

SUID-APRIKAANSE NATUURUNIE : SOUTH AFRICAN NATURE UNION.  
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Departement van Beplanning

oor

Openbare Ontspanning En Die Departement van

Beplanning op die Nasionale Konferensie oor

Openbare Ontspanning

te

Pretoria op 26 April 1968.

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Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to exchange a few ideas with you on the subject of public recreation and the Department of Planning's role in this respect. To ensure that my views are interpreted correctly it is necessary to be clear as to what I understand by the term public or open air or outdoor recreation. Here I associate myself with the definition by J.A. van der Merwe namely that open air recreation is the utilization of the outdoors environment for pleasure and welfare.

This can vary from the passive enjoyment of the winter sun in a private yard to participation in a rugby match or the journeying of many miles to tourist attractions such as the Kruger National Park. Open air recreation activities can take place in virgin areas or in a man-made nature park. In many cases the natural environment is totally ousted by facilities such as at sports grounds and municipal swimming baths.

Open air recreation embraces all those activities where man's spiritual and physical powers are renovated and refreshed.

The degree of recreation which these activities provides,

depends upon certain prerequisites such as personal taste and preference, as well as the daily routine activities of the person. It is, however, important that all factors must work in concert so that the activities can be enjoyed in comfort, conveniently and without irritation.

The necessity of recreation for the working man is generally realised and is an important aspect of social welfare and health, hence the range of rules, regulations and laws which make it possible for employees to obtain the necessary free time for recreation.

As recreation can therefore be obtained outside the dwelling area and especially for the townsman, outside the polluted city air, this asset is so much more valuable. The urge for recreation in the open air is thus noticed more and more among the ever increasing urban populations.

By open air recreation activities I therefore understand such activities as recreational or pleasure journeys, viewing and studying scenic sights, picnicking, camping, walking, mountaineering, horse riding, swimming, boating, angling, hunting, skiing, sports activities i.e. all organised games, as well as certain forms of gardening.

I have never been quite certain as to where the exact dividing line between recreation and tourism lies. To me the one is part of the other.

Thomas L. Burton writes that the term outdoor recreation embraces a large number of diverse pursuits; it can be divided in general terms, into two main kinds; on the one hand, the annual holiday, for which people travel over relatively long distances and stay away from home at least overnight; and, on the other hand, the day and part-day outing, usually involving travel radius of home. The main difference between these two



classifications lies in the need for separate accommodation for annual holiday-makers, but not for day trippers.

For several years now, there has been a growing awareness in a number of Western Countries concerning the current and potential growth of participation in outdoor recreational pursuits, and of the effects this is likely to have on the use of land and other resources. In the United States of America, this led to the appointment of joint Presidential Congressional Commission (O.R.R.R.C.) and whose 28 volume report "Outdoor Recreation for America" was published in 1962. In Sweden it led to the appointment of the Commission to Review the Resources for Outdoor Recreation, the first volume of whose report was published in 1964. In Britain, it has led to the publication of a growing number of reports and articles from various official and unofficial sources. The contents of these reports illustrate some significant similarities and differences in the patterns of outdoor recreational development between the three countries.

Unfortunately the available statistical information for the various countries cannot be compared directly as the surveys were not in every case of the same nature. In one instance the survey covered only one week-end, in another country a much longer period etc.

In general terms, participation in all forms of outdoor recreation is higher in America and Sweden than in Britain - evidence, perhaps: of the higher real per capita incomes in the former countries. But, in all three countries, the most popular activity is driving for pleasure; over 70% of the total population in the United States and Sweden, and over 50% in Britain during a Whitsun holiday period. The most popular other outdoor pursuits in the three countries a few years ago, as well as in the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging area for which a five percent survey was carried out over one week-end

during 1963, were as follows:- swimming, fishing, camping hiking and horseback riding. Differences in numbers participating were probably due, at least in part, to the differences in the climates of the countries.

It is probably safe to assume that the greatest increase in outdoor recreation in the Western Countries today, is in the following fields or aspects:- caravan parks, pleasure rides, holiday houses, motor boats, picnicking and camping.

Perhaps the most striking feature to emerge from the location of outdoor recreational resources - particularly land - and the distribution of the largely urban population. In America, it was found that public areas designated for outdoor recreation include one-eighth of the total land of the country, but for reasons of location or management, much of the vast acreage nominally designated for recreation is now not available for public recreation use. In Sweden a substantial part of the urban population is lacking a series of important facilities within easy reach. In Britain there is, also, a very distinct imbalance in the distribution of the available public recreation areas and the total population; the supply ranges from only 20 acres per 1,000 persons in the East Midlands region to as much as 150 acres per 1,000 persons in Wales and the West Midlands.

The conclusion which derives from these studies is, then, that the future development of outdoor recreation is primarily dependent upon two variables; first, the location of outdoor recreation resources in relation to the location of the potential users which is to a large extent the urban population, and second, the ease of access from one to the other. Unless facilities are provided in the required places, and unless access is made relatively easy, there will be a growing



disequilibrium between outdoor recreation demands and the supplies of resources and facilities to satisfy them.

Recreation resources might be called the "raw materials" of outdoor recreation. They are those natural and cultural features which appeal to the human senses and improve the physical and spiritual well-being of the individual.

At first thought, the term "recreation resources" brings to mind opportunities for activities such as picnicking, boating, fishing hunting and camping. In the more fundamental sense, however, the non-urban recreation resources with which we are dealing are much more than suitable settings for physical activity; they appeal to all or any number of our senses. In the long run their value to an individual and their significance of a nation lie in those qualities which provide mental stimulation, inspiration, satisfaction, and appreciation, of events that have gone before. The outdoor space in the country is more than a setting for physical activity; its chief recreation value is derived from for example an array of wild flowers, the sound of a nearby stream or the sound of the sea or the sight of a wild animal walking along the roadside in the game park.

So, too, a quiet stroll over the grounds of yesterday's frontier outpost or a tour through our early history sites enables one to reconstruct and, in some degree, relive the adventures and varied experiences of our forefathers. Telling the story of our cultural heritage through such means develops in South Africans of all ages an understanding of our country's background and history and brings to life a sense of national pride.

The most fundamental recreational resources are those supplied by nature in climate which includes water, geologic character, and plant and animal life, all of which provide

vital interest and scenic quality.

We have an abundance of these potential recreation resources in the Republic. I do not wish to describe them in any detail but in order to obtain an over-all picture of outdoor recreation in South Africa and the role the Department of Planning plays in this respect, I shall name a few.

With reference to the South African flora and fauna, more than 19,000 different species of plants have been recorded. This figure includes some 750 species of trees, notably the giant yellowwood, stinkwood, white elder and other hardwoods, and the baobab. The Republic has more than 200 species of mammals, about 850 species of birds, 300 species of reptiles and over 100 species of frogs while there are more than 1,300 varieties of fish in the coastal waters and rivers.

Nature conservation is being practised in our National Parks and nature reserves. Each of the eight National Parks has been proclaimed for a specific purpose e.g. the Kruger National Park for its Lowveld flora and fauna, the Kalahari Gemsbok Park as a home for migratory game etc. The Provincial Administrations, and their municipalities and Divisional Councils; the Department of Forestry with 67 nature reserves, the Department of Industries through its Division of Sea Fisheries, the Department of Water Affairs and in some cases the private sector, play a role in nature conservation.

Of the popular drives and some other recreational areas and resorts the following are the most important:-

The Garden Route; the Summit Route; the Transkei and the Wild Coast; the Natal sub-tropical coastal strip; the Drakensberg; hot water and mineral springs of which South Africa has at least eighty; waterfalls - the Augrabies Falls, Tzitza falls near Umtata, Magwa Falls near Port St. Johns and Howick Falls are



fine examples; wild flowers, such as the Namaqualand daisies, the National Botanical Gardens at Kirstenbosch, the flower gardens of Caledon, the Karoo Garden at Worcester, the Wild Flower Park at Darling and Brummeria Park in Pretoria.

Even the cities and many of the towns have a wide range of recreation facilities and tourist attractions.

There are a great number of monuments and places of historical interest. Some of the most important of these are also in the cities and towns.

With its sunny climate, long coastline and rich fishing grounds, South Africa is truly an angler's paradise. It is not surprising that angling both in the sea and rivers or dams is one of the most popular forms of recreation in the country.

The final group of recreation resources I would like to mention are the archaeological and anthropological resources.

South Africa is world-renowned for its relics of life in past ages. Limestone caves in the Transvaal are yielding a unique record of early human history. Stone implements made by primitive people have been found at sites all over the country. Numerous Bushman rock paintings and engravings are found in various parts of the country.

Teen hierdie agtergrond van die ontspanningsbeeld in die algemeen en wat die vernaamste ontspanningshulpbronne is, wil ek nou graag kortliks aan u skets watter belang die Departement van Beplanning daarby het en hoe dit gekom het dat die Departement ook aktief daarmee gemoeid is.

Voor die totstandkoming van die huidige Departemente van Sport en Ontspanning en van Toerisme het die destydse Raad vir die Ontwikkeling van Natuurlike Hulpbronne, die voorganger van die Departement van Beplanning, tereg belanggestel in ontspanning, as 'n potensiële hulpbron.

In die omvattende studie van die Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging-gebied was ontspanning een van die eerste aspekte wat aandag geveerg het. Moontlik is die saadjie van die Departement se belangstelling in hierdie interessante veld, daar geplant. Ek kom later terug na hierdie ondersoek.

Intussen was daar ook ander instansies wat begin belangstel het in ontspanning op 'n streeks- of selfs 'n nasionale grondslag. Die toenemende behoefte aan ontspanningsgebiede is tewens al etlike jare gevoel.

Aanvanklik is 'n Interdepartementele Komitee onder beskerming van die destydse Departement van Onderwys, Kuns en Wetenskap in die lewe geroep om, onder andere, aan die volgende aspekte aandag te skenk:-

- (a) die dringende behoefte aan openbare ontspanningsgeriewe, veral met die oog op die toekoms;
- (b) die behoefte aan 'n gekoördineerde nasionale plan van optrede en die formulering van Staatsbeleid in hierdie verband vir Ministeriële oorweging; en
- (c) die noodsaaklikheid van 'n landswye opname van potensiële ontspanningsgebiede.

Tydens 'n Administrateurskonferensie wat in 1963 in Pretoria gehou is, is besluit dat die Sentrale Regering in kennis gestel word dat die konferensie in beginsel aanvaar: "Dat 'n gekoördineerde nasionale plan vir openbare ontspanning as 'n baie belangrike vereiste erken sal word. Dit sou beteken dat daar 'n sentrale organisasie sal moet wees om hom te beywer vir die beplanning van ontspanning op 'n nasionale grondslag."

Na die totstandkoming van die Departement van Beplanning in 1964 is besluit dat die Departement van Beplanning die aangewese instansie was om die hele aangeleentheid verder te hanteer, maar die toestand was nooit kristalhelder nie.

Intussen is die Departement van Sport en Ontspanning geskep, en dit het duidelik geblyk dat die kwessie van ontspannings-  
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beplanning binne die jurisdiksie van hierdie Departement val.

Kort na die totstandkoming van die Departement van Sport en Ontspanning het 'n komitee die saak nagegaan om te bepaal watter belang die Departement van Beplanning nog by die saak sou hê. Dit was duidelik dat terwyl ontspanning en ontspanningsfasiliteite veral, die belang van die Departemente van Sport en Ontspanning en van Toerisme sowel as die Provinsiale Administrasies is, daar tog verskeie ander Departemente is wat ook daardeur geraak word. Die Departement van Beplanning het nie belang by die interne beplanning en ontwikkeling van ontspanningsoorde nie maar by die oorhoofse ruimtelike aspekte, gesien binne 'n Nasionale en streeksverband. Sy belangstelling lê dus in die beskikbaarheid van ruimte vir ontspanning beide in die hede en in die toekoms en in die aanwysing van ontspanningsoorde in verhouding tot ander grondgebruike. Verder het die Departement van Beplanning ook nog met die ontspanningspotensiaal van verskillende gebiede te make in soverre dat daardie potensiaal doeltreffend benut kan word om streeksontwikkeling te stimuleer.

In kort, terwyl spesialiserte Departemente en die Provinsiale Administrasie verantwoordelik is vir die implementering van beleid en die skepping van fasiliteite, moet daar ook voorsiening gemaak word vir ontspanning in gidsplanne vir oorhoofse ontwikkeling van spesifieke gebiede. Laasgenoemde is 'n funksie van fisiese beplanning.

'n Voorbeeld hiervan is die voorsiening vir ontspanning in 'n algemene ontwikkelingsplan vir die Oranjerivier-ontwikkelingsprojek. In hierdie geval word die fasiliteite deur die twee betrokke Provinsiale Administrasies of onder hulle toesig, voorsien. Die betrokke Hulpkomitee van die Adviserende Raad vir die O.R.P. het egter die beoogde ontspanningsterreine uitgesoek en gereserveer vir toekomstige gebruik deur die onderskeie volksgroepe.

Ten einde die ontspanningspotensiaal van ons land behoorlik te benut, word sekere basiese gegewens benodig. Hier dink mens, behalwe die studies wat ek vroeër genoem het, aan goeie opnames soos byvoorbeeld "A Survey Of The Recreational Resources Of The Colorado River Basin" asook "Recreation Today And Tomorrow In The Missouri River Basin, beide deur die "United States Department of The Interior, National Park Service"; "Open Space For Urban America" deur die Departement van Behuising en Stedelike Ontwikkeling; "Land And Water For Recreation" in die "Resources For The Future" - reeks en talle ander.

Ons moet erken dat ons inligting op eie bodem oor die onderwerp nog baie gebrekkig is. Dit is vir my 'n duidelike aanduiding van die behoefte aan 'n Departement van Sport en Ontspanning. Behalwe die goeie werk van 'n paar outomobiel-assosiasies en petrolmaatskappye is daar nog geen sistematiese opname van die meeste ontspanningsoorde, ook dié in privaat besit, gemaak nie. Dit is ook 'n belangrike funksie van die Departement van Sport en Ontspanning. Ons het egter al 'n goeie begin gemaak met studies in hierdie rigting en ek is seker dat vele sal volg. Belangstelling in navorsing in opelugontspanning vloei hier, net soos oorsee, voort uit 'n bewuswording van toenemende drukte op ontspanningsoorde.

Die beweging tot meer navorsingswerk in dié verband is nog jonk en vloei onder andere voort uit die aktiwiteite van die Suid-Afrikaanse Natuur Unie. R.W.J. Opperman se pamflet "Our vanishing Heritage" in 1959 asook Prof. Frank F. Brockman se besoek aan Suid-Afrika in 1961 en sy daaropvolgende verslag "Outdoor Recreation in Relation to Nature Conservation in South Africa"; die "Natal North Coast Survey" deur R.A. Pistorius, die verslag oor die Opelug potensiaal van sekere



Staatsgrond in die Republiek van Suid-Afrika deur M.E. Jooste en J.D. Venter en die Meestersgraad proefskrif ,, 'n Geografiese Studie Van Opelugontspanning in Suid-Transvaal" deur J.A. van der Merwe is baanbrekerswerk. Laasgenoemde studie het die basis gevorm van die omvattende ondersoek na Opelug ontspanning vir Blankes In Die Pretoria- Witwatersrand- Vereenigingstreek deur 'n Streekkomitee van die destydse Raad vir die Ontwikkeling van Natuurlike Hulpbronne. Hierdie modelstudie het ingesluit 'n analise van die ontspanningstruktuur binne die hele streek, asook 'n metodiese beskrywing van die bestaande ontspanningsoorde. Klem het geval op die ontspanningspatroon van die streek asook die onderskeie stadsgebiede; ontspanning by buitestedelike bevolking, deelname van die volgesin aan opelugontspanning; ontspanningspatrone van woonhuis- en woonstelbewoners; ontspanningspatrone van inwoners van meer gegoede en minder gegoede woonbuurtes en die invloed van motorbesit op die ontspanningspatroon. Die ondersoek het verder aspekte behandel soos drukte op ontspanningsoorde, die ekonomiese aspekte van ontspanning soos byvoorbeeld die vraag na en aanbod van ontspanningsproduk en evaluasie van opelugontspanningsoorde. Verder is aandag geskenk aan verskeie aspekte ten opsigte van die water byvoorbeeld besoedeling, bilharzia, fluktuasie van watervlak in damme en riviere, toeganklikheid tot wateroppervlaktes, konflikte tussen ontspanning en ander gebruike van damwaters ens. Ten slotte het die verslag sekere aanbevelings ingehou oor 'n plan vir opelugontspanning in die streek - iets wat nou die aandag vandie betrokke owerhede geniet veral ten opsigte van die beoogde Suikerbosrandnatuurreservaat.

'n Verdere bydrae deur die Departement van Beplanning ten opsigte van opelugontspanning is die gedeelte Saldanha- baai- Langebaanstrandmeergebied is reeds ver gevorder.

Ek het reeds genoem dat die ontwikkeling van die ontspannings-  
potensiaal in sekere gevalle veel kan bydra tot die algemere

ontwikkeling van 'n streek. Dit is veral belangrik en dit kan 'n sterk lokmiddel wees in die verafgeleë gebiede. Om hierdie rede stel die Departement van Beplanning daarin belang omdat die ontwikkeling van doeltreffende ontspanningsoorde kon bydra om 'n gebied aantreklik te maak en dus sy vestigingspotensiaal te verhoog- wat op sy beurt weer kan bydra om die desentralisasieproses van alle funksies in die land sover prakties voordelig, uit te voer en te laat slaag. Die Departement hou dus in 'n toenemende mate 'n oog op hierdie belangrike bydraende faktor.

'n Voorbeeld hiervan is Richardsbaai. Richardsbaai is gekies as 'n groeipunt, daar gaan 'n hawe kom en ontwikkeling sal ongetwyfeld plaasvind. Een van die maatskaplike vestigingsprobleme is egter die streek se klimaat. Dit is noodsaaklik dat die gebied so aantreklik moontlik gemaak word vir diegene wat daar moet woon asook vir toeriste. Gelukkig beskik Richardsbaai oor 'n groot potensiaal vir ontspanning wat hoofsaaklik op water toegespits kan word. Ontspanning is dus 'n aspek wat deeglike aandag sal geniet by die beplanning van die gebied.

Meneer die Voorsitter, ek volstaan met hierdie paar gedagtes. Graag wil ek die Suid-Afrikaanse Natuurunie en veral die Departement van Sport en Ontspanning en ander betrokke instansies verseker van die Departement van Beplanning se besef van die toenemende waarde van openbare ontspanning met al sy fesette. Die Departement sal graag sy bydrae maak op sy spesifieke terrein asook in medewerking met ander belanghebbendes.

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