

*UNSPOILED BEACHES?*  
DON'T LET DROWNING SPOIL THEM!

1

**Presentation for touristic stakeholders**

by

NPO Safe Coastal Tourism

26/10/2012

Port St Johns

# Getting acquainted

## ▶ Organizers



Caroline Danneels, Bart Verheyden,  
Lieve Verheyden and Rik Verheyden,  
= the SCT-board

Mzoxolo Patrick Qwalana, Lifeguard of  
Port St Johns Lifesaving Club, and the  
representative of SCT at the Eastern Coast

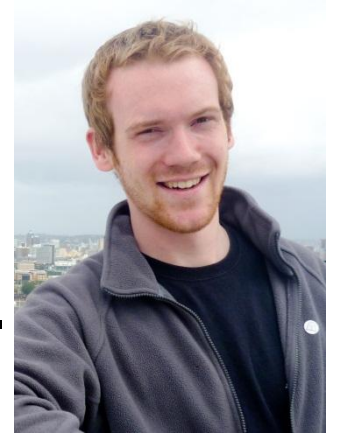
## ▶ Participants

...

What do we know?

Per year 400,000 tourists drown in the sea, worldwide, because of unawareness or underestimation of the dangers of the sea.

(<International Lifesaving Federation)



One of those victims in 2011 was BAVO.

Bart, brother of Bavo, who was with Bavo, survived the tragedy. He can testify to what happened:

*“We didn’t have the slightest idea of this kind of danger.”*

- ▶ How could this happen?
- ▶ Is it bad luck? Wrong timing? Wrong place?
- ▶ Have they been reckless?

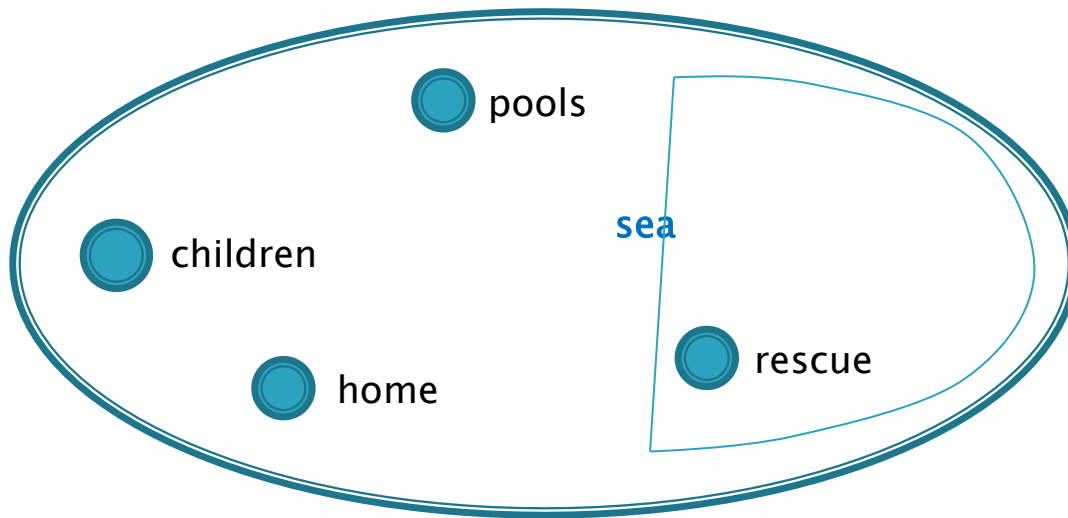
Our search for answers led to:

**Nobody or nothing spoke against their plan**  
to have a nice little swim in that big ocean.

HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE?

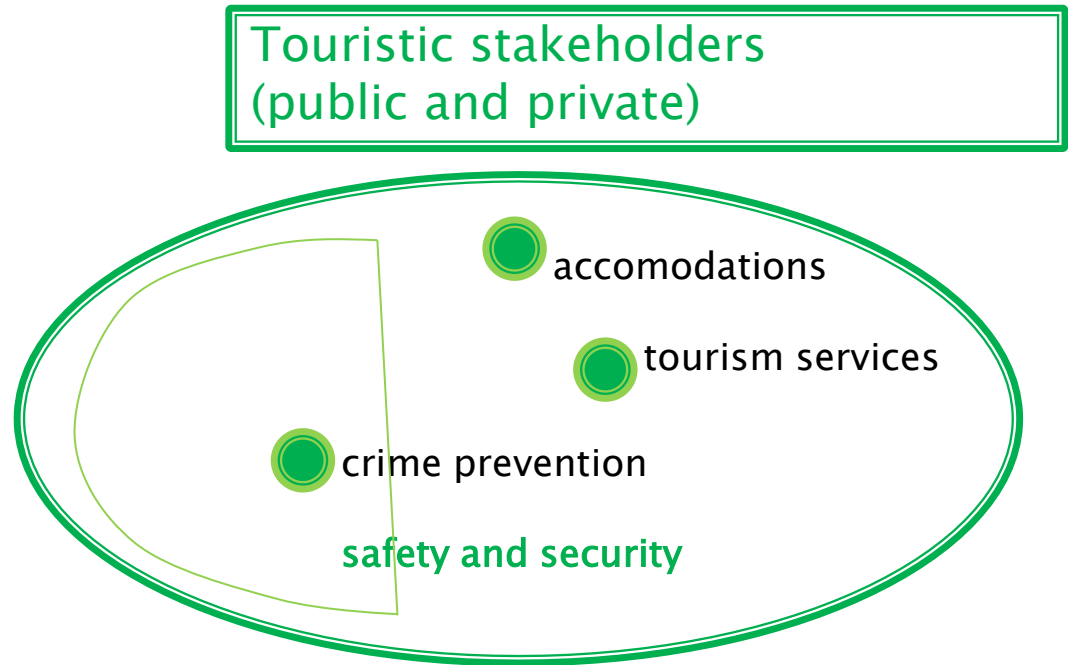
# HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE?

Prevention of drowning



A LOT OF EFFORTS >  
Lifesaving South Africa, NSRI

# HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE?



A LOT OF EFFORTS >  
Brochures, Newspaper  
Travel guidebooks

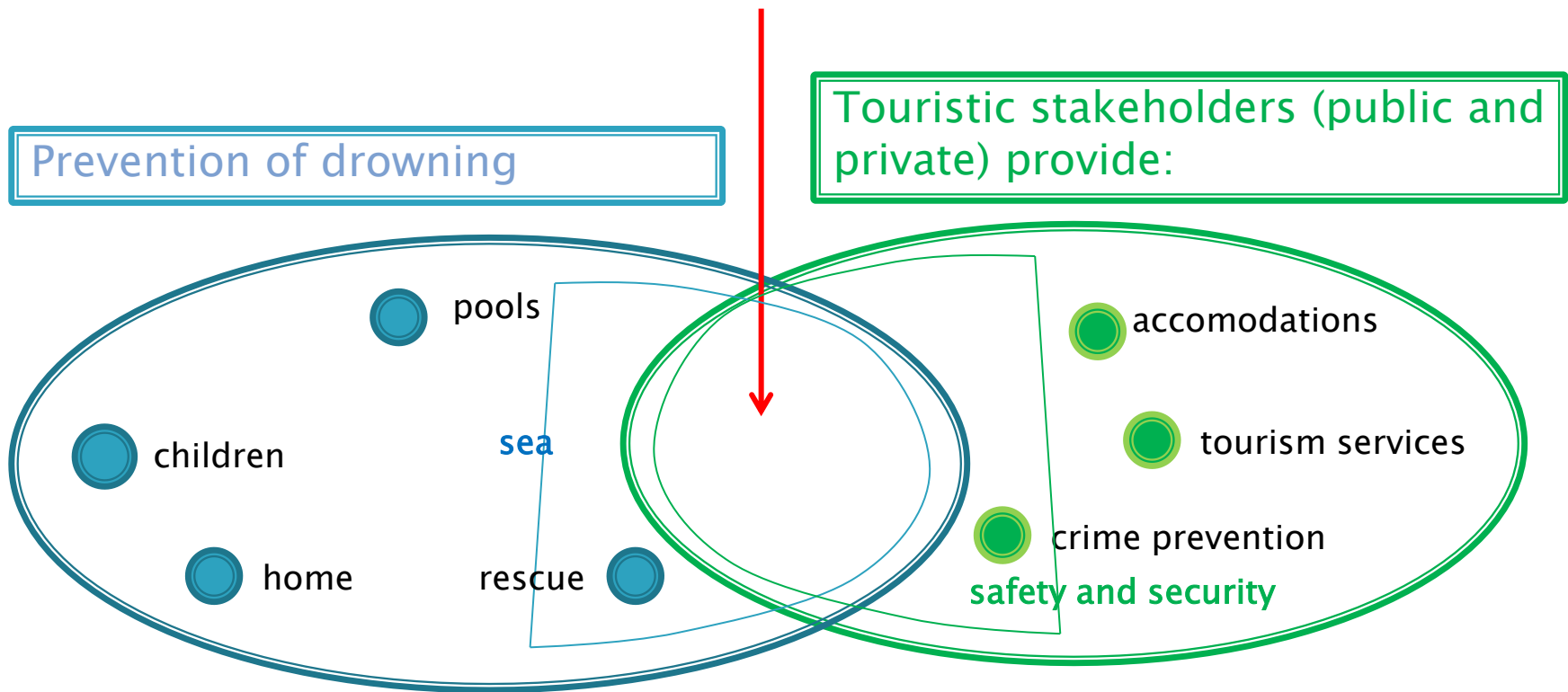
# Touristic stakeholders: who?

- National governments,
- Local governments with specific competence in tourism matters;
- Tourism establishments and tourism enterprises, including their associations;
- Institutions engaged in financing tourism projects;
- Tourism employees, tourism professionals and tourism consultants;
- Trade unions of tourism employees;
- Tourism education and training centers;
- Travelers, including business travelers, and visitors to tourism destinations, sites and attractions;
- Local populations and host communities at tourism destinations through their representatives;
- Other juridical and natural persons having stakes in tourism development including non-governmental organizations specializing in tourism and directly involved in tourism projects and the supply of tourism services.



# Lack of mutual interest

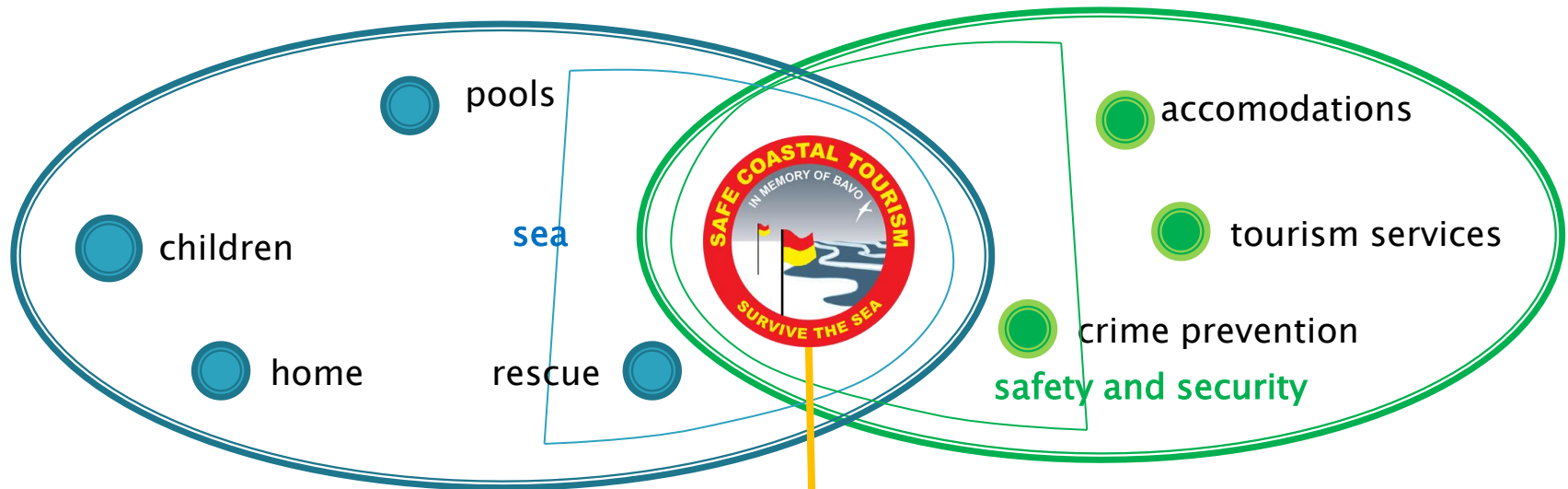
## Lack of common awareness



# The appeal of

Prevention of drowning

Touristic stakeholders (public and private) provide:



Efforts from both sectors are combined to fight against ocean drowning of tourists



is supported by

Prevention of drowning

International  
Lifesaving Federation  
(ILS)

Lifesaving  
South Africa

Touristic stakeholders (public and private) provide:

United Nations World  
Tourism Organization  
(UNWTO)

South Africa is member  
of UNWTO



What do we do? What should be done?

**FIRST**

Prevention of **the risk** of drowning!



How do we do that? How can it be done?

By providing tourists with honest and objective information

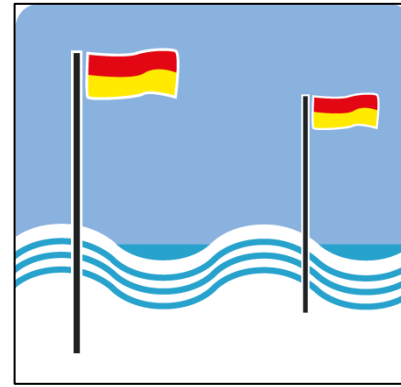
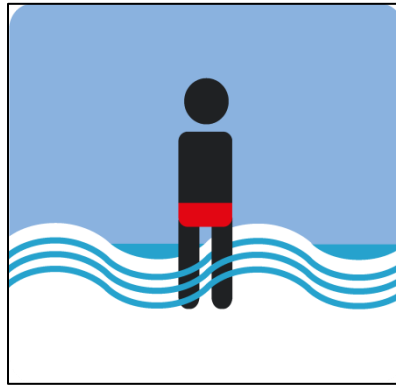
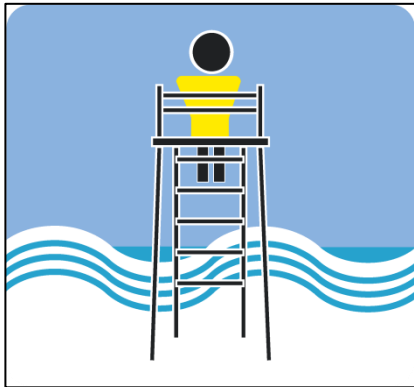
*Global Code of Ethics on Tourism*

*Article 1 (public sector)*

*Article 6 (private sector)*

United Nations World Tourism Organization

# What is the message?



Only go to patrolled beaches!

Stay knee deep!

Always keep between the red and yellow flags!

If no lifeguard, stay out!



## Further information on

Rip currents

Tides

High waves

Back wash

Shark attacks

...

**Honest, Complete, Accurate, Uniform,**  
**Not misleading, not provoking**



# Where should the message be spread?

**Repetition** of the message supports efficiency!

- All the way from home to the beach.
- By all stakeholders.
- Making use of diverse media (cf. diversity among travelers)
  - website (see example)
  - signage (cf. our action)
  - video
  - flyers and posters (idem)
  - travel guides
  - oral information





# EXAMPLE of GOOD PRACTICE: WEBSITE

## Port St Johns and sharks

Submitted by Andre (not verified) on Mon, 2012-03-12 16:46.

Be aware that the entire Wild Coast is subject to intense shark activity. There's two damn good reasons why indigenous inhabitants of the coast historically avoided the water, unlike the heavy coastal utilization up the African east coast: (1) rip currents prevailing in an area where the coastal shelf plunges abruptly, and very close to land; and (2) sharks.

Port St Johns has acquired the mis-

share of global shark

Wild Coast

work

work

been

prey (see

bite - a big bite.

was in a gentle little estuary

(mauled and churned into blood) was in knee-deep water. That's right: knee-deep, out of the surf.

Stay ankle deep, hit the pools, or just admire the view and the environment. The sea is really not for swimming.

What's to do? Stay ankle deep, hit the pools, or just admire the view and the environment. The sea is really not for swimming.

# ANOTHER EXAMPLE of GOOD PRACTICE

Inspired by 



Bluewater Bay Surf Lifesaving  
(Port Elizabeth – D. Bamber)

= Prevention Programme,  
*not* specifically targeted at tourists

- ▶ Newspapers, websites
- ▶ Educational programme for disadvantaged children
- ▶ Mobile boards placed on the beach

What do we do? What should be done?

## SECOND

A dialogue between tourism and  
experts on beach safety

# EXAMPLE of GOOD PRACTICE

## Clean Blue Med Program

(Peter Myles,

- ▶ Chairman of the Eastern Cape Coastal Route Association (ECCRA)
- ▶ Steering Committee member of the International Coastal & Marine Tourism Society (ICMTS))

= beach management including beach safety education and information, signage, access and zoning, supervision and rescue and beach facilities

→ Tourism “shakes hands” to beach (safety) experts in the interest of growth and development (= economical interest)

# ANOTHER EXAMPLE of GOOD PRACTICE

Our meeting of today:

- ▶ Presence of Mzoxolo Patrick Qwalana in this meeting (Life Saving South Africa) and all the efforts he put into this meeting
- ▶ Your presence and willingness to discuss the matter with us

Time for questions,  
discussion, suggestions!

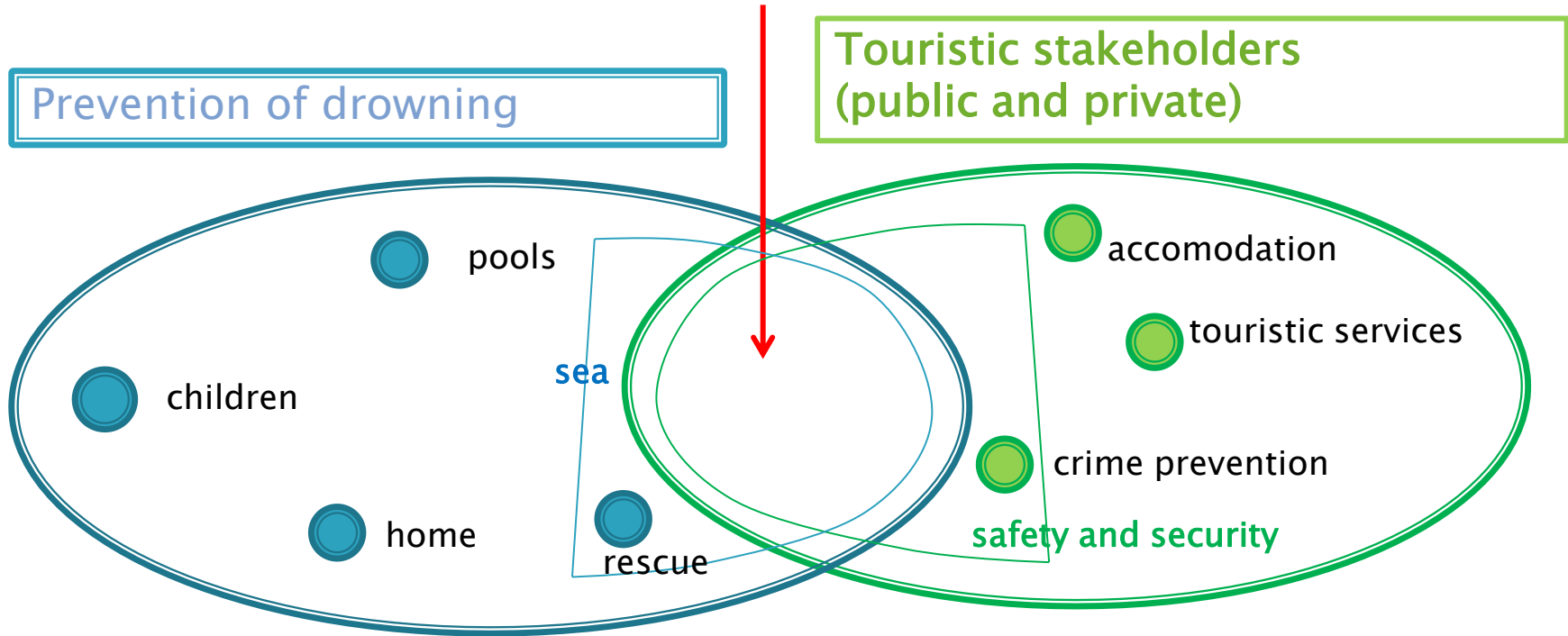
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**Presentation for the press**  
by  
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Port St Johns

# Lack of mutual interest

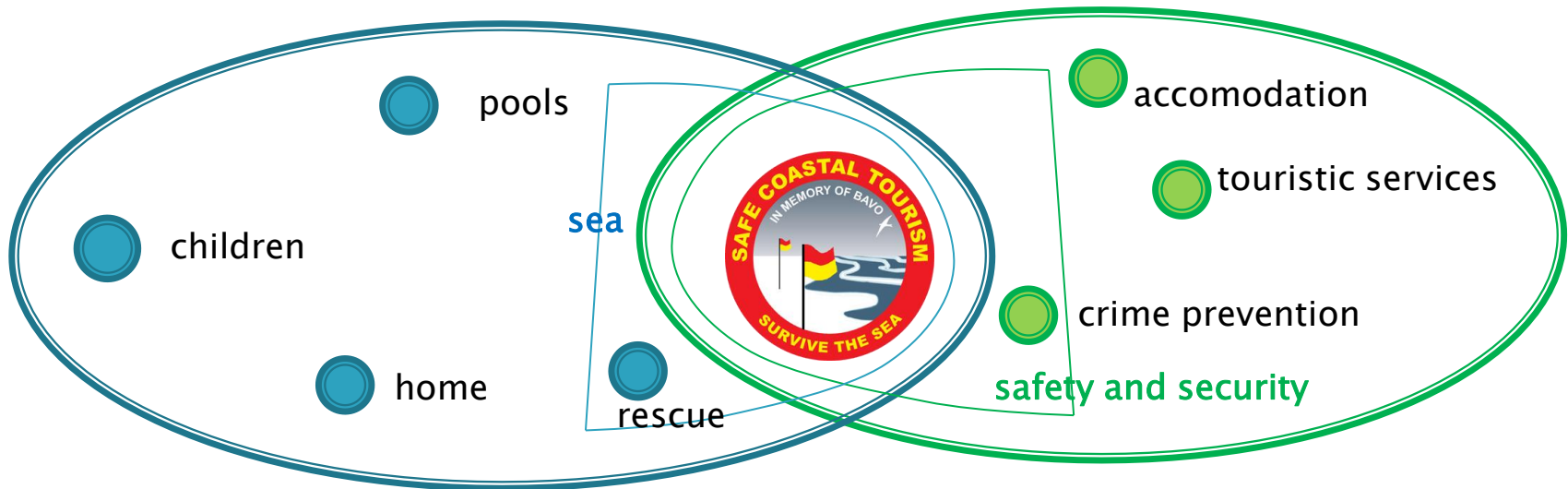
## Lack of common awareness



# The appeal of our NPO

Prevention of drowning

Touristic stakeholders  
(public and private)







Belgian NPO

Bavo's (21) drowning  
April, 18th, 2011

Coastal tourism and  
(ocean) water safe

Beach Safety  
Education

Prevention of  
risk of  
drowning



is supported by

Prevention of drowning

International  
Lifesaving Federation  
(ILS)

Lifesaving  
South Africa

Touristic stakeholders (public and private) provide:

United Nations World  
Tourism Organization  
(UNWTO)

South Africa is member  
of UNWTO

# Our Strategic Goals

1. Build the capacity to reduce coastal drowning
2. Establish a centre of expertise
3. Reduce coastal drowning through the dissemination of uniformed, honest and complete information
4. Reduce coastal drowning through partnership and collaboration

# Our Actions

## Studying the worldwide phenomenon of holiday drowning

1. Scientific Literature
2. Conferences
3. Networking with experts in the field
  - e.g. International Life Saving
  - Lifesaving Australia
  - Irish Lifesaving Foundation

### Results:

- leaflets, folders, signage according to worldwide standards
- scientifically correct travel advise focusing on coastal drowning risks

# Meetings with touristic stakeholders

1. Public (administrators and politicians) and private,
2. In Belgium and South–Africa (from local to national level)

## Result:

- the spreading of the above mentioned ocean safety advise (see also the next slide)
- sensitizing the touristic professionals

## Expected Result:

- installation of a legal duty of information on a local/regional/national level

TO ALL ORGANISATIONS CONCERNED WITH TRAVEL AND TOURISM IN SOUTH AFRICA,  
Please add the following safety advice regarding “Swimming in the oceans around South Africa” to your brochures, website, travel documents, ... :

#### Swimming in the Oceans around South Africa

Utmost care should be taken when swimming in the oceans around South Africa.

Alongside the South African coast treacherous currents such as rip currents and unexpectedly high waves can drag swimmers into dangerous situations, often followed by near-drowning or fatal drowning.

So called rip currents come to live in a trench between sandbars, which can be described as a powerful, narrow channel full of fast-moving water running perpendicular to the beach, out into the ocean, sweeping swimmers and surfers away from the beach. In South Africa's coastal areas there is also a risk of shark attacks.

The risks of shark attacks and of treacherous currents can only be located by trained beach lifeguards, not by unaware beachgoers even if they are experienced swimmers. Therefore it is strongly advised to swim only where lifeguards are operating, and to avoid going into the water at desolate and unguarded beaches.

A swimmer caught in a rip current should not attempt to swim back to shore directly against the current. This would result in exhaustion and drowning. The swimmer should remain calm and swim parallel to the shore until he is outside of the current. Then the swimmer can swim at a leisurely pace, in a diagonal direction, away from the rip and back to shore. But be aware that this technique sounds easier than it is in reality.

15/8/2012

Approved by Secretary General of the International Lifesaving Federation Dr. H. Vervaecke

# Contact with the UNWTO

1. Studywork on UN-directions as far as tourism is concerned
2. A meeting with the secretary-general, Mr. Thaleb Rifai
3. A presentation at The World Committee on Tourism Ethics (Rome, July 2012)

## Result:

- letter of support by Mr. Thaleb Rifai (see the next slide)
- the UNWTO's appeal to join efforts for *Safe Coastal Tourism* (press release, July 2012)

## Expected result:

- installation of a legal duty of information on a local/regional/national level



# Support letter by Secretary-General of UNWTO Mr. Thaleb Rifai





# Press release UNWTO

## World Committee on Tourism Ethics calls for Safe Coastal Tourism

**PR No.:** PR 12046

Rome

Madrid

13 Jul 12

*The Eleventh Meeting of the World Committee on Tourism Ethics has closed with calls to make "Safe Coastal Tourism" a priority in coastal destinations worldwide (Rome, Italy, 12-13 July,).*

The Committee heard from invited guest, Caroline Danneels, founder of the non-profit organization "Safe Coastal Tourism", on the importance of safety precautions at beaches and marinas across the globe. Based in the Flemish Community of Belgium, the organization works to raise awareness of the crucial need for adequate safety measures and the provision of accurate information to tourists to prevent often fatal accidents at coastal sites. Committee members drew particular attention to the need for safety warnings, in the form of signs and flags, to alert visitors to dangerous conditions, and the absolute necessity of life-guards and life-buoys to aid in rescues, even during tourist "low-season".

<http://media.unwto.org/en/press-release/2012-07-13/world-committee-tourism-ethics-calls-safe-coastal-tourism>

# Contact with European Advertising Standards Alliance

1. Studying the problem of **false advertising** (on holiday destinations)

Expected result:

- a standard on honest advertising, as far as coastal tourism is concerned

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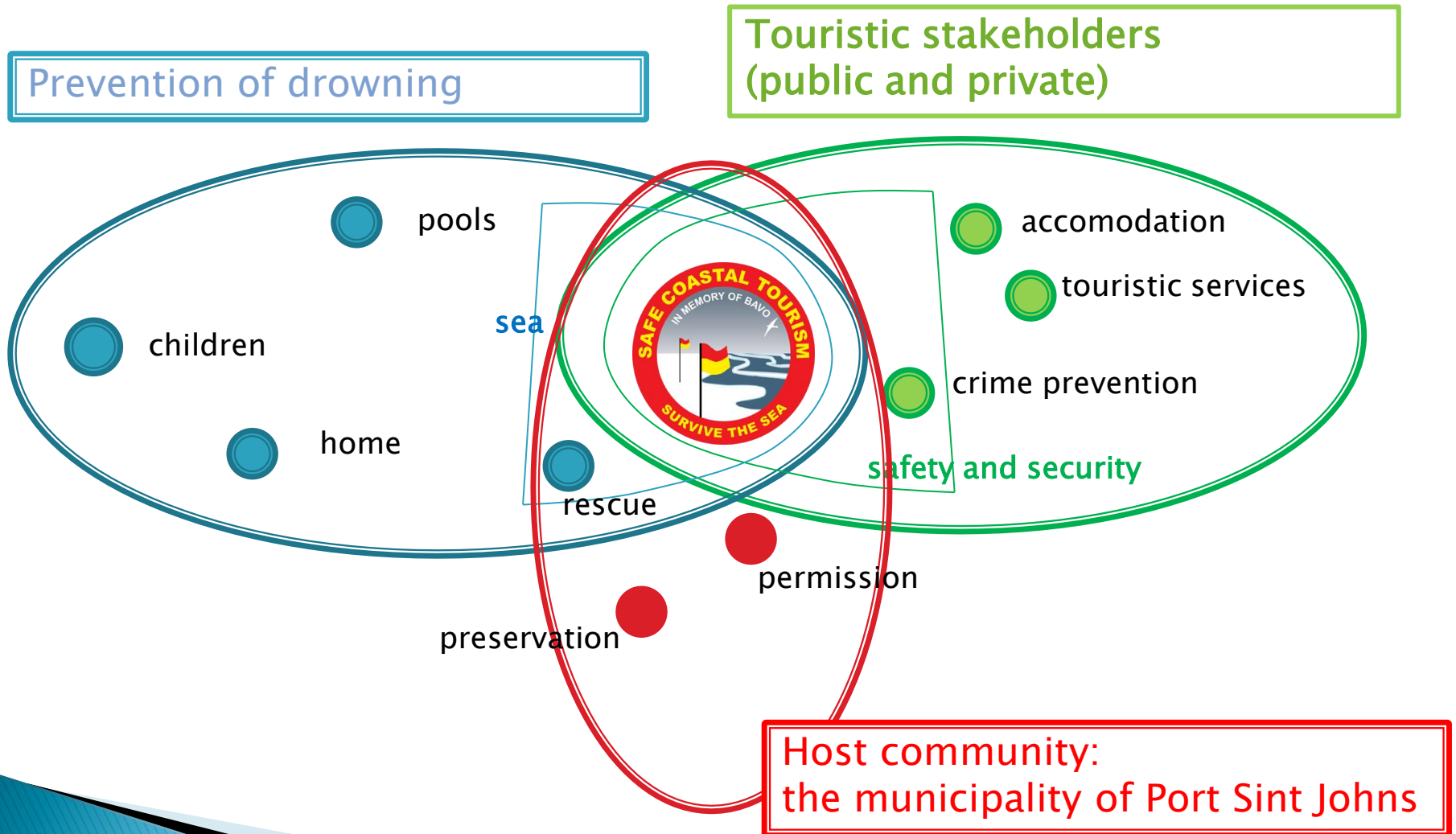
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Port St Johns project

27/10/2012

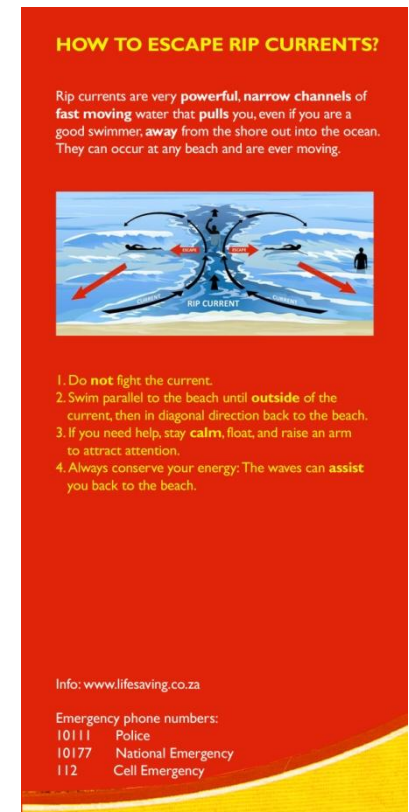
Port St Johns

# Our NPO in a local project



# Project design (1)

- ▶ Provision of information pamphlets
  - To tourism offices
  - To resort owners, Lifesaving, Municipalities

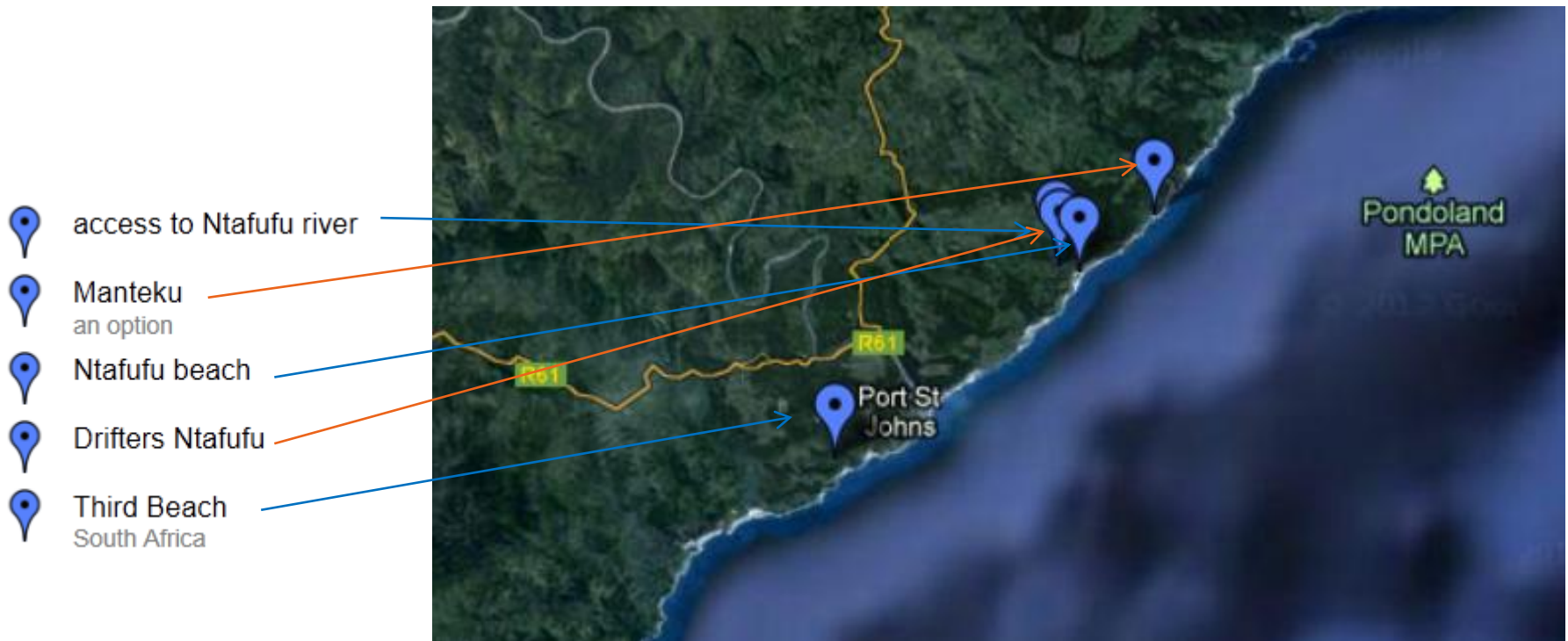


# Project design (2)

- ▶ Five safety signage boards on beaches in Port St Johns
  - As a (symbolic) pilot project
  - In accordance with ILS guidelines
  - Completely covered by the NPO funds







The two remaining signage boards will probably set up at:

- Manteku
- Drifters Ntafufu



## Access Ntafufu river





## Ntafufu beach





## Third beach in Port St Johns

# Contact details

- ▶ Mzoxolo Patrick Qwalana,
  - Lifeguard of Port St Johns Lifesaving Club
  - local representative of the NPO SAFE COASTAL TOURISM
  - TEL 0723234067 or 0784303504
- ▶ NPO head office
  - [info@safecoastaltourism.org](mailto:info@safecoastaltourism.org)
  - E.Ruelensvest 99, 3001 Louvain, Belgium, Europe
  - Mobile: 0032 498 743 043
- ▶ Website: [www.safecoastaltourism.org](http://www.safecoastaltourism.org)