Irma Booyens / Christian M. Rogerson

Responsible tourism in the Western Cape, South Africa: An innovation perspective

Abstract

Responsible tourism incorporates economic, environmental and social imperatives in keeping with sustainable tourism notions. It can be argued that tourism entities, private, public and non-profit alike, need to innovate in order to be competitive from an economic perspective as well as implement environmentally and socially responsible practices, and impact on environmental and social change. This article proposes that responsible tourism can provide a framework for conceptualising and cultivating tourism innovation in the light of sustainability debates. Based on a broader study of tourism innovation in the Western Cape, South Africa, innovation relating to economic, environmental and social practices is examined. The findings point to the widespread implementation of both innovation and environmental practices by tourism enterprises. In addition, social and structural innovations are identified as innovation types which have a particular bearing on responsible tourism. It is argued that local policy initiatives are needed to strengthen innovation for responsible business practices in tourism and thereby to enhance environmental and social change on a larger scale. Overall, the results of this cross-sectoral investigation contribute to discourses on environmental innovation in tourism by identifying it as a prevalent type of tourism innovation which comprises multiple environmentally-friendly practices.

Key words: tourism innovation; responsible tourism; environmentally-friendly practices; social innovation; South Africa

Introduction

Innovation is critical at tourism enterprise level to enhance competitive advantage and performance and correspondingly to ensure business survival in the contemporary global environment (Omerzel, 2016). Innovation by tourism enterprises is shown as economically significant since it enhances the competitiveness of tourism enterprises as well as destinations (Tigu, Iorgulescu & Răvar, 2013; Williams, 2014). Arguably, innovation in tourism should not only be concerned with tourism enterprise level economic viability, but also with the environmental and social sustainability of host destinations and communities (cf. Hall, 2009; Weeden, 2013; Brookes, Altinay & Ringham, 2014). This said, it is observed that whilst tourism innovation is a growing topic of inquiry across tourism and hospitality studies, questions about innovation in relation to sustainability in tourism are neglected (Hall, 2009; Hjalager, 2014; Saarinen, 2014). Among others Spenceley (2008), Leslie (2012) and the World Bank (Christie, Fernandes, Messerli & Twining-Ward, 2013) stress responsible tourism is central to the sustainability of tourism development in sub-Saharan Africa and not least given the enormous challenge of climate change (Hoogendoorn & Fitchett, 2016; Rogerson, 2016). Our analysis addresses an investigatory gap around the nexus of innovation and responsible tourism within African scholarship through an examination of South Africa where responsible tourism is a guiding framework for national tourism development yet only limited research investigations have been undertaken (Hoogendoorn & Rogerson, 2015).

Irma Booyens, School of Tourism & Hospitality, Faculty of Management, University of Johannesburg, South Africa;
E-mail: ibooyens@hsrc.ac.za

Christian M. Rogerson, School of Tourism & Hospitality, Faculty of Management, University of Johannesburg, South Africa;
E-mail: crogerson@uj.ac.za

Responsible tourism principles can be utilised as both a conceptual and policy framework for tourism development (Saarinen, 2014) and also to cultivate innovation. This paper employs responsible tourism as a framework for tourism innovation vis-à-vis responsible tourism production. In other words, innovation is examined with regard to responsible tourism practices by tourism entities. Innovation is broadly defined as the application of new knowledge or the combination of existing knowledge to develop new or significantly improved products, services, processes, organisational methods, marketing practices and/ or the capturing of new markets (cf. Organisation for Economic Co-operation & Development [OECD], 2005). Tourism entities are considered to be innovative in terms of responsible tourism if they exhibit economically sustainable behaviour by introducing innovations or significant improvements to their products, processes or business practices in order to maintain their competitiveness and/ or enhance their socially or environmentally sustainable practices. The article draws upon the empirical findings of research on tourism innovation in the Western Cape. The Western Cape is a leading region for international tourist arrivals in South Africa where policy makers are conscious of the importance of innovation for regional competitiveness and enhanced local economic development (Booyens, 2015, 2016; Grobbelaar, Gwynne-Evans & Brent, 2016). This article analyses the innovation propensity of tourism enterprises with a specific emphasis on environmental, social and structural innovations. For further findings regarding tourism innovation from the Western Cape study consult Booyens and Rogerson (2016a).

Responsible tourism and innovation

The concept of responsible tourism is embedded in debates on sustainability in tourism which have received extensive attention in tourism scholarship (Spenceley, 2008; Lorant, 2011; Leslie, 2012; Saarinen, 2014). This said, responsible tourism is also often intertwined with notions of 'eco', 'alternative', 'new', 'smart' and 'green' tourism (Fennell, 2012; Sharpley, 2013; Weeden, 2013). What these concepts have in common is an emphasis on minimising the adverse impacts of tourism on the environment and host communities; promoting conservation practices; ensuring that tourism is economically sustainable; and, maximising the social benefits of tourism. With respect to social benefits, responsible tourism debates in the global South prioritise pro-poor development impacts, local economic development and poverty alleviation (Spenceley, 2008; Scheyvens, 2012; Eraqi, 2014). Even though responsible and sustainable tourism have overlapping principles and practices Saarinen (2014) argues that there is a contextual difference. He maintains that the responsibility discourse emerges from neoliberal 'self-organising' new governance, corporate social responsibility and consumer behaviour whereby consumers do not necessarily consume less but do so in a responsible manner Saarinen (2014, p. 2). Farmaki, Constanti, Yiasemi and Karis (2014, p. 11) stress that: "Although sustainable and responsible tourism are based on similar pillars – aiming at environmental protection, social welfare and local economic benefits – responsible tourism shifts responsibility towards individuals, organisations and businesses". The emphasis, therefore, is on the 'ethical' behaviour of tourists, tourism enterprises and other role-players in the tourism industry. This underscores the need to understand responsible tourism both from a consumption and production perspective (Saarinen, 2014). Ethical tourists are generally more aware of the social and environmental impacts of tourism and interested in actively engaging with nature and host communities (Farmaki et al., 2014; Natrátil, Pícha & White Baravalle Gilliam, 2016). This signals the emergence of the so-termed 'new' tourists who demand more responsible experience-based forms of tourism which drives innovation by tourism producers (Fennell, 2012; Weeden, 2013). With regard to ethical business behaviour by tourism enterprises, the need to mainstream responsible tourism business practices is highlighted (Weeden, 2013; Brookes et al., 2014). Nevertheless, the concept of

responsible tourism should not merely be regarded as a marketing tool, a method for 'green-washing', or as a niche market but instead should be viewed as a broad-based approach towards sustainable development (Booyens, 2010; Scheyvens, 2012; Eraqi, 2014; Farmaki et al., 2014; Saarinen, 2014). In addition, the focus needs to be extended beyond the economic or 'tourism first' outlook to incorporate social development and environmental protection imperatives (Hall, 2009; Koščak, Colarič-Jakše & Veljokvič, 2014; Saarinen, 2014).

Several economic, environmental and social imperatives underpin innovation for responsible tourism. At the outset innovation is central to creating knowledge and enhancing competition in order to achieve long-term economic progress (Porter, 2008). The presence of competition in a particular market or destination necessitates that enterprises introduce innovations or upgrade their product offerings, processes and business practices continuously in order to stay competitive. Innovation, therefore, drives competitiveness which stimulates further innovation (Omerzel, 2016; Porter, 2008). Both mechanisms of innovation and competition, therefore, contribute to productivity and growth across an economy. In this line of argument, innovation is critical for the competitiveness of tourism firms in a highly competitive global environment in which innovation holds the key to survival, competitiveness and growth (Williams, 2014; Omerzel, 2016). Further, environmental issues are of continued concern in the light of increasing international pressure to address issues of climate change, pollution and environmental degradation (Kajan & Saarinen, 2013; Weeden, 2013; Hjalager, 2014; Saarinen, 2014; Hoogendoorn & Fitchett, 2016). The impact of tourism on the environment is receiving increased global attention with tourism stakeholders responding by improving practices in relation to environmental protection (Fennell, 2012; Hoarau, Wigger & Bystrowska, 2014). It is imperative that tourism entities innovate by introducing environmentally-friendly practices into their operations in order to reduce their impact on the environment (Kajan & Saarinen, 2013; Weeden, 2013; Brookes et al., 2014). Examples of such practices include energy conservation, water conservation, waste management; and utilisation of environment-based or eco-tourism products. Social innovation is related to social entrepreneurship whereby tourism entrepreneurs and business owners are concerned with meeting social needs or addressing social issues (Ahmad, Abdurahman, Ali, Khedif, Bohari & Kibat, 2014; Eraqi, 2014; Sloan, Legrand & Simons-Kaufmann, 2014). Sloan et al. (2014, p. 51) explain that social entrepreneurship is a means of fostering socio-economic development in tourism. This is connected to social innovation when new or approved products, services, measures or procedures are introduced which "simultaneously meet social needs (more effectively than alternatives) and create new social relationships or collaborations" to improve the wellbeing to individuals and communities (Hubert, 2010, p. 24).

Methods

The Oslo Manual is a significant international source which offers guidelines for the collection of enterprise level innovation data (OECD, 2005). The manual can be used as a starting point to measure innovation in tourism (Williams, 2014). This said, there is a need to adapt existing approaches for understanding and measuring innovation in tourism (Camisón & Monfort-Mir, 2012). In this South African study the Oslo Manual innovation definition and typology was applied but adapted with certain questions from the Community Innovation Survey (CIS) questionnaire for a sector-specific tourism innovation survey. The CIS is a harmonised survey, under the auspices of Eurostat, which collects firm level innovation data mostly in European Union member states. The Oslo Manual delineates four specific types of innovation, namely product (or service), process, organisational and marketing innovations. For this study, a fifth category of environmental innovation was added, which represents

an expansion of the Oslo Manual approach. In addition, as certain authors point out there are innovations in tourism which are not picked up by traditional instruments (Camisón & Monfort-Mir, 2012; Williams, 2014), a sixth 'other' (open-ended) category was added to the questionnaire. In accordance, qualitative interviewing and observations were employed to identify those innovations which did not fit the Oslo Manual typology.

The South African National Innovation Survey follows the Oslo Manual approach and uses an adapted version of the CIS in order to ensure cross-country data comparability (Booyens, 2015). Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes are used to classify sectors. However, as there are no SIC codes for the tourism industry as it cross-cuts standard economic sectors, it is difficult to identify tourism enterprises in the data. One alternative is to pursue a sector-specific survey of innovation activities in the tourism industry which was the approach used in this research. Overall, there are few examples of broad-based, cross-sectoral inquiry into tourism innovation since most studies either focus on particular cases of innovation or investigate innovation in a given tourism sector such as accommodation (Booyens, 2015). The strength of the Western Cape research is its approach to capture innovation across tourism sectors in the province. In addition to analysing tourism enterprise level innovation, the approach was extended to examine tourism innovation at the destination or tourism system level. This was an exploratory study which employed mix-methods. The research consisted of a cross-sectional survey of tourism enterprises (N=156) in the Western Cape Province regarding their innovation activities during 2010-2012. In addition, a set of qualitative interviews was included with actors in the regional tourism system (N=11). The actors included representatives from local and provincial government departments; higher education institutions; Destination Marketing Organisations; nature conservation bodies; and regional offices of national tourism associations or agencies. In terms of the sample selection, enterprises and other respondents were identified purposively (cf. Booyens & Rogerson, 2016a). A semi-structured questionnaire was used for the enterprise level survey. Qualitative interview schedules were employed for the tourism system level interviews.

Responsible tourism and innovation in the Western Cape

This section firstly delineates the policy environment for responsible tourism, both nationally and in the Western Cape Province where the adoption of the responsible tourism pilot project is considered to be an innovation driven by the public sector. Key findings, in relation to responsible tourism, from the Western Cape study are outlined secondly.

Responsible tourism: A guiding framework

In South Africa, responsible tourism is regarded as a guiding framework for tourism development and is supported by several national tourism policy frameworks (Spenceley, 2008; Rogerson, 2013). Policy frameworks for responsible tourism in South Africa are not detailed here since they are well documented and analysed elsewhere see Spenceley (2008). Rogerson (2013, p. 344) notes South Africa was the first country in the world to formally adopt 'responsible tourism' as a national policy framework. The emphasis in the local context is on responsible tourism development focussing on economic sustainability and environmental responsibility in addition to pro-poor tourism development centred on poverty alleviation and community development (Spenceley, 2008; Booyens, 2010, Frey & George, 2010; Rogerson, 2013). A policy review observes that scant attention is given in South African tourism policy frameworks to the role of innovation vis-à-vis responsible tourism promotion and development (cf. Booyens, 2015).

At the local policy level the City of Cape Town embraced responsible tourism when it signed the Cape Town Declaration in 2002 after the Earth Summit in Johannesburg (City of Cape Town, 2002). A 2008 study disclosed low levels of responsible tourism practices amongst tourism enterprises in Cape Town (Frey & George, 2010). Responsible business practices include providing better holiday experiences for guests and ensuring good businesses through increased socio-economic benefits and improved natural resource management. Frey and George (2010) observe a mismatch between business owner's attitudes and behaviour. In other words, business owners pay lip service to responsible tourism albeit they are not investing time and money into changing management practices. Factors such as the perceived cost, risk and lack of government support impact on this situation. Nevertheless, responsible tourism is regarded by tourism enterprises as an avenue to enhance their competitiveness and profitability.

During 2009, the City of Cape Town adopted the Responsible Tourism Policy and Action Plan (City of Cape Town, 2009). The Responsible Tourism Partnership with industry stakeholders was formed subsequently to support the promotion and implementation of responsible tourism practices in Cape Town. This discussion about the initiatives of the local and provincial government regarding responsible tourism is based on interviews with stakeholders. One project that followed from the Responsible Tourism Policy and Action Plan is the Responsible Tourism Pilot Project facilitated by the City of Cape Town. Its aim is to establish best practice in terms of social and environmental responsibility practices and reporting. The project has 21 participating firms in the pilot phase and envisaged to be rolled out on a larger scale in future. Challenges with regard to the project include that environmental practices are difficult to measure and monitor, full cooperation from participants is often lacking, and the City has limited resources for monitoring. The City has subsequently partnered with Cape Town Tourism to encourage the wider role out of responsible tourism practices amongst its members.

Although the City of Cape Town has assumed a leadership and facilitation role in the Responsible Tourism Pilot Project, responsible tourism and environmental initiatives are implemented and supported by both the local and provincial governments in the Western Cape. The Responsible Tourism Pilot Project was preceded by the province's Cleaner Production Project. Some of the tourism participants of the Clear Production Project were absorbed by the Responsible Tourism Pilot Project. In addition, as a host city Cape Town initiated 41 Green Goal projects in conjunction with the FIFA World Cup in 2010 which achieved notable success. As a result, the record of Cape Town has been recognised with several awards most notably the 'Best Destination' in the 2009 Responsible Tourism Awards and the 2010 Impumelelo Sustainability Award for contributions to sustainability as part of the Green Goal programme for the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Although systemic relationships between public and private role players have been put in place to promote responsible tourism and much has been achieved as a result of the efforts of local government (with the support of the provincial government), arguably more needs to be done to ensure broad-based uptake of responsible tourism practices in the Cape Town city-region and the Western Cape Province.

Findings from the Western Cape research

The overall empirical findings in relation to tourism innovation in the Western Cape are outlined and followed by a discussion of environmental, social and structural innovations which are considered as particular examples of responsible tourism innovation.

Innovation is observed as widespread in the Western Cape with up to 60% of tourism enterprises considered innovative (Booyens, 2015, 2016; Booyens & Rogerson, 2016a, 2016b). These are enterprises which have implemented new or significantly improved products (or services), processes or business practices (which include responsible tourism practices) during the period under review. It should be

emphasised that the vast majority of tourism innovations in the Western Cape are incremental rather than novel. In other words, only a quarter of tourism firms surveyed introduced innovations that can be considered as novel (i.e. new-to-market; first in South Africa; and world-first innovations). The remainder of enterprises merely introduced incremental improvements (or upgrades) rather than 'new' developments or developments that are only new to their own enterprises.

Table 1
Tourism innovations by category or type*

Innovation category or type	Percentage of all identified innovations
Product (or service)	28.3
Marketing	23.1
Environmental	17.5
Organisational	14.3
Process	8.4
Structural	4.8
Social	3.6

* For definitions and examples on each of the identified innovation types see Booyens and Rogerson, 2016a.

A key finding is that tourism enterprises are active in terms of environmental innovation, the category with the third most innovation activities after product and marketing innovation categories (Table 1). It is demonstrated also that a small number of tourism entities engage in social and structural innovations, 3.6% and 4.8% of all identified innovations respectively. These social and structural innovations are viewed as significant in the light of responsible tourism objectives.

Table 2
Environmentally-friendly practices by tourism enterprises

Environmentally-friendly practice	Percentage of total responses
Energy saving measures	29.1
Waste management (incl. recycling)	23.9
Water saving measures	18.8
Conservation (biodiversity protection)	11.1
Green building	11.1
Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions	6.0

Source: Survey.

Environmentally-friendly practices are considered as innovations in which tourism enterprises have introduced new practices or significant improvements to existing practices during the period under review. As shown on Table 2 the majority of environmentally-friendly practices (i.e. innovations, upgrades and extant practices) consist of energy saving, waste management and water saving measures, followed by conservation, green building and the reduction of carbon footprint. Energy saving measures typically comprise the use of solar panels and geysers, heat pumps, gas, water saving lights and wind turbines. Waste management measures consist of recycling, the safe disposal of hazardous waste, dry toilet systems, bio-digesters, and worm farms to make compost from kitchen waste. Water saving measures include grey water systems, rain water tanks, and methods to minimise water usage. Further practices are purifying water to reduce use of bottled water, using recycled and recyclable products, creating systems for environmental management, printing less, and establishing vegetable gardens. Beyond these measures there are examples of local tourism entities (private, public and non-profit) which are

energetically involved in conservation and maintaining biodiversity. Their efforts focus on minimising the impact of their operations on the environment, especially in the case of attractions, activities and accommodation establishments operating in protected areas. Firms plant indigenous gardens to create habitats for supporting bird and animal life, remove invasive alien plant species, clean rivers, and participate in environmental awareness programmes. Several local tourism transport enterprises use fuel efficient and low emissions vehicles to reduce their carbon footprint. The research reveals that environmental innovations mostly are non-technological and incremental in nature. This said, a few examples of technological innovation in the form of process innovation, which go hand-in-hand with environmental innovation, are identified. An example is the Table Mountain Aerial Cableway (a major attraction in Cape Town) which makes use of technological processes to enable their environmental practices. Yet an historic hotel in Cape Town only makes use of simple, non-technological systems for monitoring resource management as cutting-edge technology is too costly for adoption by this hotel. This finding aligns with Rogerson and Sims (2012) who demonstrate that the age of hotels in South Africa can be a limiting factor in its environmental practices. In this regard, new-build hotels have the advantage of installing new, cutting-edge systems for environmental management. One good practice example is Cape Town's Hotel Verde (see Box I).

Box I
Environmental innovation at the new-built green hotel

Hotel Verde is situated next to the Cape Town International Airport. The hotel stresses its goal to be the 'greenest hotel in Africa'. The most important innovations include a sophisticated heating and ventilation system using geo-thermal heat pumps, as well as a sophisticated Environmental Management System which functions as an interface for the hotel's various systems. Further environmental practices include an on-site grey water recycling system, and on-site compositing system and sorting facility for recycling purposes, and the use of solar panels and wind turbines to generate up to 14% of the hotel's energy. The hotel offers guests incentives for not using air conditioning or having linen washed and towels replaced every day.

Accommodation stands out as the sector with the most environmental innovations, followed by attractions and activities, travel and visitor services, transport services, and catering (Table 3). This result reflects the overall patterns of innovation with accommodation standing out as the leading sector. In addition, large hotels are more dynamic in terms of innovation than smaller accommodation establishments, a finding which confirms that of other South African research large tourism enterprises are more innovative in terms of environmental practices than smaller ones (Rogerson & Sims, 2012; Ismail & Rogerson, 2016). The observed pattern of innovation by tourism sector shifts when considering both structural and social innovations. Now the attractions and activities sector stands out as that with the most innovations followed by accommodation, and travel and visitor services.

Table 3
Disaggregation of enterprise level tourism innovations by sector and type*

Tourism sector	Total innovations per sector (%)	Environ-mental (%)	Structural (%)	Social (%)
Accommodation	39.4	59.1	25.0	22.2
Attractions & activities	28.3	18.2	50.0	55.6
Travel & visitor services	15.1	9.1	16.7	22.2
Transport	9.6	6.8	8.3	0.0
Catering	7.6	6.8	0.0	0.0

*An analysis of all tourism innovations at enterprise level taken together.

It was revealed that both social and structural innovations mostly are implemented by non-profit or government entities wherein profit maximisation is not the main motivation. A few examples of private enterprises with social and structural innovations were captured. Importantly a distinction must be drawn between social innovation and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Social innovation is regarded as new and improved initiatives towards ensuring social benefits and affecting social change over and above tourism enterprises giving ad hoc donations or participation in community initiatives. Accordingly, social innovation is defined as the implementation of new or significantly improved products (or services), process or practices with social benefits. Social innovation often comprises continuous social initiatives which are considered part of core activities of entities that see themselves as responsible tourism operators. In fact, social innovation is, in most cases, driven by motivations of entrepreneurs and owners to be ethical, do the 'right' thing or 'make a difference'. For instance, the managing director of a nature-based firm stressed that:

For us it is about passion, it is about the community, it is about uplifting and empowering people, it is about nature. It is to develop people from the grassroots levels in order to exceed in life. Our firm is a platform or foundation for skills development and [socio-economic] upliftment.

This said, social innovation is mostly driven by public entities and NPOs as part of their core mandate. Western Cape examples of social innovation include museums facilitating skills development and education programmes; one voluntourism operator focused on nature conservation as well as the provision of medical care, education, skills development in impoverished areas as part of their core mandate; and, a craft centre establishing outreach programmes for skills development in arts and crafts. Box II provides a case example of Open Africa which uses a route network to stimulate economic development through tourism towards alleviating poverty in rural parts of Africa.

Box II
The case of Open Africa as an example of social innovation in tourism

Open Africa is a network of self-drive routes throughout South Africa, and also in Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia. They operate as an NPO and use tourism as an economic platform to create and sustain jobs for rural communities in Africa. They have been in existence for 17 years, have 63 routes in the network with 2,400 participating businesses which employ around 27,000 people. They focus on drawing existing tourism establishments into the route initiatives. An Open Africa team develops the route and provides training. Later it hands the initiative over to the community to be managed by a route forum, usually consisting of local business owners. Open Africa operates an innovative model to facilitate social innovation working closely with local municipalities and tourism associations with funding from corporate firms, provincial and national government departments, the South African National Lotto, and the World Bank.

Structural innovations in this investigation are identified as a collaborative form of innovation which coincides with both environmental and social innovations. Structural innovations are implemented by individual enterprises or entities, but more often in collaboration with others. It is demonstrated structural innovations have a broad focus which extends beyond the boundaries of an enterprise and the collaborative activities can result in wider benefits or structural change in a sector, community, local economy or destination. One example of structural innovation is new or significantly improved collaborative or destination marketing initiatives where partnerships between tourism enterprises, and public and non-profit entities exist. A further significant illustration is the institutional promotion of responsible tourism by the City of Cape Town - a regulatory initiative bringing various stakeholders together on a systemic level. Indeed, in the Western Cape systemic relationships exist between public and private role-players with evidence of inter-organisational networking particularly within the Cape Town city-region for promoting responsible tourism.

Conclusion

An imperative of responsible tourism is the need for tourism enterprises to be economically sustainable in order to maintain a competitive advantage and grow their businesses enabling them to create employment opportunities and income generation benefits for local economies. Overall tourism enterprises in the Western Cape are dynamic in terms of innovation which is mainly incremental in nature. In addition, local public and non-profit entities also implement certain environmental, social and structural innovations.

The findings of this cross-sectoral investigation contribute to discourses on environmental innovation in tourism by identifying it as a prevalent type of tourism innovation which comprises multiple environmentally-friendly practices. Although several research studies focus on environmental practices in hotels and accommodation establishments these investigations do not necessarily offer a broad-based view of tourism innovation (Booyens & Rogerson, 2016a). Accommodation is identified as the sector with the highest propensity for environmental innovation. In fact, large accommodation establishments are shown to be more innovative in term of environmental innovations than smaller firms. This finding corresponds with Chan (2011) who points to the slow uptake of environmental practices by smaller hotels and accommodation establishments, whilst other studies show hotel groups were more innovative than independent accommodation establishments in terms of the adoption of environmental practices (Jacob, Carmen & Eugeni, 2010; Rahman, Reynolds & Svaren, 2012; Tigu et al., 2013; Ismail & Rogerson, 2016). In addition, whilst Jacob et al. (2010) observe environmental innovations are mainly process innovations and therefore technological in nature this investigation illustrates that environmental innovations by tourism entities are mostly non-technological and incremental in line with the broad pattern of tourism innovation in the region (Booyens & Rogerson, 2016a, 2016b).

It was revealed that small numbers of tourism entities are engaged in what is described as social and structural innovation. Social and structural innovations are significant from a responsible tourism innovation perspective and contribute to debates on innovation in tourism. Arguably, social innovation goes beyond enterprises simply taking part in CSR initiatives. Fennell (2012) calls for 'more than a surface approach' to ethical and responsible tourism business practices. In fact, it is confirmed that passionate entrepreneurs and business owners are those who implement both ethical business practices and social innovations (Ahmad et al., 2014; Gardiner & Scott, 2014). This motivation underscores the social dimensions of innovation as highlighted by Hall (2009). In the Western Cape experience it is observed that social innovations are mostly implemented by non-profit or public entities. Westley and Antadze (2010, p. 4) emphasise that whilst social innovation does not necessarily involve a commercial interest, it does not preclude it. Indeed, non-profit entities are observed to use tourism as an income generation activity to finance their environmental and/or social initiatives which make up their core mandate. Nevertheless, Westley and Antadze (2010) argue social innovations rarely have a lasting or revolutionary impact on social problems. This said, this research proposes structural innovation has the potential to make a notable contribution to social and/or structural change since it involves activities which transcend a single enterprise or organisation and can influence broader benefits to a given sector, community, local economy or destination on a systemic level. From the Western Cape experience structural innovation is associated with both environmental and social innovation, observed to be collaborative, and engage a number of private and/ public actors. Accordingly, it is important from a policy perspective since governments are expected to play a role in addressing both social and environment issues (Sloan et al., 2008; Hubert, 2010). The promotion of responsible tourism by local government in Cape Town is significantin the light of debates on responsible tourism innovation. Our

findings signal there has been a larger uptake of environmental practices in Cape Town since 2008 when low levels of responsible tourism business practices were recorded in the city (Frey & George, 2010). It is unclear, however, if this is the direct result of efforts by the local government to promote responsible tourism.

In closing, innovation is an underdeveloped research theme in the annals of African tourism scholarship. This paper proposes that responsible tourism can be used as a framework for conceptualising and catalysing tourism innovation. It is demonstrated in the Western Cape tourism economy that innovation on a whole, and environmental innovation more specifically, is widespread. In addition, social and structural innovations are identified as further types of innovation which are significant from a responsible tourism perspective contributing to research on the nexus of responsible tourism and innovation. The Responsible Tourism Pilot Project is one example of structural innovation by a public entity which depends on systemic relationships between public, private and non-profit entities. Notwithstanding these promising signs of progress we argue the need for further improvement and stimulus policy initiatives to strengthen responsible tourism in the Western Cape and South Africa as a whole. In particular, the existing regulatory environment for responsible tourism in South Africa needs to be enhanced (cf. Booyens, 2010; Frey & George, 2010; Rogerson & Sims, 2012). Key policy considerations must be the strengthening of systematic relationships of public-private networking and collaboration around responsible tourism in order to enhance innovation and spread benefits, and the encouragement of further social and structural innovation in tourism by private, public and non-profit entities. From a broader perspective we contend that innovation is an avenue to effect wider benefits and meaningful environmental, social and structural change in tourism. For this to be realised, however, more energetic actions are required from various role players in the local tourism system in order to embed an innovation outlook in the responsible tourism discourse.

References

Ahmad, J. A., Abdurahman, A. Z. A, Ali, J. K., Khedif, L. Y. B., Bohari, Z. & Kibat, S. A. (2014). Social entrepreneurship in ecotourism: an opportunity for fishing village of Sebuyau, Sarawak Borneo. *Tourism, Leisure and Global Change, 1*, 1-39.

Booyens, I. (2010). Rethinking township tourism: Towards responsible tourism development in South African townships. *Development Southern Africa, 27*(2), 273–287.

Booyens, I. (2015). *Innovation and networking in tourism for the competitiveness of the Western Cape regional tourism economy*. PhD thesis, University of Johannesburg, South Africa.

Booyens, I. (2016). Global-local trajectories for regional competitiveness: tourism innovation in the Western Cape. *Local Economy, 31*(1&2), 142-157.

Booyens, I. & Rogerson, C.M. (2016a). Tourism innovation in the Global South: evidence from the Western Cape, South Africa. *International Journal of Tourism Research, 18*(5) 515-524. DOI: 10.1002/jtr.2071.

Booyens, I. & Rogerson, C. M. (2016b). Unpacking the geography of tourism innovation in Western Cape Province, South Africa. *Bulletin of Geography: Socio-Economic Series, 31*,19-36.

Brookes, M, Altinay, L. & Ringham, K. (2014). Successful implementation of responsible business practice. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes, 6*(1), 77-84.

Camisón, C. & Monfort-Mir, V. M. (2012). Measuring innovation in tourism from the Schumpeterian and the dynamic-capabilities perspectives. *Tourism Management, 33*(4), 776-789.

Chan, E. S. W. (2011). Implementing environmental management systems in small- and medium-sized hotels: obstacles. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research, 35*(1), 3-23.

Christie, I., Fernandes, E., Messerli, H. & Twining-Ward, L. (2013). *Tourism in Africa: Harnessing Tourism for Growth and Improved Livelihoods*. Washington DC: The World Bank.

City of Cape Town (2002). *Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism*. Cape Town: City of Cape Town.

City of Cape Town (2009). *Responsible Tourism Policy and Action Plan for the City of Cape Town*. Cape Town: City of Cape Town.

Eraqi, M. I. (2010). Social responsibility as an innovative approach for enhancing competitiveness of tourism business sector in Egypt. *Tourism Analysis, 15*(1), 45-55.

Eraqi, M. I. (2014). Responsible tourism management as an integrated approach for enhancing standards of living of local people in Egypt. *International Journal of Services and Operations Management, 17*(1), 17-34.

Farmaki, A., Constanti, P. Yiasemi, I. & Karis, P. (2014). Responsible tourism in Cyprus: the rhetoric and the reality. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes, 6*(1), 10 – 26.

Fennell, D. (2012). Tourism ethics needs more than a surface approach. In T. V. Singh (Ed), *Critical Debates in Tourism* (pp. 188-198). Bristol: Channel View.

Frey, N. & George, R. (2010). Responsible tourism management: the missing link between business owner's attitudes and behaviour in the Cape Town tourism industry. *Tourism Management, 31*, 621-628.

Gardiner, S. & Scott, N. (2014). Successful tourism clusters: passion in paradise. *Annals of Tourism Research 46*, 171-173.

Grobbelaar, S. S., Gwynne-Evans, N. & Brent, A. C. (2016). From enterprise development to inclusive innovation – A systematic instruments framework for regional innovation support. *African Journal of Science, Technology, Innovation and Development, 8*(2), 223-246.

Hall, C. M. (2009). Tourism firm innovation and sustainability. In S. Gössling, C. M. Hall & D. B. Weber (Eds.), *Sustainable Tourism Futures* (pp. 282-298). New York: Routledge.

Hjalager, A. M. (2014). Disruptive and sustaining innovation: the case of rural tourism. In G. A. Alsos, D. Eide & E. L. Madson (Eds), *Handbook of Research on Innovation in Tourism Industries* (pp. 56-83). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Hoarau, H., Wigger, K. & Bystrowska, M. (2014). Innovation and climate change: the role of network relations and the attitudes of tourism sectors in Svalbard. In G. A. Alsos, D. Eide & E. L. Madson (Eds), *Handbook of Research on Innovation in Tourism Industries* (pp. 303-324). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Hoogendoorn, G. & Fitchett, J. (2016). Tourism and climate change: a review of threats and adaptation strategies for Africa. *Current Issues in Tourism*, available at http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2016.1188893

Hoogendoorn, G. & Rogerson, C. M. (2015). Tourism geography in the global South: new South African perspectives. *South African Geographical Journal*, *97*(2), 101-110.

Hubert, A. (2010). *Empowering people, driving change: social innovation in the European Union*. Available: ec.europa.eu/bepa/pdf/publications_pdf/social_innovation.pdf. [Accessed 21 November 2012].

Ismail, S. & Rogerson, J. M. (2016). Retrofitting hotels: evidence from the Protea Hospitality group of hotels within Gauteng, South Africa. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure 5*(1), 1-14.

Jacob, M., Carmen, F. & Eugeni, A. (2010). Environmental innovation as a competitiveness factor in the Balearic Islands. *Tourism Economics, 16*(3), 755-764.

Kajan, E. & Saarinen, J. (2013). Tourism, climate change and adaptation: a review. *Current Issues in Tourism,16* (2), 167-195.

Koščak, M. Colarič-Jakše, L-M. & Veljokvič, B. (2014). The quest for excellence and a socially responsible approach in the planning process for sustainable tourism development: a case study of Slovenia. *Tourism: An International Interdisciplinary Journal, 62*(2), 189-200.

Leslie, D. ed. (2012). *Responsible Tourism: Concepts, Theory and Practice*. Wallingford: CABI.

Lorant, D. (2011). Tourism ecology: towards a responsible, sustainable tourism future. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes, 3*(3), 210-216.

Navrátil, J., Pícha, K. & White Baravalle Gilliam, V. L. (2016). The interest of visitors to protect natural areas in 'green' accommodation. *Tourism: An International Interdisciplinary Journal, 64*(2), 159-174.

Omerzel, D. G. (2016) A systematic review of research on innovation in hospitality and tourism. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 28* (3), 516-558.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2005). *Oslo Manual: Guidelines for collecting and interpreting innovation data*. Paris: OECD.

Porter, M. E. (2008). *On Competition*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Rahman, I., Reynolds, D., & Svaren, S. (2012). How "green" are North American hotels? An exploration of low-cost adoption practices. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 31*, 720–727.

Rogerson, C. M. (2013). Responsible tourism and local linkages for procurement: South African debates and evidence. *African Journal for Physical, Health Education, Recreation and Dance, 19*(Supplement 2), 336-355.

Rogerson, C. M. (2016). Climate change, tourism and local economic development in South Africa. *Local Economy, 31* (1&2), 322-331.

Rogerson, J. M. & Sims, S. R. (2012). The greening of urban hotels in South Africa: evidence from Gauteng. *Urban Forum, 23*, 391-407.

Saarinen, J. (2014). Critical sustainability: Setting the limits to growth and responsibility in tourism. *Sustainability*, *6*(11), 1-17.

Scheyvens, R. (2012). Pro-poor tourism: is there value beyond the rhetoric? In T. V. Singh (Ed), *Critical Debates in Tourism* (pp. 124-131). Bristol: Channel View Publications.

Sharpley, R. (2013). Responsible tourism: Whose responsibility? In A. Holden & D. Fennell (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Tourism and Environment* (pp. 382-391). London: Routledge.

Sloan, P. Legrand, W. & Simons-Kaufmann, C. (2014). A survey of social entrepreneurial community-based hospitality and tourism initiatives in development countries: a new business approach for industry. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes, 6*(1), 51-61.

Spenceley, A. (ed) (2008). *Responsible Tourism: Critical Issues for Conservation and Development.* London: Earthscan.

Tigu, G., Iorgulescu, M. & Răvar, A. S. (2013). The impact of creativity and innovation in the hospitality industry on customers. *Journal of Tourism Challenges and Trends, 6(*1), 9-34.

Weeden, C. (2013). *Responsible Tourist Behaviour*. London: Routledge.

Westley, F. & Antadze, N. (2010). Making a difference: strategies for scaling social innovation for greater impact. *The Innovation Journal: The Public Sector Innovation Journal, 15*(2), 3-21.

Williams, A. M. (2014). Tourism innovation: products, processes and people. In A. A. Lew, C. M. Hall & A. M. Williams (Eds.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Tourism* (pp. 168-177). Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.