

## Group Documentary: The One That Got Away

### Self Reflexive

Former Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism Pallo Jordan (1998) once said: "All natural marine living resources of South Africa, as well as the environment in which they exist, are a national heritage of all South Africa's people, which should be managed and developed for the benefit of present and future generations." It is from this that our documentary stems from. "The One That Got Away" is a nature documentary that looks at the communities living in and around the Tsitsikamma National Park looking to get fishing rights in the marine protected area.

The process of putting this documentary was not an easy one. We suffered a great deal of previous setbacks before settling on doing this documentary. Our original idea fell apart at the last minute which forced us to quickly find an alternative. After a great deal of time and energy was put into the first idea, it was challenging to try and continue with that same spirit for our second idea. Yet nonetheless we went ahead with it only to discover that one group member was not committed to the idea and preferred we go with his original idea of the conflict between Tsitsikamma National Park and its surrounding coloured communities. To avoid further tension and to attempt to make up for lost time, the obvious decision was to go ahead with the Tsitsikamma story.

Perhaps the strongest aspect that this documentary has is that it touches on several news values that we took into consideration whilst gathering research. We looked at:

- continuity- the story had already been in the news and because of previous media attention, it was familiar to the public
- Personalization- the story is about events which can be portrayed as the actions of individuals thus making it human interest
- Impact- the information of the story affects a lot of people.
- Conflict- the story is about a shortage of, and competition for resources thus resulting in some kind of disagreement between several parties
- Currency- the story is on a topic a lot of people are already talking about

The end product of this documentary is not what I envisioned. I was not completely sold on the idea from the start mainly because the driving force behind this idea stemmed a great deal from the fact that the programme 50/50 wanted it done, thus the motive behind one group member putting in endless amounts of effort was purely for the financial benefits. Yet at the end of the day, I firmly believe that we placed too much responsibility on one group member mainly because he convinced us that he was keen to and that he was fully capable to take it on as director. In this sense, we are all partly to blame because the workload became too much for him and unfortunately the end product isn't a true reflection of the group.

Our roles were not rigid but the director tended to dominate and this meant that the rest of the group did a bit of everything. I could argue that there were certain aspects of the documentary that were barriers such as the Afrikaans language and my ill health that prevented me from participating fully, but in retrospect these were minor obstacles and I admit that I could have been more pro-active especially in exercising a greater deal of assertiveness and contesting some of the decisions.