use with the available resources, and the different uses and programs demanded by the visitors and the public.

Like marketing measures in general, demarketing can be associated with the 4 Ps of the marketing mix. Table 2.2 summarises demarketing measures suggested or identified by previous researchers in various fields including health care, tourism and protected area management, grouped according to their association with the 4 Ps. The subsequent sections investigate these relevant studies in detail beginning with research outside the field of tourism and protected area management.
Table 2.2: Demarketing measures suggested/identified in previous research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marketing mix component</th>
<th>Demarketing measures suggested/identified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Product</strong></td>
<td>• narrowing the product line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• using lower-grade material in production/reducing the level of service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• discouraging certain facilities that attract ‘undesirable’ markets (^1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• reducing the maintenance of certain walking tracks to encourage use by experienced walkers only (^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• providing safe wildlife observation areas to channel visitor movements (^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• limiting activities permitted either seasonally, because of local environmental conditions, or entirely (^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• limiting activities by restricting the areas in which they can be conducted (^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distribution (Place)</strong></td>
<td>• limiting distribution to make product less available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• reducing the convenience of access to certain services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• limiting total quantity of products/services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• limiting quantity per customer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• issuing timed entry tickets to visitors based on a specific carrying capacity (^1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• introducing booking or reservation systems (^1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• introducing permit or license systems (^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• using an allocation system for visits on a ‘first come first served’ basis based on social and biological carrying capacities (^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• limiting the overall capacity of camping and accommodation facilities (^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• limiting total visitor numbers (^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• limiting group sizes (^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• developing a ‘Park Full’ strategy to encourage use of other destinations (^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• permitting certain activities only under supervision of appropriately educated personnel (such as accredited commercial operators or park rangers) (^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• making access to fragile areas more difficult, simultaneously promoting less fragile options (^2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) Suggested/identified among others in the field of tourism

\(^2\) Suggested/identified in the field of tourism and recreation in protected areas
Table 2.2 continued: Demarketing measures suggested/identified in previous research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marketing mix component</th>
<th>Demarketing measures suggested/identified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Price                   | • introducing or increasing prices/user fees 1 (including entrance fees, parking fees, camping fees and the like) 2  
  • discouraging/stopping price discounting practices 1  
  • introduce differential pricing (where the price increases disproportionately with increasing time spent in the destination) 2  
  • creating a queuing system to increase the time and opportunity costs of the experience 2 |
| Promotion               | • ceasing/decreasing promotion of product/service (in specific markets 1 2)  
  • promoting less utilization of services  
  • non-promotion of certain services  
  • promoting/stressing restrictions related to product/service 1 2  
  • warning visitors of environmental circumstances under which activities may be curtailed 2  
  • promoting/stressing restrictions or difficulties with travel to the destination 2  
  • discouraging certain (‘undesirable’) markets through the style of and information in promotion 1 2  
  • educating journalists and media regarding appropriate environmental behaviour 2  
  • promoting/stressing appropriate behaviour/minimal impact behaviour in promotional material 2  
  • highlighting the environmental degradation that could occur if too many people frequent the area 2 |

Compiled from Beeton (2001, 2002; 2003); Beeton and Benfield (2002); Beeton and Pinge (2003); Benfield (2001); Borkowski (1994); Buckley (2003a); Carlse and Ali-Knight (2004); Clements (1989); Fluker and Richardson (2004); Groff (1998); Hill and Pickering (2002); Kindra and Taylor (1995); Mark and Brennan (1995); Mark and Elliott, (1995); Mark and Elliot (1997); Shama (1978); Wall (2005); Wearing and Archer (2001)

1 Suggested/identified among others in the field of tourism  
2 Suggested/identified in the field of tourism and recreation in protected areas

2.5 Demarketing research

Demarketing has been predominantly applied in developing economies coping with product shortages and the healthcare and energy supply sectors in North America, Canada, the United Kingdom and, to some extent, Australia. Research on demarketing has focused on two areas (i) demarketing in the case of product shortages, particularly during the 1970s when concerns about energy supplies were high (for example Cullwick, 1975; Gallagher, 1994; Kotler, 1974; Monroe and Zoltners, 1979; Shama, 1978) and (ii) demarketing the consumption of public services, predominantly healthcare services (for example Borkowski, 1994; Kindra and Taylor, 1995; Mark and Brennan, 1995; Mark and Elliott,
1997; MacStravic, 1995). Most of these studies are theoretical in nature and have focused on discussing and prescribing demarketing actions derived from Kotler and Levy’s (1971) seminal article on demarketing.

Shama (1978) proposes demarketing measures for businesses in periods of inflation or shortage where business may aim to reduce demand. He defines **shortage** as ‘an economic and a physical state, which occurs when demand is larger than supply at the existing (or administered) price level’ and **inflation** as ‘a process of rising prices of raw materials and final products and services…’ (Shama, 1978:44). The demarketing measures proposed were identified by their association to the 4 Ps and included: narrowing the product line, using lower-grade material in production (product); raising prices, stopping price discounting practices (price); decreasing promotion, demarketing through promotion (promotion); and limiting distribution to make the product less available and limit quantity per customer (place). Similar to Cullwick (1975) in an article on product shortages, Shama (1978) recognises that integrating all of the marketing mix variables is as important in demarketing as it is in overall marketing.

Shama (1978) also surveyed 104 American marketing managers and 969 consumers in order to determine how businesses actually adjust their marketing/demarketing practices in these economic periods. He found that demarketing measures related to price were most prominent followed by those related to product, promotion and place. This author argues that investigating demarketing within the framework of the marketing mix is a useful approach in order to achieve a systematic and coherent discussion, and it was consequently adopted for this study.

Kindra and Taylor (1995) propose a theoretical framework for demarketing inappropriate healthcare consumption, which includes aspects that are also helpful for setting demarketing in national parks into context (Figure 2.2).
Kindra and Taylor (1995) suggest that there are certain driving factors which affect health care utilization. Demographic shifts, for example, mean that the proportion of older people is increasing rapidly. Furthermore, consumer awareness of certain health care technologies is increasing. These factors lead to increasing demand for health care services and ultimately result in overfull demand.

The response is demarketing inappropriate health care consumption through the marketing variables, particularly price, distribution (place) and promotion. In their article, Kindra and Taylor (1995:12) argue that ‘although, to some, the term “demarketing” may appear to be an oxymoron, it has become a legitimate alternative marketing strategy’. Kindra and Taylor (1995) suggest demarketing measures like increasing the price to the consumer through user fees or co-payments, reducing the level/quantity/number of services, reducing the convenience of access to certain services and promoting less utilization of services. These measures are similar to those identified by Borkowski (1994) as being used by Health Maintenance Organizations in North America. The author also mentions the use of non-promotion of certain health care services by ‘repress[ing] information about … elective and/or expensive services’. To be effective, this demarketing measure should be accompanied by premeditated promotion of ‘less-costly preventive procedures (e.g. physical examinations, immunizations, etc.)’ (Borkowski, 1994:12). Kindra and Taylor
(1995) also point out that demarketing the use of services has to be accompanied by marketing alternative services in order to make it effective and to maintain customer satisfaction.

A third element in Kindra and Taylor’s (1995) framework are pressure points. The authors suggest that specific factors influenced the successful application of demarketing in the Canadian health care system including that the quality of health care cannot be jeopardized, costs must be reduced and consumer expectations must be lowered. It is suggested that measures could be used to determine the effectiveness of demarketing actions, however, this point is not elaborated on. Although the specific driving factors, the demarketing actions and the influencing factors are likely to be different in protected areas, these elements are important in any demarketing strategy.

While a range of authors, such as Borkowski (1994), Kindra and Taylor (1995), Mark and Brennan (1995) and Mark and Elliot (1997), found demarketing useful and effective to address over-use of healthcare services, the concept has also been criticised for ethical reasons. MacStravic (1995) in particular, criticises the use of demarketing in the Canadian and North American health care context to address ‘chronic overuse’. He acknowledges that demarketing measures have been used in both these countries, but he argues that ‘…pure demarketing is both pragmatically risky and ethically questionable’ (p. 57). MacStravic (1995) gives some demarketing examples from the health care field that were failures as they defy ‘…one of the most basic marketing maxims: Make the customer happy’ (MacStravic, 1995:58). These examples include limiting access to emergency rooms and discouraging inpatient stays after delivery of a child. This use of demarketing without providing acceptable alternatives for customers is indeed controversial and questionable. MacStravic (1995), similar to Kindra and Taylor (1995), suggests that in cases of overuse of certain health care services there is the need to provide and promote attractive alternative options, an approach he calls ‘remarketing’.

Although the use of demarketing for tourism and recreation to national parks is less likely to be pragmatically risky in terms of customers’ wellbeing as in the health care sector, ethical considerations are important regarding measures that restrict or put a price on park visitation. This is considered further in section 2.7. The controversial nature which demarketing may have when it selectively discriminates against certain customer groups
was also recognised by Kotler and Levy (1971) in their seminal work on demarketing. The authors state that activities like making ‘undesirable’ customers wait longer for delivery of a product, providing poor quality or service and making it harder for such customers to find product channels … ‘may raise thorny issues in social ethics’ (Kotler and Levy, 1971:81). When a demarketing strategy is planned or when single demarketing measures are implemented it is therefore very important, especially for public sector organisations, to consider whether the steps are ethically justifiable.

Regarding the healthcare sector, Mark and Brennan (1995) and Mark and Elliot (1997) also criticise the use of demarketing to some extent. They theoretically discuss demarketing as a strategy to manage dysfunctional demand in the National Health Service (NHS) of the United Kingdom, especially in relation to emergency services. These authors note that general demarketing, which aims at shrinking the level of total demand, has been a major policy activity in the NHS. Mark and Brennan (1995) and Mark and Elliot (1997) also identify instances where selective, ostensible and unintentional demarketing occur: selective demarketing through the ‘price’ component by requiring partial payment for certain services; ostensible demarketing through the ‘distribution/place’ component by maintaining long waiting lists that denote exclusivity; and unintentional demarketing again through long waiting lists which may lead to recovery (or death). It is noted that, notwithstanding these examples, demarketing has been used somewhat unconsciously in the health care context. Mark and Brennan (1995:20) for instance state that ‘demarketing has happened, so far, more or less by accident in the health service’.

Mark and Brennan (1995) and Mark and Elliot (1997) furthermore criticise the focus of demarketing efforts on changing and rationing the supply of health services (for example through reduction of public hospital beds, the product component). Instead, they advocate the use of demarketing to manage demand. It is stated that ‘…demarketing… will only really become credible if it develops as a demand-side activity’ (Mark and Elliot, 1997:300). Mark and Elliot (1997) highlight the need to address consumer behaviour through persuasive promotion and advertising (promotional demarketing) and, similar to Kindra and Taylor (1995), recognize the need to market alternatives to consumers in a demarketing situation.
Mark and Brennan (1995) and Mark and Elliot (1997) also point out that to render demarketing measures more acceptable and understandable they need to be used more consciously and be made more explicit. Mark and Brennan (1995:21) remark that ‘implicit, or hidden, demarketing has gone on within the NHS probably since [the service] was established …’. Mark and Elliot (1997: 301) propose that the four types of demarketing identified by Kotler (1971) (general, selective, ostensible and unintentional) can be separated into those that ‘can become explicit activities capable of positive utilization … [general and selective] and those which perhaps necessarily would remain implicit and undesirable … but for which demarketing as a concept has provided a framework for understanding and awareness [ostensible and unintentional]’ (Figure 2.3). However, Mark and Elliot (1997) acknowledge that implicit decisions will always remain part of the decision making process involved in any demarketing strategy.

**Figure 2.3: Implicitness and explicitness of types of demarketing**

As mentioned before, this research is not concerned with ostensible and unintentional demarketing, but with general and selective demarketing in protected areas. Therefore, the notion of explicitness of demarketing is an important one, which will further be addressed in section 2.7.

A recent article by Wall (2005) addresses the demarketing efforts by the United Kingdom government to reduce private car usage. The author notes that ‘the attempt to reduce the reliance on cars has many aspects, including the preservation of oil, the harmful effect on
the environment and public health’ (Wall, 2005:424). It is therefore somewhat related to demarketing demand for certain activities and experiences in national parks. Both demarketing situations aim in part to reduce negative environmental impacts and to preserve scarce resources.

Wall (2005) argues that the provision and/or promotion of alternatives to car use, such as cycle paths in built up areas, park and ride schemes and public transport, had limited success and so demarketing measures related to ‘price’ have been used instead to reduce private car use. These include tolls on bridges and motorways, workplace parking levies and charges to enter built-up areas, such as those introduced in London in 2003 (Wall, 2005). Importantly, he notes that pricing as a demarketing tool is problematic because ‘it is politically unattractive’ and people are often ‘strongly attached to their vehicles and resent interference with their freedom to use them’ (Wall, 2005:424). By using pricing as a demarketing tool, governments risk voter backlash at elections. The above issue can also be related to pricing in protected areas, as will be elaborated on in section 2.7.

Referring to Wright and Egan (2000 cited in Wall, 2005), the author argues that selective demarketing could be more effective than general demarketing to reduce private car use. Selective demarketing measures could focus on specific categories of user, particular journey purposes and future users (such as teenagers as they tend to be more receptive to ‘green’ issues and are not yet ‘committed to a car-based lifestyle’) (Wright and Egan, 2000 cited in Wall, 2005:425).

Wall (2005:426) argues that ‘whilst demarketing can be seen to work, it needs to be well planned and integrated with other government initiatives in order for it to be fully effective’. In protected areas, a well integrated approach to demarketing is also vital; albeit in this context integration of initiatives of different stakeholders, not only government initiatives, is important.

Beeton and Pinge (2003) investigate the role of demarketing as a tool for reducing gambling expenditure in Australia and increasing local tourism. The focus of this conceptual study is not on demarketing tourism, but on demarketing gambling to foster tourism. Beeton and Pinge (2003) note that Australians are not taking their maximum allowance of annual holidays which, in the long term, could result in ‘issues of community
health as well as impact on the viability of the domestic tourism industry’ (Beeton and Pinge, 2003:309). They suggest that ‘if gambling expenditure can be limited, with that money being shifted to local tourism, local communities stand to benefit’ (p. 310). To this end the authors propose a demarketing – remarketing strategy where gambling is demarketed to certain segments that tend to travel locally if they take a holiday (selective demarketing) (Figure 2.4). Local holidays are remarkeleted to these segments at the same time.

**Figure 2.4: Demarketing-remarketing strategy by Beeton and Pinge**

Beeton and Pinge (2003) note that some demarketing measures are already being applied to gambling in Australia including making access difficult through legislation that bans Internet gaming and limiting the number of poker machine licenses. Based on previous research about demarketing Beeton and Pinge (2003:317) suggest a number of additional demarketing measures for gambling including:

- Limiting the supply of the product (e.g. number of gaming machines, time limits on machines, reducing opening hours and enforcing breaks);
- Making access to venues more difficult (e.g. limited street frontage, limited entrances direct from street);
- Reducing promotion of gaming venues;
- Discouraging tied promotion of gambling venues with benign products like shopping;
- Providing better information to gamblers – duration of play and time of day, odds of winning, amounts lost.
Remarketing measures for local tourism include the development of well-priced local tourism packages and the promotion of local tourism products at the gaming venues (Beeton and Pinge, 2003). But Beeton and Pinge (2003) note that for their demarketing-remarketing strategy to be effective requires various government departments to work together, which may represent an obstacle. They also recognize the reliance of government on gaming revenue and the reluctance of gambling operators to relinquish revenue as critical aspects that may thwart the demarketing of gambling.

A limited number of studies have investigated demarketing in tourism and these will be considered in the next section.

2.6 Demarketing research in tourism

Kotler and Levy (1971) used demarketing of a tourism destination as a key example when introducing the concept of demarketing into the marketing debate and tourism textbooks increasingly make mention of demarketing and its potential for tourism management. For example Fluker and Richardson (2004), Gunn (2002) and Weaver and Lawton (2006) mention demarketing and Wearing and Neil (1999) refer to demarketing in the context of ecotourism. Nevertheless, demarketing has not received a lot of attention from the tourism research community and Beeton and Benfield (2002:501) point out that ‘studies into demarketing in relation to environmental management and tourism are extremely few in number and limited in their range’.

Clements (1989) was the first to study demarketing and tourism by discussing the use and potential of demarketing for discouraging young, troublesome tourists from visiting Cyprus. Focusing on selective demarketing, he was not concerned with issues of overuse, but rather with discouraging what were considered the ‘wrong’ types of tourists and attracting ‘desirable’ tourist segments. The author stresses the importance of proactive action and suggests that there is need for ‘a solution at the point of source rather than at the resort end of the chain’ (Clements, 1989:89), meaning that ideally tourists should be influenced and managed before they actually decide to visit. To achieve this Clements (1989) proposes the incorporation of demarketing aspects into the marketing mix, and thus manipulate particularly product, price and promotion variables. He reports that in the case of Cyprus, demarketing measures that were used included strict control over physical
attributes of the holiday, such as discouraging cheap self-catering apartments and nightclubs (product), increasing prices for tourism services and discouraging discounting among tourist agencies (price) and reducing promotion in specific markets (promotion).

Clements’s study (1989) notes that the Cyprus Tourism Organization, the national tourism body, doesn’t have complete control over how Cyprus is promoted and presented as a destination. Clements states, however, that the Cyprus Tourism Organization ‘is monitoring standards of information presentation at the points of tourist departure. Agencies report directly to [the Cyprus Tourism Organization] on how Cyprus is being presented in local media and how holidays are being offered … efforts are made to ensure that travel and tour operators do not deviate from ‘acceptable promotional policies’’ (Clements, 1989:91). These efforts are unfortunately not further elaborated on. This author believes that a lack of control over external promotional media may have a profound influence on the effectiveness of any promotional demarketing measures.

Clements further stresses the importance of integrating both demarketing and marketing into the overall management strategy, rather than considering demarketing in isolation. In a subsequent article about tourism planning in Cyprus Clements (1998) refers back to Cyprus’s selective demarketing strategy described above and reports that, although the strategy was effective initially, a delay in actively developing the ‘desired’ tourism markets in a long-term vision meant that total visitor numbers to the island dropped significantly. This again highlights the need to integrate demarketing and marketing efforts to achieve the desired outcomes.

Like Clements (1989), Benfield (2001) examines demarketing in the context of mass tourism. His study, however, focuses on general demarketing as opposed to selective demarketing. In a case study, he describes and evaluates the effectiveness of several demarketing strategies used at the National Trust’s Sissinghurst Castle Garden in Kent in the United Kingdom, a site suffering from chronic excess visitor demand. As the castle and gardens are owned and managed by the National Trust, they are dedicated to conserving the site while also providing the opportunity for people to experience and enjoy it.

Due to high visitor numbers, Sissinghurst suffered negative environmental as well as social impacts. Since self-regulation by visitors did not prove successful as a management tool –
visitors had been asked to postpone their entry to the site when carrying capacity had been reached – other strategies were introduced including issuing timed entry tickets to visitors based on a specific carrying capacity, implementing obligatory reservations for coach groups and a booking system for tour groups and discontinuing any paid advertising. Furthermore, any magazine features about the site ‘were edited, where possible, to stress the sensitivity of the garden and the restrictions that were in place’ (Benfield, 2001:215). The first two measures are related to the distribution (place) component of the marketing mix, the latter two are promotional demarketing measures.

Benfield (2001) indicates that customer satisfaction and financial considerations are important factors which have to be considered when demarketing is used for demand management. Concerning the former he points out that it is crucial that visitors are informed about the demarketing strategies in place before visiting the site so that they can tailor their visits accordingly. Similar to Sissinghurst Castle Garden, national parks are also concerned with conservation while providing the opportunity for visitor enjoyment and hence visitor satisfaction and financial considerations might also be factors that have an influence on the use of demarketing in parks. This might be especially likely since Australian national parks are shifting towards a more market-driven and strategic management approach in recent years, as discussed in section 2.3.

Another study that explores demarketing in a tourism context is Beeton (2002). Beeton examines the demarketing actions taken at popular film-induced tourism sites in the United States and United Kingdom to reduce tourism numbers in order to counteract negative visitor impacts. These negative impacts were primarily pressures on infrastructure, issues of crowding and loss of privacy. Beeton’s study focuses mainly on investigating promotional aspects of demarketing by analysing promotional material for the sites, in particular brochures and websites. She also used a very limited range of surveys of tourist associations and management agencies to explore the extent of use of other demarketing measures to reduce negative visitor impacts, including introducing entry and parking fees, making access more difficult, stressing appropriate behaviour towards residents in promotional material and decreasing promotion. Beeton (2002) finds that in the promotional material there is little evidence of demarketing strategies. The ‘limited nature of this study’ (Beeton, 2002:5) means that the findings are inconclusive, but she suggests that integrating demarketing aspects into overall destination marketing could be a means to
manage demand at film-induced tourism sites. She proposes an integrated marketing-demarketing strategy (Figure 2.5) for destinations portrayed in commercial films.

**Figure 2.5: Integrated marketing-demarketing strategy by Beeton**

After Beeton (2002:7)

In the first stage of this strategy concurring with the release of the film, the demarketing component is only small ‘possibly in the realm of notifying potential visitors whether sites are publicly accessible and if not, what limitations there may be’ (Beeton, 2002:7). In the second stage, demarketing measures are more significant and include ‘providing more information such as costs, time or number restrictions and appropriate behaviour towards residents’ (Beeton, 2002:7). The last stage, which coincides with the actual visit to the site, highlights on-site strategies that manage visitation, such as site hardening. This model is only somewhat transferable to protected areas. Except in cases where a film is shot in a protected area, there may not be a trigger comparable to a film release that initiates sudden popularity of the area and is followed by the other steps described in the model.

Carlsen and Ali-Knight (2004) discuss demarketing in the context of wine tourism. Similar to Clements (1998), their study also shows the importance of integrating demarketing and
marketing measures in the overall management of the destination. Employing a case study, the authors investigate what demarketing measures are used to reduce negative impacts, whilst fostering benefits from wine tourism. The focus of their study is the Napa Valley, a wine region in California, United States, which is ‘under increasing pressure from tourism’, especially from day-trippers who visit the valley on weekends (Carlsen and Ali-Knight, 2004:2). The authors note that tourism growth in the Napa Valley has resulted in negative impacts such as traffic congestion and loss of scenic beauty due to development.

In regard to demarketing measures, Carlsen and Ali-Knight (2004) describe that the destination management organisation for the region, the Napa Valley Convention and Visitor Bureau, in cooperation with local wineries try to discourage day-trip visitors through the style of and information in promotion. At the same time more ‘desirable’ high yield niche markets, such as the wedding and meetings markets are targeted. Simultaneously, additional strategies are used including limits on tourism development and the promotion of alternate attractions and wine regions. The authors conclude that ‘there must be a synergy between marketing and resource protection for a wine tourism destination to truly succeed – it is not enough to stimulate interest and awareness of the wine tourism product through traditional marketing channels. The use of demarketing strategies … has been found to be effective in the case of Napa Valley and could be of interest to other wine regions faced with similar tourism pressure’ (Carlsen and Ali-Knight, 2004:8).

2.7 Demarketing research specifically related to tourism and recreation in protected areas

It has been pointed out in section 2.3.2 that corporate and policy documents on protected areas increasingly indicate that marketing should play a role in proactively managing visitor demand, influencing, redistributing and in specific cases reducing demand and that the term demarketing is increasingly mentioned in this context. However, research on demarketing related to tourism and recreation in protected areas is limited. This section will address research that has considered marketing as a tool for demand management and then discuss studies that have focused on demarketing in protected area management.
Jenkins and McArthur (1996) examine the potential of destination marketing to influence demand for protected areas, in particular visitor awareness, perceptions and choice of sites. Drawing on primary data from a case study on promotion of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area in Australia from 1993, they identify a strong relationship between level of promotion for a site and level of market awareness. The study indicates that marketing is a strong influence on how visitors perceive a site and ultimately on what sites they choose to visit. Jenkins and McArthur (1996:15) point out that

Park managers can continue to be the passive recipient of market forces and thus always have to respond to external influences. Alternatively, they can grasp some key marketing principles, become part of the marketing environment, and exert some influence on their own.

Although Jenkins and McArthur (1996) recognize the potential of marketing as a proactive tool for managing demand their study is limited to the promotional aspect of marketing and the concept of demarketing is not addressed.

Archer and Wearing (2001; 2002) discuss the role of marketing and interpretation as management tools for Australian protected areas. Herein, marketing is again limited mainly to its promotional sense. The authors state that ‘tension exists between the alternative uses by Australian national parks agencies of interpretation and marketing as management tools’ (Archer and Wearing, 2002:29). This tension is primarily due to historically differing beliefs in park management agencies in regard to those two management tools. Interpretation, which is defined as ‘a means for communicating information, stories, values and ideas to assist people in understanding their relationship with the environment’ (Archer and Wearing, 2002:32) is a well established and key tool in the management of protected areas. On the contrary, marketing has only recently established itself within protected area management.

Archer and Wearing (2001; 2002) argue that, if used in a synergistic partnership, interpretation and marketing can be highly effective in positively influencing different stakeholders’ awareness and perception of protected areas, as well as in shaping visitor expectations and behaviours. To this end the authors suggest that ‘the interpretation and marketing functions of park management agencies should be developed and administered not in isolation of one another, but with an understanding of each other’s aims and

In a conceptual article Wearing and Archer (2001) propose a ‘Five Rs’ framework for sustainable marketing of protected areas (Figure 2.6).

**Figure 2.6: Five Rs framework by Wearing and Archer**

The foundation for this framework is provided by five strategic guiding principles that address sustainable marketing on the organisational, regional and park-site level. These principles are:

- **Responsible**: The marketing of protected areas should be done in a responsible and ethical manner.
- **Realistic**: The marketing of protected areas should be done so in a manner that disseminates realistic images and information.
- **Regional**: The marketing of national parks and protected areas should be developed in a regional context.
- **Research**: Research is a fundamental building block of sustainable marketing and must be carried out and integrated into marketing strategies.
Relationships: Cooperative marketing strategies between relevant protected area agencies, tourism industry and community stakeholders can benefit all involved.

After Wearing and Archer (2001:39)

Wearing and Archer’s (2001) ‘Five Rs’ framework is important in that it places the protection of environmental integrity at the centre and this acknowledges that this is the ultimate aim of protected area agencies in Australia, and that all marketing efforts must correspond to and assert this aim.

Within the context of the first principle, ‘Responsible’ marketing, Wearing and Archer (2001:39) suggest the use of demarketing in specific circumstances: ‘In situations of excess demand, lack of supply or conflicting use, demarketing strategies are appropriate in order to discourage the level of demand for a particular setting or activity’. Based on Howard and Crompton (1980) who touch upon marketing in their book *Financing, managing and marketing recreation & park resources*, Wearing and Archer (2001) list a number of demarketing measures that are related to the ‘price’ and ‘promotion’ component of the marketing mix:

- Increasing prices in a manner so they increase disproportionately as time spent in the park management destination increases [price];
- Creating a queuing system to increase the time and opportunity costs of the experience [price];
- Limiting the main promotional strategy to select and specialised media channels [promotion];
- Promoting the need to conserve the area through minimal impact and sustainable development [promotion];
- Highlighting the environmental degradation that could occur if too many people frequent the area [promotion];
- Highlighting any restrictions or difficulties associated with travel to the area [promotion].

Wearing and Archer (2001:36); material in brackets added by the author
Building on this work Wearing and Archer (2005) outline various ways in which different marketing approaches (including relationship marketing, social marketing, demarketing etc.) can help to address issues in the management of tourism and recreation in Australian parks. In regard to demarketing, the authors suggest that it can be used to address the following issues: conflict between visitor groups and activities, inequities in access to parks, crowding in parks and ensuring the protection of ecological integrity. Interestingly, Wearing and Archer (2005) do not consider demarketing as a tool to ensure the protection of cultural and historical heritage, for which this author also believes demarketing has a role. The concept of demarketing and its use are not further elaborated on in this theoretical study.

Studies that explicitly focus on demarketing and protected areas are by Groff (1998), Beeton and Benfield (2002) and Beeton (2001; 2003). Groff (1998) takes demarketing research into the field of national park and recreation management in a North American context yet bases his work exclusively on Kotler and Levy’s (1971) original piece on the theory of demarketing, which somewhat limits the scope of discussion in his work. Groff (1998:130) notes that ‘Many national parks, public lands and natural resource areas in the United States and other countries are facing excess demand for one or more types of recreation or visitor experiences’. Importantly, within this statement and within his discussion in general, Groff recognizes that in a national park context excess demand mostly relates only to certain recreation activities and visitor experiences and hardly ever relates to the whole park and all activities or experiences. The importance of this has also been noted by Wearing and Archer (2001). Groff (1998) also suggests the use of demarketing to counteract vandalism, graffiti and litter which are common problems in parks. This author believes that these issues rather call for countermarketing measures that aim to destroy demand for these kinds of activities entirely (see section 2.1).

Although Groff (1998) provides some anecdotal evidence on the use of demarketing in North American national parks, his article is mainly conceptual. Groff (1998) notes that in some cases excess demand for tourism/recreation in national parks places great threat on the environment of the parks and on the visitor experience. He therefore states that
A park and recreation agency may need to reduce ... the level of demand in a certain demand state without damaging the visitor experience, the relationship with the various users, and the image of the agency (Groff, 1998:128).

The above quote indicates that customer satisfaction is a crucial factor influencing the use of demarketing for managing demand. This correlates to the suggestion made by Benfield (2001). In addition, Groff (1998) indicates that maintaining the image of the agency is also a point to be considered when using demarketing. He suggests different demarketing actions that marketers can take to address overfull demand and ordered according to their association with the marketing mix components they are: using a permitting or licensing program, using an allocation system for visits on a ‘first come first served’ basis based on social and biological carrying capacities (distribution/place), increasing entrance fees, license fees or permit costs (price), and decreasing promotion for the park or activity (promotion). Demarketing measures related to the ‘product’ component are not included.

Corresponding to Kindra and Taylor (1995) and Mark and Elliot (1997) in the field of health care, Groff (1998) also points out that it is important to use demarketing for a park, site or activity in combination with marketing an alternative or substitute in order to reduce disappointment by visitors. This point is also addressed by Benfield (2001), who suggests that offering alternatives for activities that have been rationed helps to maintain visitor satisfaction. Groff’s (1998) article is mainly prescriptive, since he advises how demarketing should be used rather than examining in detail how it is used and what factors actually influence that use.

Beeton and Benfield (2002) discuss the potential of demarketing as a conscious policy and management tool for protected areas. It is argued that demarketing ‘has the potential to provide planners and managers with a range of constructive tools and techniques that, when applied to areas in a proactive manner, can result in positive and successful results’ (Beeton and Benfield, 2002:499). Anecdotal evidence is used to make the point that some management activities, which can be grouped under the umbrella of demarketing, are currently being used in some tourism places to manage demand. The authors note, however, that the use of demarketing to date has mostly been unconscious and that demarketing ‘has not been adequately recognised or actively pursued as a marketing or management tool’ (Beeton and Benfield, 2002:502). The draft plan of management for
Wilson Promontory National Park in Victoria, Australia, from 2000, for instance, proposes different strategies which correspond to demarketing including:

- Limiting the overall capacity of camping and accommodation facilities to 4000 visitors [distribution/place];
- Developing a ‘Park Full’ strategy to encourage use of other destinations [distribution/place];
- Maintaining the ballot system for the main camping site in the park [distribution/place];
- Reducing the maintenance of certain walking tracks to encourage use by experienced walkers only [product];
- Providing safe wildlife observation areas to channel visitor movements [product];
- Discouraging feeding of wildlife through education [promotion].

After Beeton and Benfield (2002:510); material in brackets added by the author

These measures can again be grouped according to their association with the marketing mix components as indicated by this author in brackets. It should be noted that no measures are included that can be associated with the ‘price’ component of the marketing mix.

Beeton and Benfield (2002:510) make an important point by stating that the negative side of some demarketing measures are ‘issues of equity and access (especially if too much focus is on using price as a demarketing tool or if there is a lack of awareness that limitations on visitation are in place and potential visitors have come a long way only to be barred entry)’.

Problems associated with pricing as a demarketing tool have also been identified by Wall (2005), as indicated previously. To address this drawback of demarketing - that is to render it more acceptable for all stakeholders - Beeton and Benfield (2002) argue that demarketing measures need to be recognized as such, used consciously and be incorporated into the overall marketing of the park. This argument is similar to Mark and Brennan’s (1995) notion of explicitness of demarketing in health care.
Beeton and Benfield (2002) argue also that promotional aspects of demarketing should be used to address demand issues, since the authors consider them as most influential. Beeton and Benfield (2002) suggest that if demarketing is strategically planned and incorporated into the overall marketing strategy ‘the park will be promoted and negative effects limited simultaneously at the point of visitor-decision making’ (Beeton and Benfield, 2002:510). Simultaneously, it is criticised that to date those demarketing measures that are applied on-site have been focused on, which implies that in practice promotional demarketing measures have been neglected.

With a case study on Mount Buffalo National Park and Mount Buffalo Chalet in Australia Beeton (2001; 2003) provides the first empirical data on demarketing in national parks. Beeton’s research is limited to the promotional aspects of demarketing. She examines to what extent demarketing is used in promotional material disseminated by Mount Buffalo National Park and Mount Buffalo Chalet to mitigate negative tourism impacts. From this case study Beeton (2001; 2003) concludes that demarketing measures are only employed to a limited extent, especially as far as the chalet is concerned, and that those measures are also not consciously used as demarketing. No holistic demarketing strategy could be identified. Those promotional demarketing measures found by Beeton (2001; 2003) to be used include:

- Discouraging certain types of visitors (those seeking a fast-paced, downhill skiing experience) through messages included in web pages and brochures;
- Stressing restrictions on visitation in promotion (for instance restrictions on the use of open fire and limits on other activities, bans on bringing pets or firearms into the park and warnings when activities may be curtailed temporarily);
- Stressing appropriate environmental behaviour in promotion.

Beeton (2001, 2003) also notes that it is not only important which strategies are used, but when they are incorporated into the management cycle. Therefore she advocates the use of promotional demarketing measures in particular because they reach the prospective visitor at the decision making stage. Thus these measures have the potential to let the prospective visitor make an informed decision about the park visit and to modify expectations and behaviour and ultimately visitor satisfaction. Incorporating demarketing messages into promotional material is also believed to provide ‘the opportunity to present this
information in a positive, non-threatening manner, which can reduce the necessity of on-site staff being authoritarian gate-keepers’ (Beeton, 2003:103).

Based on this case study Beeton (2001; 2003) suggests some additional less prescriptive demarketing measures for use in parks, with emphasis on measures related to the ‘promotion’ component of the marketing mix:

- Discouraging certain (‘undesirable’) markets through the style and information of promotional material [promotion];
- Notifying visitors of banned activities at the point of information gathering and in promotional material [promotion];
- Limiting activities permitted either seasonally, because of local environmental conditions, or entirely [product];
- Warning visitors of environmental circumstances under which activities may be curtailed [promotion];
- Permitting certain activities only under supervision of appropriately educated personnel (such as accredited commercial operators or park rangers) [distribution/place];
- Making access to fragile areas more difficult, simultaneously promoting less fragile options [distribution/place];
- Educating potential visitors regarding appropriate environmental behaviour at point of information gathering and within marketing and promotional literature [promotion];
- Educating journalists and media regarding appropriate environmental behaviour [promotion].

After Beeton (2001; 2003); material in brackets added by the author

Furthermore, Beeton (2001; 2003) states that simultaneously alternative sites should be promoted for activities that are non-compatible or banned in a park and ‘desirable’ markets should be encouraged through the style and information provided in promotional material. The former, however, raises the difficulty that the most appropriate alternative sites may be outside the national park and thus not directly under the influence of the protected area managers.
A range of studies has investigated or discussed selected measures used in protected areas that can correspond to demarketing if used to actively manage visitation, such as pricing, limiting visitor numbers and licensing, without placing them in the context of demarketing (for instance Eagles and McCool, 2002; Eagles, McCool and Haynes, 2002; Evans, 2001; Manning, 2004; McArthur and Hall, 1996; Newsome, Moore and Dowling, 2002; Sowman and Pearce, 2000). In the Australian context specifically, studies include for instance Buckley (2003a), Buckley, Witting and Guest (2002; 2003); Bushell (2003); Hill and Pickering (2002), Jenkins and Wearing (2003); Fluker and Richardson (2004). Some Australian studies relevant to this research, will be considered in the subsequent paragraphs.

Hill and Pickering (2002) examine the regulation of summer tourism in the nine Australian alpine and subalpine national parks including Mount Buffalo National Park (NP), Kosciusko NP, Namadgi NP and Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair NP. In their investigation the authors include some measures that correspond to demarketing. It can be observed that these measures are related to ‘price’, ‘product’ and ‘distribution’ components. Related to ‘price’ they examined to what extent park entry fees are used to manage visitation and demand. Hill and Pickering (2002) found that park entry fees are only applied in a limited way in these parks and when used they have the purpose to raise revenue, rather than to manage demand.

For measures that are related to ‘product’ Hill and Pickering (2002) investigate the use of limitations on activities by restricting the areas in which they can be conducted. The authors report that there is reasonably extensive use of such limitations especially for high impact activities like horse riding, two and four wheel driving and cycling and also for the use of open fires. Zonation is also mentioned in this context. It is noted that zoning schemes are set out in management plans to determine park land for specific purposes. Fluker and Richardson (2004) also note the common use of zoning in Australian protected area management to delineate where certain activities are allowed and where they are excluded. In the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and the Wet Tropic World Heritage Area in Queensland, for instance, zoning is a primary management tool. In an international context, Eagle et al. (2002) state that zoning is a principal method to proactively redistribute visitation. Although zoning has not been specifically identified as a
demarketing tool in the literature, it can be argued that it is a necessary step towards applying demarketing measures coherently in different parts/zones of a national park.

Related to ‘distribution’ Hill and Pickering (2002) examine the application of licenses and permits for individual visitors and limitations on total visitor numbers or group sizes. For the former two demarketing measures the authors conclude that the park management agencies make very little use of them. On a national basis Buckley et al. (2002) report that commercial activities on the contrary require permits in almost all Australian parks. Limits on group sizes are, according to Hill and Pickering (2002), applied to a reasonable extent in the Australian Alps national parks for activities like horse riding or back country camping in a commercial context.

Hill and Pickering (2002:32) argue that ‘limiting numbers of users may become more important in the future, as increasing tourism places unacceptable pressure on the fragile and limited alpine environment’. At present, carrying capacities and thresholds for specific activities and areas are not well known (Hill and Pickering, 2002). Establishing these would be a prerequisite for systematic and transparent development of limitations on visitation. In addition, Hill and Pickering (2002) observe that visitor monitoring is still limited and often of low priority to protected area managers. The authors hold the lack of visitor monitoring also partially responsible for the reluctance to develop limitations on visitor use. They state that ‘as the scale and nature of visitor use remains largely unknown very little effort has been made to limit the number of users’ (Hill and Pickering, 2002:18).

Other authors also report that visitor monitoring in Australian protected area management is often not done systematically and continually (for example Archer, Griffin and Hayes, 2001; McIntyre, 1999; Wardell and Moore, 2005). This is despite the fact that information on visitor numbers is a political and legislative requirement for performance reporting as noted for instance by Moore, Smith and Newsome (2003) and Wearing and Archer (2005). A range of factors have been suggested which may be accountable for the lack in monitoring practice including logistics, as protected areas are often remote, constraints in staffing and finances and lack of expertise in social sciences (McIntyre, 1999; Wardell and Moore, 2005).
Hill and Pickering (2002) report that the park management agencies rely heavily on visitors’ knowledge of minimal impact codes that advocate appropriate environmental behaviour. The authors argue that there is, however, evidence that these minimal impact messages do not effectively reach potential visitors. Two reasons for this are identified: ineffective distribution of the codes and lack of direct contact between visitors and park staff. It is not examined though how these minimal impact messages are in fact promoted and distributed. It is interesting to note that Hill and Pickering (2002) see park staff positively as an essential and effective bearer of messages about appropriate environmental behaviour. This view contrasts with Beeton’s (2003:103) statement about on-site park staff appearing like ‘authoritarian gate-keepers’.

Similar to Hill and Pickering (2002), Buckley et al. (2003) and Buckley (2003a) note that generally park user fees in Australian parks are used more to raise revenue than to manage visitor demand. While park management agencies in all Australian states charge park entrance fees, camping fees or both to some extent (Buckley et al., 2002), charging fees for private use of public lands in general is still a contentious issue (Buckley, 2003a). This is said to be due to several reasons including ‘philosophical objection to double taxation’, as taxpayers have already paid for protected areas and ‘free access historically’ (Buckley, 2003a:64). Concerning the latter Eagles (2001:23) also notes that ‘Australia has a long tradition of free access to natural and cultural heritage assets’ which are public goods. Buckley (2003a:60) argues that if people have been able to visit protected areas in the past without paying park user fees ‘then they may raise strong objections to newly introduced fees, to the point of political action’. This statement corresponds to Wall’s (2005) notion that pricing as a demarketing tool for governments or public organisations is politically unattractive and may lead to voter backlash at elections, discussed in section 2.5.

Buckley (2003a) indicates that the use of park user fees is furthermore influenced by the legal framework in which the park management agencies operate. Legislation may stipulate whether the park management agency concerned has the legal power to charge park user fees and with what conditions. In regard to the use of park user fees as a tool to manage demand in particular, Buckley et al. (2003:58) argue that ‘where parks want to restrict visitor numbers or activities for environmental or social reasons, they generally use non-economic mechanisms rather than raise fees, for reasons of social equity’. This argument is also supported by Bushell (2003). A predominance of demarketing measures
related to the marketing mix component ‘price’ is therefore unlikely in any demarketing situation in an Australian national park.

2.8 Research gap and contribution of this research

It is increasingly being recognized that marketing should play an active role in managing, influencing, redistributing and in specific cases reducing visitor demand in protected areas such as national parks. To this end, several authors have suggested demarketing as a valuable tool in cases of excess visitor demand.

Research about demarketing in general has focused on product shortages and public services, primarily healthcare services. A limited number of studies have considered demarketing in relation to tourism and more particularly tourism and recreation in protected areas. However, most research about demarketing has been theoretical in nature and has focused on prescribing how demarketing should be implemented. To a lesser extent studies have investigated what demarketing measures are actually being used by respective parties. This is also true for those studies that link demarketing, tourism and protected areas.

Comprehensive empirical data on the use of demarketing in national parks is very limited, with Beeton (2001; 2003) undertaking the first and only empirical investigation in this context. In particular, systematic consideration of demarketing measures across the range of marketing mix components is rare. Furthermore, potential factors that influence when and how demarketing is used have received little research attention to date. Some authors have speculated on or have discussed a limited range of issues that may influence the use of certain demarketing measures; in the protected area context, these are particularly measures related to pricing. A comprehensive investigation into influencing factors considering the whole range of demarketing measure is lacking.

From the discussion of previous research and from Table 2.1 it is evident that a wide range of demarketing measures have been suggested or prescribed in various fields. The focus of this research is therefore not on suggesting additional measures, but on examining what measures are actually used in national parks that face excess visitor demand. This research aims to contribute to the knowledge on demarketing in national parks by not only
examining the extent of the use of demarketing measures, but also by investigating what factors influence how and when demarketing is used to manage demand. Besides this theoretical contribution, a deeper understanding about the concept of demarketing in the national park context will be of value for practitioners involved in tourism and recreation management in national parks. If examples of demarketing can be disseminated and factors that influence the use of demarketing measures are better understood, managers can make more informed decisions about whether or not this concept and particular measures are valuable in specific instances. This research aims to go some way to increase that understanding.

2.9 Summary
This chapter reviewed and discussed literature relevant to the research topic and introduced key concepts and definitions providing the theoretical background for this study. The chapter firstly explored marketing as a tool for demand management and considered important concepts like the marketing mix, different demand states and demarketing. Marketing was then considered in the Australian park management context. This was followed by a more detailed examination of the concept of demarketing and discussion of research on demarketing in different fields including health care, tourism and tourism and recreation in protected areas. The following chapter will present and explain the methodological framework of the study.
3.1 Introduction

Chapter two discussed literature relevant to the research topic. It introduced key concepts and definitions and established the contribution of the study in the research field. The purpose of this chapter is to present and explain the methodological framework of the study. Firstly, the research paradigm and approach are discussed. Secondly, the research method is explained and details about its implementation are given. Thirdly, the data collection is outlined including data collection techniques used and details about the implementation of these techniques. Then the analysis and presentation of the research data is addressed, which is followed by a discussion of ethical considerations in relation to data collection and reporting of findings. Finally, this chapter examines limitations of the research.

3.2 Research paradigm and approach

The theoretical paradigm that underpins a research project influences its design because a paradigm is an ‘overlying view of the way the world works’ (Jennings, 2001:34). It guides the way people think, including how they see and structure their research (Kayrooz and Trevitt, 2005). In the social sciences, a range of research paradigms exist which differ on the basis of ontological, epistemological and methodological premises. Ontological considerations relate to the view of the nature of reality. Epistemological considerations concern the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the subjects or objects of research. Lastly, methodological considerations concern the guidelines for conducting research (Guba and Lincoln, 1998; Jennings, 2001). Positivism, post-positivism, interpretivism and critical theory are examples of research paradigms (Jennings, 2001; Saunders et al., 2000).

The underlying paradigm of this research is interpretivism, which implies the ontological notion that there are multiple realities. Consequently, multiple explanations exist for a phenomenon. Furthermore, it implies that the relationship between the researcher and the
subjects is subjective rather than objective. The interpretive paradigm is associated with a qualitative methodology (Jennings, 2001), which was also adopted for this research. A qualitative methodology focuses primarily on evidence that enables the researcher not only to identify issues, but also to illuminate their meaning (Gillham, 2000). Qualitative research is concerned with obtaining rich data from a relatively small number of subjects which allows the researcher to immerse themselves in the details and specifics of the data (Saunders et al., 2000). A qualitative methodology provides the opportunity to view answers and themes in a wider context and use background information to understand the underlying issues. This was important to be able to address the how and why aspects of the research objectives.

This research is partially exploratory in nature (Jennings, 2001) because very little empirical data exists on the topic, especially in the Australian context as shown in the previous chapter. Therefore, the research aims to explore the use of demarketing in visitor demand management in Australian national parks facing demand issues. It is also explanatory (Jennings, 2001) to some extent, since it aims to explain why marketing and demarketing are used to manage demand in the way they are, that is, what factors influence decisions about how to use marketing and demarketing. The research is inductive in nature, as theories are developed out of the data gathered and no hypotheses are made prior to data collection (Jennings, 2001). An inductive approach fits in well with the interpretive paradigm and the qualitative methodology of this study. It can be argued, though, that the research does not follow a purely inductive approach, since a literature review was conducted prior to the primary data collection which provided key themes to be investigated.

3.3 Research method
3.3.1 Case study
A case study is considered the most valuable method for this research, as it provides a holistic investigation of the topic and enables a comprehensive understanding of context. As Yin (2003:13) suggests, a case study is highly suited for research that ‘investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident’. For this research to study the phenomenon, which is the use of demarketing as a tool for demand management, in its
real-life context was considered critical. It was anticipated that there would be a range of contextual issues, such as factors that contribute to high visitor demand in the park, visitor types and experiences and the management context which may be very closely linked to the phenomenon. Yin (2003:13) continues that in these situations the researcher decides ‘to cover contextual conditions – believing that they might be highly pertinent to [the] phenomenon of study’.

Furthermore, case studies have a distinct advantage for research that aims to answer how and why questions about a phenomenon which the researcher cannot control and where potential variables cannot be manipulated (Yin, 1994). In this research, the researcher could not gain control over the phenomenon under investigation and manipulate variables that potentially influence the use of marketing and demarketing. In addition, the research seeks to answer how demarketing is used to address demand issues in the park and why demarketing measures are used to manage demand in the way they are. This research used a single case study of an Australian national park that faces demand issues. The decision to focus on only one case ensured that the primary research was manageable financially and in terms of the time frame available. It also provided the opportunity to examine one case in depth rather than several cases superficially.

As highlighted by Stake (1998), the selection of cases is a vital step in case study research. Stake (1998:100) argues that ‘in the beginning, phenomena are given; the cases are opportunities to study the phenomena’. Therefore, an important step is to select a case or cases that provide the best learning opportunity (Stake, 1998). In line with the qualitative methodology, non-probability purposive sampling was used to choose the case (the national park) for this study. Non-probability sampling means that the units of study do not have the same probability of being included in the study because they are not selected randomly but purposively – with purpose (Saunders et al., 2000; Zikmund, 2000).

This sampling method allowed the researcher to select the study unit most suitable for inclusion in the study based among others on the ‘closeness of fit to criteria associated with the study’s focus’ (Jennings, 2001:139). The key selection criterion was that the national park should be among those Australian parks facing the highest pressure from excess visitor demand. Two other criteria were considered for pragmatic reasons. Firstly, whether the national park agency and relevant employees were prepared to participate in the study
and whether relevant secondary documents were accessible; secondly, whether the park and staff offices were geographically and financially accessible to the researcher.

### 3.3.2 Delphi study

To identify the Australian national parks that face the highest pressure from excess visitor demand the author consulted an expert panel using the Delphi method. Using an expert panel rather than relying solely on the researcher’s own judgement ensured that the case selection was more rigorous.

The Delphi study is a method for ‘polling experts in order to arrive at a consensus of informed opinion on current or, more usually, future occurrences’ (Crandall, 1994:420). As this definition indicates, this method originated as a technique for predicting future developments or events. However, according to Green, Hunter and Moore (1990), its more general usefulness is being recognized widely. The Delphi method has been applied in tourism as a tool for forecasting future developments, events and tourism demand, but recently it has been used ‘in more qualitative’ ways (Garrod and Fyall, 2005:89). Examples for the latter include: the generation of a set of performance indicators for sustainable tourism (Miller, 2001), the investigation of issues important to the heritage tourism sector in the United Kingdom (Garrod and Fyall, 2000), the investigation of future tourism patterns in the Antarctic (Bauer, 2001) and the generation of a definition of ecotourism in a marine context (Garrod, 2003).

The aspect of the Delphi study which made it especially useful for this research is that it ‘elicit[s] judgements on problems that are highly complex and necessarily subjective, requiring significant levels of knowledge and expertise on the part of respondents’ (Garrod and Fyall, 2005:86). There are no objective indicators for the visitor pressure facing Australian parks that would be comparable among all parks. For that reason judging which parks are under most pressure is subjective and calls for considerable knowledge and insight. In comparison with other methods that draw on expert knowledge (for example focus groups and nominal group technique), the advantage of the Delphi method is that it allows a group of individuals who are geographically dispersed to generate an opinion or develop consensus about an issue without meeting face to face (Miller, 2001; Ritchie, 1994). It involves less time, cost and is relatively easy to administer using email. In contrast to questionnaires, the Delphi method is iterative so participants can state their
views and then reconsider them in light of those put forward by other panelists. The Delphi study was undertaken following the steps and procedures outlined in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Steps in the Delphi method

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Procedure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>A panel of experts is established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>First questionnaire is e-mailed to panel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Responses are collated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Second questionnaire is e-mailed to panel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Responses are collated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Summary of results is sent to panel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Derived from Crandall (1994); Garrod and Fyall (2005); Green et al. (1990); Moeller and Shafer (1994)

Potential panelists for this Delphi study were Australian academics with expertise and pre-eminence in relevant fields, such as tourism and environmental studies, as well as members of the Tourism in Australia’s Protected Areas Forum (TAPAF). TAPAF is an informal independent collaboration between representatives of protected area management agencies and tourism agencies across Australia (Hillman, 2004). It is ‘a forum to share knowledge, discuss common issues and develop solutions for the sustainable development of nature-based and ecotourism activities within Australia’s protected areas’ (Hillman, 2004:73). The forum was considered an appropriate source for panelists as its membership includes senior representatives of Federal and State protected area management agencies with particular responsibility for managing visitors, recreation and tourism as well as members of government tourism agencies with a particular interest in tourism in protected areas (Buckley, 2002a). It was anticipated that members would have up-to-date working knowledge about national parks and their use for recreation and tourism purposes.
Relevant academics were identified through their publications and university web-directories on staff expertise. One academic from each Australian State and Territory, except the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), was selected as a potential panelist. In the ACT all relevant people were already involved in this study as a supervisor or assessor. Rowe and Wright (1999 cited in Garrod and Fyall, 2005) and Smith (1995 cited in Garrod, 2003) argue that the size of the panel tends to have little impact on study outcomes. Indeed, a great range of different panel sizes have been used for Delphi studies in tourism research, for instance Bauer (2001) approached 93 potential panelists, Garrod (2003) 15, Garrod and Fyall (2000) 17, Green et al. (1990) 40 and Miller (2001) 74. Garrod and Fyall (2005), referring to Smith (1995), report that Delphi studies have been done with as few as four, and as many as 904 panelists. The number of potential panelists for this study was set at 21, since TAPAF had 14 members and it was decided that no more than one-third of panelists should be from the academic community. This number was considered large enough to allow differing views to emerge, while being small enough to be practical.

The key question to be addressed by the Delphi study was which Australian national parks face the highest pressure from excess visitor demand. The study comprised two rounds of information gathering. The panelists were presented with a set of questions in the initial invitation e-mail; the answers were aggregated and then provided as anonymous feedback via a second e-mail. As indicated previously, the panellists could then reconsider their initial responses in light of those of all panelists. The aggregated response to the second set of questions was a form of consensus which assisted with the selection of the park to be studied. According to the advice of Garrod and Fyall (2005), the Delphi questions were designed to be readily understandable and not require panel members to invest much time in formulating their response.

There are differing opinions on what constitutes an appropriate consensus for a Delphi study and, in fact, some researchers do not refer to this issue at all. An agreement rate of 60 per cent of the panel has been proposed (Hill and Fowles, 1975 cited in Garrod and Fyall, 2005), as well as the opinion that time or budgetary limitations should determine how many rounds are conducted (Garrod and Fyall, 2005). For this research a final consensus among panelists was not imperative. Rather it was important that the study provided the researcher with a selection of those parks that are considered to face high pressure from visitation, to which the researcher could apply the more practical selection criteria.
described previously. Consequently, the time constraints meant that the decision was made to conduct two Delphi rounds. The results of the Delphi study are discussed in chapter four.

The potential Delphi panelists were invited to take part via e-mail (Appendix A) in mid October 2005. The invitation e-mail included information about the project and the first set of questions. The e-mail was sent to the head of TAPAF, who forwarded it to the members. This procedure was a requirement by TAPAF and lent the invitation more authority. The invitations were sent directly to the academics. For organisational reasons TAPAF members received the e-mail on 14 October 2005 and the academics on 15 October 2005. The time frame for response to the first Delphi round was three weeks following the suggestion of Garrod and Fyall (2005). After three weeks had elapsed, eight people had responded, a response rate of approximately 38 per cent. Five responses were received within about 10 days of the invitation. A reminder email triggered an additional three responses within the following week (Figure 3.1).

**Figure 3.1: Temporal distribution of responses to the first round of the Delphi study**

A good geographical distribution of responses was achieved with at least one panelist answering from each Australian state or territory apart from the Northern Territory. Half of
all responses came from academics and the other half from TAPAF members. Table 3.2 illustrates the backgrounds of the panelists and their participation in the two consecutive rounds.

Table 3.2: Background of panellists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State or Territory</th>
<th>Background</th>
<th>No. participating first round</th>
<th>No. participating second round</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>TAPAF member</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Capital Territory</td>
<td>TAPAF member</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>TAPAF member</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>TAPAF member</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Garrod and Fyall (2005) argue that a well-balanced panel is important throughout the rounds of a Delphi study. Bearing in mind that this Delphi study initially approached two-thirds TAPAF members and one-third academics, this balance was not maintained. The researcher perceived that a change in the balance of the panel would in this case not be likely to bias the results of the Delphi study. This was confirmed by the first round results that did not show any specific pattern based on the panelists’ professional background. Furthermore, the Delphi result in this study was only used to assist with case selection.

The iterative approach of a Delphi study allows panelists to reconsider their assessments in light of all responses. Therefore, the second round provided feedback to panelists who had participated in the first round (Garrod and Fyall, 2005) and asked them to review their initial responses (Appendix B). The panelists were asked not to nominate any ‘new’ national parks, and had the opportunity to comment on their second round selection.
The second round of e-mails was sent on 11 November 2005 with a request for responses within two weeks, since the panelists were familiar with the study topic and procedure. Seven of the eight panelists replied making the response rate 87.5 per cent. Most responses to the second round were received on the same day that the email was sent out (Figure 3.2). A reminder was sent out again after about 10 days and resulted in an additional response. It can therefore be assumed that a time frame in excess of two weeks would not necessarily have resulted in more responses.

**Figure 3.2: Temporal distribution of responses in the second Delphi round**

3.4 Data collection

The case study method provides the researcher with the opportunity to use multiple data collection methods or techniques and multiple sources of evidence (Denscombe, 1998; Yin, 2003). Remenyi, Williams, Money and Swartz (1998) and Yin (2003) identify six major sources of evidence used in case study research: documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artefacts. This research used documentary secondary sources and in-depth face-to-face interviews with management of the selected national parks. Table 3.3 shows the data collection techniques that were used to achieve each research objective.
Table 3.3: Research objectives and techniques to achieve them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Technique</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To review and discuss existing literature related to the use of</td>
<td>Review of relevant literature and other documentary secondary sources on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demarketing as a tool for demand management in general, and for</td>
<td>the topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demand management in protected area tourism in particular.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To identify factors that contribute to high visitor demand for</td>
<td>Analysis of documentary secondary sources; face-to-face interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian national parks, with specific focus on a park that</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experiences excessive demand.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To investigate the use of demarketing in managing demand in</td>
<td>Analysis of documentary secondary sources; face-to-face interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this national park.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. To identify what factors influence management decisions about how and</td>
<td>Analysis of documentary secondary sources; face-to-face interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when to use demarketing measures for visitor demand management.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. To develop a set of conclusions and recommendations regarding the use</td>
<td>Research findings are used to develop a set of conclusions and recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of demarketing in national parks.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gillham (2000:13) points out that ‘data accumulated by different methods but bearing on the same issue are part of what is called the multi-method approach’. Implementing a multi-method approach helps to triangulate the research findings, and thus to make the research more rigorous (Beeton, 2005; Gillham, 2000; Yin, 2003). Accordingly, a key reason for using both secondary document analysis and face-to-face interviews in addressing some research objectives was to triangulate the research findings.

### 3.4.1 Documentary secondary sources

Secondary sources used in this research comprised academic literature relevant to the topic, as well as market research and other reports stemming from various governmental and non-governmental bodies involved in tourism research. The latter included, for example, the NSW Department of Environment and Conservation, Tourism New South Wales and the Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism. Academic literature was not only drawn from the tourism and protected area management fields but also from marketing. Literature from fields where marketing and particularly demarketing have been applied for managing demand, such as healthcare, was also considered. Other sources included national park management plans and other policy documents, and the national park website and booklets. These were mainly used to obtain contextual information about the national park and to identify demarketing measures employed to manage demand.
3.4.2 Interviews

The interviews with management from the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NSW NPWS) had two purposes: First, to provide additional information about the use of demarketing measures to manage visitor demand and to contribute to the contextual information about the park; second to identify factors that influence management decisions about how and when demarketing measures are used to manage demand.

All but one interview were undertaken face-to-face. Due to time and cost constraints the last interview was conducted via telephone. Face-to-face interviews were otherwise adopted, as they provided the best opportunity to gain in-depth data on the topic and to gain an insight into underlying management issues. Gillham (2000:62) supports this view stating that ‘the overwhelming strength of the face-to-face interview is the ‘richness’ of the communication that is possible’. Saunders et al. (2000) similarly point out that participants are generally more willing to spend a comparably large amount of time on a face-to-face interview as opposed to interviews where this kind of direct contact is not given. They also note that face-to-face interviews allow the researcher to establish personal contact with the informants in order to build up trust, which increases the likelihood of receiving detailed and honest answers. The latter point was considered especially important because some of the interview questions aimed at investigating the effectiveness of present demarketing actions, which might be perceived as a sensitive issue.

3.4.3 Interview design and details

According to the structure and formality imposed by the researcher, interviews can be categorised into structured, semi-structured and unstructured (Saunders et al., 2000). Semi-structured interviews were used for this research because this type of interviews corresponds to the qualitative methodology of the research and provides certain advantages. Unlike unstructured interviews, semi-structured interviews provide the researcher with key themes and questions to be covered (Jennings, 2001), which gives the interview a focus that is necessary to explore issues identified in the literature. However, as opposed to structured interviews, semi-structured interviews are non-standardised, which means they allow for changes in the order of the themes or questions which makes it possible to follow the path the interviewee pursues (Saunders et al., 2000). Moreover, as ‘the questions are not objectively predetermined and presented’ (Jennings, 2001:166) the
interviewer can ask for clarifications, probe answers in order to obtain in-depth information and ask supplementary questions as issues emerge.

An interview schedule with key themes and questions to be addressed was used during interviewing (Appendix C). The schedule was pilot-tested to ensure that the key questions would be understood and likely to result in relevant data. The pilot interview was conducted in December 2005 with a staff member of Environment ACT who has considerable background in protected area management. Based on this pilot test, slight adjustments to the wording of a few questions were made.

3.4.4 Recruitment of interviewees

While various stakeholders are involved in or influence marketing and demarketing of national parks or experiences and sites within them, as has been discussed in section 2.3, this research focuses on the park management side of demarketing. For this reason and due to time and financial constraints, the researcher decided not to include interviews with tourism industry members or park visitors. Interviewees were staff from the NSW NPWS. The agency has four field branches (Central Branch, Northern Branch, Southern Branch and Western Branch) each incorporating a number of regions. The regions are further subdivided into areas with management responsibilities. Ten interviews were conducted in total; five with staff members from the branch (Central Branch) and regional levels (Blue Mountains Region) and five on the area or park level respectively (Table 3.4). The interview participants were involved in different areas within the agency including planning, visitor education, interpretation and marketing, information management, various ranger responsibilities, commercial licensing and world heritage management. For anonymity reasons the interview participants cannot be further identified.

Non-probability purposive sampling was again used to select these informants with the aim of having the most relevant and informed staff participating in interviews. The approach also owed characteristics to the snowball sampling technique because after the first contact had been established, this person recommended and subsequently approached further relevant interview participants within the NSW NPWS. The participants were recruited through an e-mail accompanied by an information sheet giving details about the research (Appendix D). This was followed up with a personal telephone call to further explain the nature and focus of the research and seek participation.
Once participation had been secured the interviews were conducted in two main rounds: the first six interviews in mid January 2006 and the remainder of four interviews from mid February 2006 onwards (Table 3.4). The reason for this two round process was primarily organizational, in terms of informants being available for interviews during these periods. The interviews lasted between 45 and 70 minutes. With the consent of the participants the interviews were audio tape-recorded and subsequently transcribed verbatim.

**Table 3.4: Interview details**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level in the organisation</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location of interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area/park level</td>
<td>17 January 2006</td>
<td>Blackheath Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area/park level</td>
<td>18 January 2006</td>
<td>Blackheath Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branch/regional level</td>
<td>19 January 2006</td>
<td>Katoomba Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area/park level</td>
<td>19 January 2006</td>
<td>Richmond Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area/park level</td>
<td>20 January 2006</td>
<td>Blackheath Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branch/regional level</td>
<td>20 January 2006</td>
<td>Katoomba Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branch/regional level</td>
<td>14 February 2006</td>
<td>Katoomba Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area/park level</td>
<td>15 February 2006</td>
<td>Glenbrook Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branch/regional level</td>
<td>16 February 2006</td>
<td>Katoomba Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branch/regional level</td>
<td>02 March 2006</td>
<td>Telephone interview</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Veal (1997:135) points out, recording provides the opportunity ‘to analyse the results of interviews in a more methodical and complete manner than is possible with notes’. Furthermore, it allowed the researcher to concentrate fully on the conversation and to formulate probing questions. The transcripts were made available to informants for verification prior to analysis.
3.5 Analysis and presentation of data

Cresswell (2005:233) states that ‘there is no single, accepted approach to analysing qualitative data, although several guidelines exist for this process’. He suggests broad steps of analysis that are commonly used and these formed the basis for the data analysis (Table 3.5). Miles and Huberman (1984) suggest three features of qualitative data analysis which can be related to Cresswell’s six steps: data reduction (Cresswell’s steps one to three), data displays (four to five) and conclusion drawing/verification (step six).

Table 3.5: Steps in the data analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Data reduction</td>
<td>1. Preparing data for analysis</td>
<td>This includes sorting and cataloguing sources as well as transcribing interviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Exploring data</td>
<td>2. Exploring data</td>
<td>The researcher reads through the data to obtain a general sense of the material and to note down ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Coding data</td>
<td>3. Coding data</td>
<td>This involves dividing the text into segments of information, labelling these segments with codes and collapsing the codes into themes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Data displays</td>
<td>4. Generating description of themes</td>
<td>The themes identified in the coding process are described, interrelated and possibly organized into layers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Representing and reporting findings</td>
<td>Findings are reported by means of a narrative discussion supported by visual displays, for instance comparison tables, hierarchical tree diagrams or figures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Conclusion drawing/verification</td>
<td>6. Interpreting findings</td>
<td>This step involves making sense of the data. The researcher ‘forms some larger meaning about the phenomenon based on personal views and/or comparisons with past studies’ (Cresswell 2005:251).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After Cresswell (2005); Miles and Huberman (1984)
To prepare the data for analysis, all interviews were transcribed verbatim and then stored using the qualitative software package QSR NVivo Version 2.0. The author carefully read the transcripts and listened to the interview tapes to explore the data and prepared memos (Jennings, 2001) both during the data collection and the transcribing process. The memos assisted in keeping track of thoughts and ideas induced by the data. Memos were also used later during the coding process with the memo function of QSR NVivo.

The transcribed data was then coded. Miles and Huberman (1984:56) describe codes as ‘categories [which] usually derive from research questions, hypotheses, key concepts or important themes’. The coding involved assigning labels to pieces of data such as paragraphs, phrases or sentences (Jennings, 2001). The author commenced the coding process by compiling an initial list of codes after reading through the transcripts and memos. The final codes were then collapsed into themes, which provided the basis for discussion and interpretation. QSR NVivo facilitated the organization of data, eased the process of assigning codes and aided in locating words or text segments.

3.6 Ethical considerations

Researchers at the University of Canberra who intend to conduct research involving human participants apply to the Committee for Ethics in Human Research for approval. The Committee functions under guidelines contained in the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research involving Humans issued by the National Health and Medical Research Council (University of Canberra, 2005). Approval from the Committee was granted in September 2005. The key ethical considerations relevant to this project are outlined below.

Informed consent

Burns (1997:18) states that informed consent ‘is the most fundamental ethical principle …. Participants must understand the nature and purpose of the research and must consent to participate without coercion’. Accordingly, each potential participant received detailed information on the purpose and nature of the project, as well as the research process and their rights. The voluntary nature of their participation and the use of the data were highlighted. Delphi panelists were given this information in the invitation e-mail (Appendix A). A positive response to the e-mail was considered as their consent. Potential interview participants were informed about the project in a letter of invitation and a
comprehensive information sheet (Appendix D). If the potential participants had further questions concerning the project they were discussed in the follow-up telephone call. Finally, the research was explained to the participants at the beginning of each interview and a consent form was also discussed and signed before the face-to-face interviews. The participants received a copy of their signed consent form.

Confidentiality
Confidentiality of participants was ensured throughout and at the completion of the research. Personal information on the participants was kept strictly confidential at all stages of the project under the provisions of the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988. Names, contact details and the data collected were only accessible to the participant, researcher and supervisory panel. The findings were reported and discussed in a way that generalises the findings rather than naming individual participants. All data will be transferred to the University of Canberra for storage upon completion of the research project.

Anonymity
For participants of the Delphi study anonymity was guaranteed throughout the research process with individualised emails and results reported as aggregated data. The researcher was not able to guarantee anonymity for the interview participants as it may be possible to identify individuals from the context of the research. This situation was clearly communicated to the participants through the information sheet before they were asked to sign the informed consent form.

Risk for participants
The research was considered to be low risk. The main risk was that interview participants might perceive some issues as politically sensitive (for example negative visitor impacts or unsuccessful management measures). The researcher was aware that discomfort or anxiety could result as the participant might feel the research is criticising their management style and actions. To address this, the researcher explained the nature of the research prior to every interview to avoid any wrong impression about the project’s intention. Furthermore, participation was completely voluntary and participants could withdraw at all times and retrieve any interview recordings or notes. This was explained to participants in the information sheet.
**Recording of data and validating of interview transcripts**

With the consent of the participants the interviews were audio tape-recorded and transcribed. The transcripts were made available to the participants for validation. Besides being ethically appropriate, this action was also designed to increase the validity of the research results.

**Participants’ access to results**

The research participants will have access to the final thesis through the University of Canberra library and Australian Digital Theses and will receive a summary of the research after completion. The participants were also informed that they would be notified by the researcher of any publications that arise from the project and that copies would be provided on request.

**3.7 Limitations of a qualitative methodology and case study method**

As with all research, limitations regarding the generalisability, reliability and validity of findings have to be considered. Research using a qualitative methodology is limited in its ability to provide generalizations about the findings to a wider population, since data is obtained from a small, non-representative number of cases and/or subjects (Yin, 1994). This research was, however, not intended to provide statistical or other generalisations so this limitation is not relevant. Instead it was intended to provide deeper insights into the phenomenon of demarketing and to identify issues related to the specific cases that can be further explored and tested. This viewpoint is supported by Gummesson (1991 cited in Remenyi et al., 1998:116) who states that

> Qualitative research is less concerned with making statements about the commonality of particular findings than with the fact that good qualitative research should enable one to attain an understanding of organisational processes. … The understanding gained of a process in one setting can form the basis on which such processes are understood in other, similar [settings].

The qualitative nature of the research means that it is limited in terms of reliability. The concept of reliability assumes unchanging conditions that make replication of the study possible. This assumption, however, is not valid for all research, as Saunders et al. (2000:251) point out; certain research does not aim to develop findings that are repeatable ‘since they reflect reality at the time they were collected, in a situation which may be
subject to change’. This is applicable to the investigation of the use of marketing and demarketing in national parks that face demand issues. Further Saunders et al. (2000:251) argue that attempting to ensure that qualitative research could be replicated would not be feasible without undermining the strength of this type of research; its strength being the flexibility in exploring the complexity of a dynamic topic. Similarly, in the context of case study research, Stake (1995 cited in Beeton, 2005:47) stresses that ‘the quality and significance [of this type of research] is based on whether meanings generated are valued, not its replicability’. Remenyi et al. (1998) and Saunders et al. (2000) point out, however, that a qualitative methodology should nevertheless not lead to a lack of rigour in the research process. They suggest therefore that making the research process transparent is crucial. To this end the researcher has recorded her reasons for the research design and the choice of methodology and methods and explained them in this chapter.

Beeton (2005), Remenyi et al. (1998) and Yin (2003) suggest that criticisms about the validity of qualitative research and case study research should be addressed by using multiple methods for data collection and drawing upon different sources of evidence. As stated before, this research combined in-depth face-to-face interviewing with analysis of secondary and documentary data to increase the validity of the findings. Interview transcripts were furthermore validated by the interviewees to ensure that the transcripts were an accurate account of the interview.

3.8 Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the methodological framework of this study. It discussed the research paradigm and approach as well as the research method. Details about the implementation of the research method were also provided. The data collection was addressed including the types of data collection techniques used and details about the implementation of those techniques. It has outlined how the research data was analysed and presented and what ethical considerations in relation to data collection and reporting of findings were observed. Finally, this chapter examined limitations of the research. Chapter four and five will present and discuss the study findings.
Chapter 4

Results and discussion of Delphi study and background on the case study national park

4.1 Introduction

A Delphi study was conducted to assist the researcher in the selection of an Australian national park for the case study. This chapter reports and discusses the results of both rounds of the Delphi study and then provides background information on the selected park including general information, an overview of tourism and recreation and a brief outline of the management context.

4.2 Results of the first round of the Delphi study

The first round of the Delphi study asked the panelists to identify the two Australian national parks they perceived to be under most pressure caused by excess visitor demand and to specify reasons for their nomination. Excess visitor demand was defined as a level of visitor demand that results in negative environmental and/or social impacts. Furthermore, panelists were asked to identify, if applicable, areas within the national parks they felt are under particularly high pressure from visitor use and again, to provide reasons for their selection.

Three national parks were nominated by more than one respondent, namely Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, Fraser Island (Great Sandy) National Park (NP) and Blue Mountains NP (Table 4.1). A further nine national parks were suggested by one panelist each. Interestingly, most of the panelists did not confine their nominations to the State or Territory they are currently working in. In the first round, two panelists suggested two national parks located in the State where they work, but both changed their assessment in the second round, each nominating a park located in a different State. A range of reasons were stated for park selections including high visitation levels, visitor or tourism impacts, personal knowledge of parks, specific locations and prominence of parks (Table 4.1).
Table 4.1: Results of the first round of the Delphi study

Questions in first round:

A: In your opinion, what are the two national parks in Australia under most pressure caused by excess demand? (Excess demand means a level of visitor demand that results in negative environmental and/or social impacts)

B: Within these national parks, are there specific areas that you feel are under particularly high pressure from visitor use?

C: Please specify why you have nominated each of the above national parks and areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Park</th>
<th>Times nominated</th>
<th>Reasons for park selection</th>
<th>Area within national park</th>
<th>Times nominated</th>
<th>Reasons for area selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Barrier Reef Marine Park</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>- Numerous media and planning reports indicating the threats to the reefs, etc.</td>
<td>The reef near the collection of islands near Cairns</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>- Familiarity with this area of the park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Queensland)</td>
<td></td>
<td>- High visitation, intensive impact on small areas</td>
<td>All areas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>- The Great Barrier Reef needs to be looked at as a whole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Large area with enormous ‘non-visitation’ issues impacting on the ecological integrity (climate change, high nutrient runoff from agriculture on mainland, etc.)</td>
<td>Whitsunday Islands and outer reef adjacent to this area</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>- High level of risk from commercial marine trade and transportation in channels adjacent to Whitsunday Islands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Uniqueness and international significance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Ongoing pressure from development and tourism particularly boat charters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Lack of knowledge about long term impacts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Lack of regulation and infrastructure to deal with discharge of black water from vessels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Significant threats from multi-use park management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Personal experience and interest in the park’s future</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraser Island (Great Sandy)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>- A series of Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service projects on visitor management</td>
<td>Lake MacKenzie area</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>- Increased camping pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Park</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Visitation is constantly increasing with a limited track network in a fragile environment</td>
<td>Freshwater lakes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>- The lakes are an ‘Icon’ of the island but are extremely susceptible to pollution through overuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Queensland)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- The sand environment is not conductive to vehicle traffic without infrastructure (wooden boards, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Mountains National Park</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>- Very high annual visitor use</td>
<td>Icon sites</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>- ‘Don’t know – best guess’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(New South Wales)</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Well known and promoted both nationally and internationally</td>
<td>Areas around Katoomba particularly Grose Valley and Jamison Valley</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>- High visitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Close to Sydney, Australia’s most populous city</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- High demand for more infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Increased pressure from urban development and associated pollution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Risk of losing authentic natural experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- High demand for more infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Issues such as safety and environmental impact of high-use sites</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.1 continued: Results of the first round of the Delphi study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Park</th>
<th>Times nominated</th>
<th>Reasons for park selection</th>
<th>Area within national park</th>
<th>Times nominated</th>
<th>Reasons for area selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Wilsons Promontory National Park     | 1                | - Has a waiting list of over a year and a lottery system for any sort of overnight visit and is too far to visit in a day; demand far exceeds supply  
- Close to Melbourne and one of Melbourne’s most loved parks  
- Has a number of environmental issues (e.g. wildlife feeding and erosion) and safety issues (cliffs and fire danger) | Camping and beach areas, walking tracks and all day use areas | 1                | 'Most visitors to national parks just want to hang out, maybe do short walks, show the kids, etc.'                                                                                                                   |
| (Victoria)                           |                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                           |                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Royal National Park                  | 1                | - Personal and work experience with Royal NP                                                                                                                                                                                 | Audley precinct           | 1                | Major focal point of visitors  
- Very threatened by over use, lack of funding for management action, etc.                                                                                                                                                               |
| (New South Wales)                    |                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                           |                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Kosciuszko National Park             | 1                | - High level of visitation  
- Sensitive alpine environments  
- Ski fields  
- Governance issues                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Ski fields                | 1                | --                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| (New South Wales)                    |                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                           |                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Lane Cove National Park              | 1                | - Large boundary/area ratio  
- Urban location, high local visitation                                                                                                                                                                                     | Particular areas unknown | 1                | --                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| (New South Wales)                    |                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                           |                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park      | 1                | - Urban pressure                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Whole park                | 1                | 'Don't know the park well enough to answer'                                                                                                                                         |
| (New South Wales)                    |                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                           |                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Dandenong Ranges National Park       | 1                | - Urban pressure                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Whole park                | 1                | 'Don't know the park well enough to answer'                                                                                                                                         |
| (Victoria)                           |                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                           |                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
Table 4.1 continued: Results of the first round of the Delphi study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Park</th>
<th>Times nominated</th>
<th>Reasons for park selection</th>
<th>Area within national park</th>
<th>Times nominated</th>
<th>Reasons for area selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Port Campbell National Park</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Problems with walking off track - most on track sightseers are not impacting the park because tracks are hardened</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Victoria)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mornington Peninsula National Park</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Problems with walking off track - most on track sightseers are not impacting the park because tracks are hardened</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Victoria)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Springbrook National Park</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Heavy commercial tourism development</td>
<td>Area accessed from Springbrook Plateau</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Knowledge of the area and personal experience of high level of use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Queensland)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For six of the ten parks, panelists identified specific areas that they perceived to be under especially high pressure from visitor use. These parks are Fraser Island (Great Sandy) NP, Blue Mountains NP, Wilsons Promontory NP, Royal NP, Kosciuszko NP and Springbrook NP. None of the park areas were named by more than one panelist, although it can be argued that ‘icon sites’ in the Blue Mountains NP include areas around Katoomba, and ‘Freshwater lakes’ on Fraser Island includes the Lake Mackenzie area. For Lane Cove NP, Port Campbell NP and Mornington Peninsula NP no particular area was identified. Two further parks were considered to be under visitor pressure as a whole, namely Ku-ring-gai Chase NP and Dandenong Ranges NP. In the case of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, one panelist stated that the park as a whole needed to be looked at, two other panelists named specific areas.

Again, a wide range of different reasons were given for selecting specific park areas (Table 4.1). The diversity in responses in regard to park areas may point to the fact that many Australian national parks are very complex - geographically and in terms of the visitor experiences they offer (for example Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, Blue Mountains NP). The former covers an area of 34,540,000 hectares with four different plans of management adopted in the marine park (Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, 2005). Visitor experiences include water-based, vessel-based, resort-based and air-based experiences (Harriott, 2002). The Blue Mountains NP is comparably much smaller (247,000 hectares), but has a very complex boundary which is indented in many areas and includes a mix of developed and wilderness zones. Visitor experiences in the Blue Mountains NP include a wide variety of nature-based activities ranging from more passive enjoyment to adventure activities (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001).

4.3 Results of the second round of the Delphi study

In the second round, three of the seven panelists made changes to their initial park nominations. Two of those panelists altered their selection and chose one different park each; the third changed both nominations. Overall, responses moved towards greater consensus in this round (Table 4.2).
### Table 4.2: Changes in park nominations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National park</th>
<th>Nominations first round</th>
<th>Nominations second round</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (Queensland)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>no change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Mountains National Park (New South Wales)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>increased by 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraser Island (Great Sandy) National Park (Queensland)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>no change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilsons Promontory National Park (Victoria)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>increased by 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal National Park (New South Wales)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>no change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kosciuszko National Park (New South Wales)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>no change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lane Cove National Park (New South Wales)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>decreased by 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park (New South Wales)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>no change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dandenong Ranges National Park (Victoria)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>no change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port Campbell National Park (Victoria)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>decreased by 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mornington Peninsula National Park (Victoria)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>decreased by 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Springbrook National Park (Queensland)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>decreased by 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Four national parks were suggested by more than one panelist, namely those three with multiple nominations in the first round (Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, Blue Mountains NP and Fraser Island NP (Great Sandy) NP) and additionally Wilsons Promontory NP (Table 4.2). As a result, only four national parks received single nominations. Nevertheless, the results indicate that while there are a number of national parks which are considered to face particularly high pressure from excess visitor demand in Australia, there seem to be no parks that stand out unequivocally. With the exception of one national park, no additional comments were made or reasons given for either park or area selections in the second round (Table 4.3).

The first four listed national parks in the second round were considered for selection as case study units (Table 4.3). As mentioned in chapter three, the selection of a national park for the case study was governed by the results of the Delphi study and pragmatic considerations including the accessibility (geographical and financial) of the park and staff offices and availability of pertinent secondary documents. Furthermore, it was essential that relevant staff of the national park agency were prepared to participate in the study. The Blue Mountains NP (BMNP) was selected as the case study unit for this research, as it satisfactorily fulfilled all the criteria for selection. The reasons given by panelists for the nomination of the BMNP (Table 4.1) are related to:

- **the level of visitor use and associated impacts:**
  ('very high annual visitor use', 'issues such as safety and environmental impact of high-use sites', 'high demand for more infrastructure');

- **the location of the park and associated pressures:**
  ('close to Sydney, Australia’s most populous city', 'increased pressure from urban development and associated pollution'); and

- **the status of the park as a renowned and promoted destination**
  ('well known and promoted both nationally and internationally').

The next section will give background information on the BMNP.
Table 4.3: Results of the second round of the Delphi study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Park</th>
<th>Times nominated</th>
<th>Additional comments on park selection</th>
<th>Area within the park</th>
<th>Times nominated</th>
<th>Additional comments on area selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Barrier Reef Marine Park</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>All areas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Queensland)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Whitsunday Islands and outer reef adjacent to this area</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Particular areas unknown</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Mountains National Park</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Icon sites</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(New South Wales)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Areas around Katoomba particularly Grose Valley and Jamison Valley</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Particular areas unknown</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraser Island (Great Sandy) National Park</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Lake Mackenzie area</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Queensland)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Freshwater Lakes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilsons Promontory National Park</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Camping and beach areas, walking tracks and all day use areas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Victoria)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Circle walking trail / camping areas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Whole park</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(New South Wales)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dandenong Ranges National Park</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Whole park</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Victoria)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.3 continued: Results of the second round of the Delphi study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Park</th>
<th>Times nominated</th>
<th>Additional comments on park selection</th>
<th>Area within the park</th>
<th>Times nominated</th>
<th>Additional comments on area selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kosciuszko National Park</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>- Concentration of ski fields infrastructure  &lt;br&gt; - Enormous visitor demand over a relatively short period  &lt;br&gt; - Huge impact of infrastructure and related servicing  &lt;br&gt; - All these pressures in a very sensitive alpine environment</td>
<td>Perisher Valley Precinct (especially in winter time)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Reasons for choosing Perisher over Thredbo area:  &lt;br&gt; - Thredbo is under head lease, has more coordinated approach to planning, infrastructure provision and managing visitor impacts  &lt;br&gt; - Perisher is managed by NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service within a planning context of having to deal with numerous lessees and the resource pressures facing the organisation to improve all aspects of Perisher Valley (conservation management, ski fields accommodation, lessees demands, visitor impacts, infrastructure, etc. are all very complex and resource intensive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal National Park</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Audley precinct</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(New South Wales)
4.4 Background on Blue Mountains National Park

Declaration, location and size

The Blue Mountains were declared national park in 1959 (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001). The BMNP is located in New South Wales (NSW) between the Great Dividing Range and the coastal lowlands of the Cumberland Plain (Map 4.1). In 1959, the national park covered an area of 62,000 hectares. Since its declaration, a number of additions have been made to the park, extending the park to its present size of 247,000 hectares. The BMNP has a very complex shape, which reflects the history of dedication, rather than any consistent and pragmatic management boundaries (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001).

Map 4.1: Location of Blue Mountains NP and major population centres

![Map of Blue Mountains National Park and major population centres]

Source: NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (2002c:no page)

In November 2000, the BMNP, together with seven other protected areas, was inscribed on the World Heritage List as the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area on the basis
of its outstanding natural values (Lindsay, 2005; NSW Department of Environment and Conservation, 2005).

**Significance**

The BMNP derives its special significance from its natural and cultural attributes and geographical location. Together with adjacent national parks, the BMNP forms an important conservation zone as well as a large and diverse natural and recreational area in close proximity to NSW’s major metropolitan and industrial centre, Sydney (population around 4,250,000) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006). The park lies only 50 kilometres from the centre of Sydney and borders the city’s western suburban fringe (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001). It contains outstanding landforms and scenery characteristic of the region’s sandstone landscape. The park encompasses an extremely wide range of flora and fauna and associated communities many of which are rare or threatened. It also holds significant Aboriginal sites and historic features associated with past recreation and land use (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001).

The BMNP contains three specific wilderness areas or parts thereof, declared under the NSW *Wilderness Act 1987*: the Kanangra-Boyd Wilderness, the Wollemi Wilderness and the Grose Wilderness. Under section 9 of the *Wilderness Act 1987* recreational use in the wilderness areas is restricted to activities that are ‘essentially self-reliant’ and ‘of minimal impact’ (Government of NSW, 2005:no page). The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NSW NPWS) (2001:8) state that ‘the existence of wilderness areas so close to one of the world’s great cities is particularly unique and of great significance and value’.

**Development and access**

The national park is traversed by the Great Western Highway and the Bells Line of Road, two major public roads (Map 4.2). The Great Western Highway runs east-west through the urban developments of the City of Blue Mountains which is enclosed by the national park boundaries. The City of Blue Mountains is a local government area (LGA), the urban part of which consists of a number of contiguous towns on the major ridge line of the Blue Mountains. Using this special location, the ‘city’ brands itself as ‘The City within a World Heritage National Park’. The second major road is the Bells Line of Road running through the less travelled northern part of the BMNP. While this makes the park very accessible for visitors, it also makes managing public access to the park very difficult.
Map 4.2: Blue Mountains NP (southern section of the park not shown)

Source: NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (2002c:no page)
Tourism and recreation

Some areas within the BMNP, especially the Grose and Jamison Valleys, have a long history of tourism and recreation. According to the NSW Department of Environment and Conservation (2005:10), many of the walking tracks and lookouts in the Upper Blue Mountains ‘have been in use continuously since the late 19th century’. Today, the park is ‘a major focus for domestic and international tourism as well as for many types of recreation in a natural environment’ (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001:no page).

Recreation in the park includes activities across the whole spectrum of nature-based tourism types mentioned in section 1.2. They range from passive enjoyment of the park’s spectacular landscapes from scenic driving routes and easily accessible cliff-top lookouts to active experiences like bushwalking to adventure experiences (Moon and Moon, 1998; NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001). Popular activities include vehicle-based camping, picnicking, bushwalking on formed tracks and in wilderness areas and rock climbing, abseiling and canyoning. The terrain of the national park offers particularly good opportunities for adventure activities, and the region is nationally significant for these activities (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001).

Commercial recreation represents a small, but important part of overall park use. It is a significant sector of the tourism industry of the Blue Mountains region and Sydney. All commercial use in the BMNP, including commercial recreational use, is licensed by the NSW NPWS (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001). Commercial recreation activities in the park include guided walks, tours by conventional and four wheel drive vehicles, wildlife viewing, photographic instruction, bicycling, horse riding, and the adventure activities mentioned above.

Although the BMNP contains a great number of Aboriginal sites, only a small number of those sites are accessible to visitors. However, the plan of management (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001) predicts an increasing demand for access and interpretation of Aboriginal sites in the BMNP for tourism and educational purposes.
Visitation

The BMNP is visited for recreational purposes throughout the year, with peak visitation at long weekends and during school holidays, especially around Easter. Use by both domestic and international tourists is mainly day use (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001).

Although visitor numbers for the park as a whole are not accurately monitored, the NSW NPWS estimates, based on data from camping permits, the visitor centre and Tourism Research Australia, that around three million people visit the BMNP each year (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001 and 2005a) ‘making it one of the most popular national parks in Australia’ (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001:55). This figure is contradicted by figures from Tourism Research Australia (cited in Tourism New South Wales, 2002 and 2005) that show a decline of visitor numbers for the Blue Mountains Region from around 2,684,000 in 2001 to 1,762,300 in 2004 (both figures including domestic day and overnight as well as international visitors). There are indications that this decline is about to plateau with visitor numbers for the region increasing to 2,384,300 in 2005 (Tourism New South Wales, 2006b). However, no definite visitor numbers are available for the BMNP as a whole.

Visitor data collected through electronic door counters at the national park’s visitor centre at Govetts Leap mirror the region’s decline in visitor numbers over recent years. In 2000/01, 116,014 people visited the visitor centre, while in 2004/05 the number was only 74,995 (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, unpublished data). The changes in visitor numbers from the visitor centre are not necessarily representative of total visitor numbers, as they might also be influenced by alterations in tour operator’s itineraries, the weather or lack of interest in park interpretation. However, the decline in total visitor numbers for the Blue Mountains was confirmed by some of the interviewees.

Visitor numbers vary significantly between the different areas of the park depending on the proximity to major population centres, public access roads and public transport facilities, as well as the location of natural attractions like canyons and gorges. Visitation by domestic and international visitors is broadly concentrated on the escarpments of the Upper Blue Mountains part of the national park, including the Grose and Jamison Valleys, which were also mentioned by panel members in the Delphi study (Table 4.2). According to the
NSW NPWS (2001:9), the Upper Blue Mountains section is ‘one of the major nature-based tourism destinations in Australia’. The most famous attraction in this section, and probably in the whole park, is the Three Sisters rock formation (Map 4.2). Echo Point at Katoomba is the main lookout over this area of the park. The BMNP plan of management (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001:9) suggests that Echo Point receives about 2.8 million visitors annually.

The major lookouts over the Grose Valley at Blackheath (eg. the Govetts Leap Lookout) attract around 450,000 people per year, and over two million people visit the major lookouts along the Jamison Valley. The Glenbrook section of the park which is closest to Sydney is visited by at least 250,000 people annually (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001:55). Bearing in mind that total park visitor numbers are likely to have declined since 2001, according to the regional trend mentioned above, these areas still remain the most heavily visited parts in the park.

Visitor impacts

The plan of management for the BMNP (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001:6) points out that ‘the proximity of Sydney and the urban areas of the Blue Mountains, together with the rapidly growing demand for nature-based tourism and recreation, create complex management requirements for the park’. Additionally, the highly erodible sandstone environment means that large parts of the park are particularly fragile.

A number of negative environmental visitor impacts are identified in the current plan of management (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001) including: environmental deterioration of day use and camping areas, deterioration through informal pack camping along major remote routes, the proliferation of informal foot tracks that are eroding with increasing use, especially through adventure activities, and the degradation of unconstructed walking routes. The interviews with staff involved in managing the BMNP also revealed that visitor pressures and impacts still exist which are often localised and aggravated by weather conditions such as rain or bushfire.
Management context

Although the BMNP is part of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, planning and day-to-day management is the responsibility of the NSW NPWS, which has been part of the NSW Department of Environment and Conservation since 2003 (NSW Department of Environment and Conservation, 2005). The NSW Department of Environment and Conservation was formed in September 2003 through consolidation of a number of separate agencies within the State’s environment portfolio (namely the Environment Protection Authority, Resource NSW, Botanic Gardens Trust and the National Parks and Wildlife Service). The Director General of the National Parks and Wildlife Service is responsible to the NSW Minister of the Environment (NSW Department of Environment and Conservation, 2004a).

For the planning and management of national parks, the NSW NPWS has adopted the IUCN definition of national parks (see section 1.2). National parks in NSW are managed primarily under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (and amendments) and the Wilderness Act 1987, the latter specifically relating to wilderness areas within the parks. The National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 requires that a plan of management is prepared for each national park and this becomes a legal document that outlines how the park is managed (NSW Department of Environment and Conservation, 2004b). The current plan of management for the BMNP was adopted in May 2001 and is entitled Blue Mountains Plan of Management 2001.

The national park is administered from the NSW NPWS’s Blue Mountains regional office based in Katoomba. The region is further subdivided into areas with management responsibilities (NSW Department of Environment and Conservation, 2005). Administrative centres of these areas are located at Blackheath, Oberon, Glenbrook and Richmond (NSW National Park and Wildlife Service, 2005c). Currently, the only national park visitor centre (the Heritage Centre) is located at Govetts Leap in Blackheath (Map 4.2). A former visitor centre at Glenbrook was closed due to resource constraints and a low level of use (NSW National Park and Wildlife Service, 2001).

The BMNP is a significant water catchment area for Sydney. It contains parts of the Warragamba Special Area which is jointly managed by the NSW NPWS and the Sydney Catchment Authority. The Warragamba Special Area is divided into two zones: Schedule
One and Schedule Two water quality protection zones (NSW National Park and Wildlife Service, 2001). The special management regulations in these zones will be addressed in chapter five.

4.5 Summary

This chapter began by presenting and discussing the results of the Delphi study which was used to assist with the selection of a national park for the case study. In two iterative rounds the panelists were asked to identify Australian national parks they perceived to be under most pressure caused by excess visitor demand. The results from both rounds of the Delphi study were examined and it was noted that in the second round the responses of panelists moved towards greater consensus. The results indicate that, although a number of Australian national parks were considered to face particularly high pressure from excess visitor demand, no single park was prominent. Considering the nominations by Delphi panelists as well as more pragmatic concerns, the BMNP was chosen as the unit for this case study. The chapter provided background information on the BMNP including history, location, special characteristics, tourism and recreation and the management context. The next chapter will present and discuss the results of the in-depth interviews with staff involved in managing the BMNP.
Chapter 5
Results and discussion of interviews with park management

5.1 Introduction
The previous chapter discussed the results of the Delphi study, which assisted in selecting the Blue Mountains NP (BMNP) as case study unit, and provided background information on the park. This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the primary data gathered on the BMNP through ten semi-structured interviews with management of the NSW National Park and Wildlife Service (referred to as the participants). The primary data from the interviews was used to address the second, third and fourth objectives of this research:

- **Objective 2**: To identify factors that contribute to high visitor demand for Australian national parks with specific focus on a park that experiences excessive demand;

- **Objective 3**: To investigate the use of demarketing in managing visitor demand in this national park;

- **Objective 4**: To identify what factors influence management decisions about how and when to use demarketing measures for visitor demand management.

This chapter will address each objective in turn. Responses and quotes from the interviews have not been ascribed to particular participants to assure their anonymity.

5.2 Factors contributing to high visitor demand
This section examines the factors contributing to high visitor demand for the BMNP (research objective 2). The participants collectively identified ten factors that they perceived to contribute to high visitor demand for the BMNP. Six of these factors were cited by five or more participants (Table 5.1) and they are discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs. Further factors mentioned by the participants included ‘technical advancements’ (mentioned by two participants), ‘trend to get away’, ‘number of commercial operators’ and ‘more recreation time’ (mentioned by one participant each).
Table 5.1: Factors contributing to high visitor demand for the Blue Mountains NP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attractiveness of the Blue Mountains National Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renowned destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Heritage status of the area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tourism tradition</td>
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</table>

**Attractiveness of the Blue Mountains National Park**

Almost all participants referred to the attractiveness of the BMNP itself as a factor that contributes to high visitor demand. The attractiveness of the park was interestingly attributed to different features (Figure 5.1). This reflects the fact that the BMNP offers an array of different experiences for visitors, as described in section 4.5. Five participants for example highlighted the aesthetic values of the park as an attractant for visitors. In this context, aspects like ‘the innate beauty of the place’, ‘ragged beauty of sandstone cliffs and gorges’, ‘its beauty for a start and some beautiful contrast in terrain’, ‘it is a spectacular area’ and the scenery and views of the park were mentioned.
Wilderness was seen by four participants as one of the features of the BMNP that attracts visitors. One participant indicated that the national park offers the opportunity to be in a harsh environment and experience solitude. The accessibility of wilderness in the national park was highlighted by another participant who stressed on the one hand the closeness of Sydney to the wilderness and on the other the location of the ‘Blue Mountains City’ within the national park that provides easy access to the wilderness areas:

…it [the park] is dissected by a city, the Blue Mountains City, you know a city within a national park, so that you have got a lot of facilities close by, but then wilderness is pretty much on your doorstep.

Another major attractant for visitors was seen in the opportunities that the park offers for being active, mentioned by four participants. In particular walking and canyoning were referred to. One participant pointed out that in the Upper Mountains alone, there are more than 200 kilometres of walking tracks and he argued that ‘on the world scheme, it is quite an amazing density of tracks. And people from other countries come here and they are quite amazed about just how many walking tracks we have got’. The same participant also highlighted the national importance of canyoning opportunities offered in the BMNP. While it was acknowledged that there are other places in Australia where canyoning can be
pursued recreationally, it was stressed that the Blue Mountains is the place ‘where the biggest density of canyons is, and it is something that people really, really enjoy’.

Wildlife in general was only mentioned as an attractant by one participant in relation to the Euroka precinct at Glenbrook. However, two other participants mentioned the population of Eastern Grey Kangaroos in that same area. It is interesting to note that despite these kangaroos being not native to the area, they still seem to attract visitors, especially international visitors. One participant explained:

People have an image of Australia and very close to that image is [sic] kangaroos and you get to tick that one off your list by visiting Australia at Glenbrook which is only an hour and a half, two hours from the airport. So that is a cool thing to do.

Other aspects that were mentioned in connection with the attractiveness of the BMNP are that the park has a vast area of integral bush land, offers a sense of freedom and space and has an attractive climate, particularly in winter. Each of these aspects was only cited by one participant. Aboriginal history was also raised by one participant, although this is an aspect that is not currently featured very highly in tourism terms in the park, as another participant mentioned. However, a draft Cultural Heritage Policy has been released internally in the first quarter of this year which includes plans to develop indigenous tourism and increase the interpretation of cultural landscapes (personal communication with a senior staff member).

**Location**

The location of the BMNP close to Sydney was a factor associated with high visitor demand (see Map 4.1 on page 10 for the park’s location). Firstly, the proximity to Sydney was seen as contributing considerably to high *regional* demand and the large population of the state capital was seen as a significant market. The BMNP is seen as not too far from the city, but just far enough to feel like a day out. Sydney has an increasing population which was said to translate into high visitor demand for the BMNP or even increasing visitation. One participant, however, contradicted this view by stating that visitor numbers had not been rising in the last couple of years because:

…Sydney people think that they have been here, they have done the Mountains, they don’t need to come here anymore, they can go to other places.
The opposite was conveyed by another participant who said that:

…it is in the mindset of the four million people in Sydney that the Blue Mountains is a place to come and - because it is in reach of day visitors - it is extremely popular.

It seems that more research into the current visitation of Sydney residents to the BMNP is warranted to allow for more definite statements about how the closeness to Sydney contributes to domestic visitor demand.

Secondly, the national park’s location close to Sydney was also seen as an important factor contributing to high visitation levels by international visitors. Sydney is the gateway for international tourists to Australia; it is the main egress point through which international visitors come to the country and from which they travel on domestically. Due to its location, the BMNP benefits from these visitor flows. One participant from the southern section of the park expressed the opinion that the location of this particular section makes it not well accessible for visitors, thus keeping it more pristine. Limited road provision and vehicle restrictions in catchment areas discouraged ‘busloads of tourists’. Visitors to this section of the park are ‘people who are keen’, for instance bushwalkers or four wheel drivers.

Renowned destination

Six participants suggested that high visitor demand for the park relates to its status as renowned destination. Statements like ‘Blue Mountains National Park is famous’, ‘it is so well known’ and ‘it is a world renowned area’ were used. Four participants raised the theme of icon sites and it was implied that the iconic sites in the national park are primarily responsible for the area being well known and for attracting high visitor demand. Four participants explicitly referred to the Three Sisters geological formation (Plate 5.1) as an iconic site, and it was the only site in the national park identified as such.
The Three Sisters was seen as an iconic destination that people have ‘on their to-see list’ along with other Australian high-profile destinations:

…the Three Sisters is one of the icons that people associate with Australia; Uluru, Philip Island, Kakadu, Three Sisters, they are all up there on people’s to-see list, aren’t they – the Great Barrier Reef. So I guess that is one of the main things that drive tourism – not only international, but interstate tourism as well.

Furthermore ‘even just seeing an image of the Blue Mountains’ is enough for people to recognise them ‘because [they are] quite instantly recognisable. Three Sisters as an example are very well known just visually’. This is unsurprising as numerous tourism marketing bodies use the Three Sisters on webpages to promote the Blue Mountains Region and the national park (for example Blue Mountains Tourism, 2006b; Tourism Australia, 2006; Tourism New South Wales, 2006a). The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NSW NPWS) features an image of the Three Sisters on the front of the Blue Mountains National Park Visitor Guide, on the park’s website and on the front cover of the current plan of management.

The high profile of the BMNP and its icons proved to be important in relation to how and when demarketing is used in the park to manage demand, which will be discussed in section 5.4.1.
World Heritage status of the area

The World Heritage (WH) status of the area as a contributor to high visitor demand is an interesting issue, as the views of the participants were quite discordant. Three participants suggested that the WH status is a contributor to high visitor demand, whereas two participants were very convinced that the status is not a contributor. They argued that a lot of visitors are not aware of the WH listing and consequently are not attracted to the national park because it is part of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area:

The World Heritage, although it is a nice principle, a lot of people are not even aware that it exists. So I wouldn’t argue that that is a major attractant.

A lot of them [visitors] have no idea that it is World Heritage. Most people don’t know that it is World Heritage and I don’t think they care either. It means more to us as a means for protecting the area than it does to a lot of people that come here.

One participant was not certain about the effect of WH, but assumed that it would be a draw card for visitors. This contradiction of views correlates with the lack of concord in the literature about the effect of WH status on the attractiveness of a destination and on visitor numbers. As mentioned in section 1.2, some authors (for example Burns and Howard, 2003; Shackley, 1998) see the WH status of an area as a magnet for tourists, and thus a reason behind increasing visitor numbers. On the contrary, Buckley (2002b and 2004) argues that, even for prominent Australian WH sites, no methodological and complete trend data on visitor numbers are available. As a result, he concludes that it can not be claimed that the WH status of an area has definite effects on visitor numbers. To the author’s knowledge, research on the effect of the WH status of the area on visitors to the BMNP is currently not available.
**Marketing**

Six participants talked about marketing as a factor that fuels high visitor demand for the BMNP. It was suggested that:

> It [the park] is heavily marketed internationally as part of Sydney’s tourism destination and National Parks [NSW NPWS] markets it to some extent, but it is mostly the local tourism providers and a raft of commercially licensed operators and tour companies Sydney or nationally based.

Not all participants specifically identified the parties they perceived to be involved in marketing the national park in this context. Where they were cited, they included the following:

- **Local tourism providers**
- **Commercially licensed national or Sydney tour companies**
- **Blue Mountains Tourism**
  (Tourism marketing organisation for the Blue Mountains Region, a non-profit public company owned and operated by the local industry and endorsed by Tourism NSW [Blue Mountains Tourism, 2006a])
- **Tourism New South Wales**
  (New South Wales tourism marketing organisation)
- **Tourism Australia**
  (Australia’s national tourism marketing organisation)
- **Rail Corporation New South Wales**
  (State-owned corporation providing the passenger rail network throughout NSW)
- **Interest groups**
- **Private authors and publishers**
- **NSW NPWS**

While marketing and promotional activities by the NSW NPWS were mentioned repeatedly in other contexts, only two participants mentioned the marketing by the agency as a contributor to high demand. Furthermore, the NSW NPWS’s role in marketing was clearly differentiated from other marketers by both participants. One participant perceived that the NSW NPWS ‘does it more subtly’ by providing specific information about different parts of the park, e.g. camping opportunities at Glenbrook. The other informant
stated that the NSW NPWS markets ‘the value of the national park … rather than the destination itself’. This may indicate that while the agency increasingly embraces its role in marketing– as do other national park agencies across Australia (see section 2.3) – it is seen as a management task rather than a selling task aimed at stimulating demand.

A linkage was made by one participant between marketing and WH status. It was perceived that the deliberate packaging and promotion of Australian WH areas into a loose ‘World Heritage tour’ has increased the profile of and demand for these locations. While another participant also referred to the packaging of WH areas within NSW including the Greater Blue Mountains, Lord Howe Island and Central Eastern Rainforest Reserves and Willandra Lakes World Heritage Areas, this participant was not sure about the actual use of packaging in national or international promotion.

Tourism tradition

The long tradition of tourism in the Blue Mountains was identified by half of the participants as a factor that stimulates high visitor demand. Tourism facilities, such as the walking tracks, are historic and in the late 1900s the townships in the Blue Mountains competed in the provision of facilities to attract visitors. This was critical given the area’s dependence on tourism for its economic livelihood in the absence of agricultural or manufacturing industries.

The tourism tradition was mostly connected to the domestic tourism market and particularly the Sydney market, which links back to the factor location:

…overall it is tradition. People from Sydney came here as children and they brought their children and they have done that for generations.

Three participants also mentioned that the Blue Mountains were historically a destination for honeymoons and thus maintain special personal connections.
5.3 The use of demarketing

This section addresses the third research objective: to investigate the use of demarketing in managing visitor demand in the BMNP. It discusses the use of demarketing in the park and then examines the use of specific demarketing measures in terms of product, distribution (place), price or promotion components of the marketing mix.

Similar to Beeton (2001; 2003) and Beeton and Benfield (2002) this research found that no holistic or systematically planned demarketing strategy currently exists for the BMNP. Furthermore, the demarketing measures employed are not consciously used as demarketing. One reason for this latent use of demarketing may be that marketing in general has only recently been embraced as a valuable concept in Australian protected areas overall.

Several authors have noted that marketing has only recently begun to establish itself as a valued management tool in protected areas (see for example, Archer and Wearing, 2001; 2002, Jenkins and McArthur, 1996; Wearing and Archer, 2001; 2005; Wearing and Bowden, 1999). In the context of the BMNP specifically and the NSW NPWS in general, one participant confirmed this development by stating ‘marketing has not been a good word in the Service [NSW NPWS] for many, many years. It was only in the last five or six years that people have actually taken it on board’.

In addition, a holistic demarketing strategy seems implausible at present because the marketing done by the NSW NPWS is not centralised. To illustrate, it was noted by two participants that the website is created and maintained at Branch level with input from the Regional Office and park staff. Conversely, the walking track booklets and brochures are coordinated at the regional and area levels.

It seems, however, that there is a change underway in the NSW NPWS through the publication of the Living Parks strategy in the first quarter of 2006. The strategy provides a framework for management of visitation to parks in NSW and includes implementation of marketing and promotion (NSW Department of Environment and Conservation, 2006). It announces that a Living Parks Communication and Marketing Strategy will be developed which will facilitate a coordinated approach state-wide. The Living Parks strategy will be
implemented with support of individual visitation management plans for the four geographic Branches of the NSW NPWS. One participant estimated that drafts of the visitation management plans will probably be released around April 2007 and explained that the main purpose of the plans ‘is to assist us in getting that balance: providing a sustainable range of recreation opportunities, taking into account both visitor needs and demands and environmental protection. … That will then feed into … the strategies we might use on the ground to attract or detract visitors’. Only three participants referred to the Living Parks strategy which probably reflects the fact that it was still in the planning and revision stage as the interviews took place.

Although the Living Parks strategy does not explicitly mention the term demarketing, it states that among other things ‘promotion and marketing will be used to manage visitation and environmental impacts particularly in sensitive environments or in parks that receive large numbers of visitors’ (NSW Department of Environment and Conservation, 2006:17), which implicitly points to demarketing.

In the BMNP, a number of demarketing measures are employed to manage visitor demand (Table 5.2), even though they are not part of a demarketing or marketing strategy, and these can be grouped according to the marketing mix (4 Ps). The measures are not employed across the whole park or for all user groups, but are used for certain experiences in very specific contexts and circumstances. Table 5.2 shows that, although most of the demarketing measures have been suggested or identified in previous research on protected areas (see Table 2.2), some more were identified in this study (marked with * in Table 5.2).
Table 5.2: Demarketing measures employed in the Blue Mountains NP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marketing mix components</th>
<th>Demarketing measures found to be employed in Blue Mountains NP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Product</strong></td>
<td>• Limiting activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Limiting the duration of activities*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Closures of areas and features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distribution (Place)</strong></td>
<td>• Employing a booking system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Limiting visitor numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Limiting group sizes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Providing limited signage*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Licensing commercial tourism operators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Price</strong></td>
<td>• Charging park user fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promotion</strong></td>
<td>• Stressing restrictions in promotional material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Stressing appropriate environmental behaviour in promotional material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Non-promotion of areas or experiences*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each demarketing measure is discussed according to their position in the marketing mix.

5.3.1 Measures related to ‘product’

*Limiting activities*

One measure referred to by almost all participants was limiting recreational activities such as cycling vehicle access, camping, use of open fire, canyoning, rogaining and orienteering, by defining specific areas where they can be undertaken. To assist the development and implementation of such activity limitations zoning is a tool that is used in the BMNP, like commonly in other national parks. In the Australian context, authors like Hill and Pickering (2002) and Fluker and Richardson (2004) have noted the common use of zoning in protected area management to delineate where certain activities may or may not take place. This author suggests that zoning is an important preparatory step for using demarketing measures coherently in different parts/zones of a park. As per the management plan, four ‘recreation settings’ (zones) have been defined for the BMNP which are summarised in Table 5.3 and subsequently discussed.
Table 5.3: Recreational zones in the Blue Mountains NP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zones</th>
<th>DEVELOPED</th>
<th>NATURAL</th>
<th>WILDERNESS</th>
<th>RESTRICTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description of zone</td>
<td>Glenbrook precinct, Jamison Valley escarpment between Wentworth Falls and Katoomba, and upper Grose Valley escarpment near Blackheath.</td>
<td>All areas in the park which are not 'Restricted', 'Wilderness' or 'Developed'.</td>
<td>Areas declared as Wilderness under the Wilderness Act 1987 that are not 'Restricted'.</td>
<td>Land defined as SCA Schedule One Water Quality Protection Zone in the Sydney Water Catchment Management Act 1998 (i.e. land within 3 km of full supply level of Lake Burragorang, see Map 4.1).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of recreation permitted</td>
<td>Tourism and recreation activities mainly oriented towards facilities with vehicular access; less emphasis on natural qualities, although still important, such as vehicle based camping and picnicking, scenic viewing, walking on constructed tracks.</td>
<td>Mostly self-reliant activities. Some facility-oriented activities at single, widely dispersed locations, such as camping, horse riding on designated trails, picnicking, bushwalking on tracks, cycling on roads and management trails.</td>
<td>Self-reliant activities. No motorised recreation, horse riding or cycling in accordance with Service policy and Sydney Catchment Authority regulations.</td>
<td>Limited bushwalking via defined corridors. No camping, horse riding, cycling or motorised recreation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (2001:57)

Although only one participant directly referred to the complete zoning system, half of the participants talked about specific limitations on activities in the Restricted (catchment) or the Wilderness areas. The participant who mentioned the zoning explained:

It is called spectrum of recreation opportunities and that is … a spectrum from the more wilderness challenging, self-reliant, solitude type experience right through to the really assisted experience where you have all the comforts of a more service facility.

The Developed zone provides numerous recreation facilities including walking tracks, roadside lookouts and vehicle-based picnic and camping facilities. In this zone, most recreational activities are permitted, except for those that are entirely prohibited in the BMNP (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001). In this context, four participants mentioned bans on bringing pets into the park; bans on feeding wildlife and on base
jumping were mentioned by one participant each. The plan of management also prohibits hang-gliding, parachuting and bungy jumping. In the Natural zone, the recreation facilities provided are comparatively low-key and visitation tends to be more dispersed. Public vehicle access is permitted to a number of sites (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001). In the Wilderness zone, recreational activities have to be self-reliant; public vehicle access and horse riding are not permitted, neither are competitive activities such as rogaining and orienteering (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001). Land in the Restricted zone represents an important water catchment area for Sydney and environs, and therefore specific limitations on activities apply. These limitations go further than the protection of national park values would normally require in order to control water quality. As a result, public access to the Restricted zone is limited to foot access via specific corridors (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001).

Besides these zone-related regulations, there are also more specific limitations on some activities within the zones to avoid user conflict and minimise negative visitor impacts. Cycling, for example, is permitted only on public access roads and management trails and not on walking tracks to avoid ‘user conflict’. Furthermore, there are certain regulations about where camping is permitted outside of designated camping areas, such as no camping within 300 metres of any limestone outcrops (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001). Some areas where camping and picnicking is permitted have been declared ‘fuel stove only’ areas to prevent fires and environmental impacts, which was mentioned by three participants. One participant explained:

We are trying to get people to use fuel stoves instead of open fires, particularly in places like the Blue Gum Forest down in the Grose [Valley] - a large number of people go down there and camp. So if you have everyone sort of having fires and breaking trees - and a lot of people don’t know that green plants won’t burn - so you get a lot of damage to the vegetation down there. So yes … we allow open fires in some areas and then fuel stoves in others.

As per the plan of management, abseiling and rock climbing are also excluded from a number of specific locations where they compromise other recreational activities or conflict with environmental protection. This was noted by one participant who elucidated that ‘a lot of recreational activities in the park … have environmental impacts that are quite damaging because you have got a lot of rare plants as well that live in these cliff edges and
ledges especially in the Upper Mountains, so having people climbing and abseiling all over these is not a good thing because they trample and crush them’.

Three participants talked about the closure of the iconic Three Sisters rock formation for climbers as a prominent example. Although located in the Developed zone, where climbing is generally not prohibited, the Three Sisters were closed for climbing in July 2000 for numerous reasons. First, climbing had environmental impacts such as erosion and loss of vegetation; ‘the amount of people climbing up here and abseiling off was actually creating a lot of tracks and erosion around the base and loss of vegetation on the tops…’.

Furthermore, the rock formation is of cultural significance for Aboriginal people, since it is part of the Seven Sisters Dreaming, and climbing them is inappropriate. Finally, the Three Sisters is an iconic feature for visitors and the amount of climbing was conflicting with more passive visitor use such as sightseeing and photographing. A revision process for the closure is currently under way after a five year period, which will be further addressed in section 5.4.

These findings about the use of the demarketing measure limiting activities compare well to those of Hill and Pickering (2002) in regard to management of summer tourism in the Australian Alps national parks. These authors suggested that in the Australian alpine and subalpine national parks there is a ‘reasonably extensive use’ of activity limitations, particularly for potentially high impact activities such as cycling, vehicle driving and the use of open fire.

**Limiting the duration of activities**

Limiting the duration of activities is rarely used in the BMNP with only two participants giving examples. First, duration of stay in at a camping site are limited to a maximum period of one week ‘to protect the park’s natural and cultural heritage and to provide more people with the opportunity to camp in the park’ (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001:66). Additionally, at one specific site in the Grose Valley camping is limited to one night. Second, both participants mentioned that vehicle access to the Glenbrook entrance is limited to 8.30 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. (winter) or 7.00 p.m. summer. It was suggested that this measure ‘would cut down user demand after that time of the day’. This aspect is further discussed under ‘price’.
Closures of areas and features

Temporary closures of areas or features such as tracks occur frequently in the BMNP and this measure was mentioned by seven participants. Closures are often due to fire danger, bushfire incidents, landslides and rock falls, or weather conditions like flooding and drought. Often areas or tracks are provisionally closed to ensure visitor safety, but also to minimise or prevent negative impacts on the environment:

…if one area is being impacted on, a visitor area or a camping area, they just close it and put up a sign: closed for rehabilitation, please use another area.

Interestingly, a participant also noted that ‘there is no plan to redirect people to other particular locations within that, we just close an area and hope they’ll go somewhere else’.

To influence which areas visitors use when sites are closed, and to simultaneously provide a visitor-friendly service, alternative destinations could be communicated to visitors in promotional media – especially the website, as this is a very flexible medium in terms of up-dates and changes. In a demarketing situation other researchers have recommended the marketing and promotion of alternatives to increase effectiveness and to maintain visitor satisfaction (for example Beeton 2001; 2003; Benfield, 2001; Carlsen and Ali-Knight, 2004; Groff, 1998; Kindra and Taylor, 1995; Mark and Elliot, 1997) and this aspect will be addressed in section 5.3.4.

Continued visitor use in areas made fragile by drought, fire or flooding has impacts on the park environment. This point was illustrated by one participant who stated ‘two sites [at Euroka camping area] are currently closed. The drought absolutely hammered them and of course the use during the drought hammered them. It hammered the whole site. We don't have the luxury of closing the whole lot so we have closed two [sites]. The initial intend was to close them for about six months, but we had very little recovery in six months. So we have kept them closed. They will be opened again’.

Euroka is a popular vehicle-based camping area in the Glenbrook precinct (see Map 4.1) and sequential closures and resting of camping sites in this area is provided for in the plan of management. Nevertheless, it was pointed out that the NSW NPWS is rather reluctant to close areas and tracks in the park for visitors, as will be further explored in section 5.4.
5.3.2 Measures related to ‘distribution’ (place)

Demarketing measures related to distribution or place are not generically used for the whole park, but for certain activities and experiences in specific contexts, as discussed in the following paragraphs.

**Booking system and limiting visitor numbers**

At Euroka a booking system is employed which is referred to as ‘a typical demand management strategy’. Visitors have to book a site two weeks in advance and pay a fee of $5 per adult and $3 per child per night (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2005b). One participant noted that online booking is not available and currently, bookings can only be made via telephone or in writing. The participant perceived that an online booking system would be a good opportunity to easily collect additional information about visitors. It was stated that ‘Queensland runs an online booking service, so they will be able to tell you immediately how many people from the web have accessed information and then have gone ahead to make a booking’. The online booking process on the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service’ website requires visitors to read and agree to general and park specific camping regulations and appropriate behaviour (Environmental Protection Agency Queensland, 2005) and this seems a very efficient way to promote appropriate environmental behaviour and restrictions, both of which are demarketing measures.

The booking system for the Euroka camping area is tied to limits on visitor numbers, which was mentioned by two participants. The camping area has five separate camp sites, two of which are currently closed for environmental regeneration. The maximum number of campers for each of the sites at any one time is 25. It was explained by a participant that the booking system aims to limit the numbers of campers to protect the site’s natural and cultural values and provide visitors with a natural experience: ‘we are attempting to restrict the damage to the site because it is a natural site and it has Aboriginal sites within it which the public don’t know about…and also we are trying to promote a bush experience’.

The participant pointed out however that a lot of people do not look for or access the information on camping before they visit the park - ‘…a lot of people don’t research before they come…everyday you will get someone coming in who is not booked for camping, [has] done no research’. This behaviour is ‘notorious’ for this national park, since it is
close to population centres. The perception that park visitors do not inform themselves extensively before they visit the BMNP was an emerging issue with implications for the use of demarketing measures.

The plan of management does not prescribe limits to total visitor numbers for other activities or sites in the park however, it does allow management to stipulate limits on visitor numbers for activities if necessary (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001). Two participants perceived that limiting numbers will have increasing importance as a management tool in the future:

It is quite obvious our visitation levels are going to keep increasing … So in the future we have got to look at: are there areas that we want to open up to create further opportunities, or do we want to harden the sites we have got, or do we want to implement maximum numbers in the park - maximum vehicle numbers, which personally I think is the best option to try and keep it somewhat remote and somewhat secluded so people can have a good bush experience… .

The other participant suggested a combination of visitor limits and user fees:

What we could do would be to hard-surface areas, develop a carrying capacity program, so we would work out how many people actually could use [them] and then the most effective tool for managing visitation is to start charging [visitors].

This was seen as a necessary step which the NSW NPWS will have to take within a decade. Hill and Pickering (2002) also suggested that limitations on visitor numbers will become more important as a management tool in Australian protected areas. These authors also found that at present very limited use is made of limits on visitor numbers and argued that a lack of comprehensive visitor monitoring and development of carrying capacities can be held responsible.

Carrying capacities for different activities or areas in the BMNP have not been developed. Furthermore, only limited visitor monitoring is conducted and no overall visitor monitoring program is in place (see further discussion in section 5.4.1). Establishing carrying capacities and collecting data on visitors in a coherent and systematic manner would be necessary steps towards systematically developing limitations on visitation.
**Limiting group sizes**

Besides limits on total visitor numbers, limits on group sizes for specific experiences were mentioned by four participants. The plan of management states that the NSW NPWS ‘will seek to minimise conflicts between visitor activities and impacts on the natural and cultural heritage of the park by regulating certain recreation activities where necessary, including restrictions on group size’ (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001:60). As per the management plan (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001:78, 80) there are maximum group sizes for cycling (twelve people per group), vehicle touring (eight vehicles) and for adventure activities including individual rock climbing (four people per roped party), abseiling (eight people) canyoning (twelve people) and camping at particular sites where environmental impacts had been unacceptable in the past (twenty people) (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001). In the wilderness areas there is a general maximum group size of eight visitors including any guides that the party may have, which was pointed out by three participants.

Concerning the enforcement of these limits and of regulations in general, one participant declared that they are very difficult to police:

> There is probably not a ranger in the park today and people could be doing anything out there. …we have got a hundred of kilometres of walking track or hundred and forty - you are not going to walk them everyday and you are not going to catch everybody everyday’.

One instrument that is used to help enforce group size limits are intention forms for school groups or other organised groups of more than 20 people. Two participants explained that before such groups visit the park for camping or bushwalking they are supposed to submit an intention form to the NSW NPWS which specifies activities, group sizes and so forth, and is signed off by the Area Manager responsible, if appropriate.

If certain aspects of a planned visit do not conform to the regulations, this procedure provides the opportunity for the management to make the groups aware before they come to the park. However, one of the participants stated that a lot of groups do not follow this procedure, and argued that they probably are not aware of its existence. Consequently, to make the enforcement of group size limits more effective as a form of demarketing, the procedure would need to be communicated more efficiently to the respective groups.
Two other participants also noted that park visitors are often not aware of visitor limits and other regulations. One of those participants stated ‘even commercial operators who probably should read the plan of management, I don’t think a lot of them have and I think the majority of park users wouldn’t have read it either’. The participant argued: ‘…it would be good if more people would read it, but maybe it needs to be in a different form, in a more accessible form’. It was suggested that continued education of people about these limits and regulations is therefore very important and publicising them in promotional material more effectively could be a solution (see section 5.4.3).

Providing limited signage

Another demarketing measure that is used in some situations is providing limited signage or not signposting certain sites or features. This was found to be employed to demarket specific sites to keep them pristine. In this situation, limiting the signage is a proactive strategy that prevents places from reaching the stage of excessive demand. An example was given by one participant of a camping and day-use area with adjacent parking in the Glenbrook area: ‘...that is a reasonably popular camping area, but more so popular for day visitors that know about it. It is not signposted at all. …Those who know about it get to enjoy it, those who don’t [know about it don’t] – hence we get to keep it a bit more pristine’. Asked whether this was an active strategy of the NSW NPWS, the response was: ‘Oh it is definitely an active strategy of the Service. We have deliberately not signposted it and it is not mentioned in our brochures’. The above citation also shows that providing no or limited signage is of course strongly connected to non-promotion for example in brochures, which is a demarketing measure that falls under the category of ‘promotion’.

On the other hand providing limited signage was said to be used when maintenance of a feature, for example a track, is not possible due to financial constraints or being simply too difficult to maintain. Demarketing in this case is used for visitor safety by keeping people off non-maintained tracks. Demarketing for visitor safety emerged frequently in the interviews, but has not received great attention in the demarketing and environmental management discourse. This is despite the fact that visitor safety and risk management are considered increasingly important aspects in protected area management (Eagles et al., 2002) and warrants further investigation.
Commercial licensing

Under legislation, commercial activities in NSW national parks need to be licensed (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001). This practice, as noted by Buckley et al. (2002), is common to almost all Australian parks. Commercial recreation and tourism is a small, but significant part of overall park use and according to the Blue Mountains Plan of Management, ‘licensing provides the mechanism for ensuring that activities, levels of use and behaviour are appropriate for the park and specific locations and compatible with general recreational use’ (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001:82).

Limits on visitor numbers and group sizes are demarketing measures that are applied within this licensing framework. Commercial recreation activities in the park are required to conform to all group size limits discussed previously (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001). The plan of management further states that ‘maximum levels of total commercial recreational use in the park will be set for particular activities and particular locations according to the precautionary principles’ (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001:84). While limits for particular locations are currently in place in the park, total limits on the number of licenses issued for certain activities do not exist at present. One participant explained that the number of licenses always fluctuates as commercial operators drop out, go into recess and new operators apply and that this ‘is sort of self-limiting in a way’. No total limit would therefore be set at the moment.

Maximum levels of use, that is limits on visits and visitor numbers, for particular locations exist for activities such as canyoning. It was mentioned by one participant that visitor numbers are limited through prescribing a maximum number of trips per day, week or year for particular canyons. Another way of regulating visitor numbers in commercial recreation is adopted at the popular Euroka precinct. The area is very popular with commercial tours, as it features wildlife such as native birds and kangaroos. To limit visitor numbers in the morning, when the bulk of visitors come to Euroka, and to spread visitation over the day, any new licenses issued to tourism operators limit visitation to the afternoon.

One participant noted that commercial licensing provides the NSW NPWS with more power in relation to enforcement of various demarketing measures among commercial tourists than is generally the case with independent visitors: ‘we could [tell independent
visitors that it says] in our rules that you should not do this, but you can’t get to them in the same way that you can get to operators. Operators are very easily identifiable…’.

One participant mentioned that there is currently a Treasury driven project in NSW which aims to incorporate all licenses under a Government licensing system. This centralised system would integrate schemes of various NSW Government departments including for example the Department of Fair Trading, the Department of Gaming and Racing and the NSW NPWS and that would certainly mean a change to current licensing practices. Although it was perceived that a state-wide licensing system for protected areas would be important for achieving consistency among different regions, concern was expressed that an overall centralised Government system could be more prone to mistakes. It was also perceived that the slow progress in regard to the Government licensing system thwarts progressive developments of the current licensing system of the NSW NPWS.

5.3.3 Measures related to ‘price’

Demarketing measures related to ‘price’ are not used extensively in the BMNP. This corresponds to findings by Beeton (2001; 2003), Hill and Pickering (2002), Buckley (2003a) and Buckley et al. (2003). In regard to summer tourism in Australian alpine and sub-alpine national parks, Hill and Pickering (2002) concluded that the use of park user fees is limited, and when it occurs, it functions to raise revenue, rather than manage demand. Beeton (2001; 2003) also found that there was little emphasis on pricing as a demarketing tool in the Mount Buffalo NP context.

In the BMNP it may be argued that pricing is used to manage demand in the Glenbrook area (see Map 4.2). At the entrance, visitors pay a park user fee of $7 per vehicle (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2005d) either at a staffed visitor entry station (on weekends, public and school holidays) or at a self registration machine (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2005d and 2005e). Alternatively, visitors can purchase an annual park pass from the NSW NPWS.

While six participants mentioned the park user fee at Glenbrook, only one participant referred to them as a tool deliberately used to manage visitor demand. This senior staff member argued that, together with entrance gates at Glenbrook which are closed after hours, the introduction of the fee was aimed at discouraging unfavourable users and thus,
changing the visitor demographics. The participant explained that this part of the national park ‘was being trashed by mostly irresponsible use of cars and the moment they had put the gate up and charged people to go in … the visitor demographics changed completely and [the area] became a family destination … it happened almost over night’. This application of user fees would correspond to ‘selective demarketing’, where demand from a certain customer group is reduced (for example Kotler and Levy, 1971; Clements, 1989; Beeton, 2003).

Conversely, two other participants perceived the park user fee to be merely revenue raising. Cost recovery is a policy aim of the NSW NPWS and park user fees are seen as part of this agenda. The remaining participants did not specify the rationale for this measure. What may seem like inconsistencies in statements about the rationale of pricing in the park are likely to stem from the different perspectives of the staff dependent on role or personal views.

Findings related to the use of pricing accord with Buckley (2003a) and Buckley et al. (2003). The authors noted that charging park entrance fees, camping fees or both is commonly done in Australian protected areas, albeit largely to raise revenue. At the same time the authors pointed out that demanding fees for private use of public lands in still a contentious issue. The interview participants also collectively suggested a number of reasons why demarketing measures related to ‘price’ are currently not used to a greater extent and this is reported in section 5.4.

5.3.4 Measures related to ‘promotion’

In the literature, promotional demarketing is seen by some authors (such as Beeton and Benfield, 2002 and Beeton, 2003) as the most influential aspect of demarketing. Through implementation of demarketing in promotion, visitors are reached before they decide to visit. In that way, ideally, visitors’ attitudes and expectations are shaped before the visit (Beeton, 2001 and 2003).

The NSW NPWS uses print publications and its website (www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au) as the main promotional media for the BMNP. The website features a special section on the BMNP (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2005a) and the Interpretation and Visitor Orientation Plan – Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area (Charles Walsh
Nature Tourism Services, 2003:26) states that ‘for Blue Mountains National Park the data on natural and cultural heritage [on the website] is the most detailed available in any NPWS product’.

Print publications include the NSW NPWS Guide to NSW National Parks, a free full-colour A4 booklet that provides succinct information on most of the parks in the State. A free black-and-white, folded A3 brochure produced in 2002 (Visitor Guide Blue Mountains National Park) is also available. This ‘lead-park’ brochure is ‘intended to provide basic pre-visit heritage, access and recreational information together with a simple map’ (Charles Walsh Nature Tourism Services, 2003:24). Other important publications by the NSW NPWS is a series of walking track brochures for the most popular areas (for instance Glenbrook, Grose Valley, and Echo Point and the Three Sisters). These are A5 saleable booklets, the most recent version of which includes a fold-out colour map (Charles Walsh Nature Tourism Services, 2003). Other printed publications focus on the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, and therefore cover the BMNP to a smaller extent. These publications include for instance Mountain Journeys: touring map for the Greater World Heritage Area.

Three demarketing measures related to ‘promotion’ were identified: ‘stressing restrictions in promotional material, ‘stressing appropriate environmental behaviour in promotional material’ and ‘non-promotion’ of certain areas or experiences in the park (Table 5.2).

**Stressing restrictions in promotional material**

The NSW NPWS puts considerable effort into publicising activity limitations and other restrictions and half of the participants referred to the publicising of restrictions for visitors on the agency’s website. Similarly, four participants talked about restrictions being communicated in printed media (booklets and brochures). Information in promotion was seen as complementing that provided on-site, such as signs and information in the visitor centre. The information in promotional material relates to both permanent and temporary restrictions on visitation.

Regarding the inclusion of permanent restrictions, participants referred to restrictions applying to the use of open fire and bringing pets into the park. It was stated that ‘it does happen to a pretty good degree for the straight forward things … don’t light fires outside of
fire places’ and ‘we allow open fires in some areas and then fuel stoves in others and that information is out on the websites…’. In addition, the website and walking track booklets include information about permanent restrictions on the collection of firewood, camping in specific areas and feeding of wildlife. In some cases this information is supported by symbolic images (Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2: Symbolic images for permanent restrictions

![Symbolic images](image)

It may be valuable to publicise and explain the park’s zoning system to visitors as this may possibly reduce the necessity for policing adherence to the permanent restrictions.

Concerning temporary restrictions publicised in promotional material, participants named closures of park areas due to fire danger, bushfire or weather conditions such as flooding or drought. One participant suggested that highlighting restrictions such as closures is seen foremost as a way to educate people about special ‘conditions of the natural landscape’, not as a way to ‘limit or manage the visitation level’ especially regarding closures after bushfires because they are a very emotional subject in the region. The author perceives that in many instances both functions (education and managing visitation levels) go hand in hand as a matter of necessity. While a certain natural condition in a park should not be a pretence to limit visitation, it may often be essential for safety as well as environmental protection and regeneration to restrict visitor access, and thus also to discourage demand on a temporary basis.

Participants saw the website playing a particularly important and efficient role in publicising temporary restrictions. Most of the participants judged information on the website in general, and the specific information on restrictions very positively. One
participant suggested though that the website ‘is not too bad. It is just organised a bit badly … - it can be hard even for us to find where things are on our website’. Indeed, the author perceived that information on permanent restrictions in particular could be placed more prominently on the website.

In contrast, information on temporary closures is readily accessible through a link on the park’s homepage (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2005a). The hyperlink ‘Part of this park is currently CLOSED. Find out more’ directs to a site which details all current closures in the BMNP. As suggested previously, it may be an idea to also suggest alternative destinations within or outside the park to potential visitors at this place on the website.

The effectiveness of publicising restrictions in promotional material was also seen as in doubt as many visitors do not tend to research and inform themselves about the park before their visit and potential visitors may lack access to the internet or do not use this medium for pre-visit preparation. These concerns will be considered in more detail in section 5.4.

**Stressing appropriate environmental behaviour in promotional material**

While almost all participants referred to messages about appropriate environmental behaviour on signage and information within the park, three participants mentioned that such messages are also included in promotional material. One participant said ‘…there is quite a bit of information in [the walking track booklets] about park care and what you should and shouldn’t do’. Although this demarking measure was not discussed extensively by participants, it is used comprehensively in promotional material of the NSW NPWS. Both the webpage and printed material frequently provide messages about correct environmental behaviour to educate visitors before their visit. The NSW NPWS *Guide to NSW National Parks* for instance provides messages on minimal impact behaviour in parks throughout the document including information on walking, camping, vehicle touring, horse riding and cycling (see Table 5.4 for an example). Some messages also include information on restrictions (for example on wildlife feeding and camping), which means they overlap with the demarking measure discussed previously.
Table 5.4: Extract of messages on minimal impact behaviour

Tread softly

National parks are special areas and it’s up to all of us to treat them with care – whether bushwalking, camping, or vehicle touring. Here’s how to keep your impact to a minimum.

When walking:

• Stay on the track. Walking on track edges and cutting corners on zigzagging tracks increases erosion and visual scarring.
• Avoid walking on sensitive vegetation by staying on rocks and hard ground whenever possible.
• Tread softly, wearing running shoes or lightweight walking boots.

When camping:

• Use designated fireplaces in camping areas and observe fire bans. Off the beaten track, use fuel stove rather than wood (dead wood provides habitat for native animals).
• Use rubbish bins or, better still, take rubbish with you when you leave. Don’t bury it as animals dig it up.
• If you must use detergents, toothpaste or soap, stay at least 50 metres from waterways. In areas without toilets, dig a hole 15 cm deep at least 100 metres from waterways to bury human waste.
• Don’t feed native animals – it can damage their health and make them dependent on camping areas for food.
• Whenever possible leave everything as you find it.
• Leave pets, firearms, spearguns, generators and chainsaws at home.

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (2005g:31)

The BMNP website also contains messages on how to minimize negative impacts as a park visitor. These messages are very detailed and relate to a wide range of activities. Plate 5.2 shows an extract of environmental messages for canyoning.
Plate 5.2: Extract of minimal impact messages for canyoning

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (2005f)

The website also features links to external sites which include more information on appropriate environmental behaviour (for example, link to the Off-Road Vehicle Green Guide on the Tread Lightly Australia website or the Bushwalkers’ Code on the NSW Confederation of Bushwalkers website). As mentioned previously, an online booking system for camping would be an efficient additional method to promote appropriate behaviour, if the booking process incorporated a camping code as used in Queensland.

The walking track booklets include comparable messages on appropriate behaviour, although these are less detailed than the other material and probably due to space restrictions: ‘those booklets are about as full as they could get. …they are too busy now.’ However, the messages in the walking track booklets are very well placed, linked to the content and accessible to visitors (Figure 5.3).
Figure 5.3: Minimal impact messages for camping

If you are camping in the Acacia Flat, Burra-Korain or Perrys Lookdown camping areas please remember:

! There are no bins in this part of the park, please carry out all of your rubbish.

! Fuel stoves (gas, kerosene, shellite or methylated spirits) are a great idea, they are light, reliable, and have less impact on the local environment.

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (2004b:18)

In some cases environmental messages refer to negative visitor impacts that occurred in the past and reasons why visitors should adopt appropriate environmental behaviour. One of the walking track booklets states:

The popularity and overuse of Murphys Glen has meant that it now requires special care to maintain its qualities. The gate is there to prevent further erosion and compaction of fragile soils during wet weather: only walkers and cyclists are permitted through. Please keep to the established tracks, bring a portable fuel or firewood stove and carry out all your rubbish (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2005e:13).

Non-promotion

Another demarketing measure occasionally adopted in the BMNP is non-promotion, which is the deliberate omission of certain areas, sites or experiences in promotional material. Two participants perceived the deliberate non-promotion of sites rather negatively:

… we are not in the business of locking places up – I guess the Wollemi Pine might be an exception to that, but that is for a specific reason. It is really a perception that people have that National Parks [NSW NPWS] are just locking the park up for themselves … .

Aside from not wanting to promote the off-track stuff, which I think Parks [NSW NPWS] is upfront about … I would say that mostly there is a promotion of enjoying the park on the tracks that are there … .

By contrast, other participants acknowledged the use of non-promotion in visitor demand management. One participant stated: ‘you will find that as a common tool that natural resource managers - that I have met in NSW anyway - use’. Most prominently non-promotion was mentioned in the context of managing Aboriginal sites and the measure was
mentioned by three participants, but it was not linked to high demand. Non-promotion was said to be used proactively to ensure that the location and existence of precious Aboriginal sites are not publicly known to prevent any negative impacts.

Referring to the Glenbrook area one participant said that ‘it has Aboriginal sites within it which the public don’t know about, but they are there, both contemporary and historical. We don’t tell the public about them, so by not being known - that is what is protecting them’. Another participant suggested ‘…it is similar to our management strategies for precious Aboriginal sites in that we don’t tell people where they are. ... That knowledge is shared with us and trusted to us and so they are amongst those things we don’t tell people where they are because they would be ripped. And we know that through experience’.

One participant mentioned the NSW NPWS’s database of archaeological sites which are not to be publicised - including Aboriginal sites - as a tool to assist a strategic non-promotion of certain places. This database was not put across as a negative tool, but as a positive means to ensure that the interest of Aboriginal communities of the area are safeguarded. It was said that a current project called ‘Mapping Country’ is a venture that supports this practice. ‘Mapping Country’ aims among other things to develop ‘a computer-based data management system for an Aboriginal Cultural Knowledge Database for the Aboriginal community’ and to incorporate the information into existing data management systems of the NSW NPWS and Blue Mountains City Council ‘in a culturally appropriate manner’ (Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute, 2005:no page). The project is implemented through a partnership of the Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute, Blue Mountains City Council, NSW NPWS and local Aboriginal communities (Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute, 2005). The participant explained that the project intends to ensure that ‘the Aboriginal communities have full access to the database, but that they can tag certain pieces of information which are culturally sensitive and make sure that we white fellas don’t get access to it’.

Two of the participants also pointed out that while the majority of Aboriginal sites are not promoted, it is important that some sites are showcased as an educative tool as well as to engender respect for the Aboriginal culture. This relates to the idea of providing and marketing alternative sites in demarketing situations (Beeton 2001; 2003; Benfield, 2001;
Carlsen and Ali-Knight, 2004; Groff, 1998; Kindra and Taylor, 1995; Mark and Elliot, 1997). One interview participant used the term ‘sacrificial zones’ in this context:

I think that it is important to have sacrificial zones and for places like Red Hands Cave and Black Fellows Hands Cave I think they are important as evidence and a reminder that Aboriginal communities did live here, did tribe here.

Sacrificial zones are specific areas or sites that are opened for visitation, and where visitation may indeed be encouraged. These sites are ‘sacrificed’ in order to protect other sites from visitor impacts.

Other examples of non-promotion of specific places that were given include the camping and day-use area in the Glenbrook precinct (see Map 4.2), mentioned previously in this section, where the NSW NPWS intentionally restrict signage and promotion to retain a more pristine area. Another participant mentioned the Burralow Picnic and Camping Area at the north-western edge of the park (see Map 4.2) which the NSW NPWS put on their maps only in recent years. It was said that the management ‘intentionally kept it off the maps for some years’ until it had been upgraded and ‘was ready for the wider visitor demand’.

One participant also pointed to the fact that some remote and difficult walking routes in the park are not actively promoted by the NSW NPWS. In these cases, demarketing through non-promotion is mainly employed as a risk management measure in order to discourage the ‘average visitor’ from embarking on these walks:

… if people want to do a walk from Katoomba to Jenolan Caves, there are four different routes that they can take and they can find out that information from other experienced walkers, but we are not going to provide that level of information to the average visitor because we don’t know their skill and experience. And you can send people out there and believe me, people do die out there.

The participant added that besides risk management it is also done ‘to preserve that whole … wilderness feeling for people …’.

Another instance where non-promotion may seem to be used is the map in the current BMNP brochure. This brochure is one of the main promotional materials about the park and the southern sector of the park is not shown. Only a small note indicates that a
southern sector exists. On the reverse side of the map a short paragraph refers to the sector but this author could not ascertain whether this was a case of deliberate non-promotion. One participant suggested that the map was omitted due to space restrictions. The southern part of the park ‘just didn’t fit on the page when they printed the brochure’. Another participant suggested that the omission had indeed been a means ‘to try and keep this southern sector a little bit quieter’ and that it is a relic from ‘the old school of thought’. This was an approach that existed prior to the declaration of the Kanangra Wilderness Area which is partly located in the southern section of the park. The declaration means that policies are in place which keep large areas of the southern sector pristine and the participant therefore argued that this sector should now be included in a park brochure. This would let people know what kind of experiences they can have in this area.

*Non-promotion* of certain areas, sites or experiences has not been identified previously in the literature as a demarketing tool in protected area management. In the BMNP, non-promotion is used on some occasions to prevent or minimise negative visitor impacts and mainly to *prevent* the *development* of excess demand at particularly fragile sites – temporarily or permanently. In remote areas of the park, non-promotion is additionally used for risk management.

### 5.4 Factors influencing the use of demarketing measures

A number of major factors that influence how and when demarketing measures are used emerged during the interviews. Some of these factors are highly interrelated, such as the feasibility of measures and human and financial resources available, however, for the purpose of this study the factors identified are discussed under three groupings: pragmatic considerations, resource considerations and stakeholder interests (Figure 5.4) thus addressing research objective four.
The above figure does not contain an exhaustive list of the factors that influence the use of demarketing in the park, but it includes the principal factors that emerged in this case study. Further factors which were briefly touched upon by one or two interview participants and which may be worth further investigation in future research include the public image of the protected area agency and the notion of equity.

5.4.1 Pragmatic considerations

Feasibility

The feasibility of certain demarketing measures was a factor that emerged quite strongly. It appeared that while, in theory, some demarketing measures may sound reasonable, in practice the context of a national park may render them unfeasible. In the case of the BMNP, the geographical accessibility of the park to visitors was one characteristic that made certain demarketing strategies (e.g. introduction of user fees) impractical.

Five participants pointed out that the BMNP has many vehicle and pedestrian access points and has a long urban-park border due to the City of Blue Mountains and other population centres which are around the park and contribute to the visitor accessibility. One
participant stated: ‘There are just so many different entry points to the park; that creates a massive issue and the urban interface is a massive issue’.

Three participants suggested that due to the multitude of entry points an introduction of user fees for other areas than Glenbrook or the whole park would not be feasible, as the NSW NPWS would not be able to manage and enforce them. It was pointed out that for the Glenbrook area user fees are viable because ‘… it is one road in and one road out. Everywhere else people can come in and out too easily’.

Another respondent stated that the multiple entry points into the park also make it impractical to introduce limitations to maximum numbers of walkers or cyclists:

It is impossible to police a maximum number of pushbikes, a maximum number of walkers - how do you stop them? We have got one entrance here [Glenbrook vehicle entrance], but you can come in from a multitude of entrances if you are on a pushbike or on a walk.

Similarly, one respondent referred to a potential booking system with a limit on maximum visitor numbers for the Blue Gum Forest in the Grose Valley east of Blackheath. The respondent perceived that - in this case on a micro level - the multiple entry points made such a demarketing measure infeasible because it would not be enforceable:

I think in an ideal world you could come up with lots of strategies and one of them would be – an obvious one would be that people had to register to walk into that place [the Blue Gum Forest], that you had a booking system, like other parts in Australia - even to do a particular walk in a national park - you have to register and there is only so many places at once. But the problem is … there are many different ways into Blue Gum, it is so hard to police.

Besides these access-related issues, the lack of control over certain aspects of marketing and demarketing also emerged as a factor that reduces the feasibility of measures. The lack of control over some promotional media used by potential visitors makes it unfeasible for the NSW NPWS to use promotional demarketing measures completely effectively. This is an important finding, since some authors (such as Beeton and Benfield, 2002; Beeton, 2001; 2003) suggest that promotional demarketing measures are the most influential aspect of demarketing.
In addition to the NSW NPWS, different parties are involved in marketing and promoting the BMNP including the more obvious promoters, like the tourism industry and tourism bodies, such as Blue Mountains Tourism, but also less obvious promoters, like special interest groups (e.g. four wheel drive groups and canyoning groups) and private publishers of travel guides, walking guides or magazines. Promotional publications by these parties may contain information about settings or activities that counteract demarketing efforts by the NSW NPWS. Cooperation between park management agency and these marketing stakeholders is therefore important to minimise this risk.

The participants perceived the cooperation with tourism bodies, especially Blue Mountains Tourism and Hawkesbury Tourism (two regional tourism marketing organisations) in marketing and promotion as positive. Four participants mentioned explicitly that the cooperation is very close with the Blue Mountains Regional Manager of the NSW NPWS sitting on the Board of Blue Mountains Tourism, and a Senior Ranger sitting on the Board of Hawkesbury Tourism. It was noted that the close cooperation has existed for around 18 to 20 years.

On the contrary, cooperation with private authors and publishers was perceived to be more difficult. The plan of management states that NSW NPWS ‘will encourage relevant authors and publishers to liaise with NPWS staff regarding information on the park and will encourage the promotion of minimal impact recreational use in publications’ (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001:53). In regard to wilderness areas, the plan states that the agency will furthermore seek ‘the co-operation of authors of track notes and other publications referring to the wilderness … to ensure impacts on the wilderness areas are minimised and relevant restrictions are noted’ (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2001:43).

Four participants highlighted, however, that the NSW NPWS has very limited control over those sorts of promotional publications and that liaising with private authors and publishers is a difficult task:

…people write books, as an example walking track books, all the time and very often you won’t see that book until it is on the shelf when it has been published. Occasionally, someone will ring up and say I am writing a book can I come and
talk to you about it … but nine times out of ten, they don’t. So you haven’t got any control over what people do.

The potential for closer liaison with these stakeholders was recognized: ‘it would be a really good opportunity … because you could really start asking them to leave things out, not put certain things in, say things in a different way’. It was implied though that external authors and publishers are often not known to the NSW NPWS, and that therefore liaising with them is not easy, unless they take the first step and contact the park management agency.

Another participant suggested that currently around 50 per cent of publications are sent to the NSW NPWS for editing. It was said that usually the more established and better known publishers tend to involve the NSW NPWS by letting them edit and comment prior to publication, and that the other publishers ‘just go ahead and just publish … because they see the huge potential market’.

Two participants saw a political connotation in the fact that some publishers do not liaise with the park management:

…but then you have got people that just want to get out there and do it anyway and they will do it regardless. I think it is a political game that needs to be played.

…and then we have people who are on the other end of the spectrum like Wild Magazine that printed the location of the Wollemi Pine* – in a sort of freedom of press kind of thing; we can go and do this in a complete contravention of the policy of National Parks [NSW NPWS] on displaying information about it… .

* The Wollemi Pine is not located in BMNP, but in the adjacent Wollemi NP. The quote was still considered relevant as a general statement.

On the other hand, two positive examples of cooperation were mentioned: National Geographic and Lonely Planet have both made manuscript drafts available to the NSW NPWS for revision prior to publication. In the latter case, the NSW NPWS asked the publishers to include a paragraph on camping in the Grose Valley along the lines of ‘Acacia Flat [camping area] is where you camp. You will see a lot of other places where people have camped, please don’t camp there. Unless it is an emergency, you must camp at
Acacia Flat!'. Acacia Flat is the only site where camping is allowed on the Grose Valley floor, but a number of unofficial camp sites have been created. This cooperative approach is a typical case of demarketing by ‘stressing restrictions in promotional material’.

The lack of control over promotional media used by potential visitors has previously been identified by Wearing and Archer (2005) as an issue in regard to marketing and promotion of parks in general. However, these authors did not specifically consider the issue in relation to demarketing nor did they elaborate on it. Wearing and Archer (2005) suggest relationship marketing targeted at the respective stakeholders (in this case these would include private authors and publishers) as an option for dealing with the issue.

Similarly, Wearing and Nelson (2004:10) mention the lack of control over ‘any external promotion and messages circulating about [protected areas] through film, guide-books tourist brochures and the like’. They suggest that ‘cooperative approaches are widely regarded as the most effective way of influencing the ways parks are promoted’ (Wearing and Nelson, 2004:10). As mentioned in section 2.3.1, Wearing and Nelson (2004) have provided various best practice examples of cooperative promotion between protected area agencies and different tourism stakeholders. Examples of cooperation with private authors and publishers as well as special interest groups however were not given. As stated above, in promoting the BMNP cooperation with these stakeholders is perceived to be particularly challenging. Reasons for this include that private authors and publishers are often not known until after they have put a publication on the market, which was noted by two participants. Furthermore, it was perceived that such a breadth of private players exists who promote the park through various channels that it is difficult to identify them, let alone keep track of their promotional activities:

I regularly [scan] the web to try and find out what’s new in print or what has gone up on the web and there is a huge amount of information out there. You can find [things] out about the Blue Mountains from United States sites, from Belgian sites, from people who have visited … [and] have written their stories about the Blue Mountains and posted their photographs and you know it is just this huge amount of information out there.

The breadth of private and individual ‘promoters’ could also represent an obstacle for effective cooperation. The Living Parks strategy states that the planned Living Parks Communication and Marketing Strategy will include ‘a communication strategy for
managing private publications about parks’ (NSW Department of Environment and Conservation, 2006:18). This strategy might assist managers in dealing with the lack of control over these promotional channels, which the author perceives as a very important issue.

Besides the lack of control over some promotional media, it was also mentioned by three participants that the NSW NPWS has no ultimate control over other demarketing measures, especially the introduction of measures related to pricing. Proposals for such measures have to go through to State Government. One participant noted ‘Govetts Leap [Map 4.1] could do a wonderful job putting [park user fees] in, but it hasn’t actually been approved by the Minister’. Findings of this study also support that pricing for parks is still a contentious issue, although it is done to some extent in most Australian parks (Buckley, 2003a). Participants noted:

You wouldn’t introduce any new fees or fee increases before an election… .

[User fees] are not seen as politically acceptable I think.

… the Environmental Minister hasn’t felt like it is the right time to [propose user fees and put the proposal out for public consultation].

[Introducing user fees] is a very political decision … it is about whether the politics of the time will handle it.

How stakeholders, besides the government, influence the use of demarketing measures related to pricing will be further examined in section 5.4.3.

**Effectiveness**

The effectiveness of demarketing measures emerged as another pragmatic factor that influences the use of demarketing. It was for instance perceived by three participants that a lot of visitors do not research and inform themselves about the park prior to their visit which questions the effectiveness of promotional demarketing measures:

I mean you can always do more in terms of signage and brochures and that sort of thing, but the bottom line is, there are a lot of people who come to the park without doing major homework unfortunately.
…providing a lot of information is very time-consuming and the value that you get out of it is not that great … because people don’t look on the net or don’t do research beforehand.

It appears that many visitors belong to the ‘non-planners’ or ‘visitors who just turn up’ sub-group (Wearing and Nelson, 2004:15) based on their information-search and trip planning behaviour. Previous research in NSW similarly found that many visitors preferred to explore national parks without researching the destination prior to their visit (Blue Moon Research and Planning P/L, 2001 cited in Wearing and Nelson, 2004). One participant therefore concluded that ‘…there is a lot more value in having things like [contact with staff on site], which is face-to-face, because people don’t look on the net or don’t do research beforehand’.

Two other participants also noted the importance of the ‘personal touch’ between visitors and staff to ensure that visitors are aware of limitations and other demarketing measures and to foster understanding: ‘you just start chatting [to the visitors] about things and they gradually will then pick up on some of the management issues that you are dealing with and the complexity and they will start thinking ok well, I understand why you are making these decisions or yes, I can see that it is not easy to manage’.

This view contrasts somewhat with the suggestion by Beeton (2003:103) that promotional demarketing helps to ‘reduce the necessity of on-site staff being authoritarian gate-keepers, allowing them to attend to other aspects of their management responsibilities’. It rather corresponds with Hill and Pickering’s (2002) view about park staff playing an important and positive role in educating visitors about restrictions on visitations and correct environmental behaviour. It seems that a balanced use of communication and promotion channels (off-site and on-site) is best to reach different types of visitors.

Concerning the internet as a medium for promotional demarketing measures, four participants noted that potential visitors may lack access to the internet or may not use it to access information prior to visiting. One of these participants even stated: ‘I would not rely upon the internet as a conduit for information to the general public. It is just not reliable enough’. The participant argued that a lot of people do not access the net for pre-visit information about parks and other protected areas. At the same time, three participants
perceived that the internet is increasingly used by park visitors to access this kind of information.

As discussed before, the internet is regarded as an increasingly important source for pre-trip information for visitors to Australian national parks in general (for instance Beeton, 2001; 2003; Griffin and Vacaflores, 2004; Wearing and Nelson, 2004). Wearing and Nelson (2004) also noted, however, that the websites of park management agencies are not well publicised. The authors therefore question whether prospective visitors are aware of them and access the information provided for their trip planning. More park or region specific research about the use of the internet as a source for pre-visit information seems to be warranted given the lack of clarity about its utilization by visitors and this would allow for better allocation of resources.

The high profile of the BMNP and the long tradition of tourism in the region were two other important aspects in relation to the effectiveness and use of demarketing measures. This relationship was highlighted by one senior staff member who pointed out that demarketing measures to redistribute visitors from very heavily used sites to other areas in or outside the park, such as non-promotion of those sites or reduction of facilities, would not be effective:

You chose a good area when you picked the Blue Mountains because we have such an established tourism market and trend that [the visitors] won’t go away. So what we have to do is upgrade our major destinations … the sacrificial areas so that they can accommodate the increasing pressure… .

…we have no other destinations to send them to because… they have been acquiring those same destinations for generations and they all want to go back to that spectacular landscape.

5.4.2 Resource considerations

Most participants referred to a lack of financial, human and temporal resources in managing parks in general, and seven participants specifically stated that it influences and sometimes inhibits the use of demarketing. As indicated by Archer and Wearing (2001; 2002), Bushell (2003) and Wearing and Archer (2005) reduction in public funding has put pressure on protected area management in Australia and the participants commented on this issue:
…for any of these strategies [that manage visitor demand]… you just got to have more time, more money and that is just not at all what is happening.

A lot of limitations I suppose in relation to our visitor management have simply been budgetary.

It would be nice [to publicise restrictions more] if we had time. Doing all this takes time.

I think a lot of our management is quite reactive, but that is simply a function of resources and number of staff and funding as well.

A lot of it comes down to money I must admit, and then also priorities – because of the money the priorities … because we are managing the water catchment of this area … [controlling] the pest species is where a lot of our time and effort is going into, rather than the visitation.

The final quote indicates that managing visitation is not seen as the highest priority in park management. Indeed, six participants pointed out that managing visitation is only one of many responsibilities of the NSW NPWS. It was implied by these participants that conservation is the principal role in the management of national parks and that the management of visitation, although important, has less significance and is therefore affected by the lack of resources.

Consequently, the lack of resources was seen as responsible for the limited visitor monitoring and the fact that no overall visitor monitoring program is in place. Six participants mentioned this issue. Although visitor numbers have become a general component of performance reporting for protected area agencies in Australia (as noted for instance by Wearing and Archer, 2005 and Moore et al., 2003), visitor monitoring is in many cases still lacking consistency and continuity (Archer et al., 2001; Wardell and Moore, 2005). The findings of the study in this regard are therefore not new.

Four participants pointed out that collecting visitor information more regularly and comprehensively would be vital to tailor management actions - including demarketing - and use them more effectively:
Oh, it *would* be quite useful [to have more information about visitors] because I mean anecdotally you can say this track is really heavily used or this picnic area no one ever goes there, but you can’t really be sure until you have some sort of quantitative information. But as I said, it is quite expensive to get that good quality stuff and then to actually have the time to analyse it and then feed it back into the way you manage and where you put your funding etc.

Besides more basic information, such as number of visitors, visitor monitoring should also aim to collect data on the use of different information and promotional media for accessing pre-visit information as indicated previously. More information on visitor numbers was furthermore recognized by four participants as an opportunity to place the park management in a position to ask for more government funding for the management of visitation in general, which in turn would address resource restrictions.

The NSW NPWS is currently testing/trailing a new software system (the Visitor Data System), which facilitates capturing, monitoring and reporting of detailed information about visitors. At present, it is not used in the Blue Mountains region, although four participants mentioned this system, but most were conscious that its implementation and use would require a lot of financial and human resources – more than simpler alternative solutions.

### 5.4.3 Stakeholder interests

A range of different stakeholders were identified throughout the interviews that directly or indirectly influence the use of demarketing in the BMNP. These stakeholders include those identified previously as parties involved in marketing the BMNP as well as the local community and local businesses, governments, the Aboriginal community, visitors, the public and other stakeholders such as conservation, bushwalking and 4WD groups (Figure 5.4). The following discussion provides a general outline of the interests and influences the different stakeholder groups have on demarketing.

The Blue Mountains have a long tradition of tourism and visitation in which the national park plays an important part. Tourism is the major economic activity in the City of the Blue Mountains and four participants noted that many local businesses are directly or indirectly involved in this sector and depend on tourism income: ‘we rely on visitors, international and national, to keep our economy going’; ‘just about everybody with a business trades on the national park, on the very existence of the national park; every
coffee shop in Katoomba, the YMCAs, the Youth Hostel there …’. Therefore, the local community and in particular local businesses as well as the tourism industry are major stakeholders that influence the use of demarketing measures, often opposing them due to economic reasons.

One participant pointed out that the NSW NPWS is rather reluctant - due to stakeholder interests - to implement demarketing measures that discourage visitors to go to certain areas in the park for redistribution purposes. It was stated as an example that ‘if we start turning visitors away from [the] Katoomba [district] as a destination, the local community is not going to be very appreciative. So it is not something that would be done lightly’.

Two participants particularly elaborated on pricing and the influence of the local community and local businesses as stakeholders. It was argued that the negative attitude of these stakeholders towards pricing and its economic impacts is one reason why it is not used more extensively as a demarketing tool:

…we can’t turn [the visitors] away because the local people won’t like it. We deal with the local Chambers of Commerce, too …They will be involved as part of the community consultation, but if we told them we are going to charge people to go into the park, they won’t like it because … they will see it – whether it does in the long term turn people away or not – the local community will see it as doing that.

Concerning the influence of tourism businesses and the tourism industry, four participants highlighted that the NSW NPWS is under pressure to keep areas and sites open for visitation. It was noted that even *temporary* restrictions on or closures of tracks due to damage triggered by environmental conditions such as rain or drought generate incomprehension and complaints by tourism businesses. One participant explained for instance that although it is necessary in some situations ‘…we [the NSW NPWS] are very reluctant to close walking tracks … because we’ll get heaps of letters and phone calls, you know, *why* is it closed?’ Another participant similarly stated that the agency is ‘really trying to get those tracks … sorted out as soon as possible because they are popular’ and that the agency is ‘under a lot of pressure from commercial, from licensed groups, tour operators, the general public’ to keep those tracks open.

As an example, two participants mentioned a very popular track segment in the Katoomba district, the Giant Stairway. As a result of landslides taking out stairways, the track had to
be closed for twelve months for reconstruction and rehabilitation. The major tourism attraction in Katoomba, the Scenic World, is somewhat dependent on the stairways, as they are one way for visitors to connect different experiences of the attraction. It was stated that ‘…the Scenic World wanted to make a claim against us for not having the stairs and their claim was amounting to $10,000 a week for lost profit’.

The Aboriginal community is another important stakeholder that was found to influence the management and demarketing measures. There is currently no Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that covers the management of the BMNP. MOUs are formal agreements between Aboriginal communities and the NSW NPWS about co-management of protected areas. Aboriginal interests are currently represented through an Aboriginal Site Officer, as mentioned by two participants, and through Aboriginal community consultation, as mentioned by eight participants.

In contrast to the above mentioned stakeholders, members of the Aboriginal community support certain demarketing measures in situations where precious Aboriginal sites are involved. As stated before, the Aboriginal community has input in decisions about the non-promotion of Aboriginal sites within the park in that they can tag places that are not to be publicised to potential visitors and the broader public. Likewise, the Aboriginal community has input in how sites that are promoted are depicted and publicised. Another example of Aboriginal interests influencing the use of demarketing is the closure of the Three Sisters for rock climbing due, partly, to views that climbing the rock formation was inappropriate. In this context, Hall and McArthur’s (1996a) statement that given the ‘ownership’ of natural and/or cultural heritage by a number of groups, to consult stakeholders and consider their interests in decision-making becomes particularly immediate.

A revision process for the closure is currently under way after a five year period. This process includes involvement of different stakeholders, including Aborigines, through consultation and meetings. It was pointed out by both participants that the Aboriginal community is still very strongly against any climbing activities on the Three Sisters formation and that their interests will be considered in a final decision about whether it will remain closed or be re-opened for climbers.
The above discussion has shown that various stakeholders have a profound influence on the use of demarketing measures. Generally speaking, different stakeholder groups have diverse interests and therefore influence the use of demarketing in different ways – supporting or impeding certain measures. It is important to remember that the boundaries between these stakeholder groups are not clear cut and that the groups are not entirely homogeneous, which means that the above discussion can only provide an outline of stakeholder interests and influences on demarketing measures.

5.5 Summary

This chapter reported and discussed the results of the data gathered on the BMNP through interviews with management of the NSW NPWS. Firstly, it considered factors that contribute to high visitor demand for the park, such as the location and attractiveness of the park and its long visitation and tourism tradition. Secondly, the chapter discussed the use of demarketing in visitor demand management in the park. It was established that currently no holistic demarketing strategy is employed in the park, but that, nevertheless, a number of different demarketing measures are used. Finally, the chapter identified and discussed factors that influence how and when demarketing measures are used. These factors were discussed under three groupings, namely pragmatic considerations, resource considerations and stakeholder interests. The main findings of this study will be considered again in the following chapter, which will draw conclusions and give recommendations resulting from this research.
Chapter 6

Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 Introduction
This final chapter summarizes the main research findings, draws conclusions and makes recommendations for government and further research.

6.2 Summary of the main research findings
The aim of this research was to investigate the use of demarketing in managing visitor demand in Australian national parks that face excess demand. To achieve this aim the study addressed five research objectives:

1. To review and discuss existing literature related to the use of demarketing as a tool for demand management focussing on protected area management situations;
2. To identify factors that contribute to high visitor demand for Australian national parks with specific focus on a park that experiences excessive demand;
3. To investigate the use of demarketing in managing visitor demand in this national park;
4. To identify what factors influence management decisions about how and when to use demarketing measures for visitor demand management; and
5. To develop a set of conclusions and recommendations regarding the use of demarketing in national parks.

The study focussed on the Blue Mountains National Park (BMNP), an Australian national park that experiences excess visitor demand. This park was selected using a Delphi study with Australian academics and members of TAPAF. Semi-structured interviews with staff from the NSW NPWS were conducted to investigate the use of demarketing in managing visitor demand. The main findings are summarized below.
6.2.1 Factors contributing to high visitor demand

Six factors contributed to high visitor demand in the BMNP: (1) the attractiveness of the national park itself, (2) the location of the park close to Sydney, (3) the fact that the park is a renowned destination with icon sites, (4) the marketing of the park by different parties, (5) the long tradition of tourism and visitation in the Blue Mountains, and (6) the World Heritage status of the area.

The attractiveness of the BMNP was interestingly attributed by different participants to different features, such as the aesthetic values of the park, the accessibility to wilderness and the opportunities offered in the park for being active. This reflects the fact that the BMNP offers different experiences for visitors across the whole spectrum of nature-based tourism and recreation. The location of the park close to Sydney was seen as contributing to high regional as well as international visitor demand. In connection with the status of the BMNP as a renowned destination, it was found that the iconic sites, especially the Three Sisters rock formation, are primarily responsible for the area being well known and attracting high visitor demand. Marketing by different public and private parties also emerged as a factor that contributes to high visitor demand. In this context, participants clearly differentiated the role of the NSW NPWS from other marketers, such as tourism marketing organisations or businesses. The former market the park more subtly by promoting the value of the national park, not the destination as such. So while the NSW NPWS increasingly embraces its marketing role, it is seen as a management task rather than a selling task intended to stimulate demand. Participants’ views about the World Heritage status as a contributor to high visitor demand were discordant which aligns with contradictions in the literature regarding the effects of World Heritage listing on a destination’s attractiveness. The long tradition of tourism in the Blue Mountains was seen to contribute particularly to high domestic demand and this, along with the profile of the BMNP, was important in relation to how and when demarketing is used to manage demand.

6.2.2 The use of demarketing

The study found that no holistic or systematically planned demarketing strategy currently exists for the BMNP. Furthermore, the demarketing measures that are employed in the park are not consciously used as demarketing. These findings correlate with those of
previous studies on demarketing in protected areas. It is argued that one reason for this latent use of demarketing may be that marketing in general has only recently established itself as a valued concept in Australian protected areas. In addition, marketing by the NSW NPWS is not centralised at present, which may also inhibit the use of a holistic demarketing strategy. However, there may be a change underway in the NSW NPWS with the publication of the *Living Parks* strategy. This strategy provides a framework for management of visitation to NSW parks and includes marketing and promotion. Although the strategy does not explicitly refer to demarketing, it points implicitly to the use of demarketing for sensitive environments and parks that receive large numbers of visitors.

A number of demarketing measures are used in the BMNP to manage demand, even though they are not embedded in a demarketing or marketing strategy, and they can be categorised according to the marketing mix (4 Ps). These measures are not park-wide, but are used for specific activities and experiences. Most of those demarketing measures have been suggested or identified in previous research although several additional measures were identified including: limiting the duration of activities, closures of areas or features, providing limited signage and non-promotion of areas or experiences.

**6.2.3 The use of demarketing measures in relation to the 4 Ps**

Demarketing measures related to ‘product’ include *limiting recreational activities, limiting the duration of activities and closures of sites or features* in the park. The first demarketing measure is commonly used in the BMNP for various activities including cycling, vehicle access, canyoning and use of open fire by defining specific areas where they can be undertaken. To support the development and implementation of activity limitations zoning is used in the BMNP, as occurs frequently in other national parks. Zoning is an important preparatory step for using demarketing measures coherently in different parts of a park. Conversely, limiting the duration of activities is rarely used as a demarketing measure in the BMNP and occurs only for camping and vehicle access. Temporary closures of areas or features such as tracks occur frequently in the park, often due to environmental conditions such as rain or drought. It appeared that closures are usually not accompanied by plans to redirect prospective visitors to other locations in or outside the park. In order to influence which areas visitors go to when sites are closed and to provide a visitor-friendly service, alternative destinations could be suggested in promotional media such as the park website which is easily kept up-to-date.
The measures related to ‘place’ are the use of a booking system, limiting visitor numbers, limiting group sizes, providing limited signage and commercial licensing. A booking system, which is also tied to limits to total visitor numbers, is in place at Euroka, the park’s major vehicle-based camping area. No online booking is currently available within this system, although this would provide the opportunity to collect additional visitor information and incorporate promotion of appropriate environmental behaviour into the booking process. The plan of management does not prescribe limits to total visitor numbers for other activities or sites in the BMNP, however, it appeared that limiting numbers will be an increasing important future management tool. To systematically develop limitations on visitation there are two prerequisites: establishing carrying capacities and methodically collecting and monitoring visitor data. Besides limits on total visitor numbers, there are limits on group sizes for various activities. Enforcement of group size limits proves difficult and many visitors are not aware of their existence. Therefore, continued education of prospective visitors about these regulations is very important and publicising them in promotional material more effectively could be a solution. Limits on visitor numbers and group sizes are demarketing measures that are also applied within the commercial licensing framework that is used in the park. Commercial recreation activities are required to conform to all above mentioned limits. While limits for certain locations are currently applied, total limits on the number of licences issued for particular activities do not exist in the park at present. Providing limited signage or not signposting certain sites or features was found to be employed to demarket specific places to keep them pristine and for reasons of visitor safety.

Demarketing measures related to the ‘price’ component of the marketing mix are not extensively used in the BMNP and this concurs with previous studies. User fees at the Glenbrook park entrance are the only instance where it can be argued that pricing is used as a demarketing tool in the national park.

The promotional demarketing measures used in the BMNP are stressing restrictions in promotional material, stressing appropriate environmental behaviour in promotional material and non-promotion of certain areas or experiences. While considerable effort is expended on the two former measures, non-promotion is only occasionally used. Non-promotion is used to prevent or minimise negative visitor impacts and inhibit the development of excess demand at particularly fragile sites. In remote areas of the park,
non-promotion is also used for risk management. The NSW NPWS puts considerable effort into publicising activity limitations and other (permanent or temporary) restrictions in promotional material. Concerning the internet in particular, information on temporary closures is readily accessible via a link on the park’s homepage, however, information on permanent restrictions could be placed more prominently on the website. In addition, it may be valuable to publicise and explain the park’s zoning system in promotional material as this may reduce the necessity for policing adherence to some of the permanent restrictions. Stressing appropriate environmental behaviour in promotional material is also used comprehensively as a management tool by the NSW NPWS with the webpage and printed material frequently providing messages about correct environmental behaviour to educate visitors before their visit.

6.2.4 Factors that influence the use of demarketing

How and when demarketing measures are used to manage visitor demand in the BMNP fall into three groups: pragmatic considerations, resource considerations and stakeholder interests. Pragmatic considerations include the feasibility and effectiveness of certain demarketing measures which are influenced by the specific context of a national park. While in theory some demarketing measures may appear reasonable, in practice the context of a national park may render them unfeasible or ineffective. The geographical accessibility of the BMNP and the lack of control over certain aspects of marketing and demarketing mean that particular measures (e.g. the introduction of user fees) are impractical. In addition, specific information-search and trip planning behaviours of visitors question the effectiveness of promotional demarketing measures. A balanced use of communication and promotion channels (off and on-site) is best to reach different types of visitors. More park or region-specific research is warranted on the internet as a source of pre-visit information given a lack of clarity about its use by visitors. This would allow for better resource allocation. Furthermore, it was found that demarketing measures aimed at redistributing visitors from very heavily used sites to other areas in or outside the park would not be effective due to the long tradition of tourism and the high profile of the BMNP.

Resource considerations also influence the use of demarketing in management of the BMNP. The findings suggest that a lack of resources (financial, human and temporal) influences and at times inhibits the use of demarketing measures. Lack of resources also
appeared to be a reason behind limited visitor monitoring and the fact that no overall visitor monitoring program exists. More consistent and comprehensive collection of visitor information would be crucial to tailor management actions – including demarketing – and use them more effectively. However, cost efficiency is also an aspect that needs to be considered in relation to any visitor monitoring program.

Furthermore, it was found that various stakeholders have a profound influence on the use of demarketing measures. These stakeholders include those involved in marketing and promoting the BMNP (e.g. tourism marketing organisations, tourism businesses, interest groups) as well as the local community, governments, the Aboriginal community and visitors. The stakeholder groups have diverse interests and thus influence the use of demarketing in different ways by supporting or opposing certain demarketing measures. Further factors which may influence the use of demarketing and which are worth further investigation in future research include the public image of the protected area agency and the notion of equity.

6.3 Summary of recommendations to NSW NPWS and protected area managers

Based on the findings of this research the author offers several recommendations to NSW NPWS and protected area managers in general. These are summarised in Table 6.1.
Table 6.1: Recommendations to NSW NPWS and protected area managers

- More consistent and comprehensive collection of visitor information is crucial to tailor management actions - including demarketing - and use them more effectively.
- More park or region-specific research is warranted on the internet as a source of pre-visit information given a lack of clarity about its use by park visitors. This would allow for better resource allocation.
- In case of temporary site closures, suggestion of alternative destinations within or outside the park in promotional media, such as the park website, would provide an opportunity to influence which areas visitors go to and simultaneously be a visitor-friendly service.
- Establishing an online booking system for camping would provide the opportunity to collect additional visitor information and incorporate promotion of appropriate environmental behaviour into the booking process.
- As enforcement of permanent regulations, such as group size limits, proves difficult and many visitors are not aware of their existence, continued education of visitors about these regulations is important. Publicising regulations in promotional material more effectively could be a solution and in particular, more prominent placement of regulations on the website would be useful.
- Publicising and explaining the park’s zoning system in promotional material may furthermore reduce the necessity for policing adherence to some permanent restrictions on activities.
- More conscious application of demarketing measures may help to manage visitor demand to the BMNP and other parks proactively. However, pragmatic aspects, such as feasibility and effectiveness of measures, resources and stakeholder interests need to be considered in the planning and implementation of a demarketing strategy.

6.4 Recommendations for further research

Considering the findings and limitations of this research, there are several areas for further research. Firstly, it was noted that management processes – including marketing and demarketing – are dynamic. Although this study provided some indication about future developments in the use of demarketing in the park, it mostly provided a snap-shot about the current use. As the newly released Living Parks strategy includes guidelines for future marketing and promotion of parks in NSW, further research about the use of demarketing is warranted after the strategy has been implemented.

Secondly, a comparative study investigating parks, or protected areas, in different Australian states or territories is recommended to build on issues identified in this study. The use of demarketing is likely to vary due to the policies of different jurisdictions and protected area histories. Moreover, investigating demarketing in protected areas...
internationally could be considered, as diverse cultural and political contexts will have an effect on the use of demarketing, and this may deliver additional insights into the concept.

Lastly, this research has focused on the park management perspective on demarketing so future research could include other stakeholders, like tourism industry members, park visitors, special interest groups or members of local communities. This will provide additional information about the views of these groups on the use of demarketing, especially on issues such as acceptance and effectiveness of measures. It would also be important to examine ways to involve promoters like special interest groups or private authors and publishers in cooperative approaches, as this may increase the effectiveness of promotional demarketing measures.

In conclusion, national parks in Australia and around the world are under increasing demand and pressure from visitation. It is important that this natural resource is managed for both conservation and recreation. Demarketing is one tool that can assist in managing the resource to ensure that it remains for future generations. It is hoped that this research has made a contribution to this end by providing a better understanding of demarketing as a tool for managing visitor demand to and within national parks.
References


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Appendices
Appendix A

Invitation e-mail for potential Delphi panelists

Dear…,

I am a Masters student at the University of Canberra and am investigating the role marketing and demarketing play in managing visitor demand in Australian national parks that face excess demand. Excess demand means a level of visitor demand that results in negative environmental and/or social impacts. I plan to focus on two national parks for my research and I am writing to ask you for your help in selecting these parks through your participation as a panellist in a modified Delphi study (see explanation below). The aim is to determine Australian national parks or areas within national parks that are considered to be under the most visitor pressure.

In addition to yourself I have approached around 25 other people to participate including academics with expertise in relevant fields, management from national park agencies and representatives from tourism organisations. Please note that your participation in this project is entirely voluntary.

The Delphi study is a technique aimed at achieving a group judgement on a subject matter where precise information is not available. In stage 1, the panellists answer three questions (which are at the bottom of this document). In stage 2 (in November 2005), I e-mail the aggregated answers to the questions and you can reconsider your response in light of all responses. You are then invited to submit a final response. The national parks that I am going to study will be based on the final results. At no time during or after the survey will any individual response be identified. Your confidentiality is assured throughout the process. It is estimated that it will take about 10 minutes to complete the questions in both stages of the Delphi study.

This research has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canberra Committee for Ethics in Human Research. If you have any further questions or concerns with this project, please see the attached Ethics Committee information sheet.

The results of this research will assist managers in national parks to make decisions about whether and how to use marketing and demarketing to manage visitor demand. Your participation would be greatly appreciated. If you are happy to participate as a panellist in the Delphi study, please hit reply and answer the three questions on the bottom of this e-mail by Wednesday, 26 October 2005.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Christine L. Kern
MA Tourism (research) candidate
c/- School of Languages, International Studies and Tourism
University of Canberra  ACT  2601
c.kern@student.canberra.edu.au

Supervisor
Kate Armstrong
School of Languages, International Studies and Tourism
University of Canberra  ACT  2601
Phone: (02) 6201 5943
kate.armstrong@canberra.edu.au
Delphi questions
(first stage)

A: In your opinion, what are the two national parks in Australia under most pressure caused by excess demand? (Excess demand means a level of visitor demand that results in negative environmental and/or social impacts.)

1.

2.

B: Within these national parks, are there specific areas that you feel are under particularly high pressure from visitor use?

1.

2.

C: Please specify why you nominated each of the above national parks and areas

I nominated the first national park, because…

I nominated the second national park, because…

I nominated the first area, because…

I nominated the second area, because…

Thank you for answering the first round of questions. I will email the aggregated results and the second round of questions in November 2005.
Appendix B
Second e-mail with feedback for Delphi panelists

Dear Delphi Panelists,

My sincere thanks to all for taking the time to answer the first round of Delphi questions and for your additional comments on the project and/or the Delphi study. The response rate was around 38%, with half of the answers coming from academics and the other half from representatives of national park and tourism bodies. Please find attached a summary table of all first round responses. The table lists the national parks nominated as parks under most visitor pressure in Australia, the number of nominations for each park, reasons for nomination as well as areas within these parks considered to be under particularly high pressure.

The second and last round of questions (at the end of this document) is aimed at generating a greater level of consensus. You are therefore invited to reconsider your initial response in light of the responses of all panellists. Please note that this time you should not nominate new national parks, but are welcome to change your first round answers and nominate any of the parks listed in the attached table.

Your response by Friday, 18 November 2005 would be greatly appreciated. A summary of the overall results will be distributed to all panellists in December 2005. Please note again, that your confidentiality is assured throughout the process and that at no time during or after the survey will any individual response be identified.

Thank you for your time and contribution to the research.

Kind regards,

Christine L. Kern
MA Tourism (research) candidate
c/- School of Languages, International Studies and Tourism
University of Canberra ACT 2601
c.kern@student.canberra.edu.au

Supervisor
Kate Armstrong
School of Languages, International Studies and Tourism
University of Canberra ACT 2601
Phone: (02) 6201 5943
kate.armstrong@canberra.edu.au
Delphi questions
(Second stage)

You are invited to reconsider your initial responses in the light of the answers given by all panelists in the first round of the Delphi study. Please note that you should not nominate new national parks, but that you are welcome to change your first round answers and nominate any of the parks listed in the attached table.

A: From the first round responses, which are the two national parks under most pressure caused by excess demand? (Excess demand means a level of visitor demand that results in negative environmental and/or social impacts.)

1.
2.

B: Within these national parks, are there specific areas that you feel are under particularly high pressure from visitor use? (You are free to nominate areas that have not been mentioned before.)

1.
2.

C: Comment on your selection of national parks and areas if you wish.

National park 1:
National park 2:
Area 1:
Area 2:

Thank you for answering the second and last round of questions. I will provide you with a summary of the overall results of the Delphi study in December 2005.
### Delphi results – Round 1
#### 7 November 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Park</th>
<th>No. of nominations</th>
<th>Reasons for park selection</th>
<th>Area within the park</th>
<th>No. of nominations</th>
<th>Reasons for area selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Barrier Reef</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>- Numerous media and planning reports indicating the threats to the reefs, etc.</td>
<td>The reef near the collection of islands near Cairns</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>- Familiarity with this area of the park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- High visitation, intensive impact on small areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- The GBR needs to be looked at as a whole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Large area with enormous ‘non-visitaton’ issues impacting on the ecological integrity (climate change, high nutrient runoff from agriculture on mainland, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- High level of risk from commercial marine trade and transportation in channels adjacent to Whitsunday Islands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Uniqueness and international significance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Ongoing pressure from development and tourism particularly boat charters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Lack of knowledge about long term impacts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Lack of regulation and infrastructure to deal with discharge of black water from vessels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Significant threats from multi-use park management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Personal experience and interest in the park’s future</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraser Island</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>- A series of QPWS projects on visitor management</td>
<td>Lake Mackenzie area</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>- Increased camping pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Visitation is constantly increasing with a limited track network in a fragile environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Freshwater Lakes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>- The lakes are an ‘Icon’ of the island but are extremely susceptible to pollution through overuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- The sand environment is not conductive to vehicle traffic without infrastructure (wooden boards, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Park</td>
<td>No. of nominations</td>
<td>Reasons for park selection</td>
<td>Area within the park</td>
<td>No. of nominations</td>
<td>Reasons for area selection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Blue Mountains             | 2                  | - Very high annual visitor use  
- Well known and promoted both nationally and internationally  
- Close to Sydney, Australia’s most populous city  
- Increased pressure from urban development and associated pollution  
- High demand for more infrastructure  
- Issues such as safety and environmental impact of high-use sites | Icon sites                                    | 1                  | ’Don’t know – best guess‘                                                                   |
|                            |                    | Areas around Katoomba particularly Grose Valley and Jamison Valley                                                                                                                                                            |                                                |                    | High visitation  
- High demand for more infrastructure  
- Risk of losing authentic natural experience                                          |
| Wilsons Promontory NP      | 1                  | - Has a waiting list of over a year and a lottery system for any sort of overnight visit and is too far to visit in a day; demand far exceeds supply  
- Close to Melbourne and one of Melbourne’s most loved parks  
- Has a number of environmental issues (e.g. wildlife feeding and erosion) and safety issues (cliffs and fire danger) | Camping and beach areas, walking tracks and all day use areas | 1                  | ’Most visitors to national parks just want to hang out, maybe do short walks, show the kids, etc.’ |
| Royal NP                   | 1                  | - Personal and work experience with Royal NP                                                                                                                                                                                  | Audley precinct                               | 1                  | Major focal point of visitors  
- Very threatened by over use, lack of funding for management action, etc.             |
| Kosciuszko NP              | 1                  | - High level of visitation  
- Sensitive alpine environments  
- Ski fields  
- Governance issues                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Ski fields                                    | 1                  | --                                                                                       |
| Lane Cove NP               | 1                  | - Large boundary/area ratio  
- Urban location, high local visitation                                                                                                                                                                                          | ‘Don’t know’                                  | 1                  | --                                                                                       |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Park</th>
<th>No. of nominations</th>
<th>Reasons for park selection</th>
<th>Area within the park</th>
<th>No. of nominations</th>
<th>Reasons for area selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ku-ring-gai Chase NP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>- Urban pressure</td>
<td>Whole park</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>‘Don’t know the park well enough to answer’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dandenong Ranges NP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>- Urban pressure</td>
<td>Whole park</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>‘Don’t know the park well enough to answer’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port Campbell NP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>- Problems with walking off track - most on track sightseers are not impacting the park because tracks are hardened</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mornington NP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>- Problems with walking off track - most on track sightseers are not impacting the park because tracks are hardened</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Springbrook-Wunburra</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>- Heavy commercial tourism development</td>
<td>Area accessed from Springbrook plateau</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>- Knowledge of the area and personal experience of high level of use</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C
Interview schedule with key themes and questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interviewee:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Position:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organisation:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date, time:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Interview Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Introductory question</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Could you briefly outline your role and responsibilities within the national park service?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Main themes/questions</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. What do you think are the factors that contribute to high visitor demand for Blue Mountains NP?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you think that marketing by the tourism industry, tourism bodies or the park service contributes to high visitor demand?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What strategies have been used by the National Park Service to manage visitor demand for the park? (for certain areas or activities in the park?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. What kind of things does the national park service have to think about when planning and implementing these strategies that manage visitor demand?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. What kind of visitor information is used to plan the strategies that manage visitor demand?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Does the promotional material produced by the National Park Service, such as leaflets and web pages, support the strategies for managing visitor demand?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. You mentioned that the National Park Service uses XXX strategies. Do you think that these strategies have been effective in managing visitor demand?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. What other strategies would be good to use to manage visitor demand in the park in future?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Concluding questions</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10. I think I covered all points, are there any additional issues you would like to mention?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Could I give you a call if there were answers or issues that needed clarification?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D
Invitation e-mail for potential interview participants and information sheet

Dear…,

Research request from University of Canberra Masters student

I am a Masters student at the University of Canberra and am investigating the role marketing and demarketing play in managing visitor demand in Australian national parks. My research will focus on Blue Mountains National Park. I am writing to ask you for your participation in my research project and would appreciate if you considered taking part in an interview in January 2006. I have attached a detailed information sheet about the project for you.

The results of this research will assist recreation and tourism management in national parks in making decisions about whether and how to use marketing and demarketing to manage visitor demand. I would greatly appreciate your participation.

I will call you in the next days or alternatively in the new year to discuss this project and ascertain your interest in being involved.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kind regards,

Christine L. Kern
MA Tourism (research) candidate

c/- School of Languages, International Studies and Tourism
University of Canberra ACT 2601
c.kern@student.canberra.edu.au
Information Sheet

Master of Arts research project
Using marketing and demarketing as tools for managing visitor demand in national parks – An Australian case study.

Researcher
Ms Christine L. Kern
Master of Arts in Tourism candidate
c/- School of Languages, International Studies and Tourism
University of Canberra  ACT  2601
c.kern@student.canberra.edu.au

Supervisors
Ms Kate Armstrong
School of Languages, International Studies and Tourism
University of Canberra, ACT  2601
Phone: (02) 6201 5943
kate.armstrong@canberra.edu.au

Dr Brent Ritchie
School of Languages, International Studies and Tourism
University of Canberra, ACT  2601
Phone: (02) 6201 2289
brent.ritchie@canberra.edu.au

Mr Adrian Davey
School of Resource, Environmental and Heritage Science
University of Canberra, ACT  2601
Phone: (02) 6201 2289
adrian.davey@canberra.edu.au

Research aim
The aim of the research is to investigate the role marketing and demarketing play in managing visitor demand in Australian national parks that face excess demand. Excess demand means a level of visitor demand that results in negative environmental and/or social impacts. Marketing in this context is not restricted to promotion, but includes a whole range of strategies that might be used to manage visitor demand. Following a case study approach, it will be examined what specific role marketing and demarketing play in managing demand, whether their use has been effective and what factors influence management decisions on how and when to use marketing and/or demarketing strategies.

The first stage of the research was a Delphi study with management from national park agencies, representatives from tourism organisations and academics. The Delphi study assisted with the selection of parks for this case study by identifying Australian national parks that are under particular pressure from visitation and tourism. Based on the results of the Delphi study Blue Mountains National Park was chosen as the case study park.

The benefits of this research
The results of this research will assist recreation and tourism management in national parks in making decisions about whether and how to use marketing and demarketing to manage visitor demand. Specific benefits for your organisation include a summary report of the research at the end of the project, public acknowledgement of contribution in research publications and presentations, access to the interview transcript if requested and an involvement in a project with implications for national parks in Australia.
Why you have been selected as a potential participant in this research
Potential participants have been selected based on their position and key responsibilities. You are invited to participate in the research along with around eight other staff involved in managing the Blue Mountains National Park.

What participation involves
You will be interviewed once in an individual face-to-face interview. The interview is likely to take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. Note taking and audio recording of interviews would be done with your consent. You are free to not answer specific questions.

How the data will be stored
During the research project, documentation, audio recording and electronic sources will be stored securely and confidentially with access confined to the researcher and supervisors. After completion of the research, all data will be transferred to the University of Canberra for final storage in a secure location for five years following publication.

How the data will be used and reported
The data will be analysed and results reported in a MA thesis. Results may also be published in academic and industry publications and presented at seminars and conferences. The findings will be reported and discussed in a way that generalises the results for each national park. Individual participants will not be named.

Withdrawal from the project
Participation in the research is entirely voluntary and as a participant you would be free to withdraw from the project at all times. If you should choose to discontinue participation, any notes and recordings from the interview would be erased and all traces of your participation in the research removed.

The research has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canberra Committee for Ethics in Human Research. If you have any further questions or concerns with this project, please see the attached information sheet from the Ethics Committee.
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

COMMITTEE FOR ETHICS IN HUMAN RESEARCH

Document for people who are participants in a research project

CONTACTS FOR INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT AND INDEPENDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The following study has been reviewed and approved by the Committee for Ethics in Human Research:

Project title: Using marketing and demarketing as tools for managing visitor demand in national parks – An Australian case study

Project number: 05/67  Principal researcher: Ms Christine Kern

1. As a participant or potential participant in research, you will have received written information about the research project. If you have questions or problems which are not answered in the information you have been given, you should consult the researcher or (if the researcher is a student) the research supervisor. For this project, the appropriate person is

Name: Ms Kate Armstrong

Contact details: School of Languages, International Studies and Tourism, Division of Communication and Education, University of Canberra

Phone: (02) 6201 5943  Fax: (02) 6201 2550  
e-mail: kate.armstrong@canberra.edu.au

2. If you wish to discuss with an independent person a complaint relating to

- conduct of the project, or
- your rights as a participant, or
- University policy on research involving human participants,

you should contact the Secretary of the University Research Committee

Telephone (02) 6201 2466, University of Canberra, ACT 2601.

Providing research participants with this information is a requirement of the National Health and Medical Research Council National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans, which applies to all research with human participants conducted in Australia. Further information on University of Canberra research policy is available in University of Canberra Guidelines for Responsible Practice in Research and Dealing with Problems of Research Misconduct and the Committee for Ethics in Human Research Human Ethics Manual. These documents are available from the Research Office at the above address or on the University’s web site at http://www.canberra.edu.au/secretariat/resprac.html (Research Guidelines) http://www.canberra.edu.au/secretariat/ethics/human_ethics/manual.html (Human Ethics Manual)

Postal address: University of Canberra ACT 2601 Australia  Location: Kirinari Street Bruce ACT  
Telephone: +61 (0) 2 6201 5111 Facsimile: +61 (0)2 6201 5999 World Wide Web: http://www.canberra.edu.au