TABLE MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK

Tokai Cecilia Management Framework

Communications Proposal
Objectives

This Communications Plan paves the way for communication and reputation management for South African National Parks (SANParks) Tokai Cecilia Management Framework (TCMF), situated in the Table Mountain National Park (TMNP).

INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS APPROACH

This planned approach combines internal communications with staff, and supports external stakeholder engagement, monitoring and evaluation in relation to the TCMF.

Build a positive identity for TMNP amongst both its internal and external stakeholders to counteract invalid or inaccurate narratives about the TCMF while concurrently promoting its achievements.
This framework of proactive, consistent messaging will:

- position SANParks as contributing to the social capital of South Africa through sustainable management of the conservation of biodiversity and cultural heritage; diverse and responsible tourism; and socio-economic transformation.

- Activate ongoing feedback loops with TCFM stakeholders post submission of the TCFM stakeholder report, (Including the final plan and implementation schedule).

- enable knowledgeable staff participation while creating a sense of ownership and entrenching a culture of service delivery.

- counteract misconceptions and misrepresentations of SANParks and its activities.
Communications needs emerging from working groups

- Communications by SANParks is not pro-active and is seemingly situation dependent.
- For instance, SANParks is effective in communicating on current fire situations within the park, but ineffective in educational awareness regarding fire safety.
- SANParks communications is not always agile enough as approval for the release of statements often takes too long.
- There is perceived lack of transparency by SANParks as many internal policies and decisions are not published online or in the media.
- There’s a lack of trust between the park and the stakeholders who often question the expertise of park officials.
Communications needs continued …

► User groups have a general lack of knowledge regarding the TCMF.

► More information needs to be shared through electronic communications, online campaigns, signage, media statements, video footage etc.

► First encounter with the public is also important; staff need to be trained in customer relations.

► The organisation is in the fortunate position where, in the main, it receives positive media coverage and sentiment; it is however not immune to highly damaging negative social and mainstream media coverage.

► TCMF faces criticism about various issues such as safety and security incidents, fires and lack of maintenance, leading to the public questioning the overall competence of the management of TMNP.

► Relationships between the team responsible for the TCMF and user groups requires ongoing attention and the building of trust.
Communications

In addressing the identified communications needs, there is the intention to combine information dissemination and relationship and trust building with the organisation’s multiple stakeholders.

Elements of the communication to be used during this process:

- Media and Public Relations
- Internal Communications
- Marketing, and promotions support
- Public Participation Processes
- Public information and education campaigns – permitting systems (dog walking, World Heritage status of the TMNP, Cape Floral Kingdom, Fire Management and prevention)
- Signage and Information boards
- Social Media management
- Video footage to support all these functions