

AN EVALUATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP  
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN NEW ZEALAND TODAY

BY

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## **Abstract**

This study evaluated a leadership development programme for managers in the New Zealand Department of Conservation. The programme is one of several initiatives taken by the Department to adapt its leadership and management to best respond to a variety of challenges. Theories of leadership styles and the efficacy of leadership development are well established, however, little consensus has been researched on the construct of environmental leadership and what makes leadership development for environmental managers successful. This study, which involved a constructivist/interpretivist approach, used mixed methods of research to evaluate the leadership development programme from the experiences and views of the programme participants and some of their managers. Kraiger's model of evaluation was used to design the evaluation which focused on the programme's content and design and the changes in the participants. Data confirmed the programme is of high relevance to the participants in their roles as leaders. A number of emerging themes of environmental leadership behaviours resulting from the programme were identified and these are aligned with the literature on leadership and environmental leadership theories. Impacts for future research and practices are suggested such as improving the accessibility of action learning and clarifying the opportunities for incorporating systems thinking.

## **Acknowledgements**

During the two years of undertaking this thesis part time, I occasionally pondered whether it would have been easier to complete the requirements for this degree by completing standard papers instead. It may have been easier, however, I have found a great deal of value and learning both in the study chosen and in the skills required when undertaking a thesis. What I have learned is due to the advice and coaching given by my supervisors, Drs Liz Jones and Kate Thornton. Their assistance and expertise in accessing the literature and defining my approach to the study is greatly appreciated, as is their patience in reading my numerous drafts and offering suggestions for them to make actual sense.

I would like to thank the Conservation Leadership Development Programme administrator and presenters, for their support and access to the programme participants to be able to establish a focus group and attend the participant debrief session. On the home front I must acknowledge the support of my wife Wendy in her patience, dealing with home matters and providing the space to let me get on with the study.

Finally, leadership is best appreciated when exemplified. Often we are asked in leadership development, who has been a major, positive influence in our lives. I can think of no better example than my father, who passed away in the last two months of this study. Although his career was in law and order, not conservation, he was a man of the land and enjoyed its recreational values and pursuits. A firm believer of ‘doing the right thing’, yet aware that people come from all walks of life, he was often sought for advice by family and community and had the ability to let people see their way through life’s challenges by using their own skills and strengths.

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# **Chapter 1. Introduction**

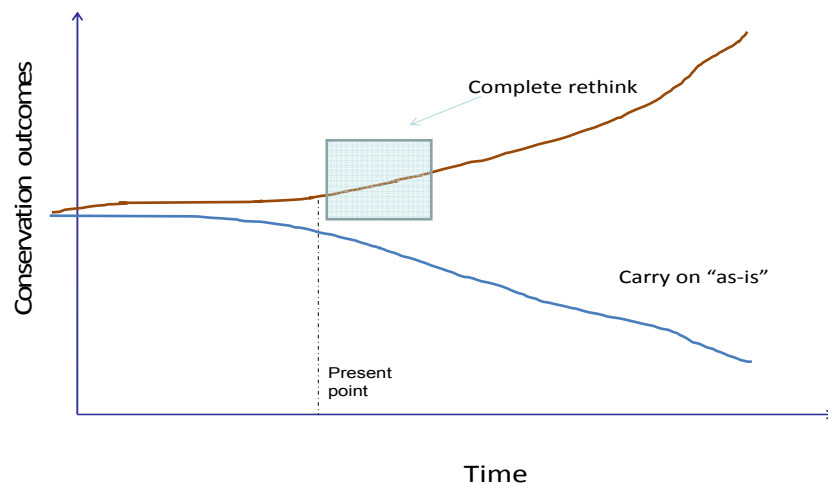
*Who is the keeper of the long view of conservation?* (Young, 2004)

## **1.1 Chapter overview**

This chapter begins by describing the changed contexts that public conservation and environment agencies now operate within. The need to adapt, embed change and lead differently is identified, as well as the need for effective leadership development. A leadership development programme established by the New Zealand Department of Conservation is then described and the case for evaluating this programme made. The chapter concludes with a brief description of the researcher role and background and an outline of the thesis chapters.

## **1.2 Introduction and background**

The Department of Conservation (DOC) has recognised that it cannot continue its current mode of conservation management used over the previous 20 years. The pace of biodiversity loss is outstripping any incremental conservation gains (Morrison, 2009a). It is now realised that continuing to lead conservation through entrenched and anachronistic paradigms in today's context is no longer viable. Furthermore, the Department is under pressure to achieve higher productivity and more innovation, and yet sustain its level of servicing with reducing budgets. These pressures are not unique to the Department and will also impact on most public agencies in New Zealand in the foreseeable future (Whitehead, 2009). Metaphorically speaking it is unclear whether it is the rules of the game that have changed, or the game itself. DOC has been forewarned that over time, it will fail in many aspects of its purpose unless new thinking and culture is embedded. The vision developed during 2009, *New Zealand is the greatest living space on Earth*, provides a focus for this development (Department of Conservation, 2011). This may mean, for example, integrating conservation with the economy and working more closely with business so that business too has the opportunity to contribute to conservation. This may also mean building the capability of communities and facilitating greater use of them for additional conservation outcomes (Morrison, 2009a, 2009b). The necessity to intervene and impose a new culture is illustrated in Figure 1-1 below. Success with this intervention may be supported by leadership development which focuses on new and different tools and concepts.



**Figure 1-1: Requirement to rethink traditional conservation management and leadership (Department of Conservation, 2010a).**

That New Zealanders directly and indirectly benefit from nature and its heritage is a powerful argument for conservation. In a number of surveys, 75% of New Zealanders consistently favour placing the environment before the economy (Young, 2007). Yet, as we develop as a country and our consumerism increases, the following annual statistics are sobering:

- 3.4 million tonnes of waste end up in landfills,
- 500 billion litres of sewage are piped into wastewater treatment plants,
- 13000 tonnes of medicinal waste is incinerated,
- About 93% of materials we use in production are thrown away,
- About 80% of what we produce is thrown away after one use (Young, 2007).

Our trend of species endangerment is equally alarming. Few would dispute our shameful history of species extinction, yet fewer still consciously contemplate the predicament that much of our biodiversity faces in this present day. As early as 1895, there were concerns for the preservation of natural heritage in New Zealand. A series of reports indicated a crisis in the indigenous lowland, podocarp and kauri forests in New Zealand that were being systematically ‘mined’ for land use and development. The impact of acclimatised sheep and rabbits and the invasion of rats and mustelids were becoming apparent as they were “annihilating one of the most remarkable collections of indigenous birds in the world” (Kirk, cited in Young, 2004, p. 98).

Conservation was a difficult concept to instil, however. Attempts by the state for conservation were tempered by the needs of foresters and farmers who held sway in a country where the sheep was considered the only truly protected animal (Young, 2004). Conservation efforts were thus largely initiated by concerned and motivated individuals alarmed at the rate of species endangerment and extinction. Over time, however, various government conservation bodies were commissioned, and it must be acknowledged that they did commit to a serious and credible undertaking of their purview. For example, in 1920 when the proposal to establish the New Zealand Forest Service was finally introduced in parliament, it was said that employees of the Service “should be alert and active on every occasion on which promptitude demanded, of sound judgement, and with a high sense of duty. Those who hold appointment are required to be honest, industrious, sober and courteous” (Halkett, Berg & Mackrell, 1992, p. 9). Similar expectations are likely to have been proclaimed for other environmental agencies such as the New Zealand Wildlife Service and Department of Lands and Survey, among others, as they were created.

These expectations were noble standards, reflective of the early public service ethic demanded from such agencies. Over time, managers within these organisations had to deal with a raft of social problems and significant events (e.g., depression, world war labour shortage, post-war growth phases and increasing pressure from development and recreation needs) that required dedication, character and innovative problem-solving skills. With nearly a century of progression since establishment, the operating context for these organisations has changed dramatically, although the challenges facing them appear no less complex. While all of us as citizens should respond to the challenge to reverse these trends, this is not a simple task. Knowing where we, either as individuals or as a country, should be directing our focus on conservation, means we must look to those whom we regard as leaders for leadership.

Government conservation agencies are not the only organisations to provide environmental and conservation management services. They do, however, take the lead in developing environmental initiatives and add a great deal of credibility, being involved in both on and off national park initiatives with communities and public and private organisations and individuals (Train, 2003). Despite the growth in their responsibilities, the criticism remains that they have become ‘stranded’ in an inflexible institutional structure largely created in the 1970s, that is unable to cope

with the emerging complex array of social, political, ecological and economic demands. (Worboys, Lockwood & De Lacy, 2001). The focus has now shifted to a new system of ensuring efficiency across a range of ecological, economic and social outcomes for the community.

Conservation agencies are now operating under conditions where the values and aspirations held by the public have changed. The challenges that face conservation leaders are many-fold. To begin, Lucas (1992) identifies five types of pressures encountered for protecting natural areas:

1. Population growth leading to pressure on land for development for industry and housing,
2. General national demands (e.g., transportation, mining, industry),
3. Agriculture, particularly intensified,
4. Forestry (exotic), and
5. Recreation and tourism.

A number of pressures can be added to these including global recession, reducing budgets, change in political representation and ideology, increasing vocal community expectations, indigenous rights and treaty claim settlements<sup>1</sup>, and continuing loss of biodiversity. Furthermore, increased mobility and affluence have brought about changing relationships between the public and natural areas both physically and psychologically. People are more able to afford to seek solitude and respite from present day pressures in pristine areas. Activities of government departments are more visible and agencies can no longer rely solely on their Minister to protect them from criticism. Pressure groups are becoming more recognised as their information, leadership and financial resources become more organised. Therefore conservation and environmental leaders must know how to respond and consider what skills they need to develop in order to do so.

In response to the challenges presented in today's environment, the Director-General of Conservation has introduced an integrated programme of change, including a raft of strategic initiatives to steer the Department's course in its new direction to counteract the pressures facing conservation. These include:

- A Natural Heritage Management System to help natural heritage managers make consistent decisions and monitor progress for national outcomes,

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<sup>1</sup> Claims by Māori for government to return, or compensate with land, for land wrongfully taken, under the Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, 1840.

- A Destination Management Framework for coordinating all the values and attractions to increase visitor experiences,
- A review of concession management to streamline processes for business operators on national parks and public conservation land,
- Various efficiency and savings initiatives,
- A commercial business unit to maximise business input into conservation, and
- A conservation leadership development programme (CLDP) to underpin the necessary culture and leadership to sustain the momentum in the new strategic direction (Department of Conservation, 2010a).

### **1.3 Need for leadership development**

In both Australia and New Zealand, leadership development has been an on-going source of concern for researchers. (Trevor-Roberts, Ashkanasy & Kennedy, 2003). They advocate the belief that leadership is of critical importance, as management education has failed to develop proactive leaders. In New Zealand leadership surveys, it has been revealed that although chief executives had a more positive view of their organisations than many employees, top managers also thought that only 51 per cent of their immediate subordinates had the capability to move into senior positions and be effective leaders (Parry & Proctor-Thompson, 2002).

The need for the CLDP is adequately justified by the Department, based on Heifitz, Grashow and Linsky's (2009) view on embracing disequilibrium:

These are unprecedented times with significant challenges now facing us individually and collectively. Rather than hunkering down and operating in business as usual, adaptation and leadership are needed.

It is easy to be in the front of the crowd when you know where you are going. It is very different when you assume it will never be the same again, and the future is not only unknown, but unknowable (Heifitz, Grashow & Linsky, cited in Department of Conservation, 2010a).

### **1.4 Programme background**

The CLDP is directed towards middle and senior managers in the organisation, the target group of participants being second and third tier managers. Should the programme be successful it could be adapted for lower ranked but high potential first tier team leaders (Department of Conservation, 2010c). The programme is intended

to improve leadership skills of individuals and teams, strengthen individual relationships across the organisation, and develop new leadership approaches under the broad purpose to help achieve the strategic vision.

Objectives for the learners are to:

- Strengthen their ability to work with others,
- Strengthen their ability to influence their organisational circumstances,
- Build systems-thinking abilities,
- Develop greater self-understanding; and
- Embed all these skills within their scope of work and organisational systems.

Although the need for the CLDP was confirmed by the Director-General and his Executive Leadership team, much of the programme design and development is based on the research and work undertaken by the two principal facilitators of the programme. Many of the content topics covered in the programme are based on research by Johnston (2008), and the work of Berger and Atkins (2009). Johnston's analysis of information compiled from 31 New Zealand Regional Council and Department of Conservation managers, focussed on the 'complexity of thinking and levels of self-complexity required to sustainably manage the environment' using Berger's 'subject-object interview technique and method of analysis.' Consideration of leadership, thinking and interpersonal relations tools and concepts led to the CLDP content described in Table 1-1 below. A full description of the content including key elements and ideas is attached as Appendix A.



**Table 1-1: Conservation Leadership Development Programme content outline (Department of Conservation, 20010c).**

<b>TOOL /METHOD</b>	<b>KEY ELEMENTS AND IDEAS</b>
<i>Engaging communication</i>	Facing others as sense-makers and not problems to be solved
<i>Action learning</i>	The action learning cycle: conversations - questions – actions – reflections – actions – conversations
<i>Myers Briggs Type Indicator</i>	The four personality dichotomies
<i>TMS – Team management systems</i>	Explores people’s work preferences on four dimensions
<i>Relationship mapping</i>	Mapping who the key players are and how they are connected.
<i>Boundary setting</i>	Noticing the way issues are surrounded by boundaries—usually invisibly
<i>Systems dynamics</i>	Feedback loops – what goes around, comes around
<i>Competing commitments</i>	Four column exercise of managing commitments
<i>Speech Acts</i>	Declarations, Assertions, Assessments, Requests and Agreements
<i>Adult development</i>	Self-sovereign, Socialised, Self-authored, Self transforming
<i>Kotter’s theory of change</i>	Kotter’s 8 steps for leading change
<i>Polarity management</i>	Whereas a <i>problem</i> has one right answer, a <i>polarity</i> can be managed by focusing on two interdependent but opposing responses.

The programme is provided over a period of approximately nine months including preparation before, and review after three workshops. The workshops are delivered through lectures and presentations by the tutors and guest speakers on the topics that form part of leadership for consideration and discussion. Participant activities such as role plays, introspection, group discussion and feedback are included. Course participants apply thinking skills between the first two workshops to an adaptive challenge or issue which is then discussed and collaborated on between the second and third workshops, and afterwards through the practice of action learning. The participants’ managers also have a significant role to play through preparing and supporting their staff before, during and after the programme. There are two workshops for the participants’ managers to attend; one at the start of the participant programme and one at the end. The programme structure and process is represented in the following Figure 1-2.

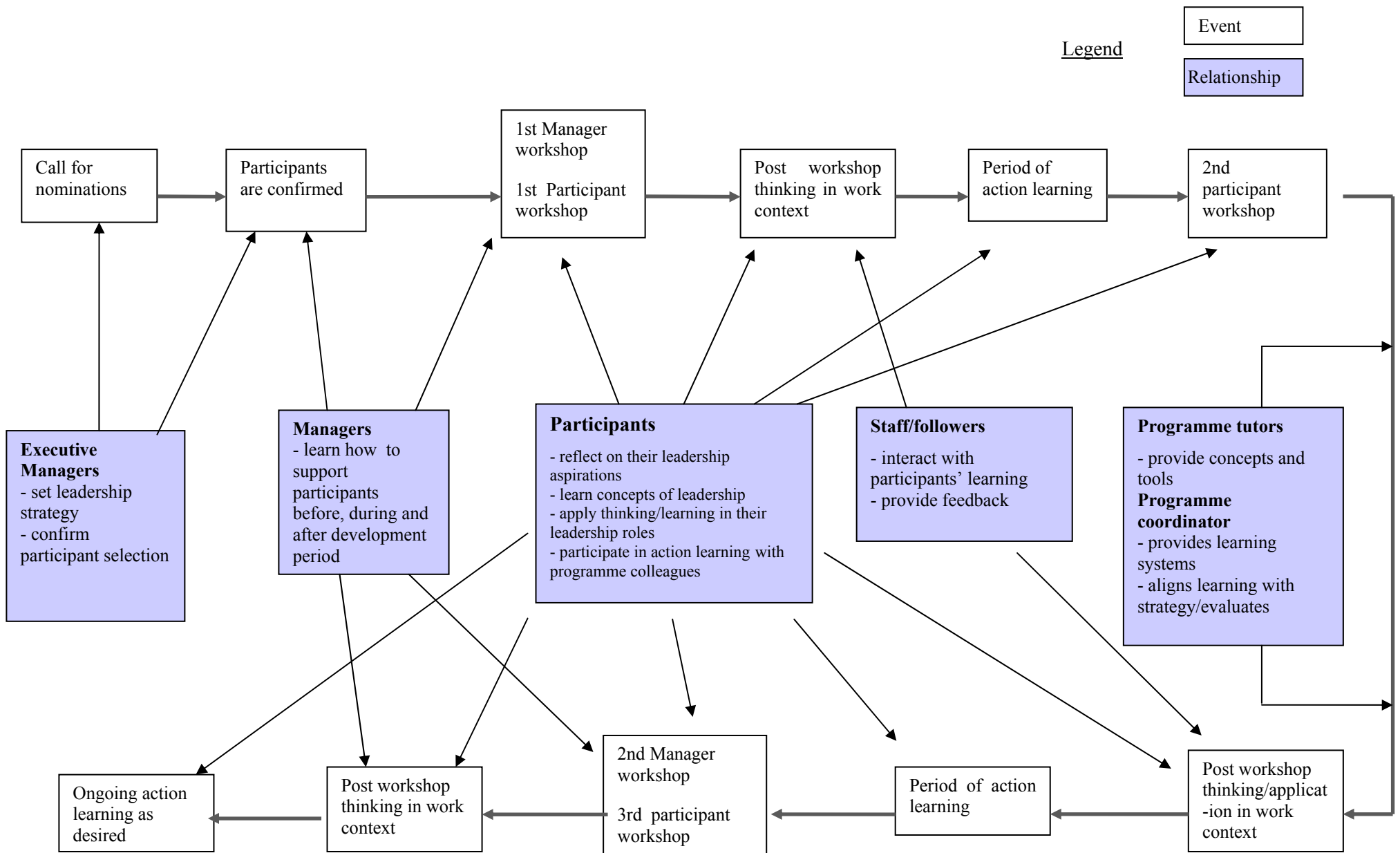


Figure 1-2: Conservation Leadership Development Programme process.

## **1.5 Concepts and definitions**

The concepts of conservation management, natural resources management, protected area management, environmental management and sustainability management are easily interchangeable to most readers. It is of value to establish an understanding of these concepts and to set out some definitions. Worboys et al. (2001, p. 57) describe protected area management as “minimising human-caused influences that tend to degrade natural environments and ecosystems”. For the purposes of this study I will use the terms ‘conservation’ or ‘environmental management’ to describe this complex activity. How leadership occurs in this domain can be assisted by Berry and Gordon’s definition of environmental leadership as “the ability of an individual or group to guide positive change toward a vision of an environmentally better future” (cited in Egri & Herman, 2000, p. 572). This will be discussed in the review of literature in the next two chapters.

## **1.6 Context**

The research on leadership and management development in New Zealand is limited. Even more limited is research on conservation and environmental leadership development in New Zealand. Accordingly, this study of environmental leadership development is important in that it may provide a systematic evaluation of environmental leadership development where little currently exists.

This research study intends to evaluate the CLDP for leaders in the New Zealand Department of Conservation, particularly for its effectiveness in developing leaders to face increasingly complex challenges through leading differently. This is the first opportunity to evaluate the programme since it has begun. In the study the overarching question is; *What have been the experiences of the participants that can help determine the success of the leadership development programme?* Ideally, if it is possible, the findings would provide evidence of improved or different conservation or environmental leadership capability or behaviour that could be attributed to the design and delivery of the CLDP.

Of particular interest is whether the programme has the following:

### ***1.6.1 Appropriate and relevant objectives and content for the participants’ needs***

The objectives outlined in the programme description have been established from the organisational development perspective. There has to be a connection between the participants’ professional development needs and organisational development goals.

If it can be shown that the programme objectives align with perspectives from both individual and organisational needs that would indicate a high relevance. I am looking for perceptions of whether the objectives were appropriate to the participants' job requirements and if the objectives accurately portray what the participants need to accomplish for their role.

Effective professional development in leadership is correlated to the programme content. It is therefore intended to analyse the participants' perceptions about the content. I am interested in how well the content presented to the participants during the workshops meets their needs as leaders. For example, are the concepts that were introduced in the workshop modules relevant and beneficial to enhancing performance in their role, and does the literature on environmental leadership skills and characteristics support the skills content of the CLDP?

#### ***1.6.2 Programme structured to effectively assist with participant transfer of learning***

It has been suggested that leadership development becomes more effective through utilising a systems approach (Bolden, 2007; Leskiw & Singh, 2007; McCauley & Hughes-James, 1994). Part of the system design should include strategies to facilitate experiential learning opportunities in addition to the conventional workshop method. For example, did the workshops and post workshop/on-the-job learning structure facilitate learning? If it is shown that the learning methods and infrastructure were successful, this would support their continued use and further support the models/theories that underpin the design of the programme. Specific lines of inquiry would include whether the programme design and delivery and workplace culture promoted successful (or otherwise) transfer of learning in their workplace.

#### ***1.6.3 Course participants have been able to demonstrate the new skills and changed leadership in their role***

I am reliant on data being accumulated through the participants' experiences and managers' observation such as the changes that participants and their managers report in participant leadership behaviours since the programme and the contexts that the transfers of learning actually occurred. This will illustrate improved environmental leadership capability.

### **1.7 Role of researcher**

I am a full-time employee in the organisation charged with protecting and preserving New Zealand's natural heritage for the benefit of all New Zealanders. My

background with the organisation started in administration and finance and then developed into staff and personnel, industrial relations, human resources management, learning and development and currently organisation development. My academic training started with extramurally completing an undergraduate Diploma in Business Studies through Massey University in 1990. I later enrolled in the Diploma in Industrial Relations at Victoria University of Wellington (VUW) completing the qualification requirements in 1998. My dissertation was based on the effects on staff of a Total Quality Management system that had been recently implemented in the organisation. As my career developed into learning and development, I became involved in various professional development programmes such as foundational leadership development, first-line manager development and industry training qualification development. Having seen the value of professional development for individuals, I enrolled in the Post Graduate Diploma in Education and Professional Development at VUW, completing the requirements for that qualification in 2008. It was at that time that the Director-General and his team signalled the need to change culture from how it had been going about its business to the programme of change noted above, including the CLDP.

Although not having a direct involvement with the CLDP, I have an interest in leadership development and have been involved in other leadership and interpersonal development programmes. My personal view on leadership is that it is often given more significance and mystique than is necessary, often associated with personal traits and characteristics. Leadership qualities are skills that can be learned through intervention and developed and honed over time through application and reflection. From my experience I have observed many individuals develop, grow and step up into a leadership space. This space is not provided solely through rank and hierarchy in organisational structures. Furthermore, leadership development is not for the reserved few. Anyone can and should be take the opportunity to lead at some point in their lives, whether it is a role in their career, sport, recreation or society. Knowing when to step up to a leadership space when the opportunity arises requires a self-awareness and knowing that one's personal skills and initiative can make a difference in a situation that may present itself. I also have an interest in evaluation and the purpose of the CLDP seemed to present a logical research project that could be used for this thesis in partial requirement of the Masters Degree in Education.

## **1.8 Outline of thesis**

This thesis is organised into seven chapters. Following this introductory chapter is a review of the available literature on leadership and environmental leadership, which

examines the theories of leadership and in particular, the broader concepts that relate to transformational leadership, such as constructivist leadership, dispersed or distributed leadership, authentic and ethical leadership and adaptive leadership. The second part of the chapter examines environmental leadership including characteristics and requirements of environmental leaders, the need for environmental organisations to be able to learn and adapt with change and complexity, and the importance of understanding communities and other groups 'stake' in conservation. Chapter 3 discusses the literature on leadership development and evaluation which examines the efficacy of leadership development, the approach to leadership development and whether it should be targeted to individuals or for building overall leadership capability in an organisation. The value of a learning system in leadership development is discussed as well as modes of learning including action learning. The second part of Chapter 3 examines the role of evaluation in leadership development and the value that it can provide in measuring success for the intended purpose, or informing in other areas that may benefit from further development. Chapter 4 describes the methodology that was used in this study. The choice of interpretive/constructivist research is explained and the mixed methods research design is outlined and justified including the methods of data collection and analysis. This chapter also introduces concepts of evaluation and discusses the approach taken for this study. A demographic profile of the participants in the CLDP and their managers is also provided in this chapter. Chapter 5 reports on the results of the quantitative and qualitative data for each of the research questions. The quantitative findings are presented in descending percentage order in tables and the qualitative data results are summarised in bullet form, with discussion of both sets of results included. This is followed by Chapter 6 in which emerging themes, that were identified and extrapolated from the results, link with the literature on transformational and environmental leadership. The final chapter provides an overview of the research process including its limitations, and an evaluation of the various aspects of the study. Further research and implications for findings for practice are also suggested.

## **Chapter 2. Leadership and environmental leadership**

*Let go, have confidence, set the guidelines and direction, and then don't interfere.*  
(Quote from a Brisbane Forest Park manager on leadership, in Worboys et al., 2001).

### **2.1 Chapter overview**

This chapter reviews the literature on theories of leadership and how they intersect with concepts of environmental leadership. Section one discusses views on leadership as opposed to management and the established notions of transactional and transformational leadership. Next, broader concepts such as constructivism in leadership, dispersed or distributed leadership, authentic and ethical leadership and adaptive leadership are examined. Section two describes the contemporary environmental leadership characteristics required of senior leaders in environmental organisations, particularly in working with communities. Finally, the need for traditional environmental organisations to adapt with change to become learning organisations is discussed.

### **2.2 Defining leadership**

As a term, leadership has no universally agreed definition. It has been suggested that there are as many definitions of leadership as there are people who attempted to define the concept (Stogdill, 1974). Leadership has often been compared to management, and in many cases the terms have been used interchangeably. Obviously, leadership and management are interrelated. A person can be a leader without being a manager and a person can be a manager without leading. In an operational sense, the transformative work of leadership can be seen to manifest through the day-to-day focus of management. As good management sustains the present, leaders can concurrently focus on moving into the future (Department of Conservation, 2009).

The essential distinction appears to be that leaders influence and motivate commitment from followers, whereas managers utilise positional power (Yukl, 1989). Most authors conceptualise leadership as a relationship whereby one person influences others to attain the expected objectives in a group. The relationship is not coercive, but serves as more of a pull rather than a push. (Bass, Avolio, Jung & Berson, 2003; Browning, 2007; Burns 1978; Chung & Chieh-Ling, 2007; Shamir, House & Arthur, 1993). Traditionally, leadership has been examined from a trait perspective or one that studied solely the leader's personality. Katz (cited in Browning 2007) believed leadership depended on three basic personal skills: human, technical, and conceptual. He suggested these were skills that were different from

those that other leadership theories studied: “Skills imply what leaders can accomplish whereas traits imply who leaders are” (p. 5). Human skill is having knowledge about and being able to work with people. It is quite different from technical skill, which has to do with working with things. To be a leader with human skills means being sensitive to the needs and motivations of others, and taking into account others’ needs in one’s decision making. Yukl (1989) believed leadership studies should also include power-influence, leadership behaviours and situational factors that interact with traits, behaviour and power. The leader that emerges in this process is the result of the individual’s or the group’s behaviours (Yukl, 1989).

### ***2.2.1 Transactional and transformational leadership***

Leadership studies have focused on understanding the difference between transactional and transformational leadership. Burns (1978) described transactional leaders as leaders that emphasise work standards, assignments and task-oriented goals. Most researchers indicate transactional leadership occurs as a continual negotiation process between the leader and staff (Hater & Bass, 1988). Rewards and recognition are provided when followers successfully carry out their roles and assignments. Transactional leaders tend to focus on task completion and employee compliance and these leaders utilise organisational rewards and punishments to influence employee performance (Bass et al., 2003). Therefore, exhibiting transactional leadership means that followers agree with, accept, or comply with the leader in exchange for praise, rewards, and resources or the avoidance of disciplinary action. Transactional leadership has been found to relate to effective follower performance, though not as strongly as transformational leadership (Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995; Hater & Bass, 1988; Howell & Avolio, 1993).

Transformational leadership, on the other hand, is transcending. Burns’ (1978) conception of transformational leadership was based on a vision to which the leader was committed, and one that the leader empowered others to achieve. Transformational leadership occurs when a leader “pays attention to followers, seeks to satisfy their higher needs, and engages the follower” (Burns, 1978, p. 4). Several researchers have investigated the effects of transformational and transactional leadership (Hater & Bass, 1988; Howell & Avolio, 1993). Hater and Bass (1988) found transformational leadership, when compared to transactional leadership, predicted higher employee ratings of effectiveness and satisfaction. They also found high performing managers were seen as more transformational in the leadership style than ordinary managers. It is even argued that “transformational leadership is coming to be equated with leadership *per se*; transactional (more so) with closed-ended,



relatively static, management” (Alimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, cited in Boaden, 2006, p. 6).

Bass et al. (2003) identify four components of transformational leadership that heighten the needs, value, preferences, and aspirations of their followers:

- *Idealized influence.* These leaders are admired, respected, and trusted. Followers identify with and want to emulate their leaders. The leader shares risks with followers and is consistent in conduct with underlying ethics, principles, and values,
- *Inspirational motivation.* Leaders behave in ways that motivate those around them by providing meaning and challenge to their followers’ work. The leader encourages followers to envision attractive future states, which they can ultimately envision for themselves,
- *Intellectual stimulation.* Leaders stimulate their followers’ effort to be innovative and creative by questioning assumptions, reframing problems, and approaching old situations in new ways. There is no ridicule or public criticism of individual members’ mistakes, and
- *Individualized consideration.* Leaders pay attention to each individual’s need for achievement and growth by acting as a coach or mentor. New learning opportunities are created along with a supportive climate in which to grow.

Inspection of these characteristics suggests an appreciation of skills necessary for the leader to engage with employees through relationship building skills such as listening, feedback, communication, valuing others and collaboration coupled with cognitive skills, intelligence and strategic focus. This type of leader inspires followers to commit to the leader’s mission and makes sacrifices in the interest of the group (Shamir et al., 1993).

When discussing the different types of leadership, it is important to consider that there is no simple relationship between them. Transformational and transactional leadership for example are not simply opposite ends of a continuum. Furthermore, although transformational leadership is generally considered to be the most effective, modern understanding of the theory suggests transformational leadership cannot be simply applied as the one effective style of leadership. Despite some evidence to the contrary (Alimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, cited in Boaden, 2006; Boyd, Henning, Reyna, Wang & Welch, 2009), transactional leadership when followed through to the

satisfaction of followers, can be effective as well (Department of Conservation, 2009; Egri & Herman, 2000; Snow, 1992). Therefore, the leadership theorists advocate for leaders to utilise a mixture of transactional and transformational leadership. From this view, both are necessary for effective leadership depending on context and circumstances, although, the concepts of transformational leadership clearly offer greater scope for coping with and responding to future organisational challenges and this can be applied to leadership challenges facing environmental organisations.

## **2.3 Broader concepts of leadership**

Additional theories of leadership have been developed alongside transactional and transformational leadership. These can be identified as constructivist leadership, dispersed or distributed leadership, authentic and ethical leadership and adaptive leadership and are discussed below.

### ***2.3.1 Constructivist leadership***

Constructivism involves the building and extending of accepted understanding and knowledge to new levels. The educational approach of constructivism involves the integration of new ideas with previous experiences and seeks to change existing cognitive structures by allowing learners to explore new alternatives (Densten & Gray, 2001). Constructivist leadership appears to be importantly shaped by the beliefs and goals of the leader. The key, according to Wirt and Krug (1997), is for the ability of the leader to view the world in clear terms of how it should be shaped, and be less distracted by the current operating context. Experience can be more than events and involves the perceptions of events. Leaders actively shape and construct their experiences by selectively attending to particular situations.

Constructivist leadership encourages learning within communities that leads to shared purpose and action. This may further encourage capacity building and collective responsibility. Lambert (2003) defines it as “the reciprocal processes that enable participants in an educational community to construct meanings that lead toward a shared purpose” (p. 10). Leaders who engage in constructive strategies describe problems in ways that invite ownership and commitment from others and can examine how they and others might be contributing to a problem. A prerequisite for engaging is the ability to inquire into the theory that underpins the practice that needs changing. (Robinson, Hohepa & Lloyd, 2009). Lambert (2003) suggests that constructivist leaders encourage the construction of meaning through reflection and dialogue, and the challenging of assumptions. Learning through critical reflection is

assisted where learners have three attributes, namely; open-mindedness; responsibility; and whole-heartedness (Dewey, cited in Densten & Gray, 2001).

### ***2.3.2 Dispersed or distributed leadership***

Leadership can be exercised by those without positional authority. This is described as dispersed or distributed leadership, also described as self-management leadership (Politis, 2005). A minimalist definition of distributed leadership, developed in the context of self-managing teams, refers to multiple leaders seeking and taking responsibility for different leadership functions and assuming complementary roles (Barry, 1991). It is not a sharing of tasks or leadership but the ‘dynamic interactions’ between multiple leaders and followers (Timperley, 2005, p. 396). Distributed leadership may be exercised by anyone whose ideas or actions are influential in the context of specific tasks and activities. The complexity and volatility of fast-changing political, economic, social and technical environments confirm that challenges for leaders and managers require a need to be more flexible, adaptive and to make complex responses. The need for renewed networking and negotiation means that leadership ‘spaces’ are created in a governance structure. Strategies include “self-constitution of authority” (Pedersen & Hartley, 2008, p. 335) and being able to decode new sets of values and goals, and working with varied rationales for action. This suggests that a leader not only has opportunities, but the expectation to step up from the existing operating realm, make sense of the world around him or her through networking and be prepared to make decisions through negotiation.

The distributed leadership model is argued as supportive when rapid organisational learning is needed. Stewart and O’Donnell (2007) highlight the importance of localised leadership in concentrating mid-manager energies and linking effectively with the central leadership when introducing change in a public organisation. They found that while an agency has sufficient capability to produce innovative responses to challenges, it may not have the capacity to distribute this innovative power quickly enough. Localised capability can underscore the leadership factor at this level. This innovative capacity requires leadership behaviours that combine analysis of the situation with the knowledge of where and how to empower across the organisation. (Stewart & O’Donnell, 2007).

In a culture of dispersed leadership, the real work of leaders begins with displaying curiosity to uncover problems that can threaten an organisation. (Bowman & Garten, 2004). The value in seeking diverse opinion can help ensure that others’ priority needs are being served. This lends itself well to community settings. For example,

iwi members have typically played crucial leadership roles in the setting-up of Māori-medium educational institutions, such as kōhanga reo<sup>2</sup> and kura kaupapa<sup>3</sup> Māori (Robinson et al., 2009). Certain skills are necessary in order to display dispersed leadership such as learning to increase self-awareness, taking time to reflect on those things, learning to assess and evaluate deeply held values and deciding to take action regarding priorities and potential life changes (Bowman & Garten, 2004). The benefits of practising these skills are that leaders become more effective in working with others, and become more flexible and confident in their approaches to goal achievement. Such leaders encourage team members to improve their inherent and distinctive talents and create environments to foster creativity and productivity. According to Politis (2005), dispersed leadership behaviours best predict the dimensions of the work environment conducive to creativity and productivity. He suggests that since employees' creativity makes an important contribution to organisational innovation, there is a need for organisations to create contexts that are most supportive to idea generation and creative thinking. In Politis' (2005) words, "for employees to be creative there must be a work environment that supports the process of creativity" (p. 182).

### ***2.3.3 Authentic and ethical leadership***

Authentic and ethical leadership are also of interest to researchers. Authentic leaders are leaders whose actions are based on values and convictions (Shamir & Eilam, 2005). This view emphasises a responsibility of self-determination by leaders and followers to exhibit sustained positive behaviour. There is a need for leaders to remain introspective and thoughtful in their pursuit of moral excellence, while tending to the business of the organisation. Authentic leaders tend to exhibit confidence, hope, optimism, resilience and a dedication to developing leadership capabilities in others. They are open about who they are and strive to link their personal values to organisational values and actions (Novicevic, Davis, Dorn, Buckley & Brown, 2005).

An outcome of authentic leadership is the development of authentic followers. This is accomplished through an authentic leader's self-awareness and self-regulation (Garger, 2008). One component of authentic leadership is the leader's transparency in dealing with followers. The idea is that when a leader is transparent, his/her authenticity can be more easily viewed by followers because inauthentic motives

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<sup>2</sup> Māori language preschool

<sup>3</sup> Primary school operating under Māori custom

cannot be hidden. It may be possible to try to develop authentic leaders to lead through honest values and convictions but there is a danger of developing inauthentic leaders who exhibit socially desirable behaviours only to appear authentic. Shamir and Eilam (2005) presented a framework for defining authentic leadership stating that authentic leaders:

- Do not fake their leadership,
- Do not lead for status, honour or other personal rewards,
- Are not copies but are original, and
- Are leaders whose actions are based on values and convictions.

Authentic leadership is strongly related to ethical leadership. Authentic leadership behaviours are those that are in agreement with one's internal values and beliefs. Authentic individuals have both the self-awareness and self-confidence to project their 'true selves' to others (Harvey, Martinko & Gardner, 2006, p. 8). Ethics on the other hand, implies *doing* the right thing and is fundamentally concerned with the impact of an individual's actions on others (Messick & Bazerman, 2001). There is therefore an 'active' quality to ethical leadership. The ethical leader is one who does not seek to fulfil his or her self-interest at the expense of others but who looks after the group's interest. Ethical leaders involve their employees in decision-making to ensure procedural fairness.

Both authentic and ethical leaders have strong moral characteristics. Sankar (2003) stresses character as a critical variable of leadership and should not be confused with charisma suggesting: "The quest for leadership excellence is based more on character than charisma. Charisma is not connected to ethics, moral literacy, mentoring or the design of an ethical culture" (p. 45). Moral literacy, he contends, is vital for the transformation of the leader's goals, vision, core values and behaviour. By possessing a virtuous character, a leader's credibility is enhanced and is therefore more empowered to create trust for others and to serve as a mentor. A report by the American Business Roundtable based on surveys of practising managers, highlighted honesty and competence as the most essential qualities for good leadership (Sankar, 2003).

Messick and Bazerman (2001) also link ethical leadership with ethical decision-making. They apply three broad criteria that executives can focus on to improve their decision-making: quality, breadth, and honesty. Improving the quality of decision-

making means ensuring all the consequences of actions are considered. This implies having accurate assessments of the risks associated with possible strategies, in particular being attuned to biases that may distort judgement. Breadth is being aware and assessing the full range of consequences that policies may entail – a decision must take into account the outcomes for all stakeholders. While breadth is being open to others, honesty is about being open with one-self. Being self-aware of the processes that lead us to form our opinions and judgments can guard against irrational, unethical decisions.

#### **2.3.4 Adaptive leadership**

Leaders help their organisation mobilise to respond to adaptive challenges. In situations requiring change, Heifetz and Laurie (1998) argue the default expectation is on the senior manager to take responsibility and solve problems, where in fact the managers should, rather than provide the answers, be asking tough questions of employees at all levels. Rather than protecting people from threats, leaders should allow them to “feel the pinch” (p. 14) of reality to motivate them to adapt. Instead of affirming current expectations of people in their roles, leaders should disorient them so that new relationships can develop. Instead of minimising conflict, leaders should draw the issue out. Instead of maintaining norms, leaders should challenge historical assumptions about the way business is done and distinguish between necessary values and irrelevant practices.

Heifetz and Laurie (1998) offer six guiding principles for leading adaptive work:

- *Get on the balcony.* Leaders need to view patterns as if from a vantage point. They need to remove themselves from the busyness in order to identify the avoidance to change and patterns of resistance,
- *Identify the adaptive challenge.* Leaders need to understand themselves, their people and potential sources of conflict to help the business learn quickly to adapt to new challenges,
- *Regulate distress.* Adaptive work generates distress. Leadership demands an understanding of the pain of change and readjustment, so a leader must have the emotional capacity to tolerate uncertainty and frustration and to be aware that he or she will be observed for the ability to hold steady and tackle tasks ahead,
- *Maintain disciplined attention.* A leader has to counteract distractions that prevent people from dealing with adaptive issues by focusing them on

bringing their particular beliefs, values, differences, assumptions, experiences and habits to work. This diversity is important as it produces innovation and learning,

- *Give work back to the people.* Every person may see different needs and opportunities because they have specific access to information that comes from their vantage point. The leader needs to encourage people to act on their special knowledge and bring that information to bear on tactical and strategic decision making, and
- *Protect voices of leadership.* A difficult time for people to speak out may be during periods of change. They may feel they are speaking out of turn or beyond their authority, or bypass proper channels. This hesitance can risk losing hidden and valuable information and may discourage a potential leader.

Heifetz and Laurie (2001) add another dimension in that adaptive leadership requires a learning strategy. Adaptive situations are hard to define and resolve precisely because they are not technical, nor amenable to solutions provided solely by leaders. When a manager sees a solution to a problem, it requires a change in the attitudes and habits of staff which is an adaptive challenge. When an employee close to the business sees a gap between the organisation purpose and the objectives he is asked to achieve, he faces an adaptive challenge to lead from 'below'.

Glover, Rainwater, Jones and Friedman (2002) give four ingredients for enhancing adaptive potential in leaders:

- *Cultural competency.* Adaptive leaders need to understand the organisational dynamics of human culture through interacting with others who may have different values than their own. This working knowledge of culture will inform the decision making to solve the varied nature of problems,
- *Knowledge management.* Adaptive leaders need to set up effective information systems to capture, store and distribute both explicit and tacit knowledge,
- *Creating synergy from diversity.* Being able to lead and organise diverse groups with seemingly opposing values is essential. It is not a case of choosing one over the other but accepting both views and purposefully confronting and reconciling dilemmas, and

- *Holistic vision.* Adaptive leaders need to be able to scan their horizons and think beyond the obvious and then visualise and consider all viable options before proceeding.

Adaptive leadership often requires reconciling differences so that multiple purposes and priorities do not cancel each other out. Hogan (2008) offers a fifth approach to this theory by suggesting “compromise” as a remaining possible skill set to view potential outcomes other than win-lose (p. 58). An adaptive leader does not abandon their purposes when he or she takes “an angled step toward them” rather than a straight line (Heifetz, Glashow & Linsky, 2009, p. 241).

### **2.3.5 Section summary**

In summary, theories of leadership have evolved over time. Earlier theories focused primarily between the characteristics of management and leadership, and then progressed to recognising the ability for some individuals to influence others. Most researchers referred to transactional reinforcement as the core component of effective leadership behaviour in organisations. With the introduction of transformational leadership theory into the literature, greater attention has been paid to understanding how certain leaders are better equipped to elevate a follower’s motivation and performance to the higher levels of accomplishment. More recent theories on styles that are related to transformational leadership include constructivist, distributed, authentic and adaptive styles of leadership.

## **2.4 Environmental leadership**

Although it could be said that environmental leadership can be distinguished from leadership in other areas, it is probably more accurate to say that environmental leadership has a special set of characteristics. It is strongly rooted in transformational leadership. Research in the domain is only just gathering momentum. Although there is a burgeoning literature on sustainability practices for business and organisations, arguably because it is increasingly seen as the right thing to do, there is little that may assist the researcher in discovering distinctive leadership qualities required for leaders in environmental and conservation organisations. Egri and Herman (2000) define environmental leadership as “the ability to influence individuals and mobilise organisations to realise a vision of long-term ecological sustainability.” (p. 572). These authors believe that environmental leadership is “the enactment of ecocentric values in organisational processes, activities and relationships” (ibid). That is, ecological sustainability is the primary element in decision-making and developing organisational goals, over traditional economic and technological concerns. They



argue that one recurring theme in the environmental leadership literature is the need for both transactional and transformational leadership in the effort to achieve ecological sustainability at organisational and societal levels. Worboys, et al. (2001) also maintain that staff, who are supported by positive leaders, can harness “extraordinary energy to achieve conservation goals” (p. 91). Environmental leadership is not constrained for the benefit of employees, however, and the practicalities of it could be extended to groups within the community, stakeholders and even volunteers (Bruyere & Rappe, 2007; Department of Conservation, 2009; Ryan, Kaplan & Grese, 2001).

#### ***2.4.1 Environmental leader characteristics***

The literature reveals some similarities between leader characteristics in public and non-public conservation organisations. Snow’s (1992) evaluation of conservation NGOs identified that CEOs used their time on the following tasks:

- Securing resources, board and membership development, managing internal affairs, personnel management and planning (57%),
- Programme implementation and research (25%), and
- Advocacy and media (11%)
- Other (7%)

This reflects a mode of working in-the-business rather than on-the-business and suggests transactional leadership or leadership by management, although, it must be acknowledged the sample was primarily from small conservation entities. Other findings were that the profile of the typical CEO indicated a desire for more motivational leadership from the board, and for it to be more strongly involved (Snow, 1992). The profile also indicated that CEOs stipulated a preference for personal growth over professional advancement, wanting to step outside the demands from the workplace to recreate past opportunities of learning and development.

In examining the profiles of environmental leaders, Egri and Herman (2000) found that case studies of environmental leaders in both non-profit and for-profit organisations identified the importance of personal and environmental values in shaping their visions for the future, as well as in providing the motivation and guidance to make environmental gains. In their comprehensive survey of 73 leaders of these environmental organisations, they revealed these leaders were more self-transcendent and open to change than those managers in other types of organisations.

The majority of environmental leaders identified the importance of interpersonal, technical and conceptual skills. About one-quarter identified political skills and very few (5%) mentioned time management skills. Bengston and Fan (1999) found three dimensions were present in conservation/environmental leadership: ethics, the use of collaborative approaches in the management of natural resources, and the use of science-based management. Booth (2005) reported on the dynamics of developing a learning and development intervention to build leadership capability in a public Australian natural resources agency. Similarly, the focus of development was identified as leadership in the areas of intra-personal management, interpersonal skills in managing stakeholders, developing relationships and building work teams, organisational awareness of systems and processes and strategic thinking skills.

In a survey by Gordon and Berry (2006), 85% of respondents indicated that today's environmental leaders need different skills/styles than past leaders. They highlighted the following attributes:

- *Vision*; the ability to see ahead and communicate what you see,
- *Information*, the ability to find, understand and transmit needed information,
- *Inclusion*, listening and using all the available skills and ideas,
- *Decision*, defining and pursuing an action agenda,
- *Dispatch*, doing things now rather than later,
- *Standard setting*, formulating the definition of success, and
- *Humanity*, using empathy and humour in dealing with others.

DOC has a similar outlook for its leadership needs, explaining conservation leadership, as “the ability to influence and inspire people by creating and advocating new ideas, championing the creative ideas of others, and initiating new directions”. The leadership needs of the Department are organised into four concepts:

- *Thought leadership* –the strategic and tactical thinking based on technical knowledge and experience to be a conservation leader in the Department and the community,
- *Organisational leadership* – the understanding, experience and values required to work within Departmental public sector processes and systems,


- *People and relationship leadership* – the capabilities needed to work with others in teams within the Department and the community, and
- *Self leadership* – the self-awareness and world view needed to support the leadership described above (Department of Conservation, 2009, p. 45).

Environmental leadership does not solely consist of skills and attributes, and must include high values and moral commitments to actively pursue change for the better. Leaders need to be attuned to the values of all those with a stake in their decisions and actions (Bengston & Fan, 1999). Another quality for environmental leaders is a strong ethical base, a secure and clear knowledge of right and wrong and how to apply it in service (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). These authors believe that environmental leadership has at its core, a deep understanding of social justice and suggest that the principles of this leadership invoke a moral imperative to educate the need for change that can be applied instrumentally through systems thinking. At the same time, environmental leaders have to be good at separating their own personal values from those of their clients (Gordon & Berry, 2006).

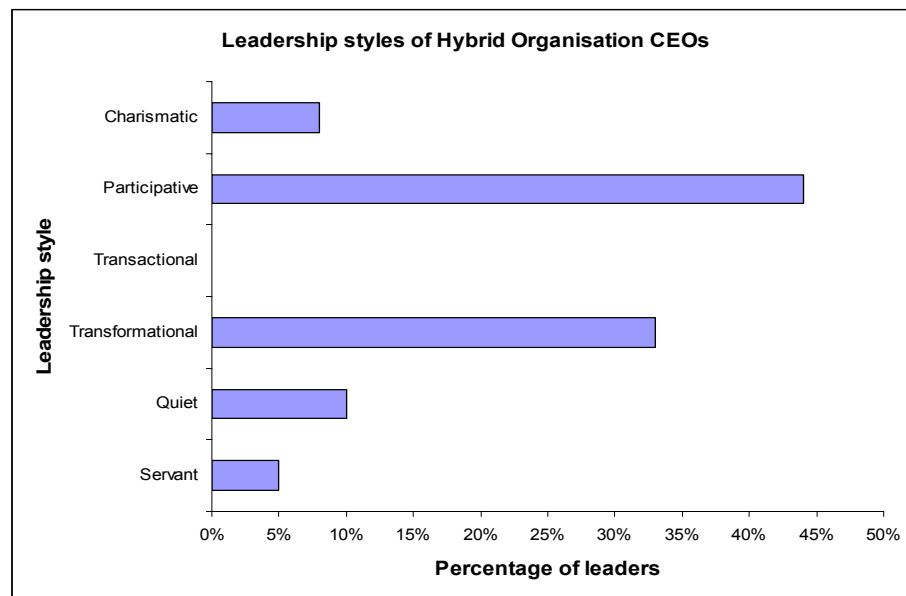
Complexity is a pervasive phenomenon in environmental leadership. The types of environmental problems in terms of systems thinking are described as ‘wicked’, (i.e., take long times for solution, involve complex interactions of process and people, have little science or knowledge base, require a need for integration across disciplines, and all within an atmosphere of emotion and contention) (Gordon & Berry, 2006). Environmental leaders need to be good at confronting this scale of complexity and uncertainty. The solutions to environmental problems, whether climate change, species conservation or natural resources management, demand communication, understanding and collaboration among diverse disciplines and traditions. In his research on the functions of environmental management and leadership, Johnston (2008), identified that they can be split into two parts. The first part, *systems capability in management*, describes three phases of managing and leading; managing *through*, managing *in and up*, and managing *out*. The second part is concerned with the *self-complexity* that the leader is aware of being made manifest in his/her leadership. Within these two parts, it is possible to attribute levels of complexity of the leadership function. This is likely to apply in the stratified systems model where leaders in their organisation are expected to operate at “qualitatively (sic) different layers and complexity of work” (Department of Conservation, 2009, p. 10). Johnston’s framework of environmental management and leadership functions and

levels, as they relate to systems capability and self-complexity, has been adapted in Table 2-1 below.

**Table 2-1: Framework of environmental management and leadership functions and complexities (adapted from Johnston, 2008, p. 77).**

Function		Lower	Continuum of complexity	Higher
				
Part one - Systems capability in management	<b>Managing Through</b>  Using adaptive science-based processes: seeking patterns, understanding system dynamics, making plans to act.	Fits information to a prescribed pattern or plan and, in acting, makes local adjustments as required.	Produces plan. Able to identify and make choices between multiple cause and effect patterns.	Decides dynamic strategy. Sees systems of systems. Able to consider 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> order system effects, choose between options and keep choices under review.
	<b>Managing In and Up</b>  Working in bureaucratic and political processes.	Follows procedures and processes, works around local variations.	Can define and implement process improvements. Sees constraints in systems. May see constraints in self and relationships.	Understands whole system dynamics and can identify changes. May also see dynamics and fluid nature of self and relationships and reflect on and engage in change.
	<b>Managing Out</b>  Engagement with communities and interests, nature of discourses.	Embedded in the discourse, with local variations, engagement to advance objectives with local communities.	Able to develop and advance a unifying discourse or story to support achievement of preferred outcomes.  Engagement to achieve outcomes, perhaps help define the plan.	Able to hold multiple discourses. Sees ways to reframe debates to improve environmental management.  Engagement as a mutual learning process.
Part two - self complexity	<b>Self-complexity manifest in leadership</b>	Focused on others who are regarded as most significant. Can feel torn between competing authorities. Power derived from connections.	Can take multiple perspectives while maintaining own views. Power derived from drive to achieve organisational outcomes. Strategic enough to lead episodic shifts in direction	Beginning to explore self as fluid and interconnected with others. Uses range of styles, and engagement, to achieve valued outcomes.  Visionary and open to change, including basic assumptions.

Environmental leadership does not reside exclusively in organisations and groups with conservation and environmental protection as their sole purpose. Recently, the concept of a new ‘hybrid organisation’ has appeared in the literature (Boyd et al., 2009). Such organisations operate in the murky space between the for-profit and non-profit worlds. These entities place equal emphasis on both environmental concerns and financial performance. In terms of CEO leadership styles within hybrid organisations, Boyd et al. (2009) found in their research that hybrids are usually led by transformational or participative leaders. See Figure 2-1 below.



**Figure 2-1: Leadership styles quantified in survey of ‘hybrid ‘organisations (Boyd et al., 2009).**

Participative leaders were defined as extroverted and sensitive, openly sharing decisions and authority with subordinates. Transformational leaders were defined as inspiring through vision and passion, achieving success by clarity of thought and articulation. None of the leaders were described as ‘transactional’ (leads by reward and punishment) which is somewhat surprising as the literature by leadership theorists does not discount it entirely. This suggests that environmental leaders or executives tend to have a collaborative leadership style rather than the command and control style. Few were described as charismatic (having personality and charm). Boyd et al. (2009) identify the following strategies that the leader can utilise to improve their environmental mission:

- Embed the environmental concerns in their business model,
- Deliberately connect the mission in relationships with suppliers, producers and customers,

- Encourage patience for results, and
- Limit the rate of growth through self imposed growth restraints.

This suggests some connection with the ecocentric values (Egri & Herman, 2000) of a leader in an environmental organisation, in particular the value of collaboration with business partners and other stakeholders to achieve the shared environmental goal.

#### ***2.4.2 Adaptive to change***

A review of the available literature identifies how environmental organisations have had to adapt their traditional mode of operating and learn as the operating context changed. Organisational change in public agencies requires organisational resilience and adaptive change. Resilience can be defined as “the capacity and confidence to bounce back in adverse circumstances” (Stewart & O’Donnell, 2007, p. 240). In such situations, learning has to occur quickly and this requires organisational leaders to establish a high degree of trust among employees that they can use their skills, knowledge and abilities, and to engage in a degree of innovation and risk-taking. Where conservation leaders have traditionally been more conversant with science and technology, they have had to enhance their ability to deal with human behaviour. For example, the established N.Z. Forest Service monopoly over information sources became threatened by the research capacity of pressure groups, meaning that instead of making an assumption for the best use of natural resources, the conservation leader then worked with communities and user-groups to debate various options (Fennell, 1982).

Similarly, Apple (2000) in her description of the U.S. Forest Service evolving culture, reinforces the need for leaders to encourage a learning organisation. According to Argyris and Schön (1996), organisational learning is a change in the behaviour of the organisation or its members that is triggered by a change in the underlying culture, (i.e., the often tacitly used set of values and beliefs that the members of an organisation share). Traditionally recognised as a professional and effective natural resources management organisation with high ethics among staff, the U.S. Forest Service has had to question its culture of maintaining the highest levels of professionalism, and transform in order to respond to increasing scrutiny from user groups. Although professionalism establishes a framework for interaction with those outside the profession, it also tends to encourage insular attitudes and conformity in behaviour and problem-solving and can resist change and innovation. The ‘prison of experience’ (Fennell, 1982) which is embodied in professionalism can

be frustrating to those who seek non-traditional solutions to problems or who seek different uses for natural resources. There is therefore a need for leaders to self-analyse where their professionalism may stand in the way of innovation.

Apple (2000) notes that, although culture has often been viewed as a source of resistance to change, it can also serve as a basis for interpretation of conditions and experiences that prompt learning. As many programmes are increasingly being implemented at regional level, the U.S. Forest Service has initiated entrepreneurial activities through virtual enterprise teams (dispersed locations) of specialised skills to offer their services to the rest of the organisation. By involving the public more, communication across the organisational boundaries occurs to a greater degree. This distributed type of leadership helps create an environment that enables innovation. In Canada, the British Columbia Forest Service has recognised the need to reinvent the leadership required throughout its organisation by stating “the need to reward non-institutional leaders” (BCFS, 2010). Their embracing of knowledge management as a framework, led to practices of integrating knowledge sharing and collaboration. By challenging dated thinking through using “mental models and strategic conversations”, they found that “internal networks were stimulated and degrees of separation decreased” (BCFS, 2010, p. 3)

Environmental change is continuous and relentless. Increasingly there is a theme of connection between leadership and action. Inaction or the decision to do nothing can result in dire environmental consequences. Effective environmental leaders must embrace change management, not only acknowledging it, but striving to find it in new opportunities (Gordon & Berry, 2006). Environmental behaviour can depend on cognitive factors such as an individual’s knowledge of conservation issues and action strategies, and skills in performing conservation-oriented activities. Personality factors such as the degree of responsibility and commitment felt, and the ability to effect change, also influence an individual’s intention to act (Jacobson, 1999). If individuals do not believe that they can make a difference, they will be unlikely to act. The contributions of individuals to environmental management are important and employee empowerment can enhance it further. Employee empowerment is giving the employee both the ability and responsibility to identify problems and to effectively deal with them (Leitch, cited in Daily & Huang, 2001). Empowered employees are more motivated and committed to participate and engage in environmental practices especially when treated as major stakeholders.

### 2.4.3 *Environmental leadership with the community*

The literature draws a strong connection between conservation leadership and the community. For example, Young suggests that “while conservation needs individuals for leadership, it requires communities for action” (Young, 2004, p.235). The requirements for public agencies to collaborate more with communities is a recurring finding of the research of this area (Bono, Shen & Snyder, 2010; Cheng, 2006; Morrison-Saunders & Field, 2000; Rohs & Langone, 1993; Scarlett, 2002; Whitelaw, Eagles, Gibson & Seasons, 2008; Young, 2010). This is even more prevalent with reducing resources and yet demanding expectations to achieve higher outcomes. Non-government environmental organisations or groups will often implement solutions or carry out activities that governments will not or cannot in response to government downsizing (Whitelaw et al., 2008). This provides a role for community groups to step up where the leadership is unable to be provided by the organisation once associated with the sole responsibility and mandate for its purpose and function. Growth in memberships of conservation organisations in New Zealand has been variable, however, there has been recent growth in conservation volunteer organisations involved in conservation projects. Approximately 25000 hectares of land are held in sanctuary by community groups with new proposals regularly occurring (Young, 2004). Currently over 550 community groups are working with DOC on conservation projects. In 2007, the value added by 200 groups to DOC was estimated at \$15.8 million (Department of Conservation, 2010b). Both public and private environmental organisations rely on unpaid volunteers to further the cause of protecting and helping the environment (Ryan, Kaplan & Grese, 2001). In 2010 more than 8000 individual volunteers worked with DOC contributing to over 25000 workdays to conservation (Department of Conservation, 2010b).

Bruyere and Rappe (2007) studied the motivations of environmental volunteers in order that leaders could develop programmes to meet the motivations of these individuals. They found the results for motivation factors as per Table 2-2 below:

**Table 2-2: Motivation factors of environmental volunteers (Bruyere & Rappe, 2007).**

<b>Motivation factors</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Helping the environment	107	36
Values and esteem	77	26
Get outside	53	18
Social	29	10
User	20	6.5
Career	5	1.5
Learn	4	1.5
Other	1	.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>100</b>



This suggests the top motivational factors for individuals to volunteer are the perception of doing valuable work for the benefit of the environment (in an outdoors and social setting) and feeling valued for contributing to it. The leader should therefore programme work that is meaningful and purposive for the individual and also provide them acknowledgement and recognition for their work and should equally support community identified projects.

Environmental leaders will inevitably encounter conflict with stakeholders. This may happen when trying to impose the opinions they think the stakeholders *should* hold while misinterpreting what opinion they *think* the clientele holds (Fennell, 1982). It is said that public opinion on conservation is a mile wide and an inch deep, often driven by emotion rather than fact: “Scientists bemoan a citizenry that is emotionally charged but woefully lacking in basic ecological knowledge” (Jacobson, 1999, p. 3). This reinforces the challenge environmental leaders have in convincing some within the community who refuse to accept science.

The challenge to the leader is to learn about their clientele. Like two sides of a coin, organisational goals must be integrated with their concerns. User groups such as The Royal Forest and Bird Society, Federated Mountain Clubs, New Zealand Deerstalkers Association, Landcare groups of farmers, Ducks Unlimited, walking enthusiasts and amateur heritage restorers present sizeable alliances for conservation leaders. Kellert produced a typology of people’s attitudes toward nature and conservation for the leader to determine which interests motivate a particular individual or group:

- *Utilitarian*: Practical and material exploitation of nature,
- *Naturalistic*: Direct experience and exploration of nature,
- *Ecologistic-Scientific*: Systemic study of structure, function and relationship in nature,
- *Aesthetic*: Physical appeal and beauty of nature,
- *Symbolic*: Use of nature for language and thought,
- *Humanistic*: Strong emotional attachment and ‘love’ for aspects of nature,
- *Moralistic*: Spiritual reverence and ethical concern,
- *Dominionistic*: Mastery, physical control, dominance of nature, and

- *Negativistic*: Fear, aversion, alienation from nature (Kellert, 1996).

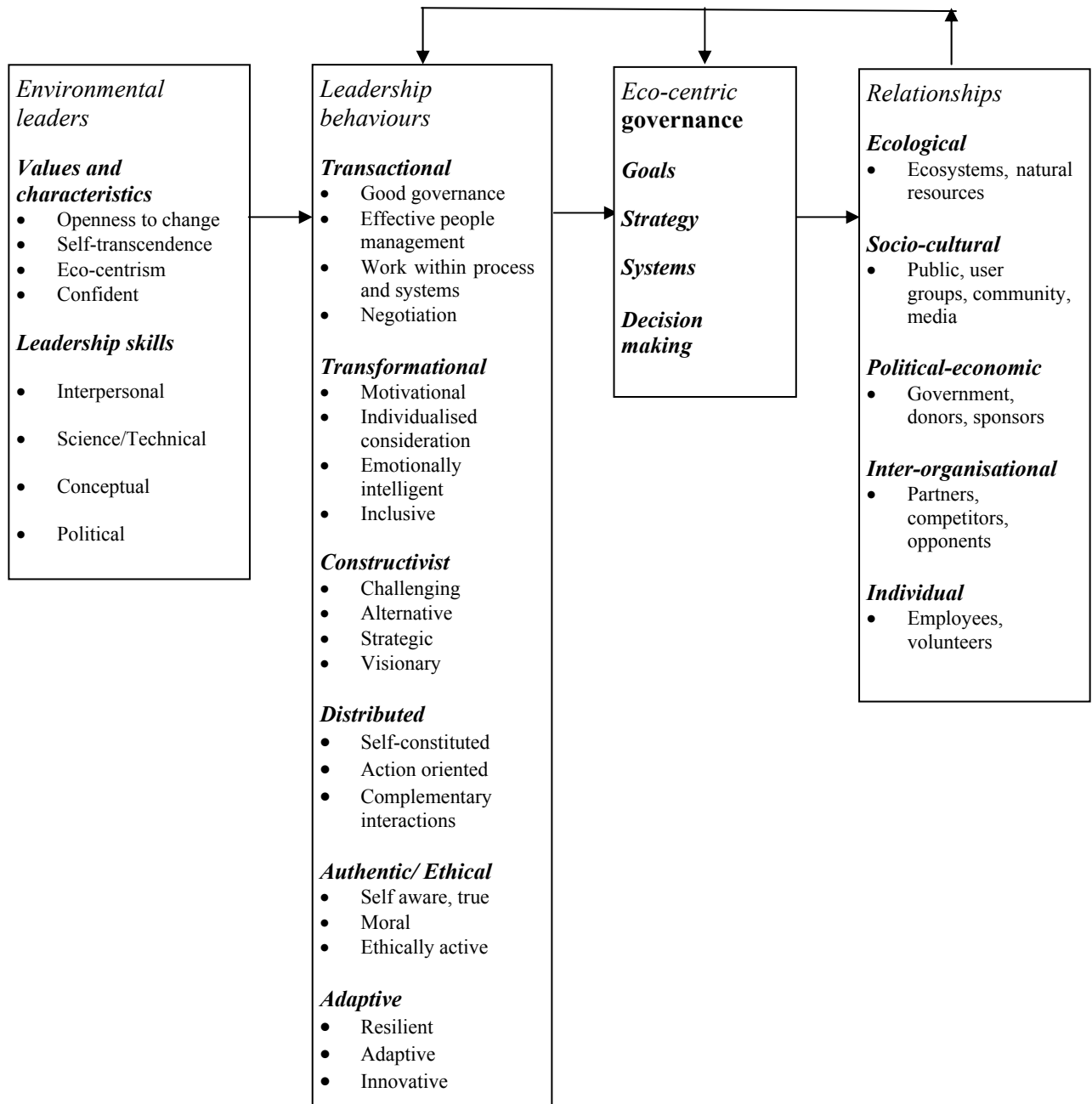
Conservation leadership must include communication skills in order to market organisational mission, policies and services. Understanding the perceptions of individuals and then validating their views with them could therefore be a crucial element in obtaining their willingness to become involved in community conservation projects.

Community relations are also critical to the longevity of government corporations striving to provide community services while promoting community values. (Morrison-Saunders & Field, 2000). The mandate to enter into partnerships with agencies and groups with similar interests is becoming less equivocal (Bono et al., 2010; Rohs & Langone, 1993; Scarlett, 2002; Young, 2010). Scarlett (2002) suggests utilising an agenda of four Cs; Consultation, Cooperation and Communication all in the service of Conservation, to lead through conflict and address the economic, community, and conservation needs of land users, rural communities and environmentalists. This is achieved through her suggested four 'I' principles of environmentalism; Innovation over prescription, Incentives over punishment, Information based on local knowledge and Integrated decision-making based on all environmental, community and economic factors.

Increasing collaboration and partnerships with communities may also be achieved in the provision of environmental education and knowledge programmes (Morrison-Saunders & Field, 2000; Vaughan, Gack, Soloranzano & Ray, 2003). In 1998 the Western Australian Department of Conservation and Land Management entered into a partnership with the University of Notre Dame, Fremantle to deliver some of the units in their Environmental Studies and Tourism programmes. The purpose of which was to be consistent with the Department's community support objectives in its corporate plan (Morrison-Saunders & Field, 2000). Accordingly, community based leadership development programmes are being developed to increase the leadership and problem-solving skills of participants and their participation in government and public service responses to local societal needs. Rohs and Langone's (1993) evaluation of a community leadership programme in Georgia demonstrated how the programme served as a catalyst to improve individual leadership in areas of personal values, participatory leadership, group perspective/group formation, motivation, maintenance, management and problem solving skills.

#### 2.4.4 Section summary

Environmental leadership in action consists of a special mix of values, characteristics, leadership styles, eco-centricism, and relationships. Figure 2-2 below describes the construct of environmental leadership.



**Figure 2-2: Model of environmental leadership (Adapted from Egri & Herman, 2000, p. 598.)**

The environmental leader must display or possess a good variety of leadership capabilities. These capabilities must range across interpersonal, technical, conceptual, cognitive, political and dealing with complexity and vast amounts of

information. Transactional and transformational leadership behaviours underpin the leadership style which also includes the qualities of constructivist, distributed, authentic and adaptive leadership. Environmental leaders must lead through effective people management and ‘doing the right things right’ to gain agreement and meet expectations. They must motivate and inspire through recognising individual considerations, yet also be inclusive and collaborative. Challenging the status quo and offering alternatives through providing vision, and then stepping up into a leadership space that complements the actions of other leaders is important. This concurrently occurs as the leader displays authenticity, self awareness and ethical decision-making. Being adaptive and resilient, able to cope with and learn from change as a companion and to be able to respond with innovation is also a necessary component. These behaviours are practised with ecological sustainability as the primary purpose of which organisational goals, strategies, structure and systems depend. Environmental leadership involves interacting with ecosystems and natural resources and building and maintaining relationships with communities, user groups, stakeholders, opponents, media, government and other organisations, employees and volunteers.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

Leadership studies have changed focus over time, from slowly being able to discern management from leadership, to where followers may be influenced to move towards a goal. Leadership theory has developed from recognising individual traits or personalities to understanding that leadership consists of having skills in understanding, relating with and motivating other people. These skills are described in the theories of transactional and transformational leadership and the broader concepts of constructivist, distributed, authentic and adaptive leadership. Environmental leadership requires a unique blend of all these skills in today’s context. The importance of these skills requires consideration when contemplating leadership development in that domain which is discussed in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 3. Leadership development and evaluation**

*Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.*  
(John F. Kennedy, 1963)

### **3.1 Overview**

The decision to invest in the development of leadership capability requires some degree of faith by a senior executive. Often, leadership is described as vital for an organisation, and leadership development is touted as a high priority, however, the purpose or objectives for it may not be well understood. The return on investment may therefore, not be immediate or even obvious. Furthermore, the decision to invest into a few 'stars' of high potential, or to invest across the organisation can be difficult to make, and initiating a programme can be fraught if it is not well served by a learning system. Follow-up or evaluation after a programme is essential to determine if objectives have been achieved or if other needs have been identified. This chapter discusses the efficacy of leadership development and how it can be distinguished from general, management development. The systems-approach to leadership development is discussed as well as general strategies for enhancing methods of leadership development for participants. The importance of evaluation in leadership development to ensure objectives and outcomes are linked is raised, and several examples of evaluation in such interventions by organisations and communities are reviewed for outcomes and success.

### **3.2 Efficacy of leadership development**

The efficacy of developing leadership has long been a topic of interest (Browning, 2007; Burns, 1978; Doh, 2003; Gardner, 1990). Furthermore, given that leadership is particularly difficult to define in simple terms, it is not unreasonable to query if leadership development is a relevant aspect of professional development and also why organisations should consider investing in it (Avolio, Avey & Quisenberry, 2010). Leadership development is a significant trend in the United States where an estimated \$14 billion is invested annually (Allen & Hartman, 2008). The underlying questions essentially concern whether leadership effectively be taught and learned, and what the skills are that benefit most from development. The view that leaders, like athletes, are born and not made and that leadership cannot be taught, is becoming more difficult to maintain (Doh, 2003; McCauley & Hughes-James, 1994). Even if the argument is accepted as partly accurate, it must be acknowledged that whatever skills exist within us, it seems reasonable to think that those underlying skills must be drawn out with education to be realised to their fullest extent. An interview of

business leaders (Doh, 2003) appeared to support the notion that leadership *can* be taught, although the amount of learning in a leadership setting depended upon the learning environment and the way it is taught. McCauley and Hughes-James (1994) also support the efficacy of leadership development although they point out that despite most participants find leadership development beneficial, the value they receive can vary. They suggest those who come to a programme with higher motivation, opportunity and support for learning benefit most. This may include people who are new in their roles, who are experiencing some conflict at their work, and who have supportive working environments.

### **3.3 Approaches to leadership development**

A distinction can be made between leadership development and management development. Burke and Day's (1986) meta-analysis of cumulative management effectiveness was a good starting point for this comparison, although it is suggested to be inconclusive as to the benefits for organisational performance (Collins, 2001). The research analysed 70 studies of managerial training effectiveness, specifically the programmes' training content and training methods utilised. One finding was that training programme descriptions and labels should not be heavily relied on as they often belied the actual content. Another finding was that different managerial training methods do not necessarily lead to increased knowledge and improved job performance (Burke & Day, 1986). Management development can be defined as "all on-the-job and off-the-job activities, structured and unstructured, formal and informal, that are undertaken to develop management expertise" (Ruth 2007, p.54). Leadership development has been defined as "every form of growth or stage of development in the life cycle that promotes, encourages and assists the expansion of knowledge and expertise required to optimise one's leadership potential and performance" (Brungardt, 1996, p.83). Leadership development has taken a more systemic approach to expand the collective capacity of organisational members to engage effectively in leadership roles and processes (Day, 2001). As previously discussed, the accepted view is that leadership roles refer to those that come with and without formal authority, whereas management development focuses on performance in formal managerial roles. Leadership processes are those that generally enable groups of people to work together in meaningful ways whereas management processes are considered to be position and organisation specific (Day, 2001). It is also claimed that leadership development for these organisational members is for them to learn to find their way out of problems that could not have been predicted (Day, 2001).

### ***3.3.1 Individual and organisational development***

As previously mentioned, studies of leadership development have for the most part focused on the individual leader, attributes of the leader and leader effectiveness. Originally, the goal of leadership development was to isolate common attributes of successful leaders. The view was that if these primarily interpersonal attributes could be identified and isolated, they could be encouraged in individuals via training and other means, effectively building an 'organisation of individuals with leadership attributes' (Foster, Bell-Angus & Rahinel, 2008 p. 505). Currently, leadership development is being seen as an active forward looking process that seeks to enhance the collective capacity of organisational members and the organisation through human-centred goal inspired relationships (Olivares, 2008). The development of individual leadership skills is important, however, this should not be at the expense of relationships and interactions within a social context (Day, 2001). In building leadership capacity, organisations need to attend to both individual leader and collective leadership development.

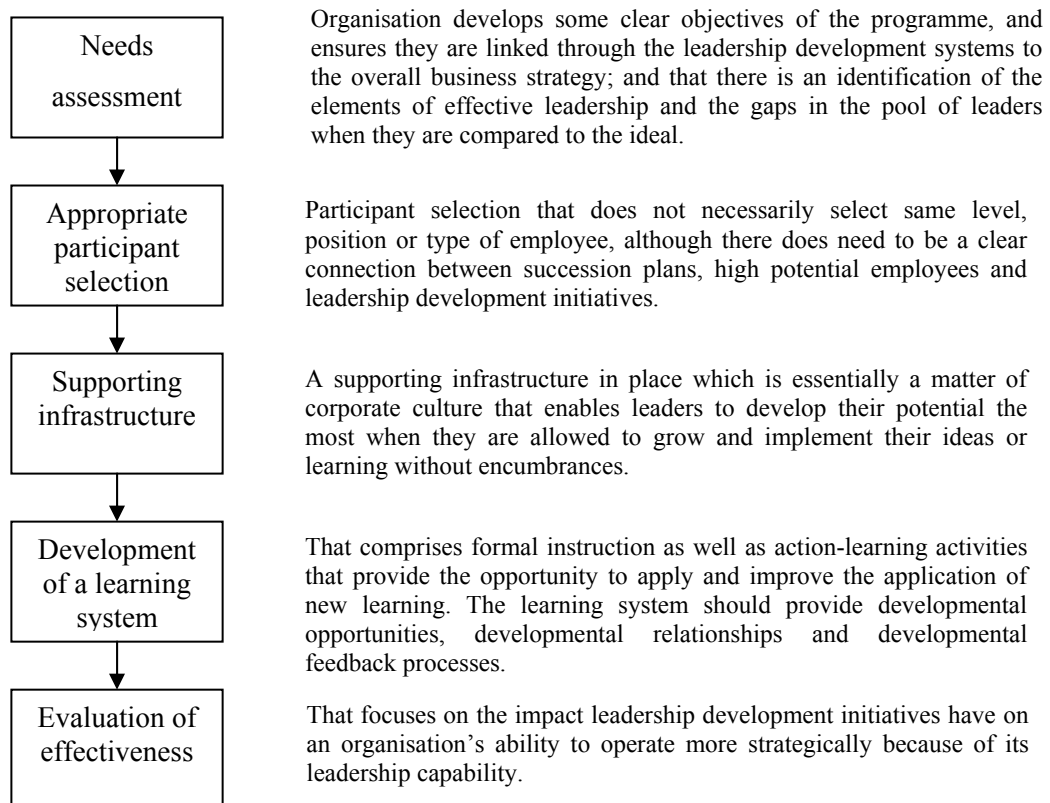
Identifying and understanding the elements of effective leadership development greatly assists in its implementation. Boaden (2006) asserts that there is a difference between developing leaders "using a traditional, individualistic conceptualisation of leadership" and leadership development "which has its origins in a more contemporary, relational model." (p. 8). A more contemporary approach needs to focus on strategic issues in a decentralised environment within the context of sensitivity to diversity, interpersonal skills and communities, and on anticipating the future and mobilising the organisation to shape it (Boaden, 2006). Leadership development studies include not only formal training programmes but the full range of leadership experiences including mentoring, job assignments, feedback systems, developmental relationships with senior executives and leader-follower relationships (Collins, 2001).

Leadership development does raise problematic challenges that need to be considered. According to Macky and Johnson (2004), leadership development is very different from other types of training, including supervisory skills training. This is because of the largely experiential basis on which it occurs – 'learning as one does'. There is little agreement upon the appropriate sources of learning. At times organisations use single sources. While such sources are valuable, the content is best learned through experience and there is growing research suggesting that organisation-directed learning is starting to give way to individual self-development

where the individuals “take on the primary responsibility for growth in their own leadership capacities and in their conceptual frames” (Orvis & Ratwani, 2010, p. 658). What leaders need to learn cannot be taught solely from a book or from a lecture. Another challenge may be the motivation of the participant and their expectations of the programme. Hayes (2007) found that some participants rate themselves higher in proficiency than they actually are before doing a programme. As existing managers, they may feel skilled enough in certain leadership skills already. Also, as they are managers of managers, acknowledgement of the ‘softer’ concepts such as emotional intelligence, mental models and personal values is sometimes viewed with suspicion (Pledger, 2007).

### 3.3.2 *Learning system*

Whatever the reasons for promoting leadership development, organisations should be adequately prepared to undertake it. As with other training, a common pitfall is the lack of a systems approach to understand the need for training or evaluate for training impact (Bolden, 2007; Leskiw & Singh, 2007). Therefore, despite the investment, some organisations do not know if the programme has been effective. Leskiw and Singh (2007) have identified what they believe to be a system of best practices in leadership development in the figure below:



**Figure 3-1: System of best practices in leadership development (Leskiw & Singh, 2007, p. 447)**



Identifying and understanding the elements of an effective transformational leadership programme greatly assists in its implementation. Robinson et al. (2009) found that there needs to be a strong link between the leadership dimensions (competency or expectation of the role) and the required organisational outcomes. When the leadership dimensions are established, it is then possible to identify the knowledge and skills that leaders require to engage in the dimensions. A development programme should ensure these skills and knowledge are adequately covered in the programme objectives. Effective development methods, practices and processes then need to be consolidated into a comprehensive framework that can be applied and adapted to fit organisational needs. It is important to establish a systems approach with links to the instructional design, needs assessment, desired outcomes and evaluation so that this can be measured (Macky & Johnson, 2004).

### ***3.3.3 Modes of learning***

The ability for the participant to learn through a variety of types of experiential learning is a vital aspect of a development programme (Allen & Hartman, 2008; Macky & Johnson, 2004). Modes of learning may include specific task learning or training, emulating a mentor, and learning through doing and reflection. The opportunities to do this should be varied and flexible, although initially identified in the pre-programme instructional design. Allen and Hartman (2008) (through the International Leadership Association), surveyed practitioners responsible for conducting leadership development in their organisation for their perspectives on the experiential sources of learning that would most likely be used, be cost effective and provide the greatest learning for participants. Their investigation found that developmental relationships, individual development plans, individual and group reflection, networking with senior executives, action learning, multi-source feedback, developmental assessments and coaching were the most useful and cost effective. Similar studies (Burke & Collins, 2005; Digenti, 1999; Enos, Kehrhahn & Bell, 2003; and Sogunro, 1997) also point towards collaborative learning and interaction, relationship, communication and self efficacy/cognitive skills as most effective sources of learning.

In order for these modes of experiential learning to be effective, people first need to develop an action-oriented mental model of what constitutes effective actions within certain situations (Frese, Beigel & Schoenborn, 2003). An action-oriented mental

model is a “cognitive representation” of the present situation, the desired future state and how the present situation can be transferred into a future state (p. 677).

The development of an organisational culture that values and actively encourages the ongoing development of leaders at all levels is critical for long-term success. Some characteristics of a desired leadership culture include:

- an organisational learning orientation that seeks and shares new knowledge,
- the effective use of measurement, assessment and feedback in developing leaders,
- growing leadership talent,
- sense-making or reflective learning, and
- the importance of leader developers (Vardiman, Houghton & Jinkerson, 2006).

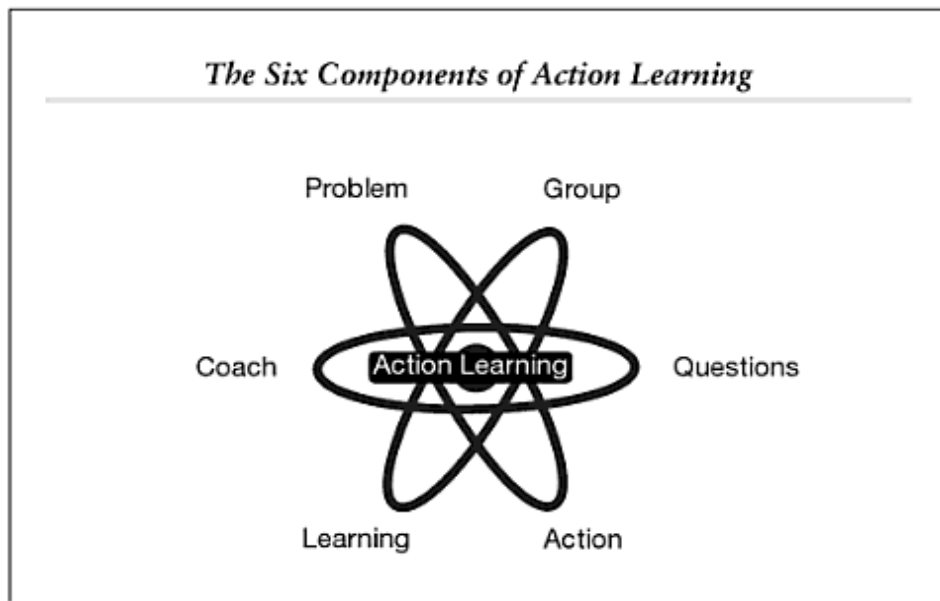
#### **3.3.4 Action learning**

Action learning is regularly cited as a key tool in leadership development. The use of action learning and the application of knowledge in the workplace are recognised as effective (Boaden, 2006; Booth, 2005; Day, 2001; Marquardt, 2004a; 2004b). According to Marquardt (2004a), all types of action learning “share the elements of real people resolving and taking action on real problems in real time and learning while doing so” (p. 28). Accordingly, action learning is seen to be ideally suited for leadership development. Day (2001), in a review of different approaches to leadership development (360 degree feedback, coaching, mentoring, networks, job assignments and action learning) suggests that action learning is the only one that offers a focus on the development of both human and social capital. Marquardt (2004b) believes that action learning is particularly effective in leadership development as it encourages the development of a number of important leadership competencies such as emotional intelligence and the ability to reflect, question and problem solve. He maintains that action learning differs from other leadership training in that the leaders are learning in context and solving real problems and that participants, rather than instructors, are seen as the source of knowledge.

There seems to be general agreement on the components of an effective action learning process. Marquardt summarises these in Figure 3-2 below as:

1. An action learning group,

2. A problem, challenge or issue,
3. A questioning and reflective listening process,
4. The ability to act on the problem,
5. A commitment to personal learning, and
6. An action learning coach or facilitator (Marquardt, 2004b, p. 2).



**Figure 3-2: The six components of action learning (Marquardt, 2004b, p. 2).**

Action learning projects were found to be important in the transfer of learning from leadership training interventions to the real world of state and local health officers in California. The evaluation by the Public Health Leadership Institute (Southfield, Spain, Pointer & Hafez, 1995) demonstrated the value of participants considering and preparing projects prior to undertaking the programme, and worked in small groups with other participants with roughly similar projects to engage in collaborative work. In the first year of using action learning in the programme, 69% of participants recognised some or major contribution to their learning. This increased to 85% for participants in the second year programme. There are factors encountered when using action learning for leadership development that can diminish effectiveness and these are listed as inadequate opportunities for reflection, poor facilitation and a failure to follow-up on project outcomes (Conger & Toegel, cited in Boaden, 2006).

### **3.3.5 Section summary**

In summary, leadership development is a realistic undertaking, and efforts and resources placed into developing leaders are justifiable. Leadership development has evolved from the early practice of identifying traits and characteristics of successful individuals and transposing them into others through training. While developing individual leaders remains important, leadership development now recognises the value in developing all appropriate leaders in the organisation (Foster et al., 2008, p. 504) in order to build organisational leadership capability. Effective leadership development requires a systems and strategic approach that aligns development objectives with organisational strategies, targets the highest potential people to lead change, has a culture and infrastructure that encourages learning, incorporates a range of learning methods, and evaluates the programme for success and effectiveness. Modes of learning should vary and should include action learning which is a powerful activity for leadership development.

## **3.4 Evaluation of leadership development programmes**

### **3.4.1 Value of evaluation**

Research indicates that even though leadership development interventions are pervasive, “organisations spend little time evaluating the effectiveness of their interventions” (Collins & Horton, cited in Militello & Benham, 2010, p.621). Evaluation studies have been shown to support leadership development programmes because of the organisational benefits that can be linked to them (Bono et al., 2010; Booth, 2005; Burke & Collins, 2005; Collins, 2001; Delahoussaye, 2001, McGurk, 2009; Sogunro, 1997; Solansky, 2010). The crux of programme evaluation is that programme success is dependent on the link between organisational and participant objectives and organisational and participant outcomes. An outcome is defined as a measurement of effectiveness or efficiency (of the organisation) relative to the system, process or individual (Collins, 2001). To best understand the outcomes that participants experience as a result of a leadership development programme, a variety of methods, perspectives and data analyses is invaluable (McCauley & Hughes-James, 1994). Evaluation of programmes can reveal success in achieving organisational objectives of increasing individual levels of confidence, providing network opportunities, enhancing decision making skills and developing a ‘bigger picture perspective’ (Foster et al., 2008, p. 505).

### ***3.4.2 Purpose for evaluation***

Undertaking an evaluation of a programme requires some prior consideration of purpose. For example Collins (2001) analysed the outcomes of available leadership development studies from 1984 to 2000 to determine whether leadership development programmes had changed in focus from individual performance to organisational performance. The results showed that about a third of the leadership training resulted in organisational or group increases in performance, while about two thirds were focused on increasing the participant's knowledge or competence. The research also found that formal training continues to be the dominant method for leadership development programmes and many methods are utilised to evaluate effectiveness. Conclusions of this study identified that "leadership development is a young but growing field that we still know very little about" (p. 8). This study was useful in that it identified trends in leadership development over a significant period of time and it highlighted the need to continue research into modes of learning that extended beyond formal training.

In an evaluation of the effect of a leadership training programme for rural Canadian organisations, Sogunro (1997) focussed on three criteria, the changes in participant knowledge, skills and attitudes. The participants identified 33 leadership competencies that were then grouped into 3 taxonomies of personal characteristics, personal relationship skills and task accomplishment skills. The findings implied; first, that leadership development is beneficial to lifting organisational performance and all employees should have access to development; second, that managers need to be retrained in various leadership skills to cope with change; third, that comprehensive analysis identifies the skills required to address the change; and fourth that evaluation should be made an integral part of a leadership development programme.

In an example of community leadership development, Bono et al. (2010) believed that volunteer community leaders can address social problems, including preservation of the environment, by collaborating with government, non-profit organisations and business sectors. The purpose of their study was to provide a clearer understanding of the link between the altruistic motives of volunteers and community leadership development that they participated in. The data collected provided basic information on the type and content of community leadership programmes undertaken, and displayed some evidence that participation in a community leadership programme may influence participant behaviour. Participants' experiences reported increased community involvement and personal change.

Programmes that focused on team building as part of their content were the most successful in fostering new community leadership activities. The study highlighted that despite the motives of participants, they engaged in their communities in new ways following participation in a community leadership programme. This suggests that such programmes foster integrative community leadership. An important conclusion of the study was that community leadership programmes can increase both knowledge and awareness of the community and actual engagement in the community for volunteer leaders who choose to participate in such programmes.

Research on leadership development programmes used by United States corporations has been done for the American Management Association. Delahoussaye (2001) wanted to find out how successful leadership development was in preparing people for increased managerial responsibility and how well it did in improving leadership skills. The most important skills ranked by survey respondents as important and currently demonstrated in the organisation were: communication skills, ethical behaviour, managing change, implementing plans, strategic visioning, and developing others. As with Collin's (2001) research, this evaluation was useful in that it studied programmes undertaken by many organisations. This enabled the creation of a profile of skills ranked in importance by participants in their roles as leaders. This profile can be used as a generic starting point when analysing needs for a potential programme.

There are also individualised outcomes for participants, although the content that is mastered will vary widely from person to person. In evaluation, McCauley and Hughes-James (1994) advise not to expect across-the-board leadership skill improvement from participants, but rather to look for changes in focused areas for each participant. Quite often the individualised outcomes show enhanced self-awareness and increased efforts to improve based on the enhanced self-awareness. These outcomes differ from the knowledge-building or practical skill-building outcomes. As each participant brings a pattern of readiness factors, more knowledge of these various individual and contextual variables and how they play a role in leadership development is needed. McGurk's (2009) study focussed on the development of new skills for senior or middle managers in the U.K. Fire Service. The expectation was that managers in these tiers would take on more delegated responsibility to initiate a new desired shift away from a hierarchical, 'emergency-response' operation to a new preventative, community-focussed and resource conscious way of working (McGurk, 2009). Important themes were people

management, presentation skills, performance management, problem solving, partnership and networking. The evaluation findings were that formal development in these areas contributed strongly to the raising of professional standards and competence, however the evidence also pointed out that for longer-term staff commitment to strategic change, well developed but informal leadership interventions in intrapersonal and interpersonal skills, including reflective practice, coaching and enabling were required. This evaluation was beneficial for the organisation because it helped link the outcomes of the programme with its objectives (i.e., for leaders to bring about a desired shift in culture and operating). The evaluation also revealed that the programme was a starting point that met the immediate need but that further focused interventions were required.

Evaluation can also measure the efficacy of varied learning methods. In Booth's (2005) evaluation of an Australian natural resources management agency leadership programme, the study revealed that learning was primarily achieved through participant collaboration in an ambiguous and complex organisational setting within the constructs of emotional intelligence and systems dynamics, and the use of action research cycles. The cycles moved through planning, action, observation and reflection. Observations were that over time, participants became more comfortable with and competent in three levels:

- *Technical* – mastery of intra-personal, interpersonal, systemic thinking and strategic thinking, theories, concepts and constructs that were introduced as knowledge and skills bases and then adapted by participants toward organisational outcomes,
- *Practical* – through application of new knowledge and skills to leadership practice and reflection on where and how these concepts could add value,
- *Emancipatory* – with reflection on practice providing new levels of self confidence, competence and acumen (Booth, 2005).

This evaluation provided worthwhile evidence of the value to be gained from using varied experiential learning modes such as systems thinking and action learning. It also demonstrated the action-oriented model (Frese, et al., 2003) in use, as participants could progressively reflect and adapt their learning to new levels.

Evaluations can be used to measure more specific benefits for an organisation. For example, evaluation of programmes delivered in other medium and large sized organisations such as Raytheon (Till, 2007), Goldman Sachs (Pledger, 2007) and

Manitoba Lotteries Corporation (Hayes, 2007) found benefits of supervisor effectiveness and proficiency, managerial skills and improved team performance. The research identified a link between these improvements and increased employee satisfaction, increased customer satisfaction and therefore, increased revenues.

### ***3.4.3 Section summary***

Evaluation is a critical activity in the learning system. Evaluation can link the organisational and participant objectives and outcomes. It can also just measure outcomes. Numerous evaluations of leadership development interventions in environmental, community, public and private organisations demonstrate that when the objectives and outcomes are linked, there are benefits for both the organisation and participant. Although an objective for an organisation may be to build leadership capacity overall, how this translates for participants may vary and evaluation can help objectives for participants be individualised and focused for greatest effect.

## **3.5 Conclusion**

Leadership development has been shown to be worthwhile and effective, particularly when it is clearly linked with business strategy and objectives. Furthermore, the literature points towards utilising a contemporary approach of enhancing leadership skills and capability across an organisation, over the traditional approach of developing individual leaders. A leadership development programme requires a system that supports the various types of experiential learning necessary for the learner firstly to develop an action-oriented model and then to reflect on the learning. Action learning is regularly utilised in leadership development. Having implemented a programme, the process of evaluation is important to measure the success against the objectives, and consideration must be given to evaluating for purpose. It is this consideration that is discussed in the next chapter where the choices of research paradigm and methodology used are explained.



## **Chapter 4. Research methodology**

*If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there.*

(Lewis Carroll, 1999)

### **4.1 Chapter overview**

This chapter describes the paradigm of the research, the choice of methods used, the use of evaluation as a research approach, the participants in the study, the instruments used to gather data and the process for analysis of the data. The chapter concludes with an explanation of the steps taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the study.

### **4.2 Research approaches**

As explained in Chapter 1, the aims of the study are concerned with evaluating the success of the CLDP through the experiences and perception of the participants. Questions that underpin this include the following:

- a) How appropriate and relevant are the programme objectives for the participants in their roles?
- b) How appropriate and relevant is the course content for the participants in their roles?
- c) Does the programme design and infrastructure promote successful (or otherwise) transfer of learning in their workplace?
- d) Have the participants changed their leadership and what are they doing differently since completing the programme?

#### **4.2.1 Research paradigm**

In undertaking this study an appropriate approach with which to frame my research was contemplated. The paradigms of positivism and its successor, postpositivism, have been at the forefront of scientific research (Walliman, 2007). A positivist approach investigates for objectivity, causality and predictability. By using accepted theories and models it should be possible to replicate an outcome (one reality) or control it through use of variables. Undertaking social research such as on human behaviour through a positivist framing, however, is not widely accepted as the research may be susceptible to the influences of the researcher's inherent beliefs, theories and disposition. Some researchers (i.e., postpositivists) believed they could

constrain these influences through quasi-experimental intervention and manipulation (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

Opponents of positivism, however, reject the notion that human behaviour can be codified scientifically, objectively and impartially to construct one reality. Such opponents, called interpretivists, aim to understand and interpret the world in terms of its actors (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Mertens, (1998) describes the interpretive/constructivist paradigm as closely associated with hermeneutics (the study of interpretive understanding or meaning). Historically the concept of hermeneutics was used to try to interpret the meaning or understanding of people's thinking during a particular time, culture or context. According to Mertens, the underlying quality of interpretivism/constructivism is that reality is socially constructed and that multiple recorded experiences and interpretations from people, although they may be in conflict at times, all contribute to that reality, or in fact to multiple realities. The epistemology (nature of knowledge) means that there is an interactive link between the researcher and participants and that beliefs and values are acknowledged and made explicit. The methods of inquiry in this paradigm are primarily qualitative and include interviews, observations and document reviews. Therefore, rather than seeking objectivity, the validity of reality is "confirmed" through multiple sources of data and the multiple methods used to collect the data (Mertens, 1998, p. 11).

This study examines the experiences and perceptions of a number of leaders who have undertaken the CLDP. As mentioned in the literature review, leadership is a very hard concept to define and predict. Each participant had individual experiences from the programme to offer and relate. The relationship between the participants and the researcher was one formed by a common desire to evaluate the appropriateness and success of the development programme for them in their role as leaders, based on their experiences. It is because of these characteristics that my approach best fits within the interpretive/constructivist paradigm in order to construct the reality of the leadership development programme for the participants.

#### **4.2.2 Methodology**

The purpose of this study is not to test hypotheses, but rather to gather data on people's perceptions and experiences from the CLDP. It is suggested that to best understand the outcomes of a leadership development programme for participants, a variety of methods, perspectives and data analyses are invaluable (McCauley & Hughes-James, 1994). A mixed methods approach which analysed both qualitative

and quantitative data was therefore employed. Whether to use quantitative or qualitative methods for evaluation has been a constant controversy which stems from the purist stance that insists research methods and research paradigms should not be mixed. (Morell & Jin Bee Tan, 2009). Mutch (2005) suggests that the research question influences the methodology. The question should indicate the collection of quantitative data or qualitative data, or a combination of both. Mertens (1998) associates research in the interpretivist paradigm as primarily qualitative in order to gather description of the event of interest and be able to formulate a theory. In qualitative descriptive research, a few people may be asked many questions or allowed to tell their own stories in their own ways. A positivist inquiry on the other hand is primarily quantitative. A characteristic of quantitative descriptive research is that many people may be asked the same questions to prove (or disprove) a proposition or theory (Mutch, 2005).

Pragmatists believe however, that methods can be mixed and matched to best answer the research questions. Mixed method design is the incorporation of various qualitative or quantitative strategies within a single project (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Guba and Lincoln (1994) noted that “both qualitative and quantitative methods may be used appropriately with any research paradigm” (p. 105). Similarly, Guba and Lincoln (2005) reiterated that “within each paradigm, mixed methodologies (strategies) may make perfectly good sense” (p. 200). Accordingly, it appeared to be of value to use mixed methods in this study.

My decision to use an electronic survey allowed me to access all the participants from the first two programmes and gather a maximum of both quantitative and qualitative data efficiently. Gathering quantitative data provides data in numerical format with the added potential for statistical analysis. For example, given the survey was aimed at the first two programme streams or cohorts, it was considered of interest to measure the two cohorts of participants and attempt to analyse any factors or ‘variables’ between the cohorts that may be identified (e.g., different content or material presented). Also, as some background data on the participants were collected, such as previous professional development, tenure, location, and gender, to see if there were any possible correlations between these factors. As the participants from the first two programme united for a debrief session, this provided the opportunity to handout a questionnaire for further, different qualitative data. The use of a focus group from a sample of participants was to explore some ideas in depth, in particular the motivations of the participants to undertake the programme and reveal specific contexts that they intended to apply the skills. Lastly, interviewing a sample

of participant managers for their observations would give some evidence of skill application on-the-job. Using combinations of quantitative and qualitative instruments enables three outcomes. First, they confirm or corroborate each other through triangulation, defined as “the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon” (Denzin, 1978, p. 291). Second, they enable or develop analysis in order to produce richer data. Third, combining methods may initiate new modes of thinking by responding to any paradoxes that arise from the different sources (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005).

### **4.3 Evaluation as an approach**

Evaluation was first thought to involve a systems approach and this evolved to include the value of a strategic and philosophical approach (Scriven, 1971-1972). Stake (1981) in his model of responsive evaluation, describes evaluation as more naturalistic and phenomenological, responding to stakeholder needs or understandings as responsive actions. The subjectivity in observing and reporting may not be as acceptable as it used to be, requiring the methodology as well as the questions of the study to meet the stakeholder needs.

According to Isaac and McLeod (1997), evaluation has more clearly defined objectives than descriptive research. The purpose of research may be curiosity or ignorance whereas evaluation is goals and needs based. Evaluation seeks evidence of product delivery and mission achievement, whereas, the outcomes for research are normally generalisable conclusions. For evaluation, specific decisions either formative or summative are desired outcomes. Cohen et al. (2007) state that evaluation and research possess many similarities (both use methodologies and methods of social science research) but also some differences. Their view is that research tends to be open-ended whereas evaluation “can become politically charged” thus determining the need to clarify the purpose of the evaluation (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 43). Evaluation is currently described as descriptive research specifically designed to get beyond basic fact gathering in order make sense of complex social issues, and responsive programme evaluation incorporates three steps (Walliman, 2007):

1. Data collection – identifying issues from the people directly in the programme, identifying facts from programme documents, and observing how the programme is actually working;
2. Evaluation – the design of an evaluation based on the data collected and findings;

3. Suggesting changes – informing participants of the findings in ways specifically designed for each audience type.

Probably the most widely applied model for evaluation of training and development in organisational settings is that introduced by Kirkpatrick in his series of articles for the American Society for Training and Development. His model identified four levels of evaluation:

Level 1 – *Reaction*. How participants reacted or felt about the learning experience.

Level 2 – *Learning*. Did participants acquire the intended knowledge or skill.

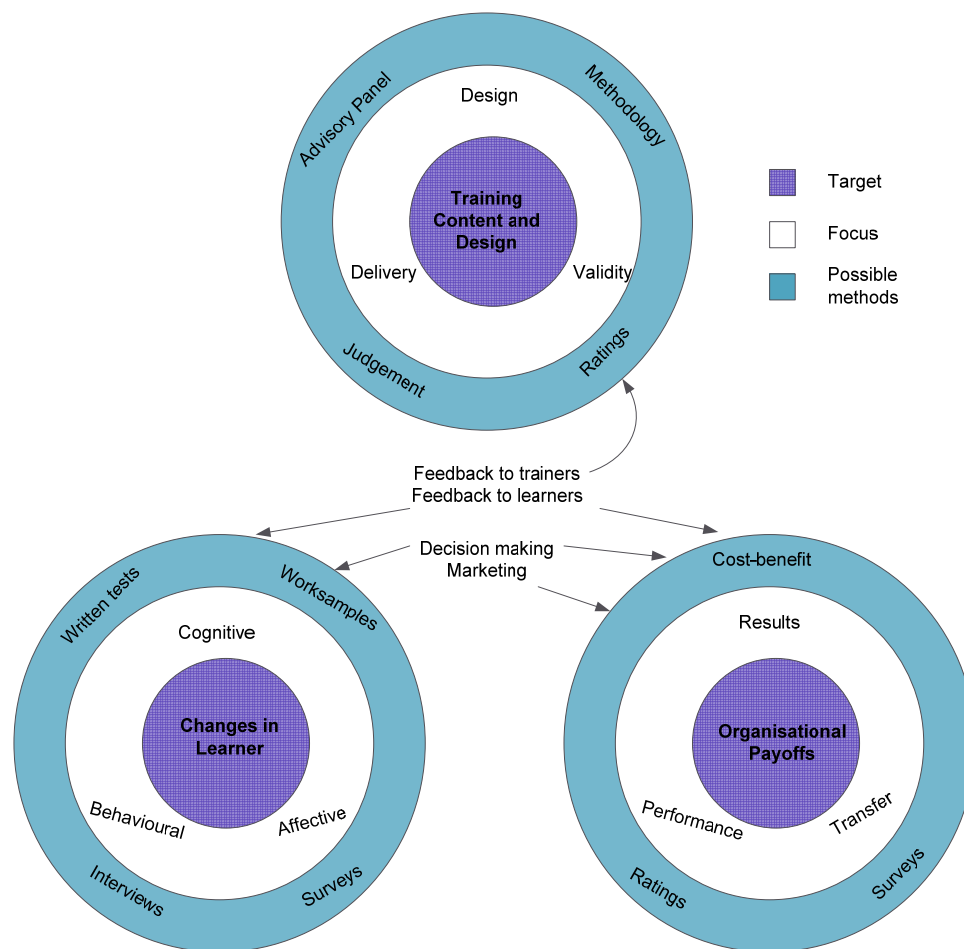
Level 3 – *Behaviour*. The extent the participant behaviour has changed since the training, especially in transfer of learning to the workplace.

Level 4 – *Results*. What effect the training has had in terms of quality, productivity, costs and turnover for the organisation (Kirkpatrick, 1994).

Although widely used in business and industry training and development, the ideal setting for which it was designed, the value of Kirkpatrick's model in other evaluative settings such as education and social research is less apparent. It is seen as having limited use in these settings because of its "inadequate explanatory power" (Guskey, 2000, p.78). While Kirkpatrick's model is useful for addressing some of the broad 'what can be measured' factors, it is less so about the 'what *should* be measured' or *why* (Kraiger, 2002). Educational and social research evaluation is by nature more suited to interpretivism rather than positivism. According to Denzin and Lincoln "in the social sciences nothing speaks for itself" (1994, p. 500). Therefore, applying a one-dimensional evaluative template for replication may not serve to extract the unexpected data that another more flexible model may be able to. Another limitation in its practicality is the required hierarchical nature of application (i.e., each level is caused by the prior level and that changes in levels are correlated with each other). This suggests, for example, that learning does not occur, or should not be measured, unless reactions to the learning programme were positive.

Kraiger (2002) provides a useful viewpoint that distinguishes between the systems approach of evaluation (the what and the how) and what he describes as the art of evaluation (the knowing why). He is of the view that most programmes are evaluated in some way, but few are evaluated in multiple ways, particularly with respect to measures of transfer of training, performance improvement and return on investment.

His model of decision-based evaluation attempts to extend the thinking about what can be measured, found in traditional approaches, to what *should* be measured. By understanding the purpose of undertaking an evaluation, thought can be applied to concentrate on a ‘target’ of evaluation that also includes focus and possible methods. Should an aspect of a programme be of interest for evaluation (e.g., changes in the participant after the programme) this can be attempted by focusing on cognitive, behavioural and affective indicators through specifically designed methods to investigate. Focussing on particular targets helps avoid unnecessary and potentially distracting data collection. Refer to Kraiger’s model in Figure 4-1 below.



**Figure 4-1: Kraiger’s Targets of Evaluation model (Kraiger, 2002, p. 9).**

Utilisation of Kraiger’s model is appropriate for determining the objectives of my study. Two of the three targets in his model, (content and design, changes in learners) are linked to the evaluation purpose. They apply to the programme objectives, content, and the changes on the learners through learning application. The third target, organisational payoff, while desirable to attempt, adds further complexity to the scope of this study and is therefore not considered in the research.

## **4.4 Research Participants**

Evaluation of the CLDP involved obtaining data from different people during the programme delivery. These included the actual programme participants through various fora, and managers of programme participants.

### ***4.4.1 Programme participants***

The course participants were the primary participants in this study. At the time of research two cohorts, of 19 participants each, had undertaken the programme during 2008 and 2009, a total of 38. All 38 participants were invited to participate in this study. The participants were ‘middle managers’ in the organisation, occupying leadership positions in the middle two management layers in the organisational chart, neither first line manager, nor executive leader. The selection process for participants to undertake the programme was firstly for the participant to nominate themselves and secondly for executive management to approve final selection. While no criteria were overtly expressed in the selection of the participants for the programme, it was accepted that potential to influence their direct teams of employee reports and their colleagues was a key driver. The age and gender of the participant and their tenure of employment in the role or organisation did not appear to be a factor in their approval for the programme.

### ***4.4.2 Managers***

To assist with triangulation, data from a random sample of five participants’ managers were collected. As part of the development programme managers are required to attend two manager workshops, one at the beginning of the programme cycle and one at the end. The participants’ managers have a critical role in the programme of support, coaching and mentoring before, during and after the training. Coaching and mentoring is a commonly used method for getting people to improve as leaders and understand their strengths and weaknesses by being receptive to their mentors’ advice and expertise (Solansky, 2010). As mentioned, an expectation is for the programme participant to influence and ‘spread the word’ through sharing the learning with his/her direct teams. The process internally coined for this is described somewhat humorously as ‘contagion’. The manager would be able to monitor the process of sharing the learning through follow-up after the programme and through regular monthly operating reviews (MORs). As part of the ‘contagion’ process the manager would also be well positioned to observe interactions with the participants’ colleagues as part of their local Senior Management Team (SMT), and whether the learning is vicariously being noticed and taken up by other members of the team.

## 4.5 Demographic profile of programme participants

As will be explained in section 4.7.1 of this chapter, on the quantitative data analysis, the demographic data of the programme participants cannot be used to make inferences. They may still be of interest and of use to provide some context. A total of 38 managers completed the programme in its first two iterations (CLDP1 and CLDP2). The demographic profiles of the participants were varied. Most of the participants were 'Level II' managers of first line leaders (35) with a small number (3) of Level III managers (managers of Level II and who report to executive management). They ranged across national office, conservancy office and area office locations, had varying previous leadership development and varying tenure in both the organisation and their present roles.

### 4.5.1 Office location and role

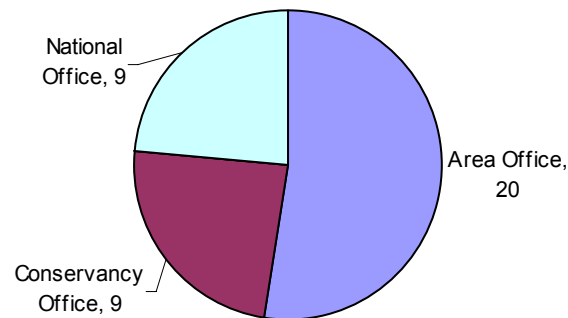
While levels of seniority were similar, the actual location-role of the participant differed. For example, area office participants may have a focus of ensuring delivery of conservation outcomes, having a more direct relationship with external communities and user groups than national office participants who may be more concerned with internal networking and policy/strategy development. Briefly, the focus of work for each office and the time-frame it works within is described in Table 4-1.

**Table 4-1: Description of office work focus.**

Office Location	Focus of work	Focus of work time-frame
Area Office	Delivery focus of conservation outputs. Translation and implementation of national policies. Leadership of field and Ranger staff. High interaction with public and user groups. Member of conservancy senior management team (SMT)	1-2 years
Conservancy Office	Support focus of securing and sustaining the technical and financial resources to support Area delivery. Leadership of technical advisors. Prime customers are Area office staff. Member of conservancy SMT.	2-5 years
Regional Office	Key outcomes business planning and monitoring. Special national operational projects. Small number of staff and managers.	5-10 years
National Office	Policy, procedure and strategy. Leaders of science, technical and corporate service teams. Interaction with national bodies and central government agencies.	>10 years



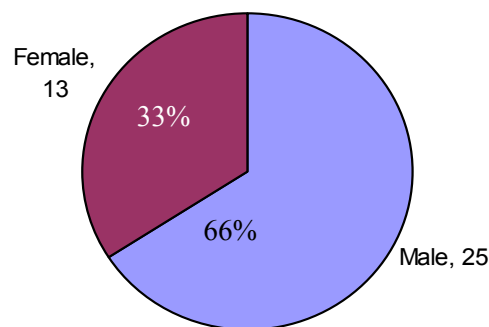
The breakdown of participant office location is displayed in Figure 4-2 below. Just over half of the participants were area managers, with conservancy support managers and national office managers making up the rest of about one quarter each. No regional office managers were participants in CLDP1 or CLDP2.



**Figure 4-2: Office location of programme participants.**

#### **4.5.2 Gender**

Figure 4-3 shows the breakdown of participant gender. The ratio of male to female participants on the programme is 25:13 or 66%:34%. This is not dissimilar to the overall gender representation of 63% male to 37% female gender ratio of the organisation.

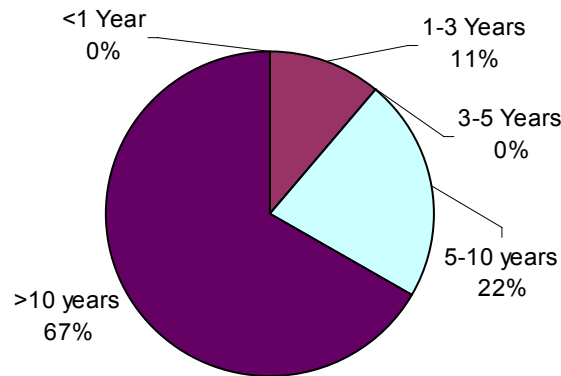


**Figure 4-3: Gender of participants.**

#### **4.5.3 Tenure**

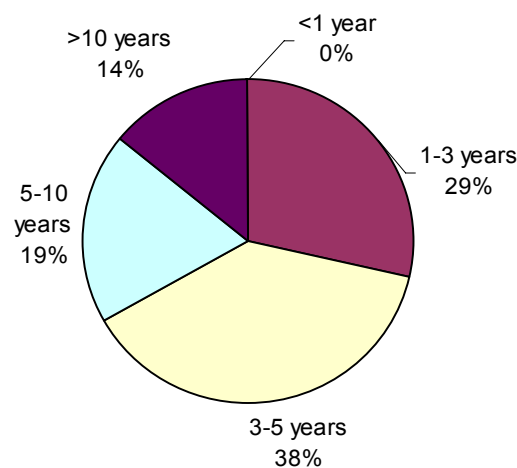
Tenure may contribute to a participant's combined experience, wisdom and leadership capability. For example, a long standing participant may have developed on-the-job leadership capability over a long period of time. This may be a factor in the overall value that the participant perceived in completing the programme. Figure

4-4 presents the survey respondents' tenure in the organisation. Of the survey respondents, 67% had tenure of over ten years, and 89% had tenure over five years in the organisation. None had less than one year of tenure with the organisation.



**Figure 4-4: Tenure of participants in the organisation.**

In terms of participants' tenure in the position they held while undertaking the programme, the results were more evenly spread. See Figure 4-5 below. Of the respondents, the largest group were in their current role between 3-5 years (38%), followed by 29 % who were in their current role between 1-3 years. This means that 67% were in their current role for under 5 years. This suggests an environment of periodic change where some participants who have been in the organisation for over five years have at some point changed their roles.



**Figure 4-5: Tenure of participants in their current position.**

#### **4.5.4 Previous leadership development**

As with tenure, both in the organisation and in their role, any previous leadership or interpersonal skills training or development may count towards a participant's existing leadership capabilities. Having some prior development and experience may be useful for the participant to 'know what s/he already knows, or doesn't know' and be able to discern the value of the CLDP as a distinct development programme from the other programmes that s/he may have attended. Table 4-2 below describes the leadership development that they may have previously undertaken within the organisation and the percentage of CLDP participants who have done this training.

**Table 4-2: Description of previous leadership programmes and attendance by CLDP participants.**

<b>Programme name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
<b>People Matter</b>	Assertiveness, Introductory relationship building skills and conflict resolution	21%
<b>Leadership Foundations</b>	People management, performance management, listening, encouraging, discussing performance, agreeing development problem solving	50%
<b>Four Quadrant</b>	Situational leadership, decision-making	34%
<b>Other</b>	Various individualised courses, NZIM, Leadership Development Centre, study, exchanges etc.	18%

There appears to be a high level of previous leadership development training for most of the respondents. The programme that has most exposure to the respondents is the Leadership Foundations programme with 19 participants. This represents at least 50% of the CLDP participants. Overall, 85% of participants had done at least one previous course. On this basis, there should be an existing level of leadership skills within the CDLP participants, assuming the previous courses were effective.

#### **4.6 Ethics**

Undertaking interpretative research raises issues regarding how data collection from participants will be managed. Mutch (2005) and Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) identify some of these issues as trust, power, coercion, use of data, confidentiality and anonymity. The situation with the research participants was that the majority of them were known to me through my professional and occasional dealings with them. This situation brought both positive and negative aspects. Although it could be claimed that a relationship of trust and credibility exists with those that I knew, the converse may have been a preference for them to 'open up' to

external or unknown researchers. My observations were that this was not found to be an issue, however, as participants were very interested in the project and quite forthcoming. In preparation, however, I found it worthwhile to follow and provide guidelines for reasonably informed consent that included the following.

1. A fair explanation of the procedures to be followed and their purposes.
2. A description of the implications and commitments for the participants.
3. A description of the benefits that were expected within reason.
4. The right to freely choose to participate in the research overall, or in aspects of it.
5. The right to withdraw from the process without any fear of consequences.
6. Assurance that any data provided would remain confidential to the researcher and be stored in a secure manner.
7. Assurance that individuals or groups could not be identified.
8. That the questions pertained to the scope of the research only. (Adapted from Mutch, 2005, p. 79, and Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 51)

The selection of tools and methods to be used was submitted to the Human Ethics committee at Victoria University of Wellington prior to research. Approval was given by the committee in May 2010. Information and consent forms are attached as Appendix B.

## 4.7 Instruments

A variety of tools to gather data from the course participants was used. A summary of the data collection methods is described in Table 4-3 below.

**Table 4-3: Summary of data collection methods.**

Method	Who	Nature of inquiry	Timeline
Focus group	Selection of participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reasons for applying</li> <li>• Expectations of programme</li> <li>• Relevance of programme objectives and content for participant roles</li> <li>• Strategic fit</li> <li>• How skills applied</li> <li>• Reactions from others</li> </ul>	June 2010
Questionnaire	Participants of both CLDP programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevance of programme objectives and content</li> <li>• Ease of learning transfer</li> <li>• Strategic fit</li> <li>• Self observed change</li> <li>• Assists with relationships</li> <li>• Further support needed</li> </ul>	June 2010
Electronic survey	Participants of both CLDP programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevance of programme objectives and content for participant roles</li> <li>• Ability to transfer learning</li> <li>• Applied skills</li> </ul>	August 2010
Interviews	Selection of participants' managers sample	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observed changes</li> <li>• Context in which skills applied</li> </ul>	October 2010 – Jan 2011
Other –Document research (Department literature, course information, intranet articles, role descriptions	Researcher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Context</li> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Purpose</li> <li>• Description</li> </ul>	June-Dec 2010

### 4.7.1 Focus group

A focus group of seven participants representing both programme cohorts was conducted. Focus groups are a useful method as they combine the best of surveys (a broader sample) and interviews (an in-depth response) (Mutch, 2005). Participants were asked to volunteer. There were seven volunteers and they were all accepted. The format of the focus group was a single oral interview format with set questions.

As the researcher also had the role of scribe, an audio recorder was utilised to record the interview so that it was possible to replay the interview and revisit the conversations to pick up aspects and comments that may have been missed during writing the group responses.

There were five questions to focus discussion:

- a). Why did they apply to go on to the programme? What was it that linked to their hope of achieving something?
- b). What did they think about before coming on to the programme? When on the programme were their expectations met, before, during and after, if at all?
- c). In what context did they apply the skills? Did they believe it made a difference (to lead/achieve outcomes)?
- d). How has the perception of change been accepted? (by: Participants, Peers, Managers, Staff)?
- e). If all leaders achieved the programme objectives what difference would it make for the organisation?

#### **4.7.2 Questionnaire**

A questionnaire to all participants was handed out to them as they convened for a debrief session following the programme completion. This was the first time the two cohorts had combined. The purpose of the debrief was to refresh their understanding of the programme content and be introduced to other leadership concepts that may not have been included in their previous workshops.

There were five questions, each designed to elicit their experiences of:

- a) What ways have they changed as a result of their participation in the programme?
- b) Which topics of the programme were the most useful to them and which aspects were harder to use?
- c) How has the programme changed their ability to build productive relationships?
- d) How the programme supports the organisation's future direction?

e) What support they need to continue developing as a leader?

The questionnaires were completed during a session at the debrief and collected thereafter.

#### **4.7.3 *Electronic survey***

An electronic survey for each programme cohort consisting of 29 Likert scale rating questions, five partially closed questions, and five open answer (descriptive text) questions was distributed to all 38 participants. (See Appendix C). The use of ‘Survey Monkey’ as the electronic tool to use was considered appropriate and adequate for this purpose. The survey was completed by 26 of the participants. This produced a completion rate of 68.4%.

The 29 Likert scale questions required the participants to rate a number of factors. The questions were utilised to allow the participants to choose how strongly they associated with each statement. The Likert scale ranged from zero to nine, with zero indicating no association to the statement, and nine indicating the most. As the range was numerically wide, there were interval markers inserted at every three values to help the respondent with his or her interpretation within the range of points. The large degree of width was to allow for the potential of analysis should there be a mixed variety of responses with this range. A narrower range (e.g., one to five) would not so readily be able to provide this (Cohen et al, 2007). If there were limited data to draw any significant meaning at this micro level, the option to summarise upwards would still remain. This format was used continually for all of the Likert scale questions to keep consistency and therefore ease of use for respondents that otherwise may introduce inaccuracies and compromise reliability and validity (Cohen et al, 2007). The first five Likert scale questions were designed to measure the degree to which the respondents felt that the objectives of the programme were relevant to their roles. An open question was then provided for respondents to describe their thoughts on any particular issue of relevance of the programme objectives.

The next 11 Likert scale questions were designed to measure the degree to which the respondents felt that the programme content was relevant to their roles. An open question was then provided for respondents to describe their thoughts on any particular issue of relevance of the programme content. A partially closed question was then provided for respondents to select from the list the three most useful content topics to them.

The next seven Likert scale questions were designed to measure the respondents' ratings of how well they were able to plan for the programme requirements and how well they were able to use the skills in opportunities provided and how much encouragement they received to use the skills from the programme. An open question was provided to allow respondents to record any factors that may have affected their abilities to put into effect any skills gained from the programme.

The final six Likert scale questions asked the participants to what degree they had achieved each of the five programme objectives plus noticed any changes in the behaviours and actions since completing the programme. An open question was also provided to record any practices they were doing differently as a result of the programme.

The final open question was provided to allow participants to make any general comment on their leadership programme experience to date.

The final four partially closed questions requested the participants record their gender, office type, tenure in role and with the organisation, and any previous leadership development from a list of previously provided or endorsed programmes. The survey instrument was trialled with a number of work colleagues, including the CLDP coordinator to test its usability, validity and time for completion.

#### **4.7.4. *Manager interviews***

Data were gathered by interview or email from a representative sample of five participant managers. The managers were selected using a mixture of random sampling and quota sampling to obtain a representation from a variety of office types and locations (Cohen et al., 2007). The managers' questions were similar whether they were orally asked in an interview situation (telephone or face-to-face), or by email. Although it was of interest to me to elicit some of their views and actions on nominating and supporting their participants, the focus of the inquiry was primarily on what they were doing to support their nominees and their observations on the nominees during and after the development programme, specifically relating to what they had been doing differently and in what contexts.

### **4.8 Data analysis**

#### **4.8.1 *Quantitative analysis***

The quantitative data resulted from the participants' responses from their on-line surveys. While comprehensive statistical analysis was neither desired nor anticipated in this study, it was briefly considered worthwhile to investigate whether it was



possible or even beneficial to undertake some level of correlational analysis between the two CLDP groups. The quantitative data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Due to the low sample size, no inferences could be made between the two groups and it was considered to be of little value to discuss any potential correlation or variables. The quantitative data that are therefore presented, are descriptive only and entire over both groups combined. The response scores from the survey questions have been averaged over all survey participants. From these averages it was possible to calculate a percentage score. The standard deviation is also provided.

#### **4.8.2 *Qualitative analysis***

The qualitative data for analysis were compiled from a number of sources:

1. The recorded focus group responses.
2. The questionnaire completed by participants during their programme debrief session.
3. The open or descriptive questions from the participants' on-line survey.
4. The recorded managers' responses.

From the qualitative data I wished to identify themes or emerging patterns. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data (Braun & Clark, 2006). A 'theme' (p. 79) captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest there are six phases in thematic analysis:

1. Familiarising yourself with your data,
2. Generating initial codes,
3. Searching for themes,
4. Reviewing themes,
5. Defining and naming themes, and
6. Producing the report. (p. 87)

#### **4.8.3 *Coding***

An important question to address in terms of coding is: what counts as a pattern/theme, or what size does a theme need to be? Codes are tags or labels for

assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferred information. (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Codes may be 'chunks' of varying size - words, phrases, sentences or whole paragraphs connected or unconnected to a specific setting. The organising part of coding entails a system of categorising the various chunks so the researcher can quickly find, pull out and cluster the segments relating to a particular research question, hypothesis, construct or theme.

Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest themes or patterns within data can be identified in one of two ways in thematic analysis:

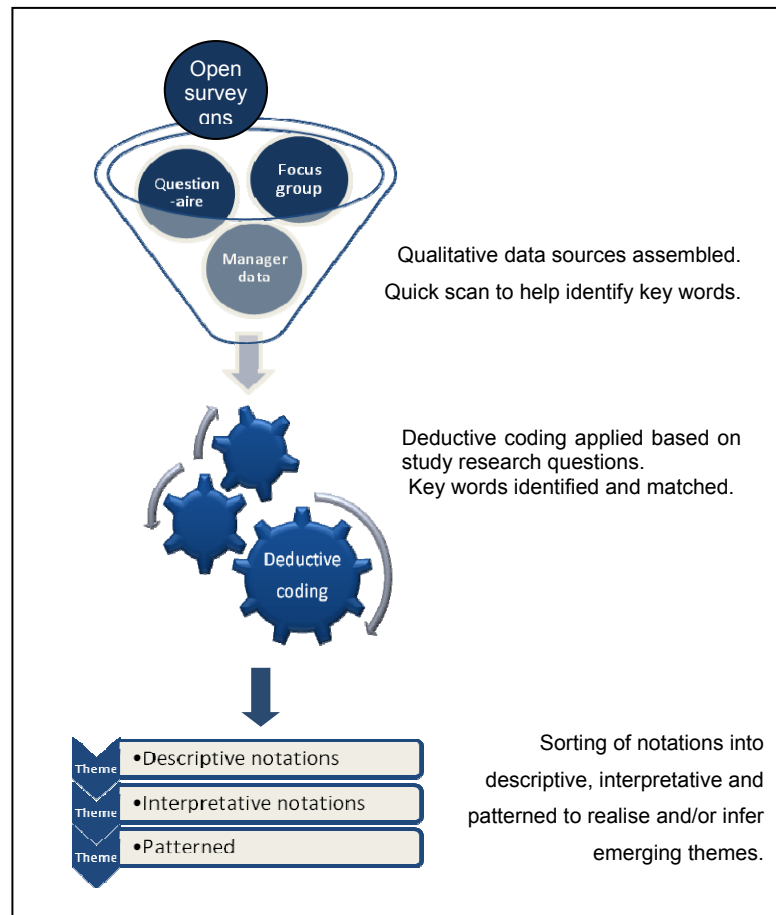
- in an inductive or 'bottom up' way; or
- in a theoretical or deductive, 'top down' way.

An inductive approach means the themes identified are strongly linked to the data themselves. A characteristic is that if the data had been collected specifically for the research (e.g., via interview or focus group), the themes identified may bear little resemblance to the specific questions that were asked of the participants. Inductive analysis is therefore a process of coding without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame, or the researcher's analytical preconceptions. In this sense this form of thematic analysis is data-driven.

In contrast, a theoretical thematic analysis would tend to be driven by the researcher's theoretical or analytical interest in the area. This form of analysis tends to be a less rich description of the data over all, and a more detailed analysis of some aspect of the data. The choice between inductive and theoretical analysis comes down to how and why the researcher codes the data. One could either code for a specific research question (theoretical approach) or the specific research question can evolve through the coding process (inductive process).

#### **4.8.4 Process**

Consideration of these characteristics in conjunction with my research objectives suggest that my approach to coding the data should be governed by the theoretical or deductive method. Also, given that the research approach is evaluative, it requires more clearly defined objectives than descriptive research. I decided to analyse the qualitative data through a combined process modelled by Braun and Clarke, (2006) and Miles and Huberman, (1994) as illustrated in Figure 4-4 below.



**Figure 4-6: Thematic analysis process used for qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994).**

I began by creating a ‘start list’ of codes prior to fieldwork (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Codes in the start list may come from the conceptual framework, research questions or key variables in the study. (Braun and Clarke, 2006) and I have firstly attempted to group the qualitative data as per my research questions. It was important that the codes developed were clearly defined for consistent operation through all the data sources. I have been careful, however, not to exclude data from outside the framed question.

As I analysed the data, I considered the application of the codes. Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 57) offer three types of codes; descriptive (a single summarising notation), interpretative (having the knowledge to differentiate into more than one notation) and pattern codes (realising and inferring an emergent pattern or theme). I firstly noted the single descriptive notations in the comments made by the sources and listed those of a similar nature together. Secondly, some of the notations inferred an additional issue, or were able to be examined in different contexts. Therefore, these interpretative notations were added and listed separately. The descriptive and interpretative notations form the basis of discussion in Chapter 5. Pattern coding is

typically used later in the data analysis as the patterns become clearer. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that this is a question of prevalence in terms of space within each data item and across the entire data set. As I looked for pattern coding in the data I was able to identify emerging patterns or themes and these are presented and discussed in Chapter 6. Although there were a number of instances across the data set, this does not necessarily mean the theme itself is more crucial. Being qualitative, there is no hard and fast guide to the proportion of the evidence of the theme for it to be considered a theme. Some judgement was necessary to determine what a particular theme was.

#### **4.8.5 Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness in interpretivist research relates to the worth of the findings and their authenticity and can be viewed as an overarching term that includes transferability, credibility and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Transferability means ‘providing datasets for possible transferability judgements by potential appliers’ (p. 316). Credibility refers to whether the findings actually make sense, and confirmability concerns the objectivity and freedom from researcher bias (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The credibility and confirmability were assisted by the triangulation of:

- mixed methods approach,
- multiple sources of data,
- two cohorts experiencing the same programme,
- time, (e.g., perceptions were recorded at several points in time), and
- theory (e.g., literature review on leadership, environmental leadership, leadership development and evaluation).

#### **4.9 Summary**

An interpretivist/constructivist paradigm is appropriate in framing my research approach, as the experiences of leadership development fall within the social research constructs. Evaluation brings a more purposive reason for inquiry than general social research, as the outcome seeks to go beyond basic fact gathering to seek evidence that may influence formative or summative decisions for a programme. Knowing why to evaluate a development programme assists with deciding on what aspects to evaluate and how to evaluate. Having a mixed methodological approach in gathering data for evaluating leadership development initiatives is strongly supported by the research on evaluation because it may: assist

with triangulation of findings; provide richer data for analysis; and raise any queries for further investigation. The use of appropriate instruments to gather data must be considered and a good understanding of the participants' contexts should be achieved prior to interviewing or surveying them. Because the use of evaluation is purposive, it is logical to apply coding in a theoretical or deductive manner when analysing the data, and this process is discussed in the following chapter.

## Chapter 5. Results

*You can't depend on your eyes when your imagination is out of focus.*

(Mark Twain, 1889)

### 5.1 Overview

The aim of this study as outlined in the previous chapter is to evaluate the participants' experiences and perceptions of the programme, in particular its objectives, content, ability to transfer learning, and changes for the participants. This chapter describes the results for each research question in turn. Firstly, quantitative data provided by the on-line survey scores are presented. Secondly, the findings from the qualitative data from the on-line survey, debrief questionnaires, focus group comments and managers' comments are provided through the process outlined in the methodology chapter. The phrases are a summary of the notations derived from all the qualitative data based on my interpretation from statements made by the participants, the focus group and the managers. Implications of the combined results for each question are then discussed.

### 5.2 Research question one – How appropriate and relevant are the programme objectives for the participants in their roles?

In this question I wanted to measure the degree to which the programme objectives were perceived as relevant by the programme participants in their role as environmental leaders. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, the objectives of this programme were established partly from the organisational strategic perspective and partly from that of the programme designers. It cannot be assumed that the motivations and attractions for a potential trainee to undertake professional development are the same as those that the organisation prescribes. This is a 'meeting-of-the-minds' between the organisation, the programme designers and the participants. If the participants rate the programme objectives as highly relevant aspirations for them as environmental leaders, then this part of the programme could be described as successful. If, however, they are not rated as relevant, then there would be a disconnection between the parties that would require further research to determine who is not on the right 'page.'

#### 5.2.1 Quantitative data on research question one.

The quantitative data suggest the programme objectives are of high relevance to the programme participants. Table 5-1 below displays the mean scores from the on-line survey question for relevance for each of the programme objectives. The highest scoring objective in terms of relevance to the participants' roles, *Strengthen their*

*ability to work with others*, scored an average of 7.85 out of a possible 9 (87.2%). The next highest score was 7.5 (83%) for the objective *Develop greater self understanding*, followed by *Strengthen ability to influence my organisational circumstances* at 7.27 (80%). The lowest scoring objective was *Build system thinking abilities*, scored 6.77 (75%). With a combined average score across all objectives of 7.30 out of 9, (81%) this indicates a strong connection between the participants' understanding of their needs, the architects of the programme and the senior leaders' needs for the organisation.

**Table 5-1: Quantitative survey results of relevance of programme objectives to role as leader.**

Relevance of programme objectives to role	Mean Rating n=26	Std Dev
Strengthen ability to work with others	7.85	1.12
Develop greater self understanding	7.50	1.39
Strengthen ability to influence my organisational circumstances	7.27	1.31
Embed all these skills within scope of work and organisational systems	7.12	1.28
Build system thinking abilities	6.77	1.48

### **5.2.2 Qualitative data on research question one**

In addition to the survey scores, Table 5-2 below summarises the feedback provided from the open survey questions, focus group, the debrief session questionnaire and managers' feedback. Again, the data draw a strong connection between the programme objectives and the participants' reasons for undertaking the programme. The qualitative data, however, reveal further insights from the participants, which can be seen to strengthen the relevance of the programme for participants.

**Table 5-2: Summarised relevance of programme objective notations from qualitative data.**

<b>Question 1. How appropriate and relevant are the programme objectives for the participants in their roles?</b>	<b>Description</b> - Relevance/Expectation of programme as perceived by the participants in their role as a leader – connection with organisational needs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All the objectives have relevance to some degree - they may not have been the driver in the facilitation</li> <li>• Time was a factor over the programme - it helped them see the relevance of the objectives better</li> <li>• Relevance differ at various levels among the participants</li> <li>• Programme will support strategic needs</li> <li>• Organisational objectives/vision not really the driver for attendance.</li> <li>• Expectations were not explicit</li> <li>• Attendance was due more for personal objectives – to be more effective as a leader</li> <li>• Seen as an opportunity to work more collaboratively with colleagues</li> <li>• Systems thinking not an immediately obvious requirement.</li> <li>• Self understanding very relevant.</li> <li>• (Net)working with others very relevant.</li> <li>• The objectives encourage new and different ways of doing things which is needed</li> <li>• Programme aims driven by facilitators but meshed in with personal views on leadership.</li> <li>• Effective leadership benefits both the leader and the organisation</li> <li>• Organisational objectives and vision change over time</li> </ul>	

### **5.2.3 Discussion**

A comment that was mentioned several times was that the motivations for some participants completing the programme were primarily personal, and that the organisation's capability and strategic goals were not the primary drivers. Underlying personal reasons to do the programme were desires to become more effective in their role. For example, when asked why he went on the programme, one person from the focus group mentioned:

*I have a leadership role and struggled to understand my belief what I should/could be doing better. I wanted to achieve a greater confidence in my role as a leader.*

Another focus group participant said:



*I wanted to develop as a leader. I also recognised that the Department wanted to go somewhere with its leadership development, set out the types of leaders that it wants in the future. I found that the programme did mesh in with my personal views of how a leader should behave. There was no great surprise or revelation.*

Others professed to not being aware of the objectives while completing the programmes with the purpose only becoming apparent and relevant during transfer of learning some time after. One survey comment supporting the objectives was:

*Over the time of the programme the relevance was less obvious to me - now that I have been working through the tools and techniques and applying the learning the relevance has been revealed to me on the systems thinking and the relevance of strengthening my ability to influence. It is my view this evaluation has come at the right time for me to have really learnt, practised and absorbed the learning so I can fully appreciate its relevance.*

The objective of *Developing greater self understanding* was generally well accepted as a necessary quality before working collaboratively with other leaders in the organisation. This was also seen as very relevant, and as a normal expectation of all leaders. Being part of the programme was seen as an opportunity to do this better. A focus group participant ventured:

*I was 'consciously competent' of my current style. I wanted to work collaboratively with colleagues and change the dynamics of my senior management team.*

The participants' managers appear to be in a prime position to see the relevance of the objectives at work, particularly in the *Strengthened ability to work with others* and *Influence organisational circumstances*, with comments such as:

*She has built a better relationship with operations staff.*

and:

*He has shown more willingness to exert influence and lead across his national project and across organisational issues.*

Success is not particularly obvious for the objectives of *Embedding the skills within the scope of work and organisational systems* and *Build system-thinking abilities*. Certainly the participants have amply illustrated the curiosity, ability and willingness to consider opportunities to apply the skills within their scope of work, however, the

*Embedding within organisational systems* part of the objective does not seem to be readily apparent. Whether it was intended for this to be a personal objective for the participant to meet after completing the CLDP, or for a desired state for the organisation to be in after sufficient leaders had been through the programme is not clear. It may be that the objective was not well stated as an expected outcome for an individual programme participant. There are glimpses of participants attempting to meet this objective, even if the objective was not in the forefront of their minds. For example, a comment from one focus group person was the desire to:

*Have an influence on the way the CLDP was to be ultimately directed and delivered, and the way that leadership development is delivered and provided in the organisation.*

Other hints at this are suggested through the responses given at the reunion debrief question on how the CLDP supports DOC's future direction:

*That it allows leadership teams to move into more deliberate and conscious leadership space, and will help to bring opposite poles together to allow conversations on central or common organisational issues.*

If actual embedding has not yet occurred, it can be asserted that at least the awareness to do so has been achieved. For example, a key realisation is that getting a critical mass of people through the CLDP is necessary to make institutional change.

In terms of *Building system-thinking abilities*, relevance in this objective cannot be claimed with any great deal of confidence, although, while not readily apparent to the participants it did become manifest to some during application, For example one survey participant said:

*I am just starting to build the systems thinking into my work and into the front minds of my team - getting them to understand that we have systems that work was a challenge!*

Although it scored quite highly in the quantitative data, this is the participants' rating of systems-thinking as relevant, as opposed to having the ability to develop it. Certainly, the awareness and the levels of understanding of the principles of systems-thinking has been raised, however, the data suggests that the participants generally struggle to conceptualise how they can meaningfully apply systems-thinking in their role, let alone organisationally. This is identified by the participant data through the reunion debrief questionnaire on what pieces of the CLDP they found harder to use,

and the on-line survey question where the number of responses showed a general view that it was not immediately applicable. Generally, however, the purpose of the programme and the positioning of the leadership requirements with the profile of leaders that are currently ‘in the space’ to lead initiatives do appear to be appropriately linked.

### **5.3 Research question two – How appropriate and relevant is the course content for the participants in their roles?**

Arguably, the success of any development programme from a trainee point of view is more often judged on its content than any other factor. If the content is not relevant for the trainee, this can result in a mis-match between, the trainers and programme architects and the organisation. It also displays poor research and analysis in the trainees’ needs, and poor positioning for intended target groups. Although the objectives in this programme were helpful in providing some intended purpose and outcome for the participants, it is also true that many of the content topics and tools may not have been familiar to them. While all of the topics could engender some basic understanding, some concepts (e.g., speech acts, boundary setting, and relationship mapping) were likely to appear to be jargon to most.

#### **5.3.1 Quantitative data on research question two**

Table 5-3 presents the quantitative survey data on the relevance of the programme content to the participants. With a narrow spread of scores ranging from 7.42 (82%) to 6.23 (69%) across the content topics, this suggests all the topics presented and taught were of moderate to high relevance to most of the programme participants.

The highest scoring content topic was *Speech acts* with an average of 7.42. The next highest score over both groups was for the *Team type management* with a combined average of 7.32 (81%). This was followed closely by *Action learning*, *Competing commitments* and *Engaging communication*. The lowest score was for *Systems thinking* which was averaged at 6.23.

**Table 5-3: Relevance of programme content to role as leader.**

Please rate how relevant the programme content was to your role:	Mean Rating n=26	Std Dev
Speech acts	7.42	1.60
Team type management (TMI/Myers Briggs)	7.32	1.18
Action learning	7.31	1.74
Competing commitments	7.27	1.31
Engaging communication	7.23	1.45
Resilience	7.09	1.81
Relationship mapping	6.80	1.80
Adaptive leadership	6.77	2.03
Boundary setting	6.76	1.81
Theory of Change	6.28	2.09
Systems thinking/dynamics	6.23	1.88

The relevance of the content topic was particularly important, because even to the researcher, a number of these concepts were new and intriguing and could be considered for other professional development courses or initiatives. Accordingly, it was decided to verify these results. The survey participants were also asked to write the top three content topics as the *best areas for them to develop* in. See Table 5-4:

**Table 5-4: Content topics that best met areas for development.**

Please list the three topics that best met your areas for development:	1st	2nd	3rd	Total
Engaging communication	3	6	4	13
Action learning	8	4		12
Speech acts	3	3	6	12
Competing commitments	5	2	3	10
Team types management	1	3	3	7
Adaptive leadership	3	1	1	5
Relationship mapping		2	3	5
Resilience		2	1	3
Boundary setting	1		1	2
System dynamics			2	2
Theory of change	1			1

This may only be a subtle variation of inquiry, however, it was useful in distinguishing the relevance of topics, and which may have already have some level of competence in the participants, from those that were identified as meeting a development need particularly well. The results in Table 5-4 reinforce the top five topics in Table 5-3 although the order of them does differ. The high placement of *Engaging communication* suggests that not only is the topic relevant but also particularly valuable in addressing the current levels of skill in that topic for the participants. *Action learning* and *Speech acts* are similarly highly rated both in relevance and improving current skill levels. *Competing commitments theory* and *Team type management* complete the validation of topic relevance and meeting development needs. Some of the ‘lower ranked’ topics in Table 5-4, although relevant, were simply not the priority of development for the participants.

### 5.3.2 *Qualitative data on research question two*

In addition to the quantitative data, Table 5-5 below provides a summary of the notations derived from all the qualitative data.

**Table 5-5: Summarised relevance of programme content notations.**

<b>Question 2. How appropriate and relevant is the course content for the participants in their roles?</b>	<b>Description</b> - How the topics presented and taught by the programme facilitators are relevant to the participant in their role as a leader.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most topics are highly relevant</li> <li>• Skills will remain relevant regardless of change</li> <li>• Most useful appear to be those that help relationship building and communication, reflection, exploring issues, considering other’s perspectives and stepping back</li> <li>• Systems thinking considered complex for day-to-day management</li> <li>• Action learning in groups required effort but were very effective</li> <li>• Have applied a number of topics e.g., Team Management index in work situation with success</li> <li>• Value of content became more apparent over time</li> <li>• Developing self awareness is a ‘foundation stone’ for much of the concepts covered later.</li> <li>• The content helped to understand that it was ok not to know all the answers but to help others work towards them.</li> </ul>	

### 5.3.3 *Discussion*

Overall, the relevance of the content topics appears high, and this is of particular interest given that most participants have had previous leadership development in

DOC, and yet little knowledge of the content topics in the CLDP. The high level of uptake and interest in the content topics by the participants seem due to a genuine desire to learn. This is despite the low levels of familiarity with most of the topics that participants had prior to undertaking the programme. Many of the participants expressed a curiosity to firstly understand what they needed to know to become better leaders in their roles, and then secondly to become proficient in that knowledge and inherent skills. As indicated in the findings, the topics concerned with reflection, communication and relationship building appear to be of greater initial interest.

From the qualitative data it was not quite as easy to ascertain highly valued topics over others. Most comments supported all the topics as relevant, the degree to which would vary among individuals and situations, for example:

*As I continue to practice, the relevance of each will shift depending on my situation. I think all are relevant to me just in varying degrees.*

and

*Some can be used every moment on the job. Others require more sitting down and working out.*

To emphasise the potential for the content variability some participants took a holistic view:

*The whole leadership thing is an ongoing journey. My feeling is that you don't just switch it on and off but rather continue to build on your leadership attributes and practices.*

Nevertheless, there were some topics that generated more interest than others. As mentioned, a good number of the topics were new and unfamiliar with the participants. This led to some excitement about identifying possible situations to try out the skills. Topics that were mentioned were *Relationship mapping*, *Boundary setting* and *Polarity management*. For example, a focus group participant commented:

*I found these aspects in the middle workshop really exciting and thought there were a few potential situations that I could try to apply these tools.*

Other topics that raised some comment were *Competing commitments*, “a real eye-opener” and *Engaging communication*.

Developing *Self awareness* was accepted as a valid objective in the previous section, so it follows that learning the tools to do so is equally relevant and beneficial. For example, when asked in the debrief questionnaire about what had changed for them, the realisation that many had since discovered about themselves was:

*That as leaders, it was ok not to have to know all the answers.*

At the risk of being rejected as one of those unnecessarily ‘soft’ skills, *Self awareness* or becoming familiar with or knowing one’s leadership style appears to have been accepted as a valid process or ‘foundation stone’, necessary to make the next steps of engaging with others.

The content other than that of actual skills associated with engaging with people, although of interest, does not appear a priority for some of the participants to develop. *Action learning* was a concept that provoked varying reaction. It was seen by most as a useful method of getting new perspectives of inquiry, although the practicalities of doing it outside the classroom environment proved difficult for some. This is discussed later in the chapter in section 5.4. Understanding the *theory of change* and *systems thinking* are not areas that the participants could conceptualise for immediate application. *Systems thinking* was a topic that did receive enough comment to make it a patterned theme as ‘difficult’. Although they could see it as valuable for strategic problem solving, participants found it complex to use in a day-to-day management role. This was particularly evident from the debrief session question on which topics the participants found hardest to use, with *Systems thinking* attracting many comments. One focus group member when commenting about highly relevant topics also remarked:

*Others were less obvious but were there for further consideration, for example, the systems thinking/ systems dynamics stuff.*

The value of *Systems thinking* could be seen by at least one manager, however, who described his participant’s application of it in a complex problem:

*She has worked diligently on her intractable problem. She has clarified roles in her team and effected behaviour changes.*

The data suggest that participants feel the application of these theories is beyond the scope of their role. Whether they are seen as within the scope of other roles is not clear as this has not been articulated, and whether they are essential to learn or are presented for interest only could be problematic for the Department. If they are essential and yet the participants believe they belong to ‘the organisation’, then there is some disconnection present. As to whether the content will build the capability to address the problems facing the Department, there is some debate whether that should be the overall purpose of the programme. Comment from the participants in the focus group and from the reunion echoed that the skills in the CLDP are universal and should not be directed to the current context for the Department solely. It has been mentioned that as DOC will always go through phases of change and growth, however, interpersonal skills remain important as remarked by one focus group individual:

*Whatever the vision or business strategy is, the relationship tools will still be relevant to new people.*

As with the programme objectives a theme frequently mentioned was the value of the content and topics becoming more apparent over time through application and transfer. One respondent summed up thoughts of others by saying:

*Through use (or lack of use) of these tools/techniques/methods the relevance has become more apparent.*

#### **5.4 Research question three – Does the programme design and infrastructure promote participant transfer of learning?**

Success in the application of learning is a crucial part of a programme cycle as it looks for the return on investment or at least the interventions and improvements that will occur from the enhanced leadership capabilities that were planned for. In the literature, the importance of having supporting infrastructure in leadership development was identified as vital to its success (Bolden, 2007; Leskiw & Singh, 2007; Macky & Johnson, 2004; Pledger, 2007). Supporting infrastructure, according to Leskiw and Singh (2007) is essentially the presence of a corporate culture that enables the leader to develop their potential the most effectively without encumbrances. These researchers believe a number of factors affect the ability of trainees to apply the learning from a development programme. Part of the research was therefore to inquire about what aspects of the programme supported the participants, or otherwise. These included: communication of the programme structure and requirements, ability for the participants to plan and put in steps to



complete the requirements, what opportunities or contexts could they identify to apply and practise the new skills, personal encouragement and support, either managerial, collegial, subordinate or within the programme cohort, and in a general sense, the resources needed by the participant.

#### 5.4.1 Quantitative data on research question three

Results from the on-line survey indicate a moderate to high overall ability for the participants to transfer the learning from the programme into their work. See Table 5-6 below.

**Table 5-6: Ability of CLDP participants to transfer learning into their role**

Please rate how much:	Mean Rating n=26	Std Dev
You have had the opportunity to apply the learning/new skills in your role since the programme.	7.73	1.08
The resources you need to use what you learned in the training are available to you.	7.54	1.03
Your programme colleagues have encouraged you to use the skills you have learned.	7.35	1.79
You were able to plan and put in steps for completing the programme requirements.	7.00	1.17
The programme structure and course work requirements were made clear to you.	6.85	1.80
Your manager has set goals that encouraged you to use the skills you learned from the programme.	6.54	1.63
Your work colleagues have encouraged you to use the skills you have learned.	6.50	1.66
Your staff have encouraged you to use the skills you have learned.	5.38	2.08

The highest scoring learning transfer factor was *having the opportunity to apply the learning in their role since completing the programme*. This scored a combined average of 7.73 (86%). The next highest factor was *having the needed resources available*. This scored a combined average of 7.54 (84%). *Encouragement from colleagues within the programme* to apply the learning also rated highly at 7.35 (82%). *Being able to plan and put in steps to complete the programme* at 7.00 (78%), came in slightly ahead of *the programme structure and requirements were made clear to you* at 6.85 (76%). *Managerial direction/support and collegial encouragement* followed next at 6.54 (73%) and 6.5 (72%). The lowest score of 5.38 (60%) was for the *participants' staff encouraging them to apply the skills*. Although

lowest, this may not suggest a lack of motivation or interest from the staff perspective, but perhaps a lack of information, or even awareness about the programme, or the participant's attempt at trying out the skills

#### 5.4.2 *Qualitative data on research question three*

Table 5-7 below provides a summary of the notations derived from all the qualitative data.

**Table 5-7: Summarised ability to transfer learning notations.**

<b>Question 3. How well have the course participants been able to apply the learning of these skills to their role?</b>	<b>Description -</b> Whether the design of the programme or learning system was beneficial to the participant and conducive to application of learning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The time to reflect on the learning and consider opportunities for trying out does not present itself</li> <li>• Needs deliberate action by the participant to allow time</li> <li>• Programme colleagues encourage each other</li> <li>• Participant managers have encouraged, although to varying degrees.</li> <li>• The executive management team could do with this programme</li> <li>• Some managers observe, others guide and set goals</li> <li>• Participant management teams are a good format to share the learning</li> <li>• Have applied in staff communications effectively</li> <li>• Most favoured discreet trying out of learning to start with but applied more over time.</li> </ul>	

#### 5.4.3 *Discussion*

The feedback does indicate that generally the organisational environment is conducive to the participants applying their learning and new skills. The promulgation of the CLDP by executive leadership has contributed towards the culture of enabling participants to develop in two ways. Firstly, that leadership development was seen to be highly valued and supported by senior managers, and secondly, for senior managers to acknowledge that this was a programme that was well overdue because of the need to build leadership capability. It could also be said that the expectation of all staff in the Department is to take leadership opportunities whenever they present themselves. These messages have helped set the scene of a supportive culture. The participants of the CLDP have indicated in the data that they feel empowered and have the mandate to lead differently. These feelings were quite evident in the various focus group and reunion debrief data and are echoed by the theme of increased confidence. The course 'feel' was described by one as:

*Very much a supportive learning environment.*

Formal instruction, relationships and feedback processes are important in leadership development. (Leskiw & Singh, 2007; McCauley & Hughes-James, 1994; Macky & Johnson, 2004). The positive culture seems to have been established early on in the programme by its facilitators. The instruction included opportunities to practice and receive feedback through the recording and playback of video as well as recommended reading and showing relevant video clips from You Tube or 'Ted'. Feedback on the instruction by the facilitators was very positive. One participant ventured to say:

*My attention was held the whole time. The extramural reading was interesting and generally worthwhile. I never felt like I wasn't coping – the material was well paced. The presenters had a number of styles and activities which they used to good effect.*

The value that was gained in the forging of the relationship between them and the participants was evident to all, supported by comments such as:

*It was a privilege to attend, professionally run by professional people.*

and:

*Credit needs to go to Jo-anne, Kyle, Abigail and the guest presenters. (pseudonyms).*

The instruction on action learning rated highly as an effective method during the programme. The participants were tasked to bring an adaptive challenge to work through during the CLDP cycle using the action learning process in their groups. Some participants found the action learning harder to do remotely through the telephone than meeting face-to-face, however, that is a reality that most were able to work around. A few other participants found the process of asking the right questions, without giving opinions, challenging. One commented:

*We could hear the value of the action learning groups but they were painful and time consuming.*

In the whole, however, most found the action learning process effective and in a safe environment to discuss the personal type challenges that were facing them.

Inherent in the development of the learning system is the ability for participants to seek opportunities to apply their learning in an experiential setting (Orvis & Ratwani, 2010). It was of interest that some participants gave more detailed ideas about the

levels or contexts in which they could now try new things, than other participants, such as; their direct team building and performance, getting their colleagues in SMT to work more effectively and in settings that involved external stakeholders. The opportunities to consciously approach their work style differently than they had previously were there, although some consideration in approach was often necessary. Some reflected on the skills covered in the workshops and considered appropriate or applicable work situations or contexts to try out. For example one focus group person commented:

*I decided to check my normal behaviour and step back to have another look at things. I became more conscious on deciding when to use the new skill or tool.*

Another commented:

*You can't instantly apply them as is, but you can think about what bits to start off with.*

Other participants were more strategic in their outlook, looking for opportunities to try things differently in a personal and organisation improvement objective, particularly in introducing some of the new thinking within their senior management team forums. A focus group member remarked:

*I saw opportunities at three levels; 1. Application of tools in normal work transactions. 2. What I can do differently in a general sense at this stage of my leadership place/career. 3. We don't just work as individual managers but as also within a SMT.*

Also while many saw the SMT as an appropriate forum to share their learning with their management colleagues, an interesting facet was the desire by the participants to be discrete and circumspect in doing so. For example, the following remark by one focus group member was echoed by others:

*It is a matter of not wading in boots and all which may provoke a negative reaction. It is a matter of not trying to create a secret club or language – but being tentative.*

As could be expected, there were concerns that finding the time to extract themselves from their day-to-day responsibilities to consider opportunities to apply and cement their learning did not come easily. Some felt that it was difficult to purposefully plan

for applying the learning because of heavy workloads placed upon them and the resulting time constraints.

Other comments were more pointed toward the ‘organisational machine’ that demanded all available capacity to push through projects and programmes of change:

*The DOC paradigm is one where the size of the conservation job is not well connected to the size of the resource to deal with it. As a consequence we carry big workloads, especially when involved in leading or supporting multiple organisation change projects.*

They were possibly the people that looked for more formalised opportunities to be arranged or more structure and direction shown by their manager in their coaching role. Whether the manager had an active role in setting opportunities or a more passive one, supporting participant-initiated ones, the examples provided by the manager are quite positive.

High levels of encouragement from within the programme cohorts themselves, appear to reflect the quantitative scores in Table 5-6 above, hence the comment:

*I now have 20 best friends at work.*

This support was probably more evident in the action learning undertaken between workshops. The ability to raise and discuss issues in these safe environments was repeated several times in the CLDP reunion debrief question on *what pieces of the programme had been the most useful* to them. Continued engagement and networking with programme colleagues was also mentioned as valuable.

Encouragement from managers was seen by the participants to be more equivocal. That is not to suggest that some managers were not supportive, nor encouraging. It is rather a reflection that levels of support and encouragement varied. Some were supportive in a passive sense and others were more active in setting goals and tasks that provided challenges and opportunities for the participant to approach, using some of the skills from the programme. A number of comments from the CLDP reunion debrief question on *what support they needed to continue learning and grow as a leader* were for opportunities to be stretched and pushed such as special projects and secondments and commitment to be monitored by their manager. Interestingly, the data does suggest that there is a perceived contradiction between the desired leadership and the leadership displayed by senior leaders in the organisation. Some

of the participants' comments alluded to a need for the senior leaders to go on the programme:

*Because of the way that programmes of change are being conducted*

and the managers are not open to change by:

*Shutting down innovative ideas put forward by ourselves.*

There was some limited evidence from the participants that their staff were supportive, although this was noted as not really out of the ordinary, as the staff were normally supportive anyway. Some were more concerned about dealing with their staff differently, in a transactional sense. For example one survey response was:

*One staff member who I was performance managing commented they had noticed changes in the way I managed them.*

Also while there is not much data to suggest the participants' staff were consciously encouraging the transfer of learning as a process for the participant, some of the participants' managers were able to see a greater engagement between their participant and his/her staff, one remarking:

*He is more confident to empower his team and enjoy watching their success.*

and another manager observing:

*Encouraging her team to make decisions rather than making decisions for them.*

This suggests the staff were open and amenable to allowing the participant to try things differently which, in an indirect way, does provide encouragement and support.

In terms of what support they felt they needed to continue to learn and grow as leaders, there were a number of suggestions made that included continued networking with the programme colleagues, annual refresher courses, regular use and practice of the tools in their own workplace, commitment from their manager to monitor and support and be given opportunities to be stretched that their current role didn't provide. Some participants would have liked more purposive manager intervention and coaching rather than having to find their own way through it all. The major 'encumbrance' to all of this was identified as the job requirements and the lack

of available time to plan for use and practice of the skills. On-the whole, however, it could be maintained that the atmosphere in the Department is highly supportive.

## 5.5 Research question four – Have the participants changed and what are they doing differently since completing the programme?

The degree that the participants felt that they had achieved the programme objectives and embedded them in their role may assist in the evaluation of programme. Acknowledging and documenting other noticeable changes in participant behaviour since completing the programme is another effective method of monitoring success. In a way, this latter process confirms the validity of the programme through real and tangible outcomes.

### 5.5.1 Quantitative data on research question four

The quantitative data for this questions summarised in Table 5-8:

**Table 5-8: Participant perception of outcome and objectives success.**

Please rate since completing the programme how much you have:	Mean Rating n=26	Std Dev
Developed greater self-understanding.	7.65	1.20
Strengthened your ability to work with others.	7.46	1.10
Noticed changes in your leadership behaviours and actions resulting from the programme.	7.31	1.38
Strengthened your ability to influence your organisational circumstances.	6.62	1.33
Embedded all these skills within your scope of work and organisational systems.	6.35	1.29
Built systems-thinking abilities.	5.92	1.41

*Developing self-awareness* was the highest factor in participants feeling success in the outcome of the programme scoring an average of 7.65 or 85%. This was followed by *strengthening their ability to work with others* at 7.46 (83%). A score of 7.31 (81%) was given on their *noticing of changed behaviours and doing things differently*. *Strengthening your ability to influence your organisational circumstances*, 6.62 (74%) and *embedding all these skills within your scope of work and organisational systems*, 6.35 (71%) were next. The lowest score was *to have*

*built systems-thinking abilities* at 5.92 (66%) and is lower than their perceived relevance of this objective in the first question at 6.77 (75%).

### 5.5.2 *Qualitative data on research question four*

The summary of qualitative notations regarding changes in behaviour by the participants observed by themselves, their managers, work colleagues and staff, after the programme are listed in Table 5-9. The data confirms the effect the programme has had on the participants.

**Table 5-9: Summarised observed reactions and changes in leadership behaviours.**

<b>Question 4. Have the participants changed and what are they doing differently since completing the programme?</b>	<b>Description</b> - The reactions and observations from participants and managers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obvious changes in participants' behaviours and demeanour</li> <li>• Challenging assumptions and traditional methods more</li> <li>• Greatest changes are increased confidence, ability to step back for reflection and then stepping up for action</li> <li>• Greater awareness of self and more open to inquiry from others</li> <li>• Effecting better communications and relations with staff and colleagues</li> <li>• Undertaking to share the learning with staff and colleagues</li> <li>• More comfortable in assuming a leadership role.</li> </ul>	

### 5.5.3 *Discussion*

A strong theme that came through was the greater level of self-awareness that they developed. This reinforces the quantitative result for this question in Table 5-8 above. The recurring theme of participants reflecting on their personal styles was quite evident, especially being more deliberate about their making sense of situations before deciding on actions. Taking the time to understand and be comfortable with their attributes first before attempting personal change was also very important. For example this focus group comment was made:

*For me it was about understanding my characteristics and understanding aspects of problem solving while recognising there are competing demands.*

Having reached a point where they had 'become self-aware', the data illustrates the high value that participants placed on seeking the views and perceptions of others. Testing assumptions through enquiry involved greater use of active listening and engagement with a diversity of people and several attempts at getting to the centre of



an issue. This was noticed by several managers who echoed these common observations:

*Has worked on her listening skills and in challenging assumptions.*

and:

*More considered questioning and responding to others perspectives.*

These comments add credence to their strengthened ability to work with others as in the second programme objective. Going through the process of testing assumptions and validating them has had the effect of giving the participants greater confidence in trying things differently being noted by several managers, for example the observation made of a participant:

*Stepping up and taking on the mantle of leadership.*

The willingness to take on a more prominent leadership role has been evident in a number of cases. Firstly, to improve their local team performance through better communications, participants have been noted by managers to

*Encourage her team to make decisions rather than making decisions for them.*

and

*More confident to empower his team and enjoy watching their success.*

Secondly, taking a lead within their SMT management teams to share the learning with and influence colleagues, although subtly, and improve the effectiveness of SMTs is another observation noted by managers tasking a participant:

*To share her learning with her management team colleagues to adjust their personal style and team dynamics to be more engaging, listening and challenging assumptions.*

Thirdly, the willingness to put themselves forward for wider organisational improvements has become evident such as:

*Being able to step up to national strategy development or managing a significant national project.*

## **5.6 Summary/conclusion**

Using the mixed methods of quantitative and qualitative inquiry has proven to be useful in gathering data to help answer the research questions. Data were obtained from various sources and at different periods and this assisted with corroboration and triangulation. The quantitative data illustrate a generally high success rate. The qualitative data support the quantitative findings and provide further detail or insight into what may be behind the quantitative scores.

The relevance of the CLDP objectives is perceived by the participants to be high, although the objectives do not seem to be the primary driver for them to enter the programme. Over the programme duration however, the participants could see the connection between their needs and the organisational needs and personalise them for application in their role. This would suggest that if replicated increasingly throughout the organisation this would increasingly achieve the CLDP objectives for the organisation. The CLDP content was also rated very relevant by the participants in their roles. The quantitative data initially suggest an equity of relevance between the objectives and the content of the CLDP, however, there is a sense that it is the content that was of primary interest to the participants. This was substantiated through the many comments in the qualitative data describing their desire to learn, apply and master the skills. This is reinforced by the fact that most of them have had previous leadership development in their tenure with DOC, and that they had little previous familiarity or understanding of the content in the CLDP. The modes of learning have been effective for the participants to grasp the skills and knowledge. No real issues have been raised as ineffectual or controversial, although the action learning did require some energy for a few.

Participants acknowledged that there were opportunities and resources to transfer their learning and most followed up these opportunities. These were encouraged in varying degrees by their programme colleagues, work colleagues, managers and to a lesser extent by their staff. Although it was not the intention to measure the performance of the participants as an outcome of the programme, any concurrent or subsequent changes in leadership behaviour by the participants since completing the programme was of interest. These were observed by the participants themselves and managers to be manifested in a variety of ways especially: greater reflection, confidence to step up, challenging assumptions and more deliberate communications. These are a few of the emerging themes of changed leadership that have become identifiable beyond the immediate findings of the research questions and are explored in greater depth in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 6. Emerging themes**

*I am pushing new boundaries, explaining myself to people why the need to do things different & empower / challenge people around me. (CLDP participant).*

### **6.1 Overview**

The purpose of this chapter is to examine some of the themes that emerged from the research data. Although the previous chapter presents the findings and results for the research questions, it was considered valuable to look beyond the immediate results and examine the changed behaviours of participants. Doing so could help illustrate whether the changes by the participants equated to improved environmental leadership. Changes in learners include behavioural, cognitive and affective changes (Kraiger, 2002). Two approaches were decided upon; firstly, by identifying the behaviours that show the participants used the skills in their roles since attending the programme, and secondly, by aligning these behaviours with the leadership types described in the literature. Attention is given to the emerging themes of: listening and communication, confidence, stepping up, valuing diversity, and reflection and sharing the learning, within the environmental leadership model. It was also considered pertinent to align the themes with the different types of leadership styles, because as illustrated in the literature chapters, these themes portray examples of environmental leadership in action.

### **6.2 Emerging themes**

In Chapter 4 it is explained that, in addition to the data being analysed in direct response to the research questions to produce notations, a number of emerging or patterned themes that extend beyond the research questions are identifiable. The qualitative data are especially helpful for this. These themes are posited as environmental leadership behaviours (Egri & Herman, 2000; Gordon & Berry, 2006; Jacobson, 1999; Johnston, 2008; Kellert, 1996; Snow, 1992; Worboys et al., 2001) and are grouped under theme headings in the tables below. Characteristics and leadership behaviours of environmental leaders are described in the literature. The themes are represented by sub-themes, collated and compiled from interpretations of the data and in the context in which they were obtained. Although it can be said that the sub-themes are closely related and overlap to some degree, the evidence of these sub-themes would underscore the presence of improved environmental leadership. Each table allows for the sub-themes to be associated with transactional, transformational, adaptive, constructivist, authentic/ethical and distributed leadership

as described in the literature. The identifications are based on my perceptions that the theme has a strong connection with the leadership type and are not definitive or exclusive. Many of the themes can be associated with more than one type, especially for listening and communication which is a core skill to all leadership types. The legend identifies which type of leadership can be associated with the theme.

Legend:

Ta	Transactional leadership
Tf	Transformational leadership
C	Constructivist leadership
D	Dispersed or distributed leadership
AE	Authentic and ethical leadership
A	Adaptive leadership

### **6.2.1 *Listening and communication***

Examination of the literature confirms that listening and communication are the foundational skills underlying leadership. Environmental leadership cannot be viewed any differently. The significance of identifying listening and communication here as a theme may be queried if these skills are expected as a normal requirement for leaders.. The difference is that this theme reflects a *deliberate desire* to improve these skills across all interactions with staff, colleagues, stakeholders and the community. The environmental leadership model as presented earlier in Figure 2-2 highlights the value of being *open to change* and *forming effective relationships* with individuals, socio-cultural, political-environmental and other groups. This supports the recommendations to understand the viewpoints of others (Kellert, 1996) and listening more to communities (Jacobson, 1999; Worboys et al., 2001). The data as per Table 6-1 below illustrate the behaviours or sub-themes of improving listening and communication.

Table 6-1: Theme of improved listening and communication from the qualitative data.	Leadership Type					
	Ta	Tf	C	D	AE	A
• Clearer discussions about the value of communication, more mindful conversations	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Improved and active listening			✓	✓	✓	✓
• Conversations are curious, inquisitive and more in-depth			✓	✓		✓
• Time is taken to explore a smaller number of the issues		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Getting to know others in new ways, through fresh eyes			✓	✓	✓	✓
• Broader and deeper across DOC relationships			✓	✓		✓
• More open and honest about the change in communication gaining commitment to working differently together		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Improved listening and communication for agreed expectations *may* represent aspects of transactional leadership although these would primarily be for managing risk. This style of leadership implies ‘closely monitoring’ and then clarifying and confirming with staff, before deviances, mistakes, and errors occur (Bass et al., 2003, p. 208). This willingness to clarify expectation through negotiation could also be extended to other, external stakeholders such as contractors and concessionaires operating on public conservation land (Kellert, 1996). The willingness to reflect on their listening and communication skills and styles with a view to deliberately communicate differently is evidence of transformational leadership (Bass et al., 2003) and has been acknowledged by several of the participants. This suggests authenticity in the participants being open about themselves, and revealing a personal desire to improve. Being open and honest about empowering their teams (Worboys et al., 2001) to meet priorities and required levels of performance, have also been observed by the participants’ managers. The time taken to extend conversations to get to the issue at hand, and the deeper conversations and ‘sense-making’ evidenced allow for the greater identification of issues for staff to be considered for significance and resolution (Johnston, 2008). The importance of establishing relationships to encourage the construction of meaning through reflection and dialogue and the challenging of assumptions portrays the presence of constructive leadership. The participants have been able to show this in contexts of engaging with their staff, as observed by their managers and engaging with communities (Jacobson, 1999). The

use of broader and deeper listening and communication across the organisation to help strengthen networks, supports distributed leadership (Katzenbach & Smith, cited in Politis, 2005). Reconciling differences so that multiple purposes and priorities can reach compromise reflects adaptive leadership (Hogan, 2008).

The theme of improved listening communication and supporting sub-themes appears to act as a mechanism for self-development. In order for improvements and progress to be made in leadership the participants acknowledge a sequence of actions should occur. Firstly, before engaging in an issue using the new tools and techniques ‘on’ someone, there is a process of becoming more self-aware of personal leadership styles and ‘space’. Being true to oneself using the content offered through the adult development theory has therefore laid the way for the participants to move into the next realm of engaging with others by ‘getting a view from the balcony’ (Heifitz et al., 2009). How participants learn to engage with others utilises skills in actively listening to them and taking note of their specific interests and concerns. The instances given of participants taking conversations further and deeper, particularly in their SMT fora, demonstrate utilisation of the *Engaging communication* and *Speech acts* techniques. The willingness to seek alternate points of view from that held by the participant is also demonstrated by this process.

This in itself is a shift in traditional relationship management. Engaging with organisations and user groups that would normally represent contradictory values to that held important to DOC can bring apprehension (Kellert, 1996). This can be significant to DOC, especially if the culture of actively seeking diverse viewpoints gathers momentum. Again, however, the challenge for the Department to reorient its established mode of operating reminds those leaders that it is not really optional. The risks, however, can be mitigated through mapping who the key players are in building relationship by the techniques offered in the *relationship mapping* content and through being intentional about what issues and possibilities are in scope through the *Polarity management* and *Boundary setting* content.

### **6.2.2 Increased confidence**

The theme of *increased confidence* is one made especially evident by the data from managers of the participants as well as from the participants themselves. Confidence is a value inherent in the environmental leadership model in Figure 2-2. Leadership skills that accompany this value include dealing with complexity (Gordon & Berry, 2006). Together, this combined possession of confidence and new skills can instil a

sense of optimism for participants to see a way forward and make progress, especially when they have the tools to do so. See Table 6-2.

Table 6-2: Theme of increased confidence from the qualitative data.	Leadership Type					
	Ta	Tf	C	D	AE	A
<b>Theme – Increased confidence</b>						
• Greater sense of hope for the future / More optimistic		✓	✓	✓		✓
• New motivation to practice new tools with whole team to support improvements.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Increased confidence to take responsibility for personal contribution to challenge self and others				✓	✓	✓
• Stimulating new ideas and ways of engagement			✓	✓		✓
• Engaging with new stakeholder groups			✓	✓	✓	✓
• Feeling more influential		✓		✓		

The increased confidence is manifested in a number of ways. It seems that the participant gains confidence having firstly been recognised as leader with potential to effect change through being nominated for the programme, and secondly, through familiarity of the tools and their potential benefits. Participants have subsequently felt some optimism in being able to bring about positive change through thinking constructively (Wirt & Krug, 1997). This optimism has renewed participants' motivation to practise the new skills in a variety of contexts from within the participant's immediate team of staff, their collegial senior management team and with external groups and stakeholders. For example, a manager made the following comment:

*He is more confident to empower his team. He has adopted some key tools that have clearly advanced his team culture and resulted in a marked increase in engagement at management team level.*

More behaviours include greater initiative taking, displaying more assertiveness, and taking more responsibility in a relaxed way. These behaviours span across many of the leadership types particularly constructivist leadership where possibilities and opportunities are seen to do things differently from previous experiences (Densten & Gray, 2001). Instances where the participants are attempting to link the leadership more effectively with the senior management team and provide opportunities for those leaders to step into, illustrate distributed leadership (Politis, 2005). Adaptive leadership is manifested in examples of the participants having the confidence to challenge their staff and the colleagues, draw issues out and then reconcile the

differences so that steps can be taken to make progress in those areas (Heifitz & Laurie, 2001). This confidence and belief displays an awareness of self that then through a display of authentic or ethical leadership (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006) becomes evident to others. By acting on their belief and optimism that improvements can be made, the participants are demonstrating authenticity thus, enhancing their credibility.

### 6.2.3 *Stepping up*

From increased confidence it is probably a natural progression to step up into a leadership space more consciously. Environmental leadership, as described in the literature model includes the value of self-transcendence. The theme of *stepping up* is verified from several data sources, the phenomenon most clearly observed from the managers' viewpoints. Table 6-3 below illustrates.

Table 6-3: Theme of stepping up from the qualitative data.	Leadership Type					
	Ta	Tf	C	D	AE	A
<b>Theme - Stepping up</b>						
• Participants to step up and move from the detail to a broader leadership role		✓		✓		✓
• Comfort with taking on the mantle of leadership		✓			✓	
• Informal network of participants is developing across the Department – momentum is gathering		✓		✓		
• Preparing leadership teams to face the big challenges together			✓			✓
• Moving on as a group of leaders, discussing issues as leaders		✓		✓		

The opportunities for stepping up and into leadership spaces are many and varied and include: building capability in the participant's team; tackling a significant personal challenge for resolution; stepping up to a national strategy project; and seeing opportunity for the participant's senior management team to become more effective. This can be dependent on a manager's support. All examples illustrate a willingness to move from the daily and weekly management duties in their role to a sharper, more strategic purpose. Data from managers reflect this comment made by one:

*He has greatly increased confidence. He now knows he is recognised as a leader and has stepped up into that role within the management team and wider.*

Learning to increase self-awareness, including discernment of things that are important is a skill required for authentic leadership (Bowman & Garten, 2004). A



quality that comes with *stepping up* (i.e., the apparent comfort or acceptance of taking on the mantle of leadership) thus suggests an aspect of authentic leadership. Being open to self-transcendence and taking deliberate steps towards realising it, confirms to followers the leader's authenticity. For example, one participant commented on her experience when explaining the purpose of the programme to her staff:

*I was trying to be transparent about this. I was passing on my understanding so it was a conscious transfer of knowledge, not just by osmosis.*

This can be due in part to the increased confidence that is regularly mentioned in the data, however, it also seems to suggest an acceptance that there is an actual duty for the participant to step up and lead. This duty manifests as acknowledgement of the trust given and investment made by the participants' senior managers and the willingness for the participant to repay this trust by focussing on something for organisational benefit and improvement. This is despite the initial motivations and reasons given by some of the focus group participants to go on the programme for personal objectives. They now appear to have since considered how to apply the thinking beyond their individual roles for the greater good.

The decision to *step up* appears to demonstrate an impact wider than the participants' immediate efforts (Booth, 2005). As momentum gathers through the networking of participants working on more strategic issues, this may begin to create an awareness in management teams of a new 'sea-change'. This change suggests the need for all managers and leaders to be able to move into a leadership space more frequently (Stewart & O'Donnell, 2007). For example, the manager comment:

*Colleagues are observing the positive impact within her team, and are poised to work similarly with their teams.*

Stepping up also suggests a change in mindset or realisation that in doing so means that no longer is it an expectation for the leader to know all the answers for problem resolution and that dealing with ambiguity is increasingly necessary (Gordon & Berry, 2006). What is of more importance is the willingness to confront change and engage with others to best manage it. This realisation may help bring about a culture in the organisation of accepting the inevitability of change and acquiring the agility and resilience to adapt (Argyris & Schön, 1996). The behaviours of *stepping up* thus strongly reflect the qualities of adaptive leadership and distributed leadership (Heifetz et al., 2009), passing the opportunity on for others to identify leadership spaces to

step into. Constructive leadership is also represented through the participants leading their teams into looking beyond their current environment and considering what could be (Lambert, 2003).

#### 6.2.4 Valuing diversity

The model of environmental leadership suggests inclusiveness. Related to improving listening and communication, the theme of valuing diversity recognises the value in deliberate seeking of alternate points of view for effective decision-making. Table 6-4 offers examples of the theme of valuing diversity.

Table 6-4: Theme of valuing diversity from the qualitative data.	Leadership Type					
	Ta	Tf	C	D	AE	A
<b>Theme - Valuing diversity for collaboration</b>						
• Being open and curious to new perspectives to understanding others and building from different points of view				✓	✓	
• Boundaries pushed out to include more diversity of viewpoints included in discussions						✓
• Willingness to accept and understand diversity resulting in new framing and opportunities for growth		✓	✓	✓		
• Seeing the whole person and how they fit into the whole team system		✓	✓			✓
• Holding contradictions positively and simultaneously						✓

Fully appreciating the value of diversity and actively seeking it is a strong theme from the programme, aided greatly by the programme content topics such as *sense-making*, *relationship mapping* and *action learning*. These skills aid in the process of seeking differing viewpoints for decision-making. These skills have been identified by participants as ones most likely to be practised after the workshops in the work contexts. Participants have demonstrated the practice of deliberately seeking alternative viewpoints in the context of staff discussions on problem solving and on testing assumptions held by themselves and by their colleagues. This is exemplified by comments made by participants such as:

*I am being more deliberate about choosing the style of engagement and the conversations to suit the circumstance and needs, rather than relying on my personal instinct.*

This seeking of viewpoints has been active, by deliberately pushing boundaries with staff and colleagues for reaction and then further exploration of the issues. Often the outcome is unknown, for example one participant comment when dealing with staff:

*I'm being curious about issues and am drawing out more from our staff. I'm not asking questions I know the answer to, but I'm being clearer in my communication.*

And a similar intention by another participant to cajole SMT colleagues:

*I'm contributing to discussions more, not to offer or suggest solutions, but to encourage more dialogue around the problem for collective steps to achieve an outcome.*

The importance of seeking the viewpoints of external groups and stakeholders where the participant has engaged with iwi on treaty settlement outcomes more constructively and with sectors of the business community for potential mutual benefit opportunities (Young, 2010) has also been noticed by the managers. For example:

*An excellent outcome to a difficult and sensitive issue that otherwise would not have occurred.*

Previously these interactions would have been in conflict with traditional organisational values and viewpoints (Fennell, 1982; Kellert, 1996).

The practice of action learning by the participants as an activity between the scheduled workshops provided opportunity to work on their adaptive challenge through soliciting the viewpoints from other participant colleagues in the action learning group. These outcomes demonstrate clear examples of constructivist leadership, distributed leadership and adaptive leadership. Authentic and ethical leadership is also represented in the participants' willingness to acknowledge the value in diversity. The process of seeking alternative viewpoints also assists good practice of transformational leadership as it enables the identification of expectations through negotiation and discussion. Although this may initially only reach an agreement to disagree on specific items, it nevertheless raises and acknowledges them at an early stage for subsequent resolution when more information is known.

### **6.2.5 Reflection and sharing the learning**

The literature on environmental leadership identified that established environmental organisations need to be adaptive and demonstrate organisational learning (Apple,

2000; BCFS, 2010). Instances of *reflection on the learning experiences* by the participants, and then *sharing the learning* have become apparent, as suggested in Table 6-5.

Table 6-5: Theme of reflection and sharing learning from the qualitative data.	Leadership Type					
	Ta	Tf	C	D	AE	A
<b>Theme - Reflection and sharing the learning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking time to reflect / Being ready to step back and pause to take in the big picture / being “on the balcony”</li> <li>• Opportunities to apply learning at a number of levels</li> <li>• Becoming an advocate for development of self and others / More self awareness and passion for learning</li> <li>• Staff exposure to new ideas / Starting to see others (not on the programme) picking up the learning</li> <li>• Sharing learning with team, and sharing tools with team when working together</li> <li>• Benefits are noticed by others who want to be part of the programme</li> <li>• Better decision making, encouraging team thinking, more considered and rounded debate at SMT</li> <li>• Greater effort to communicate team purpose to wider Department</li> <li>• Programme tools are utilised for leadership in the business</li> </ul>			✓			✓
		✓	✓	✓		✓
		✓		✓	✓	
		✓		✓		✓
		✓	✓	✓	✓	
						✓
				✓		✓
		✓		✓		
		✓				✓

Becoming more aware of different tools and techniques available to use in various leadership situations has led to some participants reflecting on their current leadership style and consequently changing (e.g., comments made about being more aware of their style and adapting to suit circumstances). Some participants having reflected on where they could become more leader-like, saw opportunities at a number of levels. This has materialised in actions such as increased delegation and creating space for creative thinking, such experiences noted by participants as:

*I am better at delegation and taking more time to consider my approach before addressing difficult situations.*

Other participants wanted to enhance the effectiveness of their senior management team (Bengston & Fan, 1999). The approach taken has not been overt or instructional, but rather a sharing of awareness of the operating context within the SMT. For example, one focus group participant wanted to create:

*A sharing of the understanding of what skills can be practised by the team to operate as a team rather than a collection of individuals.*

The success on sharing the learning seems to be conditional on the numbers of participants who have been on the CLDP. What appears to be happening is that through a small but critical mass of participants talking and behaving in a common ‘language’, but distinct from the established SMT mode of operating is creating an awareness and curiosity from the other SMT members. One participant observed:

*It is hard to define what they as an SMT are doing differently, but they are starting to operate differently, if only just a shared awareness or understanding that we have to change the way we have been leading.*

The sharing has not been restricted to SMT however. Some participants have openly fronted to their staff and explained to them that they will respond differently than they have previously done in attempting to practise their learning. For example, by making staff aware that “*she was not going into dreamland*” but rather reflecting on the issue, highlights that one participant intended to bring her staff along with her on the learning experience. Others have consciously and deliberately introduced and replicated some of the CLDP content into other programmes for other staff such as facilitating action learning groups. This activity of introducing some of the concepts and sharing the learning is widening the awareness of the types of skills in the CLDP to staff that would not necessarily be in the initial target group profile, for example the participant comment:

*The programme provides significant value to the middle section of the organisation which will in time lift the performance of the bottom section.*

The sharing of the learning at SMT level and with staff is beginning to provide evidence of organisational learning (Bengston & Fan, 1999; Booth, 2005). This is predominantly noticed by the senior managers through the manager data, such as better decision making, encouraging team thinking, and ‘*more considered and rounded debate at SMT*’. Also, greater effort to communicate team purpose to the wider Department and utilising the CLDP tools for leadership in the business lend towards a working environment that is more transparent. These actions and initiatives can be linked quite clearly to the characteristics of constructivist, distributed and adaptive leadership styles.

## **6.5 Summary**

In keeping with the evaluation focus of the programme design that included content, objectives and delivery, and the ability to apply and transfer learning, it was valuable to further examine the changes of participants' behaviours and relate to the types of leadership styles and environmental leadership qualities from the literature. Evidence of the changed behaviours is possible through emerging sub-themes from the data and can be collated into broader themes of improved listening and communication, increased confidence, stepping up, valuing diversity, and reflection and sharing the learning. From the model of environmental leadership in the literature, these behaviours or themes are posited as examples of improved environmental leadership.

## **Chapter 7. Conclusion**

*Arriving at one goal is the starting point to another.* (John Dewey, cited in Sterling-Casil, 2006))

### **7.1 Overview**

This concluding chapter begins by revisiting the background and purpose of this study. It then reviews the research objectives, specific questions considered appropriate for inquiry, and the methodology used in the study. A summary of the key findings is provided. The limitations of the study and how they are mitigated are then discussed. The final section of this chapter considers the implications for future research and practice.

### **7.2 Overview of the research process**

#### ***7.2.1 Research objectives and design***

The research was guided by the ‘problem’ facing the Department of Conservation stated in the introduction (i.e., the need to do things differently based on an unknown and unknowable future), and the purpose of establishing a leadership development programme to initiate this change. The approach centred on evaluating the success of the programme for the participants in their roles, in particular the relevance of the programme’s objectives and content and its structure, delivery and systems so that learning could lead to changes in their leadership. The literature presented in Chapters 2 and 3 explored a number of related areas. These were current theories on leadership, environmental leadership characteristics, leadership development and evaluation of leadership development. These theories confirmed that leadership is more about behaviours than individual traits, and that behaviours are influenced by skills. Skills can be developed, however, developing leadership through experiential learning and reflection is more effective. Leadership development can be effective across organisational levels in addition to specific individuals. Environmental leadership development differs only because of its specific set of skills and placement within eco-centric governance and purpose. All leadership development benefits from evaluating the interventions and methods, to help measure success towards greater capability or to identify further development.

Important aspects of research design in this study included the research questions. The over-arching question in this study was:

*What have been the experiences of the participants that can help determine the success of the leadership development programme?*

Sub-questions that support this question queried whether:

1. The programme had appropriate and relevant objectives and content for the participants' needs in their roles;
2. The programme design and infrastructure effectively assisted with participant transfer of learning, and;
3. The course participants had been able to demonstrate the new skills and changed leadership in their role well or otherwise.

The findings revealed that programme objectives were not a compelling reason for participants to enrol in the programme, as their motivations were mostly based on personal needs. Despite this the linkages between the programme objectives and the participant roles became clearer over time. The objectives ultimately proved to be very relevant for their needs as conservation leaders. Most of the programme content was very relevant, in particular those aspects that introduced new skills in self-awareness, reflection, interpersonal and inquiry. The skills associated with systems thinking and theory of change were not perceived as having the same level of relevance.

Participants felt supported during the programme by the facilitators, programme colleagues, their managers and peers. Most felt the programme infrastructure and organisational support enabled them to identify situations where they could apply the learning. These were largely opportunities in their work context. Some participants voiced a desire for more formalised opportunities such as secondments, project work or organisational initiatives to be made available or arranged by their manager.

Observations by the participants and managers have confirmed the application of the skills in the workplace and the resulting changes in leadership style and behaviour. Several themes emerged from the data: changed behaviour, such as improved listening and communication; increased self confidence; valuing diversity for collaboration; stepping up into leadership spaces; reflection; and sharing the learning. These themes, considered in relation to the literature, suggest improved and increased environmental leadership capability.

### **7.3 Limitations**

There are some limitations to this study. As outlined in the methodology chapter the quantitative data could only be used for descriptive purposes. The data were primarily from the participants and a sample of their managers, based primarily on



their perceptions. There was no direct observation from the researcher. Another factor that could be considered a limitation was that I belong to the organisation concerned and may have an unintentional view or ‘bias’ that could affect an objective study. Also, as I am familiar with most of the participants this may have affected what they were prepared to share with me. In addition, there was some minor variation of content topics that were taught during the CLDP1 and CLDP2 programmes. For example, the order of some topics was changed in the three workshops and Kotter’s Theory of change was referred to in less detail in the CLDP2 group.

I have attempted to minimize these limitations through appropriate validity and reliability. The electronic survey was trialled by a small number of work colleagues for testing to achieve reliability (Walliman, 2007). The survey and questionnaire questions were shared with the CLDP coordinator for validity. The multiple methods of gathering data have achieved levels of triangulation which assists in the credibility of findings (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). Themes were found in more than one area of the data. Data were obtained through various sources and over different periods of time. Participants commented that the evaluation occurred at a time that had allowed their experiences and perceptions to form adequately. I attempted to minimise any personal bias through use of a published evaluation model (Kraiger, 2002) and coding and thematic analysis processes (Braun & Clark, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

## **7.4 Implications for practice in the organisation**

### **7.4.1 *Connecting individual and organisation capability goals***

There appears to be a need to articulate and strengthen the link between individual leader requirements and the organisation’s capability goals. Although the findings did reveal that the programme objectives were relevant to the participants in their roles, it was also found that the participants either were not aware or familiar with the objectives, or did not initially use them as motivations for applying for the programme. That presents an opportunity for the programme design to make the linkages between the programme objectives and the participant needs for their role clearer. In particular, the objective of *Build systems thinking abilities*, although acknowledged as relevant, did not bring immediate opportunities to mind for many of the participants. This is reinforced by the comments made by many about the content topic of *systems thinking*, where it was considered quite a complex topic or tool, and difficult to conceptualise convenient opportunities that they could

implement at their level in the organisation. This may well be an objective that will continue to be difficult to meet in the future and some thought may have to be given to whether it is changed to achieve a greater awareness and understanding of *systems thinking*, rather than building its capability. On the other hand, if it is a necessary requirement for the organisation to build capability, further effort on how to address this need is now clearly identified. Despite this, the fact that *systems thinking* is now acknowledged by participants to be considered and included in their decision making, could be claimed as partial success. The instruction of understanding and implementing *systems thinking* could be undertaken in a two step process.

#### **7.4.2 *Methods of learning***

Methods of learning were, on the whole, very effective, however, some methods had mixed success. Action learning was one such method. As a tool during the programme instruction, it was reasonably successful, and provided many participants with new reflective practices that they found beneficial. Continuing the process of action learning in their groups after the workshops in their work places by telephone was achieved quite variably. Reasons cited for this variation were the effort, discipline and time required to commit to the process by telephone. As technology improves and the use of on-line conferencing increases, the enactment of action learning could be made easier and this should be considered.

Some participants voiced a desire for formal opportunities to test their new skills, or the involvement of some other opportunity for further development. More active planning by some managers to integrate appropriate and challenging initiatives as part of the participant's involvement in the programme could be beneficial.

#### **7.4.3 *Keeping the programme current***

The impetus of the CLDP development and establishment came about through the need to address financial and operational pressures. These pressures required a different approach to leadership and culture than that which had been in place for some decades. Furthermore, there is an acknowledgement that the organisation will continue to be “constantly impacted by political, social and environmental factors” (Focus group participant). This means that the Department business strategy and capability goals will almost certainly need to change and adapt over time. Despite the view by some that leadership is more about effective interpersonal skills regardless of external factors, (and that the CLDP was successful in this respect), it has been suggested that the CLDP should really provide the types of attributes that will stand the test of time through being flexible and responsive to change. This reinforces the

views of a number of the participants that the programme should be opened up to senior and executive managers in the organisation to help form and drive the culture and skills that are required. If enough managers at varying levels in the organisation receive the training, this may achieve enough critical mass to effect change. It could be useful therefore to evaluate at some subsequent point, how successful this programme has been in this regard.

## **7.5 Best practice in environmental leadership development**

The contributions made by this research lie in a number of areas: firstly, it reinforces that research on leadership in environmental organisations is an emerging field. Secondly, it confirms that environmental leadership is strongly rooted in the theories of transformational leadership and that current theories of leadership development equally apply to environmental leaders. The study further supports the notion of collective leadership development in addition to individual leader development to build organisational leadership capability. There will always be a requirement for leader and leadership development. The evaluation and the literature confirm a number of high level guidelines for best practice in environmental leadership development:

- Ensure the organisational governance and decision making are founded on eco-centric goals, that is, for the betterment of conservation and environmental management. Culture and leadership development analysis and design should align with and support these goals,
- The case for leadership development must be articulated. Senior leadership should instil a culture and infrastructure that supports leadership development and organisational learning.
- The organisational objectives should match the expectations of participant roles. Needs analysis should include research on a sample of potential participant roles,
- Environmental leadership development content should include skills in self-awareness, interpersonal relationships both internally and externally, conceptual thinking, dealing with complexity, information management and theories of leadership and adult development in addition to the required technical and science knowledge,
- Appropriate participants should be identified: firstly by identifying those in roles that are optimal in initiating the new leadership culture. (This may be across a

number of organisational levels); and secondly, to address the gaps where the culture and skills need development,

- Managers of participants must be part of the learning system and establish learning objectives and discuss with the participant experiential opportunities to apply the learning, reflect and improvise,
- The methods of learning need to be varied to meet most learning preferences. Using technology and innovative methods will assist in engagement and follow-up,
- All graduates should start sharing the learning in a formal sense (i.e., action learning, coaching and mentoring) with other levels of managers, and
- After implementation of the development programme, aspects for evaluation should be identified and the best time and methods to approach this. Additional development requirements should also be identified.

## **7.6 Further research**

This evaluation studied the CLDP design and delivery, and the behavioural, affective and cognitive changes in learners. Data from the participants were that, full understanding of the content, and the implications of applying the new skills in practice took some time to become apparent. Further research in a longer term study to follow up on the changes in participants and the impact of leadership practices on environmental outcomes would therefore be useful.

## **7.7 Final words**

Most of us learned in the school science curriculum that ecosystems are open to the movement of matter and energy both in and out. Similarly, researchers cite *action* as a key ingredient of environmental leadership. As the researcher, it is my belief that this also applies to this study. Recognising the need to change the culture of leadership in the organisation, and taking decisive steps to implement change through the conservation leadership development programme are examples of action. The actions taken by the participants during and after the programme have had an impact on most of their leadership behaviours. Undertaking this evaluation of the programme has been a useful exercise for this researcher through gaining a greater understanding of environmental leadership and it is hoped that the findings assist with the future delivery of the programme.

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### Appendix A: CLDP Content tools and key elements.

TOOL /METHOD	KEY ELEMENTS AND IDEAS
<i>Engaging communication - Talk Sense, videotaped case studies</i>	<p>“When - I feel –Because”</p> <p>Getting your cards on the table without disguise or judgement</p> <p>Listening hard (and testing out loud) the meaning the other person might be making</p> <p>Facing others as sense-makers and not problems to be solved</p>
<i>Action learning</i>	<p>The action learning cycle: conversations - questions – actions – reflections – actions – conversations .....</p> <p>In action learning groups we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have different roles</li> <li>• Ask different questions</li> <li>• Offer and listen to multiple perspectives</li> </ul>
<i>MBTI</i>	<p>4 personality dichotomies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extraversion/ Introversion (where people get their energy)</li> <li>• Sensing/ Intuition (how people take in information)</li> <li>• Thinking/ Feeling (how people make decisions)</li> <li>• Judging/ Perceiving (how people structure their lives)</li> </ul>
<i>TMS – Team management systems</i>	<p>Explores people’s work preferences on four dimensions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relate to others (extroverted or introverted)</li> <li>• Gather and use information (practical or creative)</li> <li>• Make decisions (analytical or belief based)</li> <li>• Organise ( structured or flexible)</li> </ul> <p>Also talks about individual preferences for being explorers, organisers, controllers, or advisors. Overall picture of individuals contributes to understanding key team dynamics.</p>
<i>Relationship mapping</i>	<p>Mapping who the key players are and how they are connected.</p> <p>Trying to identify the most important relationships, casting a wide net</p> <p>Trying to understand the multiple perspectives and the various competing commitments</p>
<i>Boundary setting</i>	<p>Noticing the way issues are surrounded by boundaries—usually invisibly</p> <p>Being intentional about how you think about the boundary and deciding which things are in scope and which things are out of scope and how that changes your view and the possibilities</p>
<i>Systems dynamics</i>	<p>Feedback loops – what goes around, comes around!</p> <p>Balancing feedback loops keep the ball steady even when there’s movement in the system</p> <p>Reinforcing feedback loops increase the movement of the ball up or down.</p>
<i>Competing commitments</i>	<p>Four column exercise:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I am committed to the value or importance of ....</li> <li>2. What I am doing or not doing that prevents my commitment from being fully realised</li> <li>3. Competing commitment – I may also be committed to ....</li> <li>4. Big assumption – I assume that if ...</li> </ol>
<i>Speech Acts</i>	<p>Declarations (move us toward future possibilities)</p> <p>Assertions (statements of fact)</p> <p>Assessments (opinions, values, judgements)</p> <p>Requests and Agreements (are specific in who, what, and conditions of satisfaction)</p>
<i>Adult development</i>	<p>Subject→object shifts: putting things on the table in front of me and walking around to take different perspectives</p> <p>Forms of mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-sovereign: focus on the concrete and why it matters to me</li> <li>• Socialised: focus on the group and how the group will judge quality and fairness</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-authored: focus on my self-generated system and self-authored values and principles and judge quality by my own standards</li> <li>• Self transforming: move beyond into paradox and process-based understandings. Know that the value is found in the spaces in between us</li> </ul>
<b><i>Kotter's theory of change</i></b>	<p>Kotter's 8 steps for leading change:</p> <p>Increase Urgency, Build the Guiding Team, Get the Vision Right, Communicate for Buy-In, Empower Action, Create Short-Term Wins, Don't Let Up, Make Change Stick</p>
<b><i>Polarity management</i></b>	<p>Whereas a <i>problem</i> has one right answer, a <i>polarity</i> can be managed by focusing on two interdependent but opposing responses (e.g., centralising or decentralising in an organisation. Both responses have weaknesses and strengths. The challenge is to maximise the benefits that come from opposing responses and to minimise the weaknesses. Place too much emphasis on one pole and the system will become unbalanced and eventually fail. Solving problems uses <i>either/or</i> thinking. Polarity management needs <i>both/and</i> thinking.</p>

## Appendix B: Participant information sheets

19 May 2010

### Information sheet/consent form for Programme participants.

Dear Participant

I have a role in organisational development and leadership capability in the Department of Conservation and am working with People and Organisation Development Group on a research project. The purpose of the research is to evaluate the Conservation Leadership Development Programme for its effectiveness, both to participants and the Department. Although I am not the programme coordinator, I have a natural interest in leadership development and evaluation.

The project will also contribute to my Master's thesis in Education at VUW. It is a requirement of the university to obtain ethical approval for research involving human participants.

I am approaching you because you have participated in and completed this programme. This is an invitation for you to participate in the research and is wholly voluntary.

If you wish to participate, I request your help to gather the required data in three ways:

1. I would like to hold a focus group session of 8-10 people for one hour during a scheduled participants' de-brief in Wellington next month. If you are interested in being part of this group could you indicate this on the attached consent form. The focus group session may be taped and/or transcribed.
2. A questionnaire will be circulated at the proposed debrief next month which is voluntary.
3. I will also send out a survey link in August 2010 to all participants of the first two leadership development programmes (including you) to be completed electronically.

The survey which is also voluntary should take you approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. The information received from the survey will be confidential. You will not be identified.

The information received from the focus group will be confidential to the focus group, to me as researcher and, if required, a person to transcribe the data. All information will be aggregated and any findings will not be attributed to any individual.

All raw data will be destroyed two years after conclusion of the research. A summary of findings will be available to participants at the conclusion of the research. Please indicate on the attached consent form if you would like this to be provided to you. Aggregated data will be used in a report for the Executive Leadership Team.

Please complete attached consent form if you agree to participate in the research and return it to me by email.

As part of the research I will also be approaching a random sample of managers for a telephone or face-to-face interview to investigate their perceptions of the programme.

If at any time you have any concerns about the conduct of the research please feel free to contact me on (04) 4713004 (vpn 8004), email [stully@doc.govt.nz](mailto:stully@doc.govt.nz); or Dr. Liz Jones ( VUW Research Supervisor) on (04) 463 5939.

This research has been assessed and approved by Victoria University Faculty of Education Ethics Committee.

Thank you for your consideration. Your participation is important and appreciated.

Steve Tully

Advisor, Organisation Development

**Consent Form to participate in research for evaluation of Conservation Leadership Development programme.**

*(Please indicate)*

I have read the information sheet regarding this research project, and give my consent to participate in:

- ☐ a survey
- ☐ a focus group session
- ☐ I understand the focus group discussion may be taped and/or transcribed
- ☐ I understand that by giving my consent, I agree to participate in this research. I also understand that as a participant, I have the right to:

- Decline to participate
- Decline to answer any particular question
- Withdraw from the study at any time prior to data analysis (August 2010)
- Ask any questions about the study at any time during participation
- Provide information on the understanding that my name will not be used, and
- Be given a summary of the project when it is concluded.

I would like a summary of the project when it is concluded. YES / NO (please select)

I understand that access to the data I provide is restricted to the researcher and/or transcriber and will not be used for any other purpose or released to others without my written consent .

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Information sheet/consent form for Programme participants' managers.**

(Date)

Dear Participant

I have a role in organisational development and leadership capability in the Department of Conservation and am working with People and Organisation Development Group on a research project. The purpose of the research is to evaluate the Conservation Leadership Development Programme for its effectiveness, both to participants and the Department. Although I am not the programme coordinator, I have a natural interest in leadership development and evaluation.

The project will also contribute to my Master's thesis in Education at VUW. It is a requirement of the university to obtain ethical approval for research involving human participants.

I am approaching you because you have previously nominated some of your staff to participate in and complete this programme. This is an invitation for you to participate in the research and is wholly voluntary.

If you wish to participate, I request your help to gather the required data. I intend to conduct a telephone /face-to-face interview with you in July 2010. The interview should take no more than 20 minutes.

The information received from the interview will be kept confidential. You will not be identified. All information will be aggregated and any findings will not be attributed to any individual. A summary of the data will be made available to you on request.

All raw data will be destroyed two years after conclusion of the research. A summary of findings will be available to participants at the conclusion of the research. Please indicate on the attached consent form if you would like this to be provided to you. Aggregated data will be used in a report for the Executive Leadership Team.

Please complete attached consent form if you agree to participate in the research and return it to me by email.

I will also approach the programme participants for data through a survey and a focus group.

If at any time you have any concerns about the conduct of the research please feel free to contact me on 4713004 (vpn 8004) or Dr. Liz Jones ( VUW Research Supervisor) on (04) 463 5939.

This research has been assessed and approved by Victoria University Faculty of Education Ethics Committee.

Thank you for your consideration. Your participation is important and appreciated.

Steve Tully

Advisor, Organisation Development

**Consent Form to participate in research for evaluation of Conservation Leadership Development programme.**

*(Please indicate)*

I have read the information sheet regarding this research project, and give my consent to participate in a telephone or face-to-face interview:

- ☐ I understand the discussion may be taped and/or transcribed
- ☐ I understand that by giving my consent, I agree to participate in this research. I also understand that as a participant, I have the right to:
- Decline to participate,
  - Decline to answer any particular question,
  - Withdraw from the study at any time prior to data analysis (August 2010),
  - Ask any questions about the study at any time during participation,
  - Provide information on the understanding that my name will not be used, and
  - Be given a summary of the project when it is concluded.

I would like a summary of the project when it is concluded. YES / NO (please select)

I understand that access to the data I provide is restricted to the researcher and/or transcriber and will not be used for any other purpose or released to others without my written consent .

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C: Electronic survey sent to CLDP participants

**Conservation Leadership Development Programme (CLDP2) Survey**

**1. Information about this survey**

14%

Thank you for undertaking this survey. The survey is part of an evaluation of the Conservation Leadership Development Programme (CLDP).

As a participant in the first programme, recording your experiences of it are vital to assist in its evaluation.

The following questionnaire is completely voluntary. The survey software does not collect any identifying information from participants thus it is not possible for any respondent to be identified.

The survey consists of 32 rating questions in four sections:

1. The programme objectives and relevance to your role.
2. The programme content topics and relevance to your role. (You may wish to refer to DOCDM - 537719 to refresh your understanding).
3. The ability for you to transfer the programme learning in your role.
4. The outcomes for you by completing the programme.

Each section also has a place to add your comments which is highly encouraged. There is one question (Q.18) that requires a response in order to proceed.

There are also some demographic questions that will assist in analysis of correlational variables.

The questionnaire should not take more than 20 minutes to complete.

All of the material related to this survey will be kept confidential and accessible only to me.  
The information gathered will remain confidential and will not be attributed to any individual.

When responding to the questions, please answer them from your experience or perception of the programme.


It would be appreciated if you could complete the survey by 30 July 2010.

If you have any queries or concerns please contact me on (04) 471 3004 or [stully@doc.govt.nz](mailto:stully@doc.govt.nz)

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## Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai

### Conservation Leadership Development Programme (CLDP2) Survey

#### 1. Information about this survey

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If you have any queries or concerns please contact me on (04) 471 3004 or stully@doc.govt.nz

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## Conservation Leadership Development Programme (CLDP2) Survey

## 2. Relevance of Programme objectives.



These questions are asked to measure the relevance of the CLDP objectives to your role as a leader.

On a scale from 0 – 9, (where 0 = Not at all relevant and 9 = Extremely relevant), please rate how each of the prescribed LDP objectives are relevant for your role as a leader.

	0 Not at all	1	2	3 Limited	4	5	6 Obvious	7	8	9 Extremely
1. Strengthen ability to work with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Strengthen ability to influence my organisational circumstances	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Build system thinking abilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Develop greater self understanding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Embed all these skills within scope of work and organisational systems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please add any comment about the programme objectives in relation to your role as a leader.

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Conservation Leadership Development Programme (CLDP2) Survey
3. Relevance of Programme Content

43%

These questions are asked to measure the relevance of the CLDP content to your role as a leader. Please refer to DOCDM-537719 to refresh your understanding of the content that was introduced and presented in the programme.

On a scale from 0 – 9, (where 0 = Not at all relevant and 9 = Extremely relevant), please rate how relevant the content topics in the programme were for your role as a leader.

	0 Not at all	1	2	3 Limited	4	5	6 Obvious	7	8	9 Extremely
6. Engaging communication ("When – I feel – Because")	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Action learning cycle ( Conversations-questions- actions-reflections...)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Team type Management Index (TMI)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Relationship mapping (Key players, important relationships)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Boundary setting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. System dynamics (Feedback loops)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Competing commitments (Four column exercise)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. Speech acts (Declarations – Assertions – Assessments - Agreements)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Adaptive leadership (Heifetz model)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. Theory of Change (Kotter's 8 steps)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. Resilience (Self-care, physical, emotional, spiritual)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. Please add any comment on the content topics and relevance to your role:

\*18. Please list the three topics that best met the areas for you to develop in were: (Please enter at least two)

a

b

c

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## Conservation Leadership Development Programme (CLDP2) Survey

## 4. Ability to transfer the learning to your role.

57%

These questions are asked to measure the ability for you to apply the content you learned to your work/role.

On a scale of 0 – 9 (where 0 = Not at all and 9 = Extremely so) please rate how much:

	0 Not at all	1	2	3 Limited	4	5	6 Obvious	7	8	9 Extremely so
19. The programme structure and course work requirements were made clear to you.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. You were able to plan and put in steps for completing the programme requirements.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. You have had the opportunity to apply the learning/new skills in your role since the programme.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. Your programme colleagues have encouraged you to use the skills you have learned.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. Your work colleagues have encouraged you to use the skills you have learned.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24. Your staff have encouraged you to use the skills you have learned.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25. Your manager has set goals that encouraged you to use the skills you learned from the programme.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26. The resources you need to use what you learned in the training are available to you.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please comment on any factors that may have affected your ability to put into effect any skills gained from the programme into your role:

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## 5. Programme Outcome

71%

These questions are asked to measure the outcome for you by completing the CLDP.

## Outcome

On a scale of 0 – 9 (where 0 = Not at all and 9 = Extremely so)  
Please rate how much, since completing the programme, you have:

	0 Not at all	1	2	3 Limited	4	5	6 Obvious	7	8	9 Extremely so
27. Strengthened your ability to work with others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28. Strengthened your ability to influence your organisational circumstances.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
29. Built systems-thinking abilities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30. Developed greater self-understanding.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
31. Embedded all these skills within your scope of work and organisational systems.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
32. Noticed changes in your leadership behaviours and actions resulting from the programme.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please comment on any practices that you are doing differently as a result of participating in the programme:

Please give your overall comment on your CLDP experiences

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**6. Demographics**

86%

These questions will help with correlational analysis

**Gender**

☐ Male ☐ Female

**Office location**

	Area Office	Conservancy Office	Regional Office	National Office
Please select the office location that best suits your situation at the time you started the programme.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Tenure with DOC**

	<1 year	1-3 years	3-5 years	5-10 years	> 10 years
Please select the figure that gives your tenure with DOC when you started the programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Please select the figure that gives your tenure in the job position you held when you started the programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Have you completed any previous leadership development? E.g.:**

☐ People Matter ☐ Leadership Foundations ☐ Advanced Dynamics ☐ Four Quadrant Leadership ☐ Other?

Other?

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## Conservation Leadership Development Programme (CLDP2) Survey

### 7. End of survey



Thank you for completing this survey.

Throughout the project, electronic data will be kept under password protection and any printed material will be stored in locked filing cabinets.

All data will be destroyed 2 years after analysis. Results of this questionnaire will be used for reporting to Executive Leadership (ELT), however, only aggregated results will be reported, no individuals will be identified.

Following the data analysis phase, a summary of the results will be available. Please email me at [stully@doc.govt.nz](mailto:stully@doc.govt.nz) if you want a summary provided to you.

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[Done](#)

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