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Report on the Development of the System of Tourist Entrance Fees and/or Alternative Schemes of Revenue Generation



UNDP/GEF project "Catalyzing Financial Sustainability of Georgia's
Protected Areas System" (00070382)
Testing site-level revenue generation mechanisms in Tusheti PAs

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The views expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations or UNDP.

Abbreviations Used

APA	Agency for Protected Areas
CAD	Canadian Dollar
GEL	Georgian Lari
GEF	The Global Environment Facility
NACRES	The Center for Biodiversity Conservation and Research
TPAs	The Tusheti Protected Areas
UNDP	The United Nations Development Program

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1 Introduction

The funding for Georgia's system of protected areas, including the Tusheti Protected Areas, from the state budget has increased significantly since 2003. In spite of this, the existing annual budget fails to ensure full-fledged management of the protected areas and effective implementation of different programs. The Tusheti Protected Areas are one of the largest and, at the same time, one of the most complex protected areas of Georgia, and their full functioning requires much more funds. For this reason, it is obvious that, even with the most optimistic expectations for increasing state funding and external assistance (of donors and partner organizations), the Tusheti Protected Areas need to maximize their own revenues to achieve financial sustainability.

The main source of revenues for protected areas is, of course, the visitor who pays a certain sum directly or indirectly for the benefit of a protected area. When making a direct payment, visitors buy an entrance ticket and other items (e.g. souvenirs) or services directly from the protected area. In the indirect mode of payment, the sum paid by visitors reaches the protected area in the form of concession fees. Protected areas can also generate their own revenues by other methods which are not connected with tourism. Examples of these are fees for conducting scientific research, different ways for cooperating with the private sector, for example, green marketing (unlike tourism, in the latter case, income is also received from such "users" who are far from a protected area and may have never been there), supporters' donations (e.g. through friends' associations), etc. To achieve financial sustainability, any protected area, obviously, needs to make use of every possible way of generation of revenues and to diversify these ways as much as possible. This, in general, is a necessary precondition for adaptation to generally changing environment.

One of the ways of generating alternative revenues may be the creation of a tax-exempt financial mechanism – the so-called Tusheti Development Fund¹. This fund must be an independent entity. It can serve as a collection point of donations and revenues generated by different methods (e.g. grants) which will then be used for the development of tourism. The Fund's management can include representatives of both the Park Authorities and the local government, since tourist activities in Tusheti include both the national park and the protected landscape, and the latter is managed by the local government. The governing body will make strategic decisions on the distribution and allocation of the funds for the development of Tusheti. However, the issues of institutional setup and operation of this fund are yet to be settled.

2 Ways of generating revenues and analysis of the existing situation

In relation to the Tusheti Protected Areas, at this stage, it is appropriate to consider the ways of generating revenues from tourism. (However, it would also be desirable to take certain steps in the direction of other alternatives, for example, green marketing, so that certain foundations are laid for the future.²) As we are dealing with a protected area, it is obvious that we can only talk about

¹ Preliminary report: „Tusheti Development Fund“, N. Saakashvili, September 2010, GEF/UNDP

² See a report prepared in the framework of the present project, "Workshops and Meetings for Facilitating Establishment of Partnerships between the Small Companies and Locals," NACRES 2010 (UNDP/GEF)

sustainable tourism that will not upset the ecological balance. Sustainable tourism fundamentally differs from consumptive tourism which harms the environment and often leads to total destruction.

The implementation of such “strictly environmental”, nature-oriented tourism, or ecotourism, is very difficult in real life, since humans’ entry into the wilderness already implies direct contact with the nature, which inevitably exerts certain influence on the environment. For this reason, the foundations of successful tourism lie in minimum impact on the environment and in ensuring that touching the nature is justified from the economic and social points of view both for tourists and the local population.

Impact on the nature is directly connected with the local socio-economic conditions and influences the local population’s readiness to get involved in tourist activities. Thus, it is important to maintain biodiversity and find ways to use natural resources in a non-consumptive manner, which will be acceptable for the local population from social and economic points of view. It is possible to achieve this if ecotourism develops in the right direction and long-term and sustainable mechanisms of generating revenues are introduced.

2.1 Concessions

When the construction of the Park Headquarters was completed, it was decided that the Park Authorities would offer tourists guest house accommodations, meals, guides, and other services for a certain fee. But this turned out to be quite difficult to ensure. On the one hand, it is difficult for the staff to combine this responsibility with their main duties, and, on the other hand, it was made very difficult to organize the service of guides (due to a legislative change to the rule of state procurement, the Agency of Protected Areas now has to purchase the service of guides through a tender on the scale of the entire system, which is practically impossible).

Nowadays, it is highly desirable to issue concessions on guest house accommodations and cafeterias, which will generate annual revenues for the park’s budget and, also, decrease the portion of the state funding that is spent on the upkeep and maintenance of infrastructure.

In the framework of the same project, wildlife watching tourist routes will be developed and piloted in Tusheti. In the future, it is desirable to issue concessions on these services as well.

2.2 Entrance fees

The first attempt to establish an entrance fee for foreign and Georgian tourists in Tusheti was made in 2007. This attempt turned out to be unsuccessful. Georgians who had never paid a separate fee to enter Tusheti were unwilling to buy tickets. In addition, it was difficult to differentiate between visitors and people hailing from Tusheti who were going to their villages to spend the summer. Tour companies and local population also expressed serious discontent. For this reason, the entrance fee was abolished altogether for all tourists, including foreigners. As a result, the park was unable to receive a potential income of thousands of lari.

In 2010, in the framework of the same project,³ we conducted interviews with foreign tourists who had entered the Tusheti Protected Areas to find out their ideas and opinions. It was found out that foreign tourists did not mind paying an entrance fee of GEL 20-30 if, in return, they had the opportunity to see Tusheti's unique nature, contribute to its protection, and, at the same time, use improved camp sites and tracks, good maps, and other information materials. Most of the tourists were not surprised by the fact that there are entrance fees in national parks worldwide: in some places, these are just token fees, while in others they reach several hundreds of dollars. In order to find out visitors' ideas and opinions and reveal other important issues, it is important that they are interviewed using a special questionnaire. Based on the results of the interviews, it is possible to evaluate the work of the staff, the quality of tourism infrastructure, local trends, etc. At the same time, at this stage, the questionnaire should include questions that will help us in determining the presumable price of the entrance ticket and creating the payment system. After the system of entrance tickets has been put in place, obviously, such questions will no longer be necessary and they can be replaced with questions that will reveal visitors' opinions about the existing ticket price and the payment system (a sample questionnaire is given in Appendix 1).

According to preliminary information, several Georgian tour operators that organize tours to the Tusheti Protected Areas have assessed the issue of introduction of entrance tickets positively.⁴ However, in their opinion, together with introduction of the entrance fee, it is necessary to improve the service and provide additional services. The tour operators also noted that they must know about the introduction of entrance tickets one or two years in advance, in order to take it into account in their pricing decisions and notify foreign operators with which they cooperate of this fee in a timely manner. It is desirable to study the opinions of tour operators in more detail. It is possible to do it using a special questionnaire and/or through interviews. This study will help us verify the preliminary information and ascertain other important details, which will enable us to better plan the piloting of entrance tickets in Tusheti (a sample questionnaire is given in Appendix 2).

Remarkably, there is some doubt that the introduction of entrance fees may decrease the tourist flow, which will damage the local tourism sector. Tourists may prefer going to Svaneti or Kazbegi, for example, where they won't have to pay a fee to enter the area. But, in general, many stakeholders support the idea of introducing entrance tickets for foreigners, since everyone realizes that additional revenues will contribute to better organization of tourist activities and improvement of protection.

Indeed, additional sums generated from the sale of entrance tickets are necessary to ensure the financial sustainability of the protected area and introduce all aspects of management successfully, as well as to create tourism infrastructure and improve the service. But a tourist who pays money for a ticket already expects certain infrastructure and services. Thus, in an ideal situation, the introduction of entrance tickets should be preceded by a one-time investment to set up improved camp sites, tracks, and signposts. For 2012, the authorities of the Tusheti protected landscape are

³ Sub-plan for Tourism Development and Marketing for Tusheti Protected Area Complex, NACRES 2011 (UNDP/GEF)

⁴ Sub - Plan for Tourism Development and Marketing for Tusheti Protected Area Complex, NACRES 2011 (UNDP/GEF)

planning to set up camp sites and start the rehabilitation of the village of Dartlo. In spite of this, naturally, it is impossible to achieve radical improvement of the tourism infrastructure and solution of all the issues during 2012. But with correct planning and advance preparation, it is possible to pilot entrance tickets even with the existing infrastructure and the current level of service, the more so that Tusheti and its untapped nature, its natural, semi-natural, and cultural landscapes, etc., are, in themselves, a tourist attraction for which visitors are going to pay money.

Note: While preparing this report, we asked the National Tourism Agency and the Agency of Protected Areas if there was a document (or documents) that ruled out the introduction of an entrance fee for foreign tourists on the protected areas of Tusheti or any other region. As we found out, no such document exists. However, this issue may need further examination.

There is an extensive experience of operating the system of entrance tickets to national parks in the US where entrance fees are in place in almost all the national parks. The system of entrance tickets in protected areas is less common in Europe. On the other hand, the national parks of Africa, India, the Galapagos Islands, and many other countries that have the status of a world heritage site have a well-developed and established ticketing system in which the price of the ticket is differentiated according to the age and/or nationality of the visitor. In the Appendix, we give a brief review of the ticket prices and the ticketing system based on examples of different countries of the world (see Appendix No. 3).

Forecast of revenues generated from the sale of entrance tickets

The recent years saw a sharp increase in the number of visitors to Tusheti (see Figure 1 and Figure 2 below).

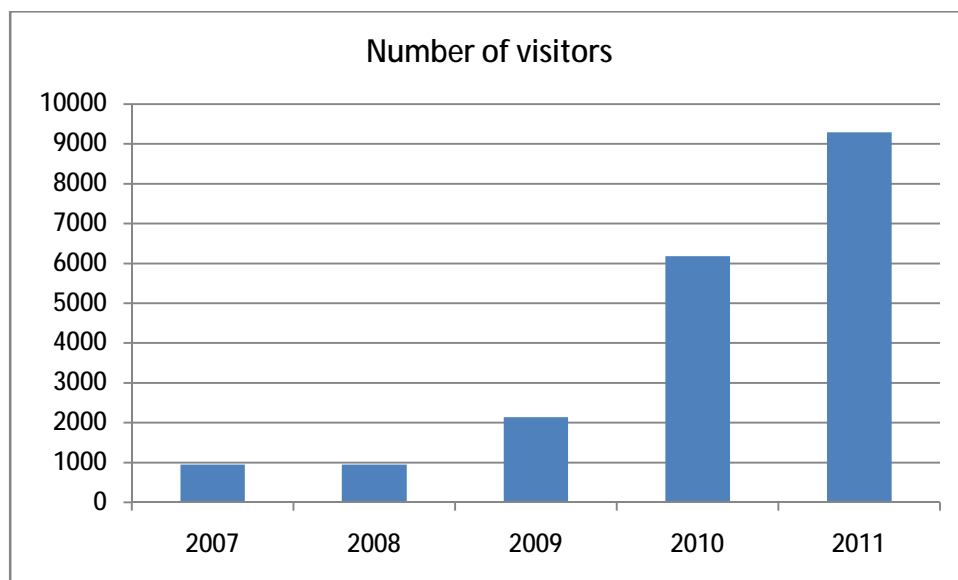


Figure 1: The number of tourists on the Tusheti Protected Areas in the years 2007-2011

In 2010, Tusheti was visited by 6,185 visitors of whom 3,011 were foreigners and 3,174 were Georgians, which can be expressed in percentages in the following way: foreigners – 48.7%, Georgians – 51.3%.

In 2011, the number of visitors grew by almost 50% (to 9,294 visitors). Of these, 56.5% were foreigners, while 43.5% were Georgians.⁵ These data confirm the projection made in the previous years that the number of visitors could increase to 10,000.⁶

In 2012 and beyond, the number of tourists will presumably increase even more or, in the worst case, remain the same (a 0% growth). However, based on the dynamics of the recent years, we can expect at least a 20% increase in the number of visitors (or about 11,000 visitors). It is also expected that the percentage composition of foreign and Georgian citizens will remain about the same (about 50/50).

Accordingly, in the case of a 0% to 20% increase, the number of visitors for the 2012 season will be from 9,000 to 11,000, and about 50% of them will again be foreign tourists. According to this presumption, it is possible to discuss different schemes and theoretical variants (scenarios) of the ticket price. For illustration purposes only, below we give projections of annual revenues generated by the Tusheti Protected Areas through ticket sales according to two potential scenarios:

Scenario 1: The price of entrance ticket for foreign citizens – GEL 40, for Georgians – a voluntary fee of GEL 40 (which presumably only 20% of Georgian visitors will pay).

Annual revenues: From foreign visitors	GEL 180-220 thousand
Annual revenues: Georgian visitors (only 20% will pay)	GEL 36-44 thousand
<i>Total</i>	GEL 216-264 thousand

Scenario 2: The price of entrance ticket for foreign citizens – GEL 20, for Georgians – a voluntary fee of GEL 20 (which presumably only 20% of Georgian visitors will pay).

Annual revenues: From foreign visitors	GEL 90-110 thousand
Annual revenues: Georgian visitors (only 20% will pay)	GEL 18-22 thousand
<i>Total</i>	GEL 108-132 thousand

Apart from these, it is obviously possible to discuss other scenarios as well. In the first scenario, the ticket price – GEL 40 – was suggested by a foreign consultant of the project, Olaf Malver, who, accordingly, thinks that this price should be acceptable for foreign visitors.⁷ However, GEL 40 may be

⁵ Source: APA

⁶ Sub - Plan for Tourism Development and Marketing for Tusheti Protected Area Complex, NACRES 2011 (UNDP/GEF)

⁷ Sub - Plan for Tourism Development and Marketing for Tusheti Protected Area Complex, NACRES 2011 (UNDP/GEF)

too much for a voluntary fee for Georgian citizens. For accurate accounting of the generated sums and in order to avoid potential distrust on the part of Georgian citizens, it is advisable that payment of the voluntary fee be made in the form of buying a ticket. (Another option would be installing donation boxes, which can be followed by equivocal reaction from Georgian visitors. In this case, accounting of the received sums may also be difficult.) In order to cover different segments of Georgian visitors as much as possible (according to their purchasing capacity), it may be useful to print tickets with different nominal values (e.g. GEL 5, GEL 10, GEL 20, and GEL 40) for Georgian citizens. In this way, Georgian visitors will have the freedom to choose the amount of the voluntary fee. However, this (printing tickets with different nominal values) may be impractical. After the appropriate preparatory works and studies have been done, it will be possible to develop concrete recommendations which will be reflected in our next report.

Proceeding from this, we can conclude that entrance tickets will be a very important source of generating revenues for the Tusheti Protected Areas. Naturally, introduction of entrance tickets requires additional administrative and technical resources, which calls for certain initial “investments” both from the purely financial and capacity building points of view. However, it is quite justified to bear these expenses in the light of the expected increase in revenues.

In spite of this, it is highly noteworthy that the number of foreign tourists on the Tusheti Protected Areas may fluctuate from year to year, and this fluctuation will be connected both with internal and external factors; the main internal factor will be the quality of service, while the major external factor will be the political situation (we mean not only the real situation, but also how it is perceived and assessed by foreign consumers).

Tourism may be the most important source of revenues, but it should not be considered as the only source. For the future, it is necessary to diversify revenues as much as possible, which will significantly improve the financial sustainability of the protected area.

3 The strategy of generation of revenues from tourism

3.1 General goal

To ensure long-term and sustainable revenues for the Tusheti Protected Areas from tourism activities.

3.2 Strategic directions

- Creation of a simple and easily manageable system of payment of fees for different types of tourist activities (e.g. use of picnic and camp sites);

- Implementation of a pilot project of introduction of entrance tickets on the Tusheti Protected Areas;
- Diversification of tourist routes and development of new attractive tourist products (e.g. thematic or combined wildlife watching tours);⁸
- Increasing of revenues generated from fees for using concrete services or infrastructure (e.g. camp sites);
- Issuance of concessions;
- Establishment of certain fees for conducting scientific research or holding special events.⁹

For the future, one of the effective means of generating income may be the establishment of the Tusheti Development Fund.¹⁰ The development of the so-called green marketing should also be considered as a long-term strategic direction.¹¹

Proceeding from the objectives of the tender proposal, we will discuss the pilot project of introduction of entrance tickets in more detail below.

4 Piloting entrance tickets on the Tusheti Protected Areas

4.1 Analysis of problems and risks

Introduction of entrance fees on the Tusheti Protected Areas is a very complex issue which, first of all, requires correct analysis of the existing experience and potential risks. In the table below, we present possible problems and risks and ways of their resolution/mitigation.

⁸ "Task Report on the Development of Community-based Ecotourism/Wildlife Watching, NACRES 2011 (UNDP/GEF)

⁹ Sub - Plan for Tourism Development and Marketing for Tusheti Protected Area Complex, NACRES 2011 (UNDP/GEF)

¹⁰ Preliminary report: "Tusheti Development Fund," N. Saakashvili, September 2010, GEF/UNDP

¹¹ Task Report on Workshops and Meetings for Facilitating Establishment of Partnerships between the Small Companies and Locals, NACRES 2010 (UNDP/GEF)

	Problem/Risk	Cause(s)	Ways of resolution/mitigation
1	Not everyone who arrives in Tusheti is a visitor to the protected areas.	Tusheti is inhabited by people (permanent and seasonal population) who cannot be considered as visitors and, accordingly, are not obliged to pay an entrance fee; this also pertains to private guests of local families, etc.	The obligatory entrance fee should only be established for foreigners, while this fee should only be voluntary for citizens of Georgia (regardless of whether this or that person is an inhabitant of Tusheti, hails from Tusheti, is employed on a seasonal job in Tusheti, etc.).
2	It is difficult to control tickets, since visitors to Tusheti, apart from the main entrance, also go over from Pshav-Khevsureti.	Permanent control of entrance tracks at the Atsunta Pass requires considerable resources which the Park Authorities do not presently have.	The number of visitors who come over from the side of Pshav-Khevsureti is relatively small, while the majority of foreigners from this group (who are obliged to buy a ticket) do not get around without a Georgian tour operator and/or guide. With preliminary explanatory and information campaign, it will be possible to ensure that these visitors buy tickets in advance. It is also possible to place a Georgian-English banner at the pass which will let the visitors know that they are entering the area of the park, for which they need to have a ticket, and if they do not have one, they must address the Park Authorities and buy it. If tour operators are involved, they are obliged to provide foreign visitors with tickets.
3	It may turn out very difficult to sell entrance tickets and exercise further control.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is no successful experience of selling entrance tickets and exercising further control; - A general lack of corresponding qualifications (e.g. a lack of knowledge of foreign languages); - A lack of infrastructure and technical means. 	<p>All possible sites for selling entrance tickets to the Tusheti Protected Areas – offices of tour operators and tourist centers both in Tbilisi and the regions - should be used. In Tusheti itself, the tickets can be sold at the main entrance, for example, at the Samkhevi Station and/or in the Visitor Center. (After the appropriate preparatory works and studies have been done, it will be possible to develop more concrete recommendations which will be reflected in the next report.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tour operators may come under an obligation to provide foreign tourists with the tickets. (After conducting a preliminary explanatory and information campaign, it is also possible to include this requirement in

			<p>contracts/memoranda.) And independent foreign visitors will be informed that they have to buy tickets to enter the area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As a sign of simplification of administration (control) and an expression of goodwill from the Park Authorities, no fines will be imposed on foreign citizens who enter the area (through the Atsunta track or via airborne transport) without having brought the tickets in advance. They should be given the opportunity to pay the fee in the Visitor Center. - It is possible to create corresponding infrastructure at the main entrance (at the Samkhevi Station), and the relevant staff should be given a simple training, which can be done with the internal resources of the Park Authorities/Agency or with external expert assistance.
4	A negative reaction on the part of Georgian tour operators and the risk that they may prefer other tourist destinations to Tusheti.	Tour operators plan their tours well in advance. They demand that they be notified of the introduction of entrance fees at least a year in advance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducting a preliminary explanatory and information campaign aimed at Georgia's tour operators; - Offering tour operators discounted fees (e.g. GEL 30 instead of GEL 40);
5	A negative reaction on the part of local population and/or the local municipality.	The peculiarities of spacial planning and the management system of the Tusheti Protected Areas (the Tusheti National Park and the State Reserve are managed by the Agency of Protected Areas, while the protected landscape is managed by the local municipality). The entrance fee to Tusheti certainly includes not only the National Park and the State Reserve, but also the protected landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducting intensive explanatory work; - Agreeing the amount of the fee and other issues with the municipality and population (e.g. guest houses) in advance; - Formulating the principle of distribution of revenues and informing the municipality and the population.

4.2 Activities

Activity No. 1: Preparing grounds for the introduction of the entrance fee

Activity No. 1.1: Preparing legal grounds: For the introduction of the entrance fee, it is, first of all, necessary to develop and approve an appropriate legal document that determines the amount of the fee, the system of its introduction, and other relevant issues. At the starting stage, an obligatory entrance fee may only be established for foreigners, while for Georgian citizens payment of the fee should be voluntary. This will create an opportunity to create a simple and convenient system of ticket sales, or of the payment of the entrance fee.

Activity No. 1.2: Cooperating with the local municipality: To ensure well-ordered functioning of the entrance ticket system, it is necessary to create a form of relationship between the Agency of Protected Areas and the local municipality that will be acceptable for both sides. The Agency, together with the local municipality, should develop a strategy of joint introduction of the entrance ticket system and the use of the generated revenues for the development of the protected areas. After both sides have agreed on certain percentage distribution of the revenues, it is desirable to make this information as available as possible for the public.

Activity No. 1.3: Determining the price of the entrance ticket: The price of the entrance ticket should be determined correctly. Experts recommend setting the price at GEL 40. However, it is important that the amount of the fee correspond with the fair market price, or the consumer's readiness to pay this or that sum. For this reason, it is desirable to conduct a preliminary survey and, based on the survey results, determine an amount of the fee that will presumably be acceptable for the majority of visitors. However, surveying the visitors should continue even after the entrance tickets are introduced to detect a need to adjust the amount of the fee. If future surveys show that the fee is so high that it may cause a decrease in visitation, decreasing of the fee may get on the agenda. However, proceeding from the goals of conservation of the protected area and the need to control the impact on the social and natural environment of Tusheti, we could also get a situation in which it will be expedient to increase the fee. (It is a known fact that the price of the ticket is one of the most effective tools to regulate visitation when there is a need to do so.)

Activity No. 1.4: Surveying tour operators: It is necessary to develop a special questionnaire for tour operators which, together with the results of the visitor survey, will give us additional information about the introduction of entrance tickets. It is important to know tour operators' opinions on whether or not the introduction of entrance tickets will decrease the number of tourists, where and in what form it will be better for tourists and/or tour operators to buy tickets, and what kind of demands tour operators themselves and tourists may have towards the Agency of Protected Areas and the protected landscape after the entrance tickets are introduced.

Activity No. 2: Disseminating information and conducting an explanatory/information campaign about the introduction of the entrance fee.

All possible means of dissemination of information, including the press, television, social networking sites, electronic media, etc. should be used to disseminate information about the introduction of the

entrance fee to Tusheti. The information should be posted on the web-sites of the Agency of Protected Areas and the Tusheti Protected Areas.

The target groups of the explanatory/information campaign are:

- Tour operators;
- Local population (local guides, guest houses);
- The local government.

The main messages of this campaign should be that the introduction of the entrance fee is a pilot project and that the generated revenues will be used for the improvement of management of the Tusheti Protected Areas, development of tourism infrastructure, and development of Tusheti in general, as well as for the resolution of social problems.

An additional objective of dissemination of information on the establishment of the fee should be to explain the significance of this initiative to the general public and to encourage the payment of the voluntary fee by Georgian citizens.

Activity No. 3: Printing and distributing tickets

If it is decided to print special tickets, this issue may be taken care of by the Agency jointly with the administration of the protected landscape, or by the Tusheti Development Fund. Tickets may be sold at the tourism information centers in Tbilisi and in the Kakheti Region, also at the TPA administration office in Alvani. In relation to tour operators, it is possible to use a more flexible system in which they will be able to receive tickets in advance and pay the accumulated sum with a schedule acceptable for both sides. (An analogous scheme is already being introduced for the Sataplia Reserve.) A receipt or a cash registry check confirming the payment of a corresponding fee, as well as a document confirming money transfer, can also be considered as a ticket. (This practice exists in different national parks of the world, for example, on the Galapagos Islands¹²).

Activity No. 4: Creating minimum necessary infrastructure

At the starting stage, it is necessary to create only the minimum infrastructure that is required for the establishment and administration of the entrance fee in the first years. It is necessary to install large and easily perceivable banners on the main road to Tusheti, near the Park Headquarters, and at the Atsunta Pass. The banners should be in the Georgian and English languages and give visitors information about the entrance fee and the differentiated system of prices.

In the best case, the tickets should be sold at the entrance, for example, at the Samkhevi Station and the Visitor Center, as well as in the Alvani Information Center. However, setting up of the corresponding infrastructure (a lifting gate, a booth/counter for selling tickets) at the Samkhevi Station requires certain funds. Assignment of a ticket seller may also become a problem. Taking this into consideration, it is possible to consider a less desirable option in which tickets will only be sold

¹²

http://www.galapagosonline.com/Galapagos_Natural_History/National_Park/Galapagos_Park_Fee/Galapagos_Park_Fee.html

in the visitor centers. The advantage of this option is that it will no longer be necessary to set up a ticket sale infrastructure on the main road. However, there is a risk that a certain part of “independent”¹³ foreign visitors will no longer buy tickets.

¹³ Visitors who travel without the help of a tour agency

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for visitor survey

Welcome to Tusheti Protected Areas!

In order for you and future generations of visitors to enjoy Tusheti and support adequate protection of its unique nature, ecosystems and clean environment we ask you to kindly fill out the information below. Your opinion is very important for us!

1. Name _____
2. Address _____
3. E-mail _____
4. Nationality _____
5. Male Female
6. Age _____
7. No. of People in your Party _____
8. Date of Entry, DD/MM/Year _____/_____/_____/
9. No. of Days spent in Tusheti _____

10. Activities while visiting the Park /Protected Landscape:

- Hiking
- Horseback Riding
- Camping
- Wildlife Viewing
- Other _____

11. How did you hear about Tusheti?

- From: Friends/Relatives Travel Agents
- TV and Radio Newspapers
- The Internet
- Other, please specify _____

12. Were your expectations met?

- Yes No

13. Will you return to Tusheti?

- Yes No

14. What did you in particular like about your visit to Tusheti:

15. What did you NOT like about your visit to Tusheti:

16. To improve protection and conservation activities in Tusheti protected areas would you be willing to pay entrance fee?

- Yes ___ No ___

If Yes please provide your option for fee amount from minimum to maximum in USD:

Minimum: _____ Maximum: _____

If No, please provide your argument why:

17. Will you return to Tusheti if entrance fee is introduced from next year?

Yes No

18. Have you visited any National Park where you had to pay entrance fee (in Georgia or elsewhere)?

Yes No

If yes, please tell us where and what was the fee in USD:

19. Would it be acceptable if entrance fee is introduced only for foreign visitors and Georgians are requested to make voluntary donation?

Yes No

Please argument your answer

20. Have you visited any National Park with such a differential entrance fee system?

Yes No

If yes, please tell us the place and fee amount in USD:

21. Would you still plan to come to Tusheti if you were informed about entrance fee?

Yes No

Please argument your answer:

22. What should be improved about the tourism services and nature protection in Tusheti?

Thank you for your input!

Tusheti Protected Area's Administration

Please return this questionnaire to any staff of Tusheti National Park or leave it with your guesthouse.

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for tour operator survey

1. Name of Company: _____

2. Address/Telephone: _____

3. E-mail address: _____

4. Which of the following activities in Tusheti do you offer to your customers?

Hiking	<input type="checkbox"/>	Camping	<input type="checkbox"/>
Horseback riding	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wildlife watching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	_____		

5. Which marketing means do you use for your Tusheti tours?

6. What do your customers like most about Tusheti?

7. Who are your customers for your Tusheti trips most Georgians or mostly foreign nationals? Please indicate percentages if possible.

Foreign nationals ----- % Georgians -----%

Please also give percentages of the nationalities if available:

8. Do you offer tours to protected areas with entrance fees?

Yes _____ No _____

If "yes" please indicated the name of protected area (in Georgia or elsewhere?) and what is the fee amount:

9. Would it be acceptable if entrance fee to Tusheti national park is introduced with the purpose of preserving and maintaining Tusheti?

Yes _____ No _____

If Yes please provide your option for fee amount from minimum to maximum:

Minimum: _____ Maximum: _____

10. Would it be acceptable if entrance fee is introduced only for foreign visitors and Georgians are requested to make voluntary donation?

Yes _____ No _____

Please argument your answer: _____

If Yes please provide your option for fee amount from minimum to maximum:

Foreign visitors: Minimum: _____ Maximum: _____

If entrance fee is also imposed for Georgians, please provide your option for fee amount

Georgian visitors: Minimum: _____ Maximum: _____

11. Do you think Tusheti will lose visitors if entrance fee is introduced to Tusheti protected areas?

Yes _____ No _____

12. If entrance fee is introduced which of the following would be a preferred mode/place to make the payment/buy the tickets?

a) APA (Tbilisi, wire transfer)

b) Tusheti PA administration (on the ground: in Omalo or in Alvani by cash)

- c) At the main entrance to the Tusheti PA: from Akhmeta (the central entrance) or from the Atsunta pass (on the ground, by cash)
- d) Other (please specify).

13. What do you think needs to be changed to improve visitor services and conservation in Tusheti

Thank you!

Appendix 3: Entrance fee amounts and systems in some national parks of the world

✓ A review of entrance fees to the national parks of the USA:

In the US, entrance tickets are in place in almost all national parks. The fees are determined according to the motor vehicle in which visitors enter the national park or on an individual basis, according to whether a visitor enters the area on foot or, for example, on a bicycle. The National Park Service also offers visitors different options of annual or lifetime passes. Such passes are attractive for those who plan to visit several national parks during the year. Apart from entrance fees, there are additional fees for using camp sites, special tours, and guide service.

✓ Entrance fees in Yosemite National Park, USA¹⁴

Reservations are not necessary to visit Yosemite National Park, but they are required for lodging and camping in the case of overnight stay in the park.

If a visitor arrives in Yosemite National Park in a private car, the entrance fee applies to all occupants of the car and includes unlimited entries to the park for seven days. The fee amounts to USD 20 per car and does not change according to the number of occupants of the car. Entrance is free for visitors 15 years old and younger. If visitors arrive without a private car – on foot, horseback, bicycle, motorcycle, or on a non-commercial bus – the fee per person is USD 10.

Prices of entrance tickets for independent visitors:

Visitor Category	Price (USD)
Visitor in a private car (one-time fee applies to all occupants of the car)	20
Visitor without a private car (on foot)	10
Visitor on horseback	10
Visitor on a bicycle	10
Visitor on a non-commercial bus	10

Important note: Entrance fees are waived on national holidays of special importance.

Different fees are in place for commercial tours.*

Type of Motor Vehicle	Price (USD)
Commercial sedan (up to 6 seats)	25** + 10 per each passenger
Commercial van (7-15 seats)	125**
Commercial mini bus (16-25 seats)	200**
Commercial motor coach (more than 26 seats)	300**

* Tour operators are required to have a special permit to organize commercial tours.

¹⁴ <http://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/feesandreservations.htm>

***This sum is based on the number of seats in a motor vehicle and does not change according to the actual number of passengers.*

Long-term passes:

Yosemite National Park Annual Pass	USD 40
Annual Pass to the US National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands*	USD 80
Lifetime pass for US citizens with permanent disabilities	Free
Lifetime pass for US citizens above the age of 62	USD 10

** This is a ticket for entrance to more than 2,000 federal recreational areas and national parks of the US. In those parks where entry by car is allowed, the pass includes the fees of the driver and occupants of the car, while in those parks where the fee is determined according to the number of visitors, it includes entrance fees of four adults.*

✓ National parks of Canada¹⁵

Entrance tickets and service fees are in place in almost all national parks and national historical sites in Canada. The revenues are used for the improvement of visitor services and the maintenance of buildings and facilities.

Entrance tickets

Daily ticket:

Visitor Category	Price (CAD)
Adult (17 to 64 years of age)	9.80
Senior (65 years of age or over)	8.30
Youth (6 to 16 years of age)	4.90
Family (up to seven people arriving in a single vehicle)	19.60
Commercial group, per person	8.30
School groups, per student	3.90

Annual pass

Visitor Category	Price (CAD)
Adult	67.70
Senior	57.90
Youth	33.30
Family	136.40

¹⁵ http://www.pc.gc.ca/pn-np/ab/banff/visit/tarifs-fees_e.asp?park=1

The annual pass includes limitless entry to 27 national parks and 77 national historical sites of Canada.

Camping services

The fee for using camp sites differs in different national parks, with the fee for one night ranging from CAD 10.80 to 38.20 CAD. In the daytime hours, the fee for using a camp site is CAD 8.80. The same fee is in place for the permit to make a fire and use a dump station.

✓ Galapagos National Park¹⁶

To enter the Galapagos National Park or the Galapagos Marine Reserve, all visitors are required to buy an entrance ticket. Payment of the price of the entrance ticket can be made upon arrival in the airport or in advance, from a tour operator. A receipt confirming the payment of the sum by the visitor is considered a ticket.

Visitor Category	Price (USD)
Foreign tourist (non-resident of Ecuador) above the age of 12	100
Foreign tourist (non-resident of Ecuador) below the age of 12	50
Citizen or resident of Ecuador above the age of 12	6
Citizen or resident of Ecuador below the age of 12	3
Foreign student registered in one of the national universities of Ecuador	25

✓ South Africa: Kruger National Park¹⁷

The summative ticket price of Kruger National Park, as well as of many other national parks of Africa, depends on the number of days spent in the park.

Ticket prices per day:

Visitor Category	Price (South African rand*)
South African citizen/resident	48
Child South African citizen/resident	24

¹⁶

http://www.galapagosonline.com/Galapagos_Natural_History/National_Park/Galapagos_Park_Fee/Galapagos_Park_Fee.html

¹⁷ <http://www.kruger-national-park-guide.com/kruger-park-entry-fees.html>

Adult foreigner	192
Child foreigner	96

* As of February 27, 2012, South African rands 10 = GEL 2.1707.

There is an annual pass, the so-called Wild Card, which can be bought both by citizens or residents of South Africa and foreign tourists. The prices of different versions of such passes range from 325 rands to 2,620 rands. The price of the pass is four times as high for foreign tourists compared to the price for citizens or residents of South Africa.

For South African pensioners (above the age of 60) discount prices are in place.

Entrance tickets are sold at the entrances of the park.