

ANNE TÖRN-LAAPIO ED.

SPECIAL ISSUES IN RESPONSIBLE TOURISM



Special Issues in Responsible Tourism

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ANNE TÖRN-LAAPIO (ED.)

Special Issues in Responsible Tourism

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Anne Törn-Laapio (Ed.)

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ABSTRACT

Anne Törn-Laapio (ED.)

Special Issues in Responsible Tourism

(Publications of JAMK University of Applied Sciences, 263)

It is commonly known that tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world. Tourism at its best has positive economic impacts on target area, e.g. by tourism income, jobs and diversity of regional economy. Also local self-esteem and comfort of living, as well as the image of the region may improve. On the other hand, tourism may limit regional economy, seasonality of the industry may increase, prices of products and services may rise, traditional means of livelihood may suffer. The major concerns are tourism-related ecological detrimental effects, e. g. effects on climate, soil, water and ice conditions, vegetation and fauna. Many sectors in many countries have started to promote responsible and sustainable tourism through research. This requires multidisciplinary research and proactive planning and cooperation between different actors.

The publication combines a wide range of studies conducted in Europe and also presents practical solutions to develop responsible tourism. Part 1 deals with examples of platforms and networks for developing responsible tourism in Finland and part 2 introduces research articles presented at the Four Seasons and Responsibility - The 12th International Conference on Responsible Tourism in Destinations – ICRT conference in Jyväskylä.

Keywords: tourism business, tourism industry, sustainable tourism, responsible tourism, tourism research, tourism development

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Jyväskylä, 2 February 2019
Anne Törn-Laapio

FOREWORD

Back in 2002, we had recently concluded a programme of work with AITO, the Association of Independent Tour Operators in the UK and some work with the South African government on Responsible Tourism Guidelines to assist in implementing their national post-apartheid tourism policy. With the World Summit on Sustainable Development taking place in Johannesburg that year, twenty years after Rio. The 1st International Conference on Responsible Tourism in Destinations took place in Cape Town, and the International Centre for Responsible Tourism we founded.

We realised that if the objectives of sustainable tourism were to be achieved then all those involved need to take their share of the responsibility to achieve sustainability. It was also clear that while some issues did arise in many destinations priorities varied and if partnerships were to be established to secure change, then it was important to focus on the issues which mattered locally as well as on the two global issues: greenhouse gas emissions and plastics. Global in that pollution created locally has a global impact through climate change, and once plastics enter rivers, they end in gyros of waste in the oceans - and enter our food chain.

Responsible Tourism and sustainable tourism are not the same thing. Sustainability is the aspiration or objective, it is a vague concept and inherently difficult to define operationally. Responsible Tourism, by contrast, focusses on the action taken to make tourism better, what is done by government, industry, community organisations, NGOs and individuals to address the issues which arise in particular places. The best short definition of Responsible Tourism is creating or making “better places for people to live in and for people to visit.” (The Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism in Destinations 2002.) The order is important as is the imperative to action.

As Jost Krippendorf, the father of Responsible Tourism pointed out in his seminal work, *The Holiday Makers* to achieve a better form of tourism we need a ‘rebellious tourists and rebellious locals’. In his view “Orders and prohibitions will not do the job – because it is not a bad conscience that we need to make progress but positive experience, not the feeling of compulsion but that of responsibility’. (Krippendorf 1987.)

In Cape Town in 2002 delegates from 20 countries, including the WTO and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), discussed the variety

of ways in which producers, consumers and government or regulators had sought to take responsibility for achieving, or at least making real progress toward achieving, sustainability. The concepts of responsibility and respect played a central role in the formation of the founding principles of Responsible Tourism. The UNWTO Global Code of Ethics makes several references to 'responsible and sustainable tourism' and affirms in Article 1: '... an attitude of tolerance and respect for the diversity of religious, philosophical and moral beliefs, are both the foundation and the consequence of Responsible Tourism...' (WTO 1989.)

The Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism identified seven areas of focus. Responsible Tourism seeks, as locally appropriate, to:

- Minimise negative economic, environmental, and social impacts and to maximise positive ones.
- Generate greater economic benefits for local people and enhance the well-being of host communities, improve working conditions and access to the industry.
- Engage local people, alongside other stakeholders, in decisions that affect their lives and life chances.
- Ensure that tourism, the industry and the consumers, makes positive contributions to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage and the maintenance of the world's diversity.
- Provide more enjoyable, authentic, experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people, and ensure that they gain a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues.
- Provide access for people with disabilities and the disadvantaged.

Since the first International Conference of Responsible Tourism in Destinations in 2002, there have been 14 RTD conferences in Cape Town, Kerala, Belize, Oman, Canada, Brazil, London, Barcelona, Manchester, Ireland, Mallorca, Cape Town, Finland, Iceland and Plymouth in 2017. Each has reflected local priorities as the conferences are used to establish multi-stakeholder partnerships encouraging producers, consumers and governments, the destination managers, to take responsibility to create better places for people to live in and for people to visit. (ICRT 2019.)

The conferences have attracted a wide range of stakeholders from business – hoteliers, inbound and outbound operators, guides and consultants – from national and local government, DMOs and marketers, community groups

and the media. The conferences have also attracted those academics who value engagement with the industry and with governments. Those academics who share a commitment for practical engagement are a significant minority. Only the academics present papers and are willing to consider publication in proceedings. The publication of papers has not been a priority for participants in the Responsible Tourism in Destinations conference series.

This then is an unusual collection of papers, colleagues from the JAMK University of Applied Sciences have with colleagues from Finland put together the Special Issues in Responsible Tourism which reflects the contributions of engaged academics at RTD12 in Finland. The papers reflect the broad range of issues which arise in just two Scandinavian countries with much in common.

Blinnikka and Grönroos address overtourism and the impact of the rapid growth of tourism in Iceland and Finland; Iceland's nature is particularly delicate, and its territory is small compared to that of Finland. In Finland, tourism impacts on the Sami people and their culture are cause for concern. Holopainen and Maukonen point to the links between the Finnish way of life, food, design, architecture and the creative industries and the cultural tourism strategy, regional development and the importance of localness in co-created cultural tourism routes, concluding that as 'regional developers, universities of applied sciences have to stay vigilant and encourage actors and stakeholders to co-operate.'

Tunkkari-Eskelinen writes about the initiative to have Lake Päijänne designed as a Biosphere Reserve and the work of students at JAMK on its tourism degree programme in researching the opinions of both small businesses and the municipalities around Lake Päijänne and makes a case for more engaged by JAMK and securing further funding to develop the project.

Seppelin, Blinnikka and Törn-Laapio, discuss the development of responsibility in tourism and link it with the 2007 UN initiative to establish Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) (The Principles for Responsible Management Education 2018) and the development of the International Centre for Responsible Tourism movement, the establishment of the ICRT Finland at RTD 12 and its subsequent activities developing a Responsible Tourism Toolkit hosted on the Visit Finland website (ICRT 2019).

Ólafsdóttir, Sæþórsdóttir, Noordhuizen & Nijkraake consider the challenges of planning sustainable;e leisure landscapes to take account of the interests of rural communities in the Arctic through holistic land use planning and zoning. As is so often the case, land use planners too often fail to plan in ways which will effectively manage tourists — their case study of Skaftárhreppur in the south of Iceland revealing a lack of balance between the area's landscape

sensitivity and its current recreational use. They point to the absence of a zoning plan and well designed and site infrastructure as major contributors to the overtourism occurring there.

Runnström and Ólafsdóttir ask whether recreational hiking is responsible, pointing to trampling impacts, the widening of trails, root exposure, damage and removal of vegetation and severe soil erosion. Their field research uses experimental plots in Þingvellir National Park. They found that hikers using hiking sticks have more impact on the soil surface profile. They conclude that managing tourism in sensitive ecosystem area requires both careful management and educating tourists about how to minimise their impact.

Nikkola considered off-season activities at tourism resorts in Lapland and under-researched topic. Nikkola discovered that most of the summer visitors are independent domestic tourists. Salenius writes about Base Camp Oulanka which began in 1998 as a more responsible alternative to a skiing centre. Väisänen & Törn-Laapio report on factors influencing sustainability performance in micro-sized rural tourism enterprises, identifying stakeholder pressure as the most significant factor in driving the development sustainability.

Seidel writes about sourcing and using local food products in a destination to enhance a sustainable tourism value chain, considering the experiential, environmental and economic value to local food in tourism, pointing to the importance of local food to responsible tourism. Hauvala, Heikkilä & Pölkki similarly point to the importance of short food supply chains and the relationship between local food production and consumption and social capital. As they point out, entrepreneurs rarely remember to communicate the history, availability and value of local food to the tourists.

Responsible Tourism addresses a broad range of economic, social and environmental issues which arise in destinations in our diverse world. There is much to do.

Harold Goodwin
ICRT & Responsible Tourism Partnership
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CHAPTER
1

The platforms for promoting
responsible tourism in Finland

SUSTAINABLE DESTINATION FINLAND – OVERVIEW ON CURRENT ISSUES

Petra Blinnikka & Leena Grönroos

Overtourism shakes tourism and destinations around the world – but what about Finland? This phenomenon has become a hot issue especially in international media. In academia, however, this phenomenon has been researched for the last few decades, but the term overtourism has rarely been used. Sustainable tourism, limits of growth and carrying capacity are only a few examples of the research that has occurred within the theme. This text aims to give an overview on the phenomenon and discusses current issues in Finland related to overtourism.

In practice, overtourism describes destinations where the people, whether hosts or guests, or locals or visitors, feel that there are too many visitors and that the quality of life in the area or the quality of the experience has deteriorated to an unacceptable level. It is the opposite of Responsible Tourism, which is about using tourism to make better places for people to live in and better places for people to visit. (Goodwin 2017.)

Milano, Cheer & Novelli (2018) define overtourism “as the excessive growth of visitors leading to overcrowding in areas where residents suffer the consequences of temporary and seasonal tourism peaks, which have enforced permanent changes to their lifestyles, access to amenities and general well-being.” Overtourism is a very complex phenomenon which is often extremely simplified. It is not a challenge that can be solved easily. Many destinations suffering from overtourism are also very dependent on tourism economically. Those destinations are the ones that every tourist wants to experience; tourists are loving such destinations to death. Cities’ public spaces are crowded by visitors to the extent that locals cannot live their ordinary lives anymore. Furthermore, the cost of living gets higher, with rental apartments in particular becoming unavailable for locals as it is more profitable for the owners to rent them at a steeper price for short-term visitors.

Iceland can be used as an example of how fast-growing tourism flows may affect a destination. Less than ten years ago, the Stopover campaign, the ash cloud and advanced air routes increased Iceland’s reputation as a tourism destination. Thought leaders like National Geographic and Lonely Planet added Iceland to the bucket list (Yle 2017).

Just recently, the same trend has been visible in Finland. The number of tourists has grown rapidly and flight connections especially to Lapland have increased. International travel to Finland broke all previous records in 2017. Nights spent by foreign tourists grew by more than 813,000 nights and came to a total of 6.6 million. (Visit Finland 2018a.) Many trends favour Finland's travel industry at the moment. Excessive tourism in some of Europe's top destinations has become a major issue and left many travellers in search of new, safe destinations. Also, as people move to big cities, Finland's uniqueness – easily accessible wilderness, open spaces, peace and quiet– becomes more meaningful for travellers. (Visit Finland 2018b.) In July 2017, it was reported that tourism growth in Finland is the largest in Europe after Iceland (Soisalon-Soininen 2017). During the first half of 2018, the rapid growth has reversed, but the travel and tourism industry in Finland is working hard to guarantee the industry's growth in the future. We still have low seasons and open spaces to attract visitors, but at the same time the high season is sold out in the most wanted regions. International tour operators are asking for more supplies for visitors, with huskys and reindeers being the most popular activities (Pesonen 2018).

The number of tourists in Iceland has increased by almost 30 per cent annually. This means that there are seven times the number of tourists compared to the population of the country. Such growth has led to the erosion of nature, congestion and rising prices. Both residents and tourists are dissatisfied. The so-called tourismphobia, the irritation of local residents towards tourists and tourism, begins when tourism has a negative impact on their lives. On the other hand, tourism has become an important part of the Icelandic economy and there is a desire for the benefits of economic growth to be sustained. (Sigurdardottir 2017.)

In Finland, some signs of the impact of tourism on the daily lives of local people can be found in Rovaniemi. The housing situation in Rovaniemi has been discussed in the media, as it is changing in a challenging direction for the locals on account of apartment buildings being increasingly rented out to tourists for short stays (Nevalainen 2018). The same phenomenon can also be seen in big cities like London and Barcelona – in the latter, the locals have protested strongly against the downsides of tourism (Overtourism in Barcelona 2018).

We must remember that there are differences between Iceland and Finland. Iceland's nature is particularly delicate, and the country's size in relation to tourist volumes is very low. Finland's surface area, on the other hand, is considerably bigger, so the circumstances are different. However, we should

anticipate the phenomenon of tourism growth and learn about the difficult situation in Iceland and other destinations affected by overtourism.

Iceland's example demonstrates the importance of inbound routes for managing tourist flows. The City of Reykjavik has a strong interest in contributing to the development of tourism through the Keflavik airport. In Finland, this is also an issue which should be considered in destination planning. Individual companies can carry out their business responsibly and commit their customers to making responsible choices. Instead, the management of tourist flows should be done at the tourism destination level, in co-operation with local businesses and tour operators.

The main principle of responsible tourism is to use tourism to make better places for people to live in and better places for people to visit (The Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism 2002). We know that the hospitality of the local population, as well as the attractions and services of nature and culture, is a cornerstone of the tourist attraction. If local well-being is weakened by the development of irresponsible tourism, both tourists and the tourism business will suffer.

Good work is already being done in Finland. There have been several development projects regarding sustainable and responsible tourism in different regions in Finland. At the national level, responsibility has already been factored in the tourism strategy for some time. The national tourism organisation, Visit Finland, has taken an active role in sustainable tourism development in Finland. Information has been available for businesses on Visit Finland's home page for a longer period of time, and sustainability is one criterion in the best tourism product of the year awards (Visit Finland 2018c.)

The work towards sustainability will be strengthened even more with the two-year-long 'Sustainable arctic destination' project. This project directs destinations, businesses and local residents, as well as tour operators and visitors, towards sustainability. Businesses will be offered sustainable tourism trainings in which all the aspects of sustainability will be considered. Furthermore, tour operators will be given information about sustainable tourism behaviour in Finland – the information that they are expected to share with their customers. (Visit Finland 2018b.) The ICRT Finland (International Centre for Responsible Tourism) network is also working actively, especially by sharing information and organising events and education within the theme. Together with Visit Finland, ICRT Finland is also compiling a responsible tourism toolkit for tourism companies.

Visitors to Finland - and also domestic visitors - are very attracted by the Sami people and their culture. This unique heritage has been misused in travel

and tourism for many years. At long last, the ethical guidelines for using Sami culture in travel and tourism were published in autumn 2018 (Saamelaiskäräjät 2018). It is a good starting point for a new era in tourism in Finland. However, these guidelines have to be communicated very effectively in order for stakeholders to make changes in tourism business behaviour.

All in all, the objective of Visit Finland is to turn Finland into a sustainable destination. Individual destinations are able to achieve their own sustainable destination labels as soon as the sustainable destination label criteria have been formed. Co-operation is the key to success. Together we are able to achieve this objective and make Finland into an even better place for people to visit and live in. It means that service providers and DMOs, associations such as the ICRT (International Centre for Responsible Tourism), travel and tourism education, and Visit Finland all take responsibility in their work.

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RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURE-BASED TOURISM SERVICES IN CENTRAL FINLAND

Mari Holopainen & Annamari Maukonen

The main aim of the article is to point out how local businesses and people are involved and activated in developing local services in the context of cultural tourism in Central Finland. In this article, we explore the role of universities of applied sciences in this process. We also address the questions of locality and sustainability in cultural tourism.

From a global perspective, important goals of sustainable development include, among other issues, “devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism which creates jobs, promotes local culture and products” (The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030 2018). International organisations like UNWTO and OECD (2005) have aligned local culture, interaction and networking, among other things, as important areas of development in cultural tourism. The Finnish way of life, food, design, architecture and creative industry are highlighted in the Development Strategy for Culture Tourism 2014-2018 (Visit Finland 2014) as primary themes of cultural tourism development. By developing cultural tourism can increase income and both cultural and social acknowledgement to destinations. These development actions create dialogue and both bring resources and protect cultural heritage and nature. Increasing the local awareness of local culture is important in promoting cultural tourism (Saarinen 2006).

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION

From the local communities' point of view the impacts of tourism on social issues (such as permanent employment, services and standard of living) are highly important. If local residents do not experience the benefits from tourism, they may become passive in development actions and grow negative attitude. According to Saarinen (2017) Butler, Hall and Jenkins (1998) likewise justify the development of tourism in rural areas. Tourism brings income for businesses and actors outside the actual tourism economy. Rural tourism involves local people and actors in regional development and co-operation. It saves services that otherwise would not have enough demand and encourages the appreciation and protection of cultural heritage. According to BusinessDictionary (n.d.)

“economic sustainability involves using the assorted assets of the company efficiently to allow it to continue functioning profitably over time”. On the other hand, UNWTO and UNEP (2015) refines the definition from the point of view of sustainable tourism “Tourism should ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities”.

It is typical for tourism to base its actions on short-term economic thinking, centralised decision-making and actors outside the destination. In the framework of sustainable development, the aim has to be long-term profitability. However, harmony between the visitors, host and destination requires the involvement of the communities at every stage of development: planning, development and management (Hall, Kirkpatrick & Mitchell 2005). From a socio-cultural sustainability point of view, the benefits have to be divided equally and fairly, and local values and practices should be respected.

LOCALITY AND AUTHENTICITY ARE IMPORTANT VALUES

There is an increasing demand for authenticity and experiential travel. This contributes to growth of locally run tours, restaurants and shopping locations. Tourists appreciate meeting local people, hearing the local dialect and being a part of the community. Interestingly according to Saarinen (2017), the problem between tourism development and local community is not in the interaction, but who produces the locality and on whose. According to Liu’s critique (2003), the challenge of co-operation is that several stakeholders have contradictory thoughts and goals concerning tourism development. Still, successful and sustainable tourism development involves various government departments, public and private sector companies, experts and community groups. UNWTO (2018) emphasises that the development should be a continuous process with a constant monitoring of impacts.

CASE EXAMPLES OF DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES

The themes of sustainable tourism development and community involvement have been included in several development projects lead by JAMK University of Applied Sciences and Humak University of Applied Sciences.

CASE 1: THE WORLD HERITAGE SITES' BOOST TO LOCAL SERVICES

The World Heritage Sites' boost to local services project is a three-year project (2016-2019) in Central Finland co-ordinated by Humak. The goal is to bring together local residents, organisations and businesses to develop co-operation and find out how the World Heritage Brand can boost the local services and marketing of the region. This project aims to attract more people to the World Heritage Sites in Central Finland and above all strengthen the regional economy. (Humak 2018).

Finland has one natural and six cultural Unesco World Heritage Sites, and two of them are in Central Finland. The Petäjävesi Old Church is a typical example of architectural tradition that is unique to eastern Scandinavia. The vernacular wooden church has survived in its original form extremely well. The Struve Geodetic Arc is a chain of survey triangulations stretching from Hammerfest in Norway to the Black Sea, through 10 countries and over 2,820 km. One point of the Struve Arc, Puolakka, is located at the top of Oravivuori in Korpilahti. These two Central Finland Unesco sights are located close to each other, only 50 kilometers apart. However, to visitors the distance seems much longer. Only very few Struve visitors will visit Petäjävesi Old Church or vice versa.

Local people are the best boosters of local attractions when they are involved in the process. How to involve local entrepreneurs? How to build a new product? How to create a route or tour for tourists, based on local services and products? These questions are discussed in the Cultural and Heritage Tourism Development Guide (2014, 47). The main suggestion is "to ensure the time required to build trust and a common understanding about tourism among the players who will be responsible for the visitor experience." The common trust and equal possibilities of taking part in the process have been the most important values in this World Heritage project in Central Finland. The local entrepreneurs want to find new partners as well as build networks and co-operate in marketing to create joint thematic innovations. In the project five joint workshops were organized which resulted in the creation of a Day Tour and a World Heritage dish.

The "World Heritage in One Day" tour is a good example of local innovations. A team consisting of local residents, entrepreneurs and the third sector representatives from the third sector has drafted, with great enthusiasm and open minds, a plan for a Heritage Day tour in the Korpilahti and Petäjävesi area. The tour consists of interesting local places to visit, tasty, ecological and local food, rural experiences such as visiting a sheep farm, and shops for

buying valuable, handmade local products. Another new local product that has been introduced is the Struve Soup. The restaurant Juhlakartano Tähti-niemi was inspired by the story of the Struve Geodetic Arc chain and created a new soup dish to their menu: A delicious Finnish fish and meat soup with a homemade Triangle Sandwich. Locality is the key element in both products.

CASE 2: CULTURAL TOURISM ROUTES WITH LOCAL ACTORS

From a European viewpoint, there is a need for wide range of local, national and international actors. Building any kind of European Cultural Route is a long-term process, but it benefits many stakeholders. In addition, knowledge of the official agreements and processes is required especially when decision making processes of authorities vary a lot. Stakeholders obviously need information and support. One interesting case was the “Co-creating cultural contents for tourism and cultural accessibility through tourism” project which aimed at developing cultural contents and tourism services of Finnish tourism routes and cultural itineraries together with local actors and knowledge networks. Collaboration between the cultural, creative and tourism sectors was one of the main goals. This one-year-long project gathered the actors together in four workshops in Jyväskylä, Tampere and Helsinki in 2017–2018. The themes dealt with networking and co-operation, national and international route development, funding and sponsors as well as the route’s thematic co-operation and marketing. The participants were actors from cultural routes, national-level organisations, regional development and marketing organisations, educators and local entrepreneurs. Many potential actors joined in to form networks of “cultural route enthusiasts.” Knowledge of cultural routes and their development increased. A guidebook (Nuijanmaa & Lehtinen 2018) for cultural tourism route development was published and distributed to guide route actors across Finland.

There are two official routes in Finland: Viking Routes and the Hansa route, consisting of 190 cities in 16 European countries (The Council of Europe 2018). The sustainability aspect in this project was taken into account already in the planning stage by involving local residents and actors in the regional development and workshops and events.

CASE 3: FINNISH LIFESTYLE CREATES MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCES

As mentioned earlier, the Finnish cultural tourism strategy suggested the Finnish lifestyle to be one of the primary themes of tourism development.

During the SuoMa –project (Productising Finnish Lifestyle Tourism Services) entrepreneurs (25) from micro-sized firms in rural areas (Turku Archipelago and Jyväskylä Lakeland) were offered help in developing service ideas based on Finnish lifestyle for the Central European market. Another aim in the project was to compile the potential marketing and distribution channels for the new service products. Entrepreneurs also created new partnerships and networks, shared best practices and updated their competence during the project. The primary themes in service development were quality and creating meaningful experiences for customers. In addition, marketing material for elaborating the Finnish lifestyle was produced. (Turku University of Applied Sciences 2017; SUOMA – Kansainvälisille markkinoille suomalaisella elämäntavalla 2018).

The development originated from the needs and goals of local small enterprises, linking them from different businesses and geographical areas. Entrepreneurs wanted to widen their customer segments and extend the season to ensure long-term economic viability. Most active new networks achieved their goals. One example of a service package created for groups is “Culture and experiences meet in Säynätsalo”. It is a combination of Finnish high-quality food, traditional handcraft and fresh air, involving kick sledging, paddling or cycling amidst lake scenery. It is also possible to combine a visit to Säynätsalo Town Hall, designed by Alvar Aalto, by sledging.

As Liu (2003) states and refers also to Hitchcock et al. (1993, 23–24), involving locals in the planning and developing tourism is a prerequisite for sustainable tourism. The best way to do this is not only to empower them economically and socially, but also politically and psychologically. The challenge in this is the large number of stakeholders who might have different interests in and perceptions of tourism. Encouraging actors and stakeholders to co-operate is crucial. As regional developers, universities of applied sciences have to stay vigilant to be able to offer best possible support by means of knowledge and networking.

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LAKE PÄIJÄNNE ON THE JOURNEY TOWARDS UNESCO STATUS OF BIOSPHERE RESERVE

Minna Tunkkari-Eskelinen

PROJECT-BASED APPROACH

During 2018, JAMK University of Applied Sciences has run a project that aims to strengthen and promote the sustainable and responsible operation of the Päijänne region as well as explore the conditions for applying for the status of a UNESCO Biosphere reserve. The project in question, “Branding Lake Päijänne”, receives funding from the ELY Centres of Central Finland and Häme as well as the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. The project’s time of operation is from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2018. The project is a neutral activator in the field and it approaches all the stakeholders involved with the topic. The project is run in co-operation with Lahti University of Applied Sciences.

The previous project was already in progress in 2008 when the first statement of the conditions was published by the regional authoritative organisation. At that time, all the other stakeholders apart from forestry, farming and fishing representatives expressed an interest in this. The existing project was spurred when the entrepreneurs in the Muurame region established the ProPäijänne association in 2016 in order to advance the process of applying for the Unesco status.

What is meant by Unesco’s term of biosphere reserve (or area)? According to Unesco, “Biosphere reserves are areas comprising terrestrial, marine and coastal ecosystems. Each reserve promotes solutions reconciling the conservation of biodiversity with its sustainable use. Biosphere reserves are ‘Science for Sustainability support sites’ – special places for testing interdisciplinary approaches to understanding and managing changes and interactions between social and ecological systems, including conflict prevention and management of biodiversity“ (Biosphere Reserves – Learning Sites for Sustainable Development 2018). The concept was established already in 1971 with UNESCO’s Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB), an intergovernmental scientific programme aiming to establish a scientific basis for the improvement of relationships between people and their environments: “MAB combines the natural and social sciences, economics and education to improve human livelihoods and the equitable sharing of benefits, and to safeguard natural and

managed ecosystems, thus promoting innovative approaches to economic development that are socially and culturally appropriate, and environmentally sustainable” (Man and the Biosphere Programme 2018). Unesco stated in 1984 that “biosphere reserves, by definition and intent, have economic and social benefits for local people, but also have value in demonstrating sustainable development tied to conservation in the wider biogeographical region.” The post-Seville period was a time when biosphere reserves, instead of being considered mere protected areas and additional zones, were seen as ecosystems and landscapes where sustainable development, characterised by a context-specific relationship between biodiversity conservation and socio-economic growth, came to be viewed as the essence of the governance and management of the designated area (Ishwaran, Persic & Tri 2008).

Nowadays the biosphere reserve is basically a concept intended as a tool for international co-operation in 122 countries with 286 biosphere areas. The criteria consist of 1) The core area(s) comprising “a strictly protected ecosystem that contributes to the conservation of landscapes, ecosystems, species and genetic variation”, 2) The buffer zone surrounding or adjoining “the core areas, and is used for activities compatible with sound ecological practices that can reinforce scientific research, monitoring, training and education”, and 3) “The transition area is the part of the reserve where the greatest activity is allowed, fostering economic and human development that is socio-culturally and ecologically sustainable”. (UNESCO 2018.) This concept highlights the issues and problems between nature conservation, appropriate research and environmental sciences, but also those of the socioeconomic field, including the presence of humans. It is basically used for collecting the information regarding the issues and problems that are mainly related to nature and the environment when people are involved. After collating the issues and problems, these conflicts are confronted with the help of the problem-solving approach, education and monitoring the related studies.

THE ACTIVITIES IN THE PROJECT

Five discussion forums in different municipal facilities were organised in the Päijänne region. The aim of these discussion events was to set down all the questions, uncertainties and critiques related to the matter at hand and clarify the different stakeholders’ willingness to commit. All the stakeholders were invited to hear the basic information of the concept and put forth questions for consideration. It became clear that tourism representatives were willing to commit themselves to seeking the Unesco status. Environmental educators

and some activators were also eager to commit themselves, and they aimed for international co-operation in this matter. The municipal representatives from Muurame, Toivakka and Joutsa had already formally decided to commit themselves to the project.

The project hosted Unesco Committee Member Meriem Bouamrane's visit to Lake Päijänne in May. The aim of the visit was to show the role of Unesco's concept to committed and critical stakeholders. The Lake Päijänne tour was done with an electric car in three days, and it included accommodation at the sustainable rural destination of Lehmonkärki in Asikkala (Päijät-Häme) and in a cultural residence as well as a visit to Säynätsalo Town Hall – designed by Alvar Aalto – in Jyväskylä (Central Finland). Some group discussions were organised with specific groups of representatives: lunch with the academics and Geopark project director in Lahti, Päijät-Häme and dinner with the municipal representatives in Lehmonkärki, Asikkala. Päijät-Häme's situation is one of a kind since they are already committed and funding Unesco's Geopark status application. Rutalahti village was an interesting example of co-operation, and the JärkiSärki case in Korpilahti demonstrates the core idea of ecological and economical values in co-operation. In Central Finland, the most critical stakeholders, such as farmers, landowners and fishing representatives, were met at the resort in Nukula, Toivakka. More academics, entrepreneurs and association members were present at Juurikkasaari, Jyväskylä, where dinner was served at the end of the tour. The most critical representatives understood that there were no requirements or restrictions to land use on Unesco's part apart from that mandated by national law. Meriem Bouamrane's message was clear: the inhabitants of the Lake Päijänne area should be proud of their region, its water is invaluable, and the area representatives should continue to work for sustainable development with those who are already committed to the shared goals and vision, as well as be decent role models for the critical stakeholders.

The Päijänne Symposium is intended to become a traditional event after a hiatus of several years. It was held in Korpilahti, which is the rural area of Jyväskylä. Get-together-transportation was organised from Lahti and Jyväskylä, demonstrating sustainable activities in the process. Keynote speakers motivated the audience by speaking about branding in regional development alongside climate change speeches. The Swedish biosphere coordinators run the panel discussion, which was very fruitful. The rest of the day was spent in workshops based on the themes brought up in the previous events.

The project includes altogether five workshops in different locations during 2018. The aim of the workshops is to continue the working process with

stakeholder representatives who are already committed in order to create a shared vision and goals around Lake Päijänne. The first two workshops were organised before the main event, Päijänne Symposium. In the workshop, which was organised simultaneously with the symposium, the representatives were asked about their opinion towards the Unesco concept application. There were still some doubts among the groups of forest owners and forestry industry representatives. The reasons for the negative opinion of some stakeholders had changed from the previous ones. But is it still mission impossible? Doubts and criticism – such a dialogue needs a continuum, similar to the one in Sweden.

An explorative study of global biosphere areas shows that all the cases are different from each other. Nature has its own specialities, and the amount of original plants and specific animals are different from area to area. Most often, tourism was mentioned as being active and to some extent increasing in a specific area. There was an ongoing trend of partnership contracts with different associations, municipalities and companies. These not only dealt with the project activities but also demonstrated the commitment towards sustainable actions in the area. Several sustainable development projects with schools, businesses and research outfits appeared in each of the areas.

In the Branding Lake Päijänne project, the primary data is currently in its collecting stage. The survey has been conducted among locals, summer place owners, school representatives, local youth, etc. in order to find out the level of understanding of sustainable development. This work is still an ongoing process. It is also very important for informing the representatives of the next generation, and therefore the survey will focus next on different association members around Lake Päijänne.

The ProPäijänne association is in active co-operation with the JAMK branding project. They invited NordMAB co-ordinators to visit Lake Päijänne in October. Altogether 20 representatives from Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Estonia and Finland will be taken on a tour that is almost identical to the one organised for Unesco Committee Member Meriem Bouamrane. Additionally, there will be a lunch cruise on Lake Päijänne and a pathwalk in Leivonmäki National Park. This will also be a pilot test group for Lake Päijänne tour tourism.

LAKELAND TOURISM

Lake Päijänne is the second biggest lake in Finland. If measured by water volume, it is the biggest and also the deepest lake in Finland. Its deepest point is 95.3 m. It is characterised by rocky shores and 1,886 small islands. Around the lake the population is 327,700 (at the end of 2010). This figure

includes the two biggest municipalities, Jyväskylä (population 130,800) and Lahti (population 100,800). There are 13 other municipalities in the lake area. The total surface area of the planned biosphere is 8,581 km², of which the surface area of Lake Päijänne is 1,080 km² and that of Lake Vesijärvi 110 km². A total of 49,960 ha has been earmarked for nature conservation areas.

VisitFinland has a Lakeland tourism strategy, and VisitJyväskylä as well as LahtiRegion are following this strategy in their operations. Additionally, VisitJyväskylä is paying increasing attention to sustainability in tourism promotions. No tourism as such, including responsible tourism, is emphasised in Unesco's biosphere areas. However, based on the descriptions of the reserves on Unesco's website and independent biosphere reserves' local websites in most countries in Europe, tourism is a powerful industry in these areas. It seems that tourism has increased after sustainable goals and development activities of the partner organisations in the area have been set. For example, Spreewald in Germany is facing seasonal overtourism, and now they have started measuring the socioeconomics in the area. Whenever the tourism industry is considering sustainable development of the area, and when tourism operations are acting responsibly, it demonstrates Unesco's biosphere principals.

What is responsible tourism? According to Harold Goodwin and his expertise network of ICRT, which is based on the Cape Town Declaration, it is about making better places for both people living over there as well as for tourists. This is not just our responsibility to take care of that place but also the responsibility of government, local people, operators and tourists to take care of the visited place to make it more and more sustainable. (The Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism 2002.) It means e.g. decreasing those aspects, which have a negative impact on our environment and on society, maintaining global diversity by increasing and contributing to the conservation of natural heritage, and providing experience to our tourists by introducing them to local people so that they can know more about that particular place (Cape Town Declaration). JAMK University of Applied Sciences and its tourism degree programme co-ordinate the National ICRT Network in Finland. (ICRT Finland 2018.)

What is the current stage of responsible tourism in the region? According to research work conducted by the tourism students, there are some small businesses, which are already considering the use of sustainable acts in their operations. Altogether 60 entrepreneurs were interviewed and questioned about co-operation in the region, with the aim of finding out possible business networks or dominant activators in the area. The lack of tourism companies is evident. One local entrepreneur said: "The tourism situation is not good, as the

number of tourists is very low. Co-operation with local people may enhance tourism, as locals can take their friends or relatives to the place so that the area can have more and more tourists. The area also must have some more attractions and activities for the tourists.” The municipalities were researched by the students during the course assignment. Of the 12 towns researched, two seemed to pay less attention to tourism advancement in their operations. Basic services were available, but there was less competition in tourism services. However, the Lake Päijänne could become responsible tourism destination with more co-operation in the future. Some of the stakeholders think that there should be more activities as well as some visitors’ services such as restaurants, so that the place can become better known as a tourist attraction or even destination.

IN CONCLUSION

The journey towards the Unesco status still continues, but there appears to be a risk of the development work slowing down without the project and adequate funding. The stakeholders need the unit for co-ordination and getting people together for discussions and local activities. Unesco’s status of biosphere area would provide such a forum. JAMK University of Applied Sciences is already running several development projects in the region. In the future, the focus should be more on sustainable activities (see e. g. Unesco 2018) and responsible tourism considerations.

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THE PLATFORMS FOR PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE TOURISM IN JAMK UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Sini Seppelin, Petra Blinnikka & Anne Törn-Laapio

THE DEVELOPMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY IN TOURISM

The development of responsibility in tourism dates back to the 1980s and is based on the concept of sustainable tourism (Krippendorf 1987, 138–139). UNWTO and UNEP's definition of sustainable tourism combines the Brundtland Commission's definition of sustainable development and tourism. Sustainable tourism is 'tourism that takes into account its present and future economic, social and environmental impacts, taking into account the needs of tourists, the tourism industry, the environment and the local communities' (Making tourism more sustainable 2005, 11–12). The principles of responsible tourism were defined in 2002 in Cape Town at the first International Responsible Tourism conference. Accountability in responsible tourism is emphasised both locally and internationally. The main idea is to make better places for people to live in and visit (ResponsibleTourismPartnership.org).

All forms of tourism could be much more responsible than they are now. Responsibility from an ecological, social, cultural and economic point of view depends on the commitment of all stakeholders in the region. The results are largely due to the fact that all tourism stakeholders, regardless of region or country, take responsibility for development work and their own activities in the long term.

THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AT JAMK UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES HAS COMMITTED TO DEVELOP RESPONSIBILITY IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY

JAMK University of Applied Sciences is an international multidisciplinary higher education institution situated in Jyväskylä, Finland. The School of Business includes four departments: Tourism and Hospitality, Research and Development, Business and Entrepreneurship and Global Business Management. The School of Business of JAMK University of Applied Sciences has chosen 'Ethics, Responsibility and Sustainability' to be one of the four strategic goals for 2017–2020. For example, the Tourism and Hospitality

department promotes responsible management, education and operations in the activities. Sustainability and responsibility is the main focus in both bachelor's and master's degree programmes of the Tourism and Hospitality department. It also appears in the key content of continuing education projects which seek to improve the competitiveness of both SMEs and the public sector. In addition, responsibility of tourism is a key research theme in JAMK University of Applied Sciences.

THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS HAS ENGAGED IN PRME – THE PRINCIPLES FOR RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

The Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) is an UN-supported initiative established in 2007. It offers a platform for developing responsibility for academic institutions all over the world. It is based on the idea of 'Business as an Agent of World Benefit' and it leans on the officially introduced UN Global Compact. Organisations joining the PRME express their commitment to integrate the six principles of responsible management education into their curriculum, research and stakeholder activities.

The main goal of PRME is to develop and transform management education to be in line with responsibility and sustainable development. Within organisations who subscribe to the PRME principles, students are sensitised to responsible values. These higher education institutes are committed to developing their activities according to the following six principles (Figure 1):



Figure 1. Six PRME principles (PRME 2018)

PRME is the largest organised connection between the United Nations and management-related higher education institutions with over 16,000 business and management programmes worldwide (PRME 2018).

PRME's Vision and Mission

Business and management schools as well as other management-related higher education institutions play a key role in shaping the mindsets and skills of future leaders, and can be powerful drivers of corporate sustainability.

PRME's vision is to realise the Sustainable Development Goals through responsible management education.

Our mission is to transform business and management education, and develop the responsible leaders of tomorrow.

Figure 2. PRME's Vision and Mission (PRME 2018)

JAMK UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES, THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS HAS COMMITTED TO DEVELOP RESPONSIBLE LEADERS

The School of Business of JAMK University of Applied Sciences has been a member of PRME since 2011. The aim is to broadly advance the integration of sustainability and corporate responsibility in activities in order to be able to develop the capabilities of the students to identify, face and tackle the many problems of our present time. These issues are deeply integrated to the curricula for a master's degree in Tourism and Hospitality, and one key competence of the degree is responsible management. The department of Tourism and Hospitality has developed its curricula by launching 'Sustainable Gastronomy' specialisation as a part of the Bachelor of Hospitality Management degree in 2012. Within research projects carried out at the School of Business together with local business actors, responsible tourism is taken into consideration. Within the strategic area of tourism, we emphasise tourism related to natural environments, physical exercise, well-being and responsibility. As an example of a project related to the natural environment, the School of Business is aiming at arranging one of the lake areas in Central Finland (Päijänne) to receive the status of a Unesco biosphere reserve. We can bring up two more examples of the projects that the School of Business has carried out with other partners. First, there are the several Sustainable Tourism projects, which have been aimed at developing the ecological, cultural and social sustainability of rural tourism, and second, the Regenerative Leadership project, the main focus of which was on corporate social responsibility.

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR RESPONSIBLE TOURISM NETWORK

The International Centre for Responsible Tourism (ICRT) is a global network aiming to promote the principles of responsible tourism according to the

2002 Cape Town Declaration (Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism in Destinations). The Hub Centre (Hub ICRT), located in England, is led by Professor Harold Goodwin. There are 12 national affiliates worldwide, including Canada, Australia and South Africa. Of the Nordic countries, only Finland and Sweden (since 2017) are currently participating in the global network.

The ICRT network commits itself to promoting the contents of the Responsible Tourism Declaration, which describes the characteristics of responsible tourism, taking into account all the dimensions of responsibility. Generally, responsible tourism is designed to develop destinations and areas so that they are better for people living and visiting there. Diversity, transparency and respect are the core values of the network (Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism in Destinations 2002).

The Declaration stresses that responsible tourism management should take place at the local level where local people and tourists meet. The same criterion may not be suitable for all regions. Each tourist destination and company must define their own priorities that are most important for the particular item / company concerned.

Depending on the country and region, the sister networks have a slightly different shape and structure.

All sister networks support the concept of responsible tourism and ensure that the network's operations are in line with the content of the Declaration. Each national network is autonomous and responsible for its own funding and actions. Only the network's main hub ICRT can create or approve new sister networks. (International Centre for Responsible Tourism 2018).

FINLAND JOINS THE NETWORK OF RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

Network founder Harold Goodwin visited the Sustainable Tourism Award (KESMA II) project seminar in the beginning of 2014, which prompted wider co-operation to promote responsible tourism here in Finland. Professor Goodwin was impressed by the work done in promoting responsibility in Finland. Responsibility has been promoted in Finland by many projects, studies and individual companies. Following negotiations and discussions, Finland was invited to join the network of responsible tourism, and the signatory was asked to set up a national sister network in Finland as well.

The idea of a network established in Finland is not to act in association form or collect fees for membership of that network. Participants in the network are expected to be actively informed about issues of responsibility, and in particular the commitment to the content of the Cape Town Declaration. We welcome both business representatives and private individuals who wish

to promote responsible tourism in Finland. This is a network of people, not organisations. (ICRT Finland 2018).

THE LAUNCH OF THE NETWORK AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESPONSIBLE TOURISM IN DESTINATIONS

The ICRT network in Finland was launched to a wider audience in June 2016 at the International Conference on Responsible Tourism in Destinations, held in Jyväskylä. (RTD 12 Finland 2016). The twelfth event was a continuation of similar events happening in different parts of the world. The event was held for the first time in the Nordic countries. The theme of the event was Four Seasons and Responsible Tourism. The organisers of the event were JAMK University of Applied Sciences, ICRT Hub, the Tourism Research and Education Institute/ University of Lapland and Lahti University of Applied Sciences. (ICRT Finland 2018).

WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED?

Since the establishment of ICRT Finland, the network members have had 9 meetings around the country. The main tasks of ICRT Finland are:

- to encourage and facilitate Erasmus+ and other exchange programmes to enable Responsible Tourism academics and practitioners to further the development of Responsible Tourism through exchange of experience, knowledge and skills.
- to run conferences and workshops and to disseminate information through print and other media about the principles and practice of Responsible Tourism.
- to undertake research on the practice of Responsible Tourism to create knowledge about the impacts of Responsible Tourism strategies and to determine which approaches are most successful in achieving the objectives of Responsible Tourism.
- to provide training on Responsible Tourism and undergraduate, post-graduate and professional levels both independently and in association with the ICRT.

In addition to the events and educational programmes that have been implemented, the network has also visualised a profile map of different actors within responsible tourism in Finland. In the first meetings, we set goals for

the following years. Then it was obvious that the need to collect all the tools to improve responsibility to the common platform was urgent. We decided to create a toolkit of responsible tourism, and it is going to be available at the Visit Finland website. We also identified special challenges in Finland within responsible tourism, and we try to create solutions to these challenges:

- Preventing the black economy
- Fair terms and conditions of employment
- Sustainable development of tourism services (bus traffic>
< nature-based services)
- Seasons and challenges connected to seasons
- Economic sustainability–product development
- Sustaining infrastructure–nature: free and free of charge>
how to sustain the infrastructure without income?
- Marketing communications and responsibility in companies
- Overtourism, growth in control and preventing negative impacts

JAMK AS A LEADER OF RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

In addition to the 12th International Conference on Responsible Tourism organised by JAMK together with partners, we have also created a new further education programme, Responsible product development in tourism, which started in February 2018. Responsibility is the core theme in our curriculum and it will be even more emphasised in the upcoming new tourism degree programme. Tourism is one of the focus areas in JAMK's strategy (2016–2020), and responsibility is the basis of all the actions.

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CHAPTER
2

Four Seasons and Responsibility -
The 12th International Conference on
Responsible Tourism in Destinations –
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Articles presented at the conference

PLANNING SUSTAINABLE LEISURE LANDSCAPES IN ARCTIC RURAL COMMUNITIES

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INTRODUCTION

It is well known that a flourishing tourism industry provides various positive effects to a society and as such benefit the economic development of communities. Tourism is therefore often seen as a positive counteraction in many arctic rural communities facing migration of its inhabitants to more populated areas. It is likewise well known that if not properly managed tourism can also have considerable negative impact, such as overload, pollution, littering and trampling causing deterioration of natural and cultural resources and subsequently the tourist destination itself.

In Iceland tourism has grown rapidly during the past decade, with an escalating annual increase reaching up to 25% in 2015 (ITB 2016). Iceland's dynamic landscapes and diverse natural sceneries have long been the major resource of the Icelandic tourism industry. The tourism industry's respond to the escalating growth of tourism in Iceland is a rising increase in recreational outdoor activities, such as mountain biking, horse riding, mountain marathon, 4WD vehicles, ATV and snowmobiles, as well as helicopter tourism, that are likely to increase tourism impact on the Icelandic natural environments and landscape and subsequently visitors experience. In order to preserve and sustain the sources of the original attraction, a well-defined spatial planning and management of tourism is critical. According to Senes and Toccolini (1998) recreational activities should be developed where the necessary natural resources exist and only when the natural and cultural environment is capable of absorbing the impact of the development. Therefore sustainable land-use plan for tourism has to be grounded on a holistic standpoint by integrating the scientific and local knowledge as regard the stakeholders' views, the wishes and experiences of the visitors, and the suitability of the land for various forms of recreation. The knowledge on different land use and its control exists along a continuum, the two extremes of this continuum being expert level and local level (i.e. Ólafsdóttir & Júlíusson 2000). If we are to develop an acceptable land use plan for tourism in arctic rural communities, integrating these two approaches to knowledge are crucial, as well as integrating both top-down

and bottom –up approaches. Only in that way can tourism increase the long term welfare of the local population.

This study attempt to sustain arctic landscapes by stimulating a holistic land use plan for tourism using the concepts of Tourism Carrying Capacity, Recreation Opportunity Spectrum and Purism Scale continuum. The overall aim is to achieve sustainable leisure landscapes in arctic rural communities, in which ecological quality, economic prosperity and cultural history are preserved and stimulated, by providing a holistic planning and zoning principles and designs based on stakeholders perception. Specific aims are to:

- identify factors that make arctic rural communities competitive tourist destinations and increase the welfare of the local population
- identify potential impacts of tourism activities on recreational settings
- evaluate and analyse different landscape entities based on environmental settings
- generate recreational zones based on different landscape entities, recreational opportunity spectrum (ROS), and tourism perceptions (purism scale)
- design a multi-scale planning approach through architecture
- provide a applicable tool for decision makers for long term tourism prosperity in fragile arctic environments

As a case study, the study focuses on the Skaftárhreppur municipality in southern Iceland, a traditional sheep farming community where the importance of tourism has grown extensively during the past two decades. The municipality had 470 inhabitants on 1st of January 2016 (Statistics Iceland 2016) and has suffered from depopulation for decades. The last few years this process has stopped probably as the role of rural tourism as a major mechanism for arresting the decline of agricultural employment and therefore as a mechanism for agricultural diversification. The Skaftárhreppur municipality together with two adjoining municipalities form a joint geopark under the name Katla geopark. In September 2011 Katla geopark was accepted into the European Geoparks Network and jointly into the Global Geopark Network (Ólafsdóttir & Dowling 2013). Part of the municipality highlands belongs to the Vatnajökull National Park (VNP) which was founded in 2008 (Icelandic act no 60/2007). The highlands area is characterised by little or no infrastructure. Since the establishment of VNP the official policy has been to make the highlands area more accessible in order to attract tourists and thus economically benefit the municipality. However, research show that increased and improved access

to the areas highlands might on the contrary decrease the economical profit from tourism as the area will attract another market group that spend less time in the area. (i.e. Sæþórsdóttir, Ólafsdóttir, & Ólafsson 2009.)

METHODS

In order to develop site specific zoning measures with respect to landscape, nature, and society, sustainable land use planning requires a deep understanding of the landscape, its genesis and both regional and local characteristics. Moreover, for stakeholders to have a buy-in and a degree of empowerment in the process of tourism development, inclusion of a range of stakeholders is fundamental to the sustainability of the process (Ólafsdóttir & Dowling 2013). Each stakeholder's group makes a contribution towards changing the nature of the area's tourism and their own success is therefore dependent upon the contribution of others.

To better understand what make Skaftárhreppur municipality a competitive tourist destination and increases the welfare of the local population as well as to identify potential impacts of tourism activities on recreational settings, the approach of action research was taken by using a focus group. A focus group was composed of ten people including local stakeholders, i.e. the municipality mayor, the planning representative, the chair of the environmental and nature conservation board, the director of Visit Klaustur, the director of the Katla Geopark, and the Vatnajökull National Park manager, and expertise, i.e. research experts representing tourism and spatial expertise as well as expertise on design, architecture and landscapes architecture. The purpose use of the group interaction to was to give insights and produce data that would be less available without the communication which took place in the group. Focus groups have been found especially useful when there is limited knowledge about the subject (Stewart & Shamdasani 1990). like in the case of Skaftárhreppur. The researchers' role within the focus group was to ask critical questions, which is in line with action research that attempt to change a social system at the same time as generation knowledge about it, as well as to approach political and technical problems by creating new knowledge through the solving of practical problems.

A three comprehensive group discussion meetings were held, the first one in October 2015, the second one in January 2016 and the last one in April 2016. The first group meeting focussed on discussions regarding identification of strengths and weaknesses of the area as tourist destination and the optimal relationship between locals and tourists. The research experts had

prepared a list of open ended questions aimed at giving information on the topic and directing the discussions. Based on the results from the first group discussions as well as available data on environmental settings potential landscape entities were evaluated. The second group meeting focused on discussions regarding impacts of the various tourism recreational activities and potential recreational settings within the municipality. The third and last group meeting was aimed at mutual discussions on the proposed land use plan for sustainable tourism development within the municipality.

Geographical information systems (GIS) were used to analyse the suitability for the various forms of recreation based on different landscape entities, recreational opportunity spectrum (ROS), and tourists' perceptions. The landscape entity map was obtained from spatial analysis from the area's topography, geology, vegetation and land use. The ROS map was based on four classes obtained from Newsome, Moore and Dowling (2013), i.e. i) primitive, ii) semi-primitive, iii) roaded natural, and iv) developed. Due to the large functional difference of the highland and lowland areas as regard tourism experiences and expectations, the roaded natural class was divided into roaded natural lowland and roaded natural highland. These five classes were analysed according to physical, social and managerial management factors (i.e. Newsome et al. 2013) and adjusted to the stakeholders' views. Suitable recreational zones were then based on the different landscape entities classified, the ROS classification, as well as tourists' perceptions according to tourism scale obtained from three popular tourist sites within the municipality's highlands area.

Tourism management require decisions and spatial interventions on multiple scale-levels. Therefore the ultimate planning design was based on a multi-scale planning approach. Each scale level represents its own importance and value. Hence, on the small scale is the holistic strategic zoning plan for the whole area. On a medium-scale level is the assignment of focus and hierarchy in the recreational attractions or focal points offered to tourists. On a large-scale is the need for specific and appropriate site-design and planning of the potential recreational attractions.

INITIAL RESULTS

Initial results reveal a lack of balance between the area's current recreational use and landscape sensitivity, reflecting many negative signs of the exponential growth within Icelandic tourism during the past few years. Decisions on where to locate new tourism infrastructure are currently being made mainly from

pragmatic consideration rather than in connection with an in depth knowledge of the landscape, emphasizing the area's general lack of a zoning plan. The results further indicate the importance of appropriate infrastructure to canalize the growing flow of mass tourism, in order to manage tourism in a better way with a reduction of environmental impact in other recreational areas, and thus increase visitors' satisfaction. This includes strategic choices about where to locate focal points for mass tourism and where to exclude tourism in the landscape. This also includes the need for appropriate site-design of attractions both from a functional and aesthetical perspective. Functional perspective addresses the importance of well-designed infrastructure avoiding damage to the landscape as a result from mass tourism, well-designed information facilities, and facilities like trash cans etc. Aesthetical perspective addresses the importance of site-specific design, i.e. maximizing and supporting the experience of the local landscapes and atmosphere which are visually appropriate. It is furthermore important that tourism infrastructure in environmentally sensitive areas are design and constructed so as to increase environmental experiences by tourists and evoke their environmental awareness.

Achieving future tourism sustainability will indubitably increase the quality of life and experience both for the community's local inhabitants and its visitors. Such a future goal will nonetheless only be met by addressing a long term and multi-scale zoning plans for tourism development. Growing tourism emphasizes the need and urgency for a zoning plan on the short term. However, regarding the visual and natural sensitivity of the arctic landscape, it is critical to implement a long term zoning plan. This, to preserve the natural scenery and wildness on the one hand, and on the other hand to avoid degrading the landscape with unlimited infrastructure developments. Thus, a zoning plan contributes to a sustainable 'care-taking' of the landscape by its inhabitants providing them a long-term vision on how to use their land efficiently with respect to the inherent value of the natural and cultural landscape.

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IS RECREATIONAL HIKING RESPONSIBLE? A PILOT STUDY OF EXPERIMENTAL PLOTS IN ICELAND

Micael Runnström & Rannveig Ólafsdóttir

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Natural area tourism is increasingly attracting visitors for experiencing, appreciating and inter-acting with nature and the environment (Newsome, Moore & Dowling 2013). Such natural areas, often protected by environmental legislations like Nature Reserves or National Parks, can offer recreation in a spectrum of opportunities ranging from primitive, solitary in nature, to developed when full service is provided. It is valuable to manage and plan a natural area with the knowledge of which recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS) it offers and what category of tourists it wishes to attract and if an area allows too many tourists, the ones searching for primitiveness will choose different site. The ecosystem may also be sensitive to disturbance and impact from a high number of visitors, and may eventually collapse or degrade and thus lose its attraction. This could be devastating for a local community having made investments in providing services for tourism in order to boost the rural economy and provide rural jobs. Hence it is of importance that a share of the income gained from the tourism is invested in good planning and management that are responsible and sustainable, as wear, tear and trampling by a large number of tourists may result in irreversible degradation of a tourist site.

Extended trampling is a most visible form of degradation caused by outdoor recreation activities (Monz, Cole, Leung & Marion 2010) leading to deepening and widening of trails, root exposure, damage and removal of vegetation cover and severe soil erosion (e.g. Cole 1983; Leung & Marion 1996; Tomczyk & Ewertowski 2011). To plan and manage tourism in a responsible and sustainable way, it is important to understand how different levels of impact from tourism affects the physical landscape and ecosystem and that this knowledge is based on local empirical measurements. It has repeatedly been shown that trampling damages vegetation, eliminates soil organic matter, compacts the soil and causes soil erosion (Cole & Bayfield 1993; Gísladóttir 2006; Ólafsdóttir & Runnström 2013) however it varies between sites and over time.

In Iceland tourism has increased nearly four-fold over the past decade and tourists are there to explore and experience the nature (Icelandic tourist board 2016). Still, a general understanding of the impact from recreational trampling in Icelandic ecosystems is limited reflecting the need for experimental research to address the impact of recreational activities for responsible tourism management and planning.

AIM AND METHODOLOGY

This study aims firstly to increase the knowledge and understanding of using field experimental plots for tourism impact studies. Secondly, to explore how different levels of recreational trampling affect the three most common vegetation types in Iceland, i.e. grassland, moss-heath and moss.

Experimental plots were constructed in both Þingvellir National Park (PNP) and Fjallabak Nature Reserve (FNR). Both areas are under protection but have for a long time been among Iceland's most popular outdoor recreational areas. PNP is located in the lowlands and FNR in the highlands thus making comparisons of impact and recovery between the highlands and lowlands feasible.

The experimental plots are constructed by five lanes with a length of 20 meters and width of 1.5 meter (figure 1). Each lane was designated a hiking pressure randomly assigned between the choices; 0, 25, 75, 200, and 500 passes. Hiking with boots and back-packs was then performed in the different lanes to reach the assigned impact level. Half of each lane, 10 m length, were hiked using hiking sticks and half without sticks, to evaluate if the popular use of hiking sticks had effect on the impact. Directly after the hiking the physical variables; soil moisture, soil compaction, soil surface profile, and vegetation cover, were measured in subplots in each lane. Statistical analyses were performed to evaluate significant dissimilarities between hiking pressure and the measured variables using ANOVA and regressions.



Figure 1. The Moss experimental plot in ÞNP with different trampling impact lanes

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results show a significant difference ($P < 0.001$) in soil compaction between the impact lanes for the moss heath cover, both in the highlands and lowlands. Measure values were not significantly different for grassland plots. This implies that the soil surface of moss heath is sensitive to high trampling and that the soil particles are pressed together forming a hard almost impermeable soil surface. Such surface condition hinders rain water to infiltrate and instead travel on the surface causing severe erosion problems. Grassland doesn't show the same significant pattern and this might be explained by the rather dense and intertwined root system of the grasses that would work as a bouncing mat under the hiker. For the experimental plot on the fragile moss it was not possible to measure soil compaction due to the very thin and undeveloped soil cover between the moss and the young lava rock underneath. Regarding surface depth all plots show significant difference between lanes with different hiking pressure ($P < 0.05$). This implies that the depth of the U-channel formed when hiking, is correlated to the amount of hikers, at least up till 500 passes that is the maximum in this study. Soil moisture didn't show any significant difference between lanes of different hiking pressure. This could be caused by the instrument used for measuring this variable being too coarse (a flower pot moisture instrument) but can also be an effect of initial natural differences in soil moisture caused by other factors.

Image analysis on the digital photographs shows that relative vegetation cover (vegetation/no vegetation), is significantly reduced by increased hiking pressure, and that a calculated resistance index indicate that moss is the vegetation type least resistant to trampling impact followed by the, moss heath, and grasslands.

Most of these variables co-work in causing potentially severe conditions for increased soil erosion. If too much hiking pressure is put on e.g. hiking trails, decreasing infiltration results in more surface water flow, decreasing vegetation cover exposes more bare soil with less possibility to decelerate the velocity of the surface water, and additionally a deeper U-channel concentrates the surface water in narrow channels, severe erosion problems are likely to follow.

The results give an interesting insight to how trampling in Icelandic environments affects the ecosystem regarding soil compaction, soil surface depth profile, soil moisture, and vegetation cover. They also support Gísladóttir's (2006) results that moss-heath is more vulnerable to trampling than grasslands.

An interesting notion from this study is a difference seen between tram-

pling using hiking sticks or not. Tourists using hiking sticks have more impact on the soil surface profile, i.e. make deeper profile, resulting in higher soil compaction. This might be as the total weight of the hiker distributes over larger unit. On the other hand the hikers that use hiking sticks impact a wider area of the vegetation cover.

IS RECREATIONAL HIKING RESPONSIBLE?

Where there is tourism, there will be impact. The challenge is to manage those impact. In order to manage recreation in natural areas, understanding its potential impact on the environment is critical. Hence, how to limit the damage by understanding why and where it occur and by constant monitoring. It is important that both the recreational users and the managers share the responsibility of limiting the impact in nature. Managing tourism in sensitive ecosystems involves educating the tourists in how to be precautious, constructing hiking paths that avoids sensitive areas, and restricting access in certain seasons.

The experience obtained and the databank assessed from this study will be used to build further knowledge on how outdoor recreational activities impacts Icelandic ecosystems and how tourism in popular but sensitive regions should be managed.

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SUMMER TOURISM: OFF-SEASON ACTIVITIES AT TOURIST RESORTS IN LAPLAND – REPORT ON WORK IN PROGRESS

Kirsi Nikkola

BACKGROUND

Seasonality is affecting tourism business in Lapland, Finland strongly with winter being main season and summer off-season. Another short peak is in September at time of autumn foliage. Lapland's tourism strategy has a goal to increase summer tourism on basis of existing services at tourist resorts and nearby national parks in order to even out seasonality (Lapin liitto 2011). The national parks and tourist resorts are all located in an area north from Arctic Circle, where natural conditions are harsh for people, animals and vegetation, and soil and vegetation recover slowly from any damage. Increase in summer tourism can benefit local economy, tourism workers and companies, but it may cause ecological problems in fragile subarctic environments. Social issues may also rise, as local people need time to recover from the high season. Tourism entrepreneurs also need time to recover and prepare next season. These issues are treated under concepts of responsible tourism (Krippendorf 1987) and sustainable or responsible tourism development which have their roots in so called Brundtland report (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987).

Sustainability of tourism and its impacts on destinations and environment have been researched widely in recent decades, but still many problems remain, mainly due to vague and loose definition of the terms sustainable tourism and sustainable development (e.g. Liu 2003; Buckley 2012). This results in ineffective planning and management of tourism (Berno & Bricker 2001 cited in Sharpley 2010). There is lack of evidence about adoption of principles of sustainable development or sustainability in tourism companies, different sectors of travel and tourism industry, in destinations or consumer behavior of the tourists (Sharpley 2010). Buckley (2012, 534) states that tourism 'is far from sustainable' and only regulations may have some effect on the impacts of tourism. Sharpley (2010) goes even further by saying that 'sustainable tourism is a myth' and suggests that it is not a realistic target for tourism development, as its adoption possibly threatens economic development of tourism.

Theoretical background of this research project is based on theories of consumer behavior in connection with practice theory that investigates people's

routine-like ways to act and think (e.g. Schatzki 2001; Reckwitz 2002; Warde 2005, 2014; Shove, Panzar & Watson 2012) and a product-based typology of nature-based tourism (Arnegger, Woltering & Job 2010) that can be interpreted as a framework to study tourists' ways to organize their nature-based holiday. Intention of the study is to identify common tourist practices in summer in context of nature-based tourism. In this study, research interest concerns possibilities of nature-based tourism companies to benefit from increased summer tourism, as some entrepreneurs in Lapland say that it is hard to get a living from nature-based tourism in summer (Nikkola 2010). Thus, objective of this work is to reveal summertime consumer behavior of tourists at tourist resorts in Lapland and their participation in both commercial and independent nature-based tourism activities. Results of this study are empirical as they are representing a topic that has not been studied a lot, namely off-season or summer activities of tourists at Lapland's tourist resorts.

Sustainable or responsible tourism was not main topic of this study, but the results are relevant for responsible tourism mainly from perspective of economic sustainability. Also ecological, social, ethical and political perspectives of sustainability are important, but they were not the topic of the research project. Political, ethical and ecological issues are related to this work raising questions such as: What kind of nature-based tourism should be promoted in fragile environments like Lapland in seasons where the soil is exposed to erosion, when in winter snow is protecting the soil? Or can we expose inhabitants and entrepreneurs of tourist resorts to continuous tourist flows or do they need time for recovery, preparation and renovation?

There is little previous research about summertime nature-based tourism at Lapland's tourist resorts. Official accommodation statistics of Statistics Finland, International summer tourism survey of Matkailun edistämiskeskus MEK (2010) and visitor surveys of National Parks made by Metsähallitus (e.g. Nyman 2012; Rantasalo & Ylläsjärvi 2011) reveal some information. In the Nordic countries summer tourists are known to be mostly domestic independent travelers who are often on a round trip by own car with family (e.g. Flagestad, Svensk, Nordin & Lexhagen 2004; Löfgren 1999), and are reluctant to spend money on commercial outdoor activities (e.g. Bodén 2007; Mehmetoglu 2006; MEK 2010; Sievänen & Neuvonen 2011).

IMPLEMENTATION OF RESEARCH OR CASE IN PRACTICE

The research project consists of two phases. The first phase is highly empirical and maps current state of summertime nature-based tourism in Lapland

by answering questions: Who are the summer tourists at Lapland's tourist resorts? What kinds of services do they use at tourist resorts? What kinds of independent or commercial nature-based outdoor activities do they participate in? What are they willing to pay for commercial outdoor activities? A survey was conducted in summer 2012 on-site at tourist resorts Levi, Pyhä-Luosto, Saariselkä and Ylläs for 718 international and domestic summer tourists. This part of the research project has been completed and this paper presents some of the survey results. The second phase is deepening our understanding about influence of tourist or consumer practices – that is routine-like ways to act and think (e.g. Schatzki 2001; Reckwitz 2002) – in context of nature-based tourism in summer. This phase of the research project has not yet been completed.

The results of the survey show that summer tourists in Lapland are mostly independent domestic travelers on a family holiday making a round trip by own car. Many of them are staying in their own cabin or rented cabin or holiday apartment or at hotel, which indicates that small accommodation units are requested. Most important services at tourist resorts in summer are hiking services and basic tourist services. People use commercial nature activity products only to a small extent, but are interested in using them in a future trip to Lapland. Majority of the summer tourists are independent travelers who do not buy any products. Second largest group consists of tourists who both participate independently in nature activities and buy some services. Only one percent of tourists used purely commercial nature activities.

Nature activity products were divided in product categories excursion package, course and equipment rental. The most popular products are excursion packages and certain equipment rental services. Current demand for commercial nature activity products in summer is rather low with approximately 5 to 7 percent of the total sample for the most popular products within category nature excursion. Currently most popular products are sauna, reindeer and sledge-dog, and nature excursion packages. From courses fishing, gold washing, canoeing or rowing, and nature photography courses are mostly bought. Most popular products within equipment rental are mountain biking or cycling, canoeing or rowing, and fishing equipment rental. Challenge for tourism businesses is that many tourists prefer to participate in nature-based tourism independently. Many of those who are willing to buy nature-based outdoor activities want to carry them out in small groups consisting of family and friends and are reluctant to pay much for the services, which makes it difficult to get a living from nature-based tourism solely, at present. Still, there is growth potential for demand of nature-based activity products, as share of respondents increased to around 10 to 16 per cent in

most popular products, when the summer tourists were asked about their interest to buy nature activities in a future trip to Lapland. In category nature excursion packages greatest demand was for trekking, sauna, nature excursion, canoeing or rowing packages. In category courses nature photography, rock climbing and canoeing or rowing were popular. In equipment rental the most interesting products were mountain biking or cycling and canoeing or rowing equipment rental. Motivation to buy nature-based activities can be divided into four groups: comfort, social contacts, possibility to participate in activity and value of the product for the tourist.

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL CONTRIBUTION

Theoretically this research project as a whole contributes to research of consumer behavior of tourists from perspective of practices and turns focus on routines and habits of tourists doing nature-based summer holiday. The research project tackles seasonality together with off-season tourism activities and wishes of both independent tourists and users of commercial tourism products. Practical contribution is mostly information for tourism planners and entrepreneurs in form of survey results about current state of nature-based summer tourism and use of services at tourist resorts in Lapland and expectations of current summer tourists for future development. The results give indications that it may be difficult to act in an economically sustainable way as a company concentrating solely on nature-based tourism in summer, at least with current products on offer, because nature-based tourism is small-scale business and people prefer to do it in small groups consisting of family and friends.

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SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY IN SME DESTINATION - A NARRATIVE APPROACH IN OULANKA NATIONAL PARK BY BASECAMP OULANKA

Keijo Salenius

ABSTRACT

Tourism in Finland is mostly defined as nature tourism although it includes activities with motors like atvs or snowscooters. At the same definition the economy of tourism is based on activities with motors. The dilemma is, how to build an all year round sosioeconomically successful sustainable tourism destination without fossil fuel.

To build the destination from zero or to do a huge greenwashing brings to the same goal. It is possible in Finland to maintain the destination using renewable energy, recycling all the used material and providing the customers all needed activity and winter equipment so that no special gear purchasing of the customer is needed.

Seasonality has been the biggest problem in Finland in most destinations during the last 40 years. Picking the easy money with popular safaries estranged the industry from its origin. Before that tourism was based on walking and camping in the nature with long relaxing walks. The change with the contents of the itineraries has been huge. Now each day have to include several activities, destinations and experiences, even TOP3 lists.

Tourists arrive to Finland from areas with huge noise and light pollution. Their incomes are high enough to make trips to expensive countries like Finland. The nowledgement of the tourists is not normally reaching the sustainable aspects. The standard attractions are brands like northern lights or Santa Claus.

The task of our marketing chain is to promote responsible and sustainable values. The destination itself does not have such tools in its toolbox or such properties in its assets that this world wide change could be done alone. To join the true sustainable movement in tourism is the only solution for the future for SME destinations.

INTRODUCTION

TOURISM, VOLUME AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

The travel industry contributed 9.8% to world GDP in 2015. 77% of this is leisure spending and business 23% (UNWTO 2016). In Finland tourism reaches up to 2.5% of GDP in 2014 and the goal is set up to 3% (Ministry of Employment and The Economy 2015).

Information given by UNWTO shows that the annual growth of tourism will be over 4% during the coming ten years (UNWTO 2016). In Finland the growth has been 6.5% annually 2011-14 (Ministry of Employment and The Economy 2015).

NATURE-BASED TOURISM VS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Nature-based tourism accounts for 20% of total international travel (UNWTO 2016). Tourism in Finland is mostly defined as nature-based tourism including the modern time safaries with atvs or snowscooters and massive skiing centres. At the same time the sales of tourism is based on engines, motors and tourism centres. Nature-based tourism is simply traveling to the natural places (TIES 2016). Sustainable tourism meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. The amount of customers willing to pay more for sustainable brands went up to 66% (Consumer-Goods' Brands that Demonstrate Commitment to Sustainability Outperform Those that Don't 2015). in 2015. The commitment to social and environmental values becomes more and more important in successful strategies.

The dilemma is, how to build and maintain an all year round sosioeconomically succesful small sustainable tourism destination.

STANDARD MODEL OF OPERATING IN FINLAND

Tourism centres are formed around scratched hills. The investments are huge – could even be over 1 billion euro in one destination – forming the nature into a city with consumption, pollution and waste. This all is surrounded by the view over the nature.

Tourists in the centres face various chances to spend time and money. Everything is possible from heli-ski to limousine. Night life is as popular as in their home cities. The shops and restaurants are the same as in the custom-

ers home cities. The services are build on all possible needs that could be satisfied.

Tourism investments are concentrated in tourism centres because the investors reject risks. Any kind of business inside the centre might become profitable. This possible success is based on the flow of tourists entering the centre. Huge marketing efforts are made through a tourism association collecting annual fee from its members. The fee could be over 1% of the turnover.

The model of marketing puts all members into the same mold. The mold is needed in order to keep the marketing message to the potential customer as simple as possible. This mold includes the brand, logo, products, target groups, slogans and visibility. While the marketing budget is based on the membership fee, so the marketing efforts are directed to the biggest operators in the centre. For the quality system it is easy to get the domestic version. Without this standard SMEs are not approved to participate in marketing abroad. SME have to show, that their product is valuable enough for foreign customers.

According to Turunen (2009), The Internationalisation of location-bound service SMEs – resources and networks in Finnish tourism companies there are three different kind of entrepreneurs in tourism, specially in tourism centres. The leading ones have established their company for international markets, are active in networking and do have good personal relationships with the foreign stakeholders. Inside the tourism centre most SME companies reach their turnover by catching the payments from the flow of tourists.

HOW TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN – DOES THIS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE?

Although rare, it is possible in Finland to maintain the tourism centre using renewable energy, recycling almost all the used material and providing the customers all needed activity and special equipment so that no purchasing of the customers is needed. This can be done in any lifecycle of the centre, either by planning and building from the very start or by greenwashing through the coming years.

CHANGE IN ITINERARIES

The thriving aspect in tourism has been the amount of sales. Selling becomes more and more important. It is not anymore enough just to sell the accommodation but everything else needed beside that. The change with the contents of the itineraries has been huge. Now each day have to include

several activities and experiences. In order to fulfill the needs of the modern customer there are needed hectic moments with the tight schedule minibuss transfers. This process brings up the adventure tourism, which is defined to include physical activity, cultural immersion and natural environment or minimum two of these (UNWTO and Adventure Travel Trade Association 2014). Adventure tourism has growth 65% from 2009 to 2012 (Adventure Travel Trade Association and The George Washington University 2013).

SOSIOECONOMICAL ASPECTS IN A TOURISM CENTRE

Investments in the sustainable operations do not bring profits quarterly. The same with the staff, the short high seasons force to use leased manpower. The hotels, restaurants and shops are normally owned by corporations with strict purchasing rules. These rules steer the purchase to the lowest prices from any location, not always from the local community.

SEASONALITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Seasonality has become the biggest problem in Finland in most destinations during the last 40 years. The acts mentioned above cut away 24/7 enjoyment. While the nature with 4 beautiful seasons allowed to produce 44 week long high season, the investors decided to concentrate on the only item threatened by the climate change. Snow and ice time could be shorter in the future.

BASECAMP OULANKA, THE SUSTAINABLE AND RESPONSIBLE DESTINATION WITH SOFT ADVENTURE TOURISM

SUSTAINABLE WAY OF BUILDING AND MAINTAINING

The project started 1998 with the idealistic idea that there is no place in the future for exploitation, at least not in tourism. The life as a standard safari company with snowscooters in a tourism centre felt unsatisfying to the guides and to the owners, even to the customers. "The opposite to the skiing centre" became the working title. It took 2,5 years to find the right spot. This armpit of Oulanka national park has been left in pristine condition. It was not ruined by a road making easy access to the area. Still there were popular traditional trails for nature lovers.

The respect towards the nature was the base for all the needed tasks. Planning, building and maintaining the camp in the sustainable way is also very cost effective. Undressing all artificial man made technical details and building old fashioned lodges lowered the cost to the half compared to the modern apartments. Leaving no footprint or even positive footprint was the goal all the way from the beginning. One of the big decisions was to find 4K logs for the buildings closer than 40K away from the camp.

Oulanka national park is the best national park with the rivers and the canyons. The trout in River Oulanka is threatened. In order to respect this phenomenon Basecamp Oulanka changed the outboard engines used on rafts from twostroke engines to electric ones being the only in the world with this solution. There are no more oil layers on the water surface, no noise pollution and no gas consumption.

RESPONSIBLE DESTINATION

The start in 2003 with 6 week long summer season was not reassuring. There was no tradition of winter walks in the national park. First to build the winter packages for sale, then get the tour operators interested in sustainable guided trips with silence, which was the biggest challenge. When the foreign customers made hundreds and hundreds of snowshoe walks in Oulanka NP, it packed the powder snow for the trails possible to walk by the domestic day trippers. The knowledge of the possibility to snowshoe into the national park spread after five years visibility in social media. The decision to execute soft activities (UNWTO 2014) was based on Basecamp Oulanka slogan "no mountain, no sea" describing the area. The only hard activities are rafting classified nr 4 rapid and ice climbing.

The season is now, 10 years after selling away the snowscooters and ATVs, 34 weeks long. All the guides get their salary every month since 2005. The guides earn minimum 20% higher than the standard level. The donation to wilderness protection has been 2.5% of the turnover. These funds has been used in countries like Georgia, Russia, Portugal, Bulgaria and of course Finland. The conservation in national park started 2009 with Kärpäskelhä meadow project. More than 20 different nationalities has been volunteering in Oulanka. The conservation has been very awarding to all participants.

The community benefits more than tax incomes from 12 jobs: local investments, real estate lease agreements, subcontracting, delivering food and material. From the turnover 71% stays locally. The family owned company has not paid any dividends or interests to the owners. There are no goals for ROI.

The environment likes the recycled processes, renewable energy and the avoidance of the pollution like light and noise.

INCOME SOURCE

Tourists arrive to Finland from areas with huge noise and light pollution. Their incomes are high enough to make possible trips to expensive countries like Finland. The knowledge of the tourists is not normally reaching the local sustainable aspects. The standard attractions are brands like northern lights and Santa Claus.

The task of the marketing chain is to promote responsible and sustainable values. The destination itself does not have such tools in its toolbox or such properties in its assets that this world wide change could be done alone. To join the true responsible and sustainable movement in tourism is the only solution for the future of SME destinations.

The potential customers are spread round the world. Digitalisation has released the power to SME in order to build the fast track. Perfect example of this fast track is TripAdvisor. Their algorithm is based on the holiday evaluation form and the tourist's good will to share their information.

TripAdvisor does not ask for money from the destinations. The amount of money is not the crucial factor putting some destinations higher in the rank and at the same time easier to book the destination. With TripAdvisor the ranking is based on the visitor's estimate. At the same time TripAdvisor has released the "GreenLeaders" programme auditing the sustainable destinations. The chosen destinations are favored in promoting. This method has made TripAdvisor 15 times more popular in a couple of years time. (TripAdvisor 2014.)

CONCLUSIONS

Being part of the tourism centre would have never given the huge potential of true sustainable and responsible destination. In the pristine location there might be used the very delectable description of ecotourism. The life of the guides is now easier, even glorious and respected in many ways. The guests are very happy practising mindfulness and wellbeing in the national park. The world needs role models. With a good example the nearby companies could – in the beginning – just copy the best practise and after the learning process even develop their own method.

Out of the safari company was formed through vast changes the whooper swan: VESTAS Award for responsible and sustainable tourism in 2011, TripAdvisor greenleaders GOLD status in 2014 and the membership with The

Long Run Foundation in 2015 including the goal to become Global Ecosphere Retreat in coming years.

Ambitious goals are needed, specially among SME. The digitalisation has made it possible to operate globally. The preparatory work of responsible organisations bring all definitions and contents to everybody interested in. Now the courage is needed to go forward along the road with sustainable and responsible milestones.

THE DREAM

Basecamp Oulanka, Oulanka national park and the corridor to Paanajärvi national park could be defined as Traveler's Philanthropy in the future Goodwin, (McCombes & Eckardt 2009). The tourism will be based on the needs of community and the national park. Lots of charity is included. As one goal could be that 90% of the tourism turnover stays locally and benefits even more the biodiversity and the low income farmers.

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FACTORS INFLUENCING SUSTAINABILITY PERFORMANCE IN MICRO-SIZED RURAL TOURISM ENTERPRISES

Hanna-Maija Väisänen & Anne Törn-Laapio

ABSTRACT

There are several factors influencing sustainability performance on the company level. The most significant factor distinguished in this article is stakeholder pressure, other factors being associated with economic or external factors. The objective of this study is to examine factors that influence the sustainable practices of micro-sized rural tourism enterprises. The theoretical framework is built from responsible business background theories, shareholder theory and the concept of sustainable development. The material consists of interviews with 26 entrepreneurs. It would seem that micro-sized tourism enterprises have a positive stance towards sustainability and to practices that support it and they have absorbed those practices into their businesses. The factors influencing their practices are a combination of values or personal reasons, external factors, economic drivers and the influence of stakeholders. Rural entrepreneurs identify stakeholders who are connected with their business and they have procedures to take care of that relationship. The most important stakeholders were customers, the environment and other enterprises. Customers could be seen as a driver but also as an obstacle to sustainability. According to this study, the challenge in furthering sustainability in micro-sized rural tourism is in economic aims and customer behavior.

INTRODUCTION

Sustainability is demanded for the tourism business just as it is in other business sectors of industry nowadays. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has given a full definition of sustainable tourism. Expressed simply, sustainable tourism can be said to be 'Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities' (UNEP & WTO 2005, 12). Like large tourism companies, small and micro-sized tourism enterprises also have an impact on sustainable development. Thus, it is widely agreed that all tourism needs to take into account the principles of sustainability.

At the corporate level, sustainability refers to an organization's activities that demonstrate the inclusion of social and environmental concerns in business operations and interactions with stakeholders. In practice, to achieve and perform sustainability, responsible or sustainable activities in companies is required (Epstein 2008; Van Marrewijk & Werre 2003; Panapanaan, Linnanen, Karvonen & Phan 2003). But why do companies adopt sustainable practices? As simply stated by Marcel van Marrewijk's words: "they either feel obliged to do it; are made to do it or they want to do it" (Van Marrewijk 2003, 99). By having a general view of sustainable practices and especially those aspects which influence these practices, the understanding of sustainable development in rural tourism will increase. This helps to find ways to encourage companies to enable sustainability development.

The objective of this study is to examine the factors that influence sustainable practices of micro-sized rural tourism enterprises. To enhance the sustainability in the field of micro-sized rural tourism companies it would be beneficial to know the influencing factors. Several studies have focused on explaining factors which influence the environmental sustainability actions of large manufacturing companies, but small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the service sector has received relatively less attention (Bansal & Kilbourne 2001). This work focuses especially on micro-sized enterprises and on rural tourism and its sustainability dimensions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are several factors which influence sustainability performance on the company level. The most significant factors are stakeholder pressure, economic drivers, company features and external factors (Epstein 2008; Gonzalez-Benito & Gonzalez-Benito 2005).

As stated in the UNWTO definition sustainable tourism should address the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities. The special feature of the tourism industry is that tourism products are used locally and that emphasizes the importance of local institutions/elements, like the local environment and stakeholders. For that reason stakeholder pressure may play a central role in sustainability (Gonzalez-Benito & Gonzalez-Benito 2005). Stakeholders are individuals and groups who can affect the company's performance or who are affected by a company's actions (Freeman 1984). Stakeholders can be distinguished as primary stakeholders, those without whose participation and support the company cannot survive (e.g. customers, suppliers), and secondary stakeholders which are not engaged in transac-

tions and are not essential for its survival (e.g. the media, non-governmental organizations) (Clarkson 1995). Stakeholder environmental pressures were considered to be the key motivating forces which come from customers (Bohdanowicz 2006; Brammer, Hojmosse & Marchant 2012), competitors or other companies (Jenkins 2006, 249), and also the municipality (Russo & Tencati 2009). An important factor influencing the environmental proactivity of a company is the proximity to the final consumer within the supply chain (Gonzalez-Benito & Gonzalez-Benito 2005; Haddock-Fraser & Tourelle 2010). By taking into account the most important stakeholders the company may gain a license to operate with them (Esptein 2008).

Esptein (2008) suggests several reasons why sustainability is becoming established in business. Through sustainability performance a company can lower costs and/or increase sales. Companies have perceived that sustainable solutions do not necessarily merely incur expenses but they can also bring savings and competitive advantage (Bohdanowicz 2006; Dewhurst & Thomas 2003), assist in managing quality and risks, create new business opportunities (Holliday, Schmidheiny & Watts 2002; Beloff & Chevalier 2012), and improve the company image and reputation (Bohdanowicz 2006). One of the most effective key motivations for accommodation enterprises are cost saving by implementing improvements in environmental actions (Bohdanowicz 2006; Dewhurst & Thomas 2003).

The external factors describe the general environment surrounding a company (Gonzalez-Benito & Gonzalez-Benito 2005). Regulations and industry codes of conduct require that companies must increasingly address sustainability. Noncompliance with regulations might be costly as well as damage reputations (Epstein 2008; Karatzoglou & Spilanis 2010).

Some of the variables influencing sustainable performance can be considered as organizational characteristics or company features. This group comprises factors like company size, position in the value chain, the company strategic attitude and managerial/ entrepreneur's values, attitude and motivations. It has been said that SMEs' adoption of environmental practices differs from that of their larger counterparts mainly on account of limitations in resources, capabilities and skills; organizational and managerial characteristics; and lack of staff training on environmental issues. SMEs seldom participate in voluntary environmental programmes (Gonzalez-Benito & Gonzalez-Benito 2005). It has been argued that the motives of small-sized tourism companies concerning sustainability are based on the entrepreneur's emotional or lifestyle motivation (Dewhurst & Thomas 2003; Garay & Font 2012) attitudes and thoughts (Sharma 2000) or on ethics and values (Tzschentke, Kirk & Lynch 2008). It is

said that entrepreneurs appreciate their own local surroundings, which they want to preserve, and the value lifestyle more than economic success. It is also widely believed that sustainable practices are based on a fundamental belief that everyone has a personal responsibility and ability to conserve resources and minimise environmental damage (Dewhurst & Thomas 2003).

METHODS & MATERIALS

A total of 26 interviews of rural tourism entrepreneurs were carried out in four counties in Finland. The semi-structured interviews were conducted face-to-face at the companies' premises during summer and autumn 2013. The companies were asked what sustainable practices they implement in the physical and social operational environment and in producing the tourism product. The reasons and factors influencing these practices came out in the interview either implicitly or explicitly. The interviews were analysed using classifying and quantifying methods.

The structure of the study is presented in Figure 1. All the sustainable dimensions are included in this study. The bidirectional arrows describe the role of stakeholders, and the directional arrows describe the external pressure.

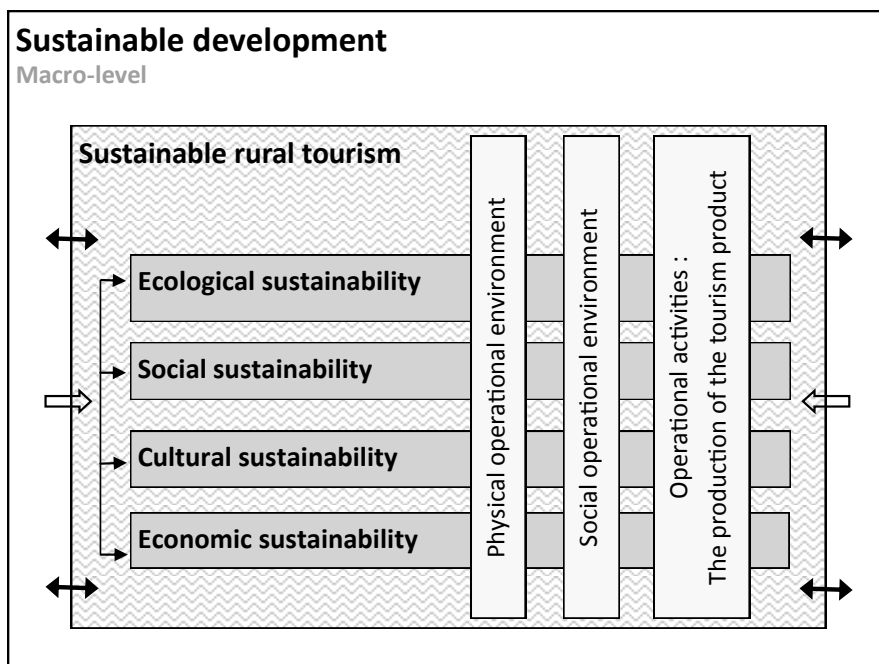


Figure 1. The theoretical views and aspects outlining the research focus of the study

All the companies had accommodation business. In addition, 16 companies had food services and 13 companies had programme services. The majority of the companies had been in operation for less than 16 years (73% of the companies). Five of the interviewees (19%) can be said to be very experienced and long-term entrepreneurs. Typically, the rural tourism business is made up of family-owned and family-run companies. In most cases the main employees were the entrepreneurs themselves.

RESULTS

The rural tourism entrepreneurs were aware of and appreciate the features of the surrounding nature and cultural environment, and aspired to protect them. The enterprises had preserved and protected the natural environment in their land areas. Half of the companies took the initiative of protecting different kinds of elements in their own land areas. This indicates the entrepreneur's high reverence for nature as well for environmental values. Buildings were conserved mainly by renovation and maintenance, and traditional materials and working methods were used where feasible. These can be considered self-imposed actions of sustainability because the regulations require these kinds of operations only on official protected buildings. In most cases the tourism businesses were located in farm and lands which were owned by the family for hundreds of years. These entrepreneurs expressed the desire to preserve the natural environment and farms for the next generations.

The enterprises utilize the historical and cultural elements of the area in their business and in this way preserve the heritage. The impression was that cultural heritage is something to be proud of for entrepreneurs. The actions reflect the entrepreneur's valuation of culture, but also its utilization in business. Fascinating historical stories, for example, entertain the consumers. However, economic benefit solely was not the main point, instead economic considerations went hand in hand with the preservation of heritage. With such practices in the natural environment and on farms entrepreneurs also wished to maintain the operational environment of the enterprise and the ability to operate and keep the business running.

The rural entrepreneurs identify the stakeholders connected to their business and have procedures which foster this relationship. The most important stakeholders were customers, the environment and other enterprises. Customers as primary stakeholders have an effect on sustainability actions, because without customers company cannot survive. Rural tourism companies value the environment highly. It is also recognized as a primary stakeholder because

if the natural environment is damaged the business will lose its competitive advantage and in the worst case scenario cannot continue.

Companies co-operated with other companies, local societies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The majority of the entrepreneurs belonged to or have been involved in local activities, and their operations supported them. Support was given, for example, by providing premises free of charge for activities, employing trainees and doing voluntary work in NGOs. The reason for taking part and supporting these kinds of local activity may lie in the fact that the local societies and NGOs were seen as important for their own businesses.

Most of the enterprises paid attention to the sustainability of purchases. In general, local purchases were favoured. Food, building and maintenance articles or services and basics were most often purchased locally. Food services provided locally is a popular trend among consumers. It is also usually easy to purchase locally because the services, products and places to obtain these services are well-known to entrepreneurs.

Almost all enterprises use renewable energy resources. Wood could be cheaply obtained from their own forest, or geothermal heating was chosen as a practical alternative. Steps to save energy or water have been taken or have at least been planned for cost-saving reasons. Following Finnish regulations concerning sewage, drinking water and waste treatment, the companies also emphasized the workability of these systems. Thus, for example, a business's sewage system could be converted and connected to the municipal waste water treatment system.

Concerning accommodation quality classification has shown how the industrial sector has had an impact on tourism production. The Finnish Rural Tourism accommodation quality classification, called the MALO Classification, is a national guideline for rural tourism accommodation. The classification is based on technical requirements and has five grades. Companies in this study have often needed to follow the MALO guidelines when seeking permission to build rural tourism accommodation.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

According to the results, the factors most often influencing practices are a combination of personal values or reasons, external factors, economic drivers and the influence of stakeholders.

Personal reasons and personal factors appear in several discourses. The entrepreneurs valued their environment, heritage and history. The appreciation

of the environment was revealed in the identification of important stakeholders, and the companies assessed the environment to be one of the most important stakeholders. Many of the companies operated on a farm owned by the same family for years or the owner had another kind of bond to the area. They felt that it is important to preserve the environment and one's heritage for the following generations. Business reasons were also important in the conservation of surroundings and buildings. In most cases the companies named the natural environment, the milieu, and the landscape as their strengths, and naturally market strengths need to be maintained.

It is suggested in the literature that personal ethics as well personal values are the key determinants of business behaviour, especially with regards to ethical or environmental issues (Tzschentke et al. 2008). It can be presumed that the motives underlying sustainable actions were both ecocentrism – valuing nature for its own sake, and anthropocentrism – valuing nature for the material or physical benefits it can provide for humans (Thompson & Barton 1994).

Finnish regulations obligate and guide certain environmental protection actions, like sewage water treatment and building in shore areas. Requirements from financiers or authorities are further external factors. It is well-known that legislation is important in forcing sustainability practices (Esptein 2008). Moreover, maintaining buildings or the natural environment are instances of self-imposed practices carried out for business reasons.

Among the most important and effective drivers for sustainability in companies are cost savings or economic benefits (Bohdanowicz 2006, 677; Dewhurst & Thomas 2003, 398; Vernon et al. 2003). The rural tourism companies targeted cost savings, for example, by using water-saving equipment, energy-saving lamps or other energy-saving procedures. The companies admitted that profitability was a challenge, which may well explain the cost-saving sustainable activities. In addition, business benefits were clearly the reason for several procedures, such as maintaining the surroundings, or considering special consumer segments, like disabled or allergic customers, to guarantee customer satisfaction and in that way increase revenue. Business benefits were also seen as a reason for taking part in and supporting local activities; local societies and local NGOs were seen to be important for businesses, because they were needed for example in organizing events.

Consumers were identified as the most important stakeholders. As far as sustainable activities are concerned, consumers were very seldom the direct reason for taking sustainability actions.

However the entrepreneurs were aware of the positive attitudes of consumers towards environmentally and culturally friendly tourism products and

services. In literature the positive attitudes of consumers towards sustainable tourism is well recognized (Budeanu 2007). It has been argued also that consumers may have an impact on companies' environmental practices (Delmas & Toffel 2004). In this study, consumers are seen to be important mainly because the companies are dependent on clients to maintain their businesses. But customers can be seen both as a driver and as an obstacle to sustainability. Consumers may impair the company's sustainability operations, for example, by ignoring the instructions given in cottages.

As van Marrewijk (2003, 99) has said: companies "either feel obliged to do it; are made to do it or they want to do it". Our study showed that micro-sized rural tourism companies are made to carry out sustainable practices because of the regulations, feel obliged to do this because of the region's heritage and natural value, or they want to do it on the grounds of economic benefits or the consumers' gratification. It would seem that commercial aims, at least to some extent, drive sustainability, and that sustainable actions support the business in the long run.

It can be concluded that to enhance sustainability in the field of micro-sized rural tourism companies, it would be beneficial to consider two things. First, it is necessary to understand the entrepreneurs' personal values and relationship to the area, and the second aspect is to justify the sustainable actions from an economic point of view or what is best from the business point of view. According to this study, the challenge in furthering sustainability in micro-sized rural tourism is in harmonizing both the economic aims and the customer's behaviour.

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EMPLOYING LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTS IN A DESTINATION TO ENHANCE A SUSTAINABLE TOURISM VALUE CHAIN – PERCEIVED BENEFITS BY TOURISTS, LOCALS AND FOOD PRODUCERS

Sarah Seidel

Food is a part of every tourism product – after all, every tourist needs to eat. Food and in particular local food products can also play additional roles at a destination than only being a means to stimulate and satiate hunger. Consuming food is a social activity, it can also be a cultural experience (Miele 2006). This implies that local food products can benefit the value creation at a tourism destination. In addition, local food has proven to be a step towards responsible tourism on social, economic and environmental dimension (Hall & Gössling 2013), due to e.g. a lower CO₂-footprint (Pratt 2013) and presenting local heritage (Miele 2006).

This research is dedicated to highlighting the benefits that the integration of local food products can play at a tourism destination on the three sustainability dimensions: People, Planet and Profit. Three types of stakeholders – tourists, locals and food producers – were targeted in this research to state their perceived benefits. While sustainable and responsible tourism is often differentiated in that responsible tourism refers more to the responsible behaviour of all stakeholders and is even the preferred term by many tourism businesses or destinations (Petra Thomas, management board Forum Anders Reisen, personal communication, ITB CSR Day on March 11, 2016), the two terms are going to be used as synonyms in this research, as the research differentiates value between the three dimensions of sustainability: People, Planet, Profit.

Local food products, being a part of tourism products and the corresponding tourism impacts on the destination, have been researched extensively, also in connection to sustainability. However, the existing research often considers one side of sustainability in detail or stays rather general. Specifically social impacts are often described in rather broad terms. While many items mentioned in prior research, as presented in the following paragraphs, were indeed among the perceived benefits, all three target groups of this research highlight additional ones also presented in the next paragraphs.

In fact, tourists spend up to one third of their budget on food (Hall & Sharpley 2003; Skuras & Dimara 2005; Telfer & Wall 2000). If this money is spent

on local food, it stays in the value chain of the destination and contributes to the local economy (e.g. Bessiere 1998; Duram 2011). Hall and Gössling (2013) differentiate between direct and indirect economic impacts. While direct impacts refer to the sales of the products and the direct employment of the local inhabitants in production, processing, manufacturing, and distribution systems, the indirect impacts include the benefits the brand names of local food products create within the rural economy as well as indirect sales and employment in e.g. rural activities. Indeed, it is argued that tourism can be a major driver for local primary industries (Hjalager & Johansen 2013; Ohe & Kurihara 2013).

Coming to social benefits, Hall and Gössling (2013) mention that, if local food products are well integrated in tourism, the human face within the food production becomes more the focus of attention than the products themselves as locals become more visible. When considering rural development, it becomes clear that the integration of local food products benefits the rural community since local food products create a regional identity, support activities such as but not only tourism, strengthen social interaction and improve employment opportunities (Duram 2011; Richards 2002). Additionally, old traditional and indigenous methods of food production are preserved for the future (Everett & Aitchison, 2008). The integration of local food e.g. in terms of food festivals or local food events might establish a relationship between local inhabitants, local food producers and local food products and might create pride amongst members of society (Hall & Gössling 2013).

Lastly, the integration of local food products also benefits the environment and enhances sustainability since fewer chemicals and pesticides are used, and production processes are more sustainable due to a less use of energy. (This point, however, is a topic to discuss as simply not all food resources grow everywhere.) Moreover, packaging materials and CO₂ emissions decrease since the transportation of local food products is limited and packaging is not necessary (Duram 2011; Kim & Eves 2012; Sims 2009). Particularly the lower CO₂ footprint has finally developed into a point of attention (e. g. Pratt 2013, Stanley & Stanley 2014), a point that has been rather neglected in tourism literature whilst being a much-discussed concept (as ‘food miles’ e.g. Engelhaupt (2008)) in other disciplines.

From the point of the consumer, e.g. the tourists, Duram (2011) and Bossona and Gebresenbet (2011) note that local food products are healthier, taste better and are more nutritious than conventionally produced goods and some researchers (Feldmann & Hamm 2015) argue that this hedonistic view

of local food products is a major motivation to buy the products. As stated in Feldmann and Hamm (2015) and Duram (2011), the most significant motivation for buying local products is to be climate and environmentally friendly. For some consumers, the environmental impacts of conventional agriculture are extremely meaningful so that they only consider buying local food products (Kirwan & Maye 2013). Additionally, it should be noted that food consumers want to protect the local food and at the same time support local businesses such as local farmers and local food producers.

To investigate the perceived added sustainable value of local food products used for tourism purposes, primary research was conducted in form of semi-structured interviews and observation among tourists, regional food producers and locals in regions with a small scale tourism development in the Netherlands and Germany. Another characteristic to help choose the regions was that they have distinct food products that can be identified as local. This indeed was already a major issue as definitions of what makes a local food product 'local' differ significantly from a non-existence (disappearing due to globalisation) (Hall & Mitchel 2003), currently being used or known for the region without having a relation to the region, from one extreme to the other: being grown, processed and sold in the region within a radius of no more than 30 miles (Hall & Gössling 2013; Sims 2009; Kirwan & Maye 2013). For this research, regions were only chosen if the full production chain takes place in the region. The reasons for choosing this definition of local products was to explore all benefits on the People, Planet, Profit side that might occur in different stages of the production. The regions researched in the Netherlands were Limburg, South-East Drenthe and Friesland with food such as cheese, dry sausages, milk products and wine. In Germany the research focussed on regions in the northern part of the country such as Altes Land (apples) and Lüneburger Heide (honey, sheep/goat products) close to Hamburg, Ostfriesland and Dithmarschen on the north coast (fish, crabs), as well as Emsland (bread, green cabbage dishes, Korn schnapps).

Concerning the economic benefits, the financial resources brought by the tourists clearly support local employment. All of the local producers report that tourists bring a significant additional spending to their businesses. Some, specifically owners of a smaller sized business or a business at the very start of the production chain (fishery boards, cheese maker, apple farm owner) even report that they would not be able to sustain their business without the tourists. Some of the local producers therefore offer specific services which are more often used by tourists than by locals such as a small café on the apple farm, direct selling of crabs from the boat or guided tours or cheese tastings.

Employment that results from this is significant as well, however, differs sometimes in seasonality. Many producers report that their businesses and local foods in general supply employment for their family members and other surrounding, often supporting local networks. As many of the local food producer businesses are family businesses there is another advantage significantly benefitting the social dimension: Young people do not leave the region to look for employment in urban areas, this also benefits family structures and neighbouring communities.

That stated, some jobs are also not relevant for the region, specifically highly labour-intensive jobs and/or seasonal ones (shelling prawns, picking apples) are usually taken over by cheap work forces from Poland or Romania. Some fishers even outsource the shelling of the crabs to North Africa, which causes a transport chain and lets money leak out of the system. However, sometimes there are even additional jobs created for tourism purposes, based on the original jobs. E.g. in several tourist areas on the coast there are “show boats” that take tourists on a fake crab fishing trip to show them how crab fishing is done. Tourists are not allowed on real fishing boats due to safety and other legal restrictions.

Considering the environmental dimension, the outcomes were more surprising. Contrary to prior research as stated in the literature review, the reason to be ‘more sustainable’ was barely mentioned, at least not in these or similar conceptual words, neither by producers, locals nor tourists. However, when probing a bit further, respondents did not use the term ‘sustainable’ in their own language but mentioned many small, often behavioural items they practise. There are two apple farmers who state that they do both sell locally and via a wholesaler to supermarkets, while the apples are wrapped into plastic for the wholesaler, they use reusable wooden boxes to sell them on the market or at their own farm outlet. The reason behind this is not only that it is more economical or convenient but mainly as ‘this is how it has always been done’ or that one just does not use plastic or produce waste. This and similar statements were dominant among both producers and locals. The fishing nets are carefully made so they do not harm marine flora and smaller fish or crabs, that would not be sold anyway, can slip through. Pesticides are less used by the farmers and the cheese maker avoids the use of mass production ingredients. Equal care is given to machines and to potentially damaging impacts, e.g. the machine oil as this can be damaging to the water or land and damage to the water/land ‘would damage ourselves’.

Locals who buy on the market use a basket or bag and no plastic bags. When asked specifically about the fact that this would be a more sustainable

behaviour, they add that they tend to go more often by bike or foot to local farms and shops as well, and say this is how to do it and there is more purpose in shopping this way than anonymously at a supermarket. The preservation of nature and a more traditional and less harmful farming / harvesting / fishing is also a point mentioned by locals. The same argument is stated by the tourists as well, though less often.

On the social side, the local producers feel pride and a sense of appreciation. This became clear not only from their words but also from their behaviour, all contacted local food producers happily agreed to an interview, wanted to show the researcher around and were happy to give tasting samples. Also significant is the business structure and its consequences for the social dimension. A lot of producer's businesses are family businesses which results in the preservation of the family structure instead of young people leaving to seek employment elsewhere. There were also fishermen in the fourth generation who state that it strengthens the family identity. One major difference between other family businesses that are not involved in a local production chain is that the local food producers also felt proud about giving something back to the region. Many stated they believed that their job contributed to the preservation of this traditional kind of work for the region, and that they also preserved the landscape as e.g. smaller fisher boats or the apple farms belong to the image of the landscape. This pride is specifically enhanced by the behaviour of the tourists, e.g. when tourists buy shrimps because fresh shrimps simply belong to the place.

Locals also appreciate sustaining the shape of the landscape and preservation of a traditional industry of which so many others were lost. Some of the locals had trouble wording this properly, however, it seemed to be the most important impact from the side of the locals. They see their environment changing, however, due to the fact that the local, small-scale food producers are still there, it enhances their sense of place. This also adds to the fact that many of the locals do not care much for tourism, however, appreciate that the tourists come and consume the local food, as, after all, it is also a bit of their own. Hence, locals do feel ownership as well. Tourists perceive local food as fresher, healthier, unique and, maybe the most surprising outcome, possessing a better quality compared to other food. Hence, they state hedonistic reasons.

In conclusion one can say that all respondents mentioned benefits for all three sustainability dimensions. However, on the whole the benefits on the social side clearly stood out as the main benefits that were perceived by all three types of stakeholders, mostly however by the local inhabitants and food producers. Some of the benefits for locals and local food producers

might however also appear without tourism. Tourism and tourists are strong facilitators of these impacts and several mentioned benefits are exclusively related to tourism.

For all three dimensions, People, Planet, Profit, new or barely mentioned benefits can be added. For the economic side, jobs for young people are an important factor and that especially family-owned businesses need the additional income provided by tourists to sustain their businesses. Locals and tourists perceive local products to have a higher value for them by being healthier, fresher and of a higher quality. On the environmental side, a major outcome is preservation of the landscape. Most interesting are the indirect effects, namely that people seem to create positive environmental impacts through their behaviour, because 'it is done that way', e.g. consumers and producers using reusable packaging or none at all and producers taking care of a resource saving production chain. However, specifically in the initial research, concerning the generally broader addressed social side, the benefits seem to stand out. Tourists feel a stronger connection to the people and the area they are experiencing and 'feel good' and attach value and importance to supporting the local community. Locals did not only mention the support of local industries but also a personal advantage stemming from that: These local food producers and products represent the 'traditional' industry of the region whilst other industries have constantly changed. The same applies to the shaping of the region; the region looks the same as it always did with e.g. the apple trees or the fishing boats. Local food producers feel great pride, which is not only due to their own products but also they feel they are giving back and contributing to the region. Next to that, the preservation of family structures and family bonds seem to be more important, an item that has rather been linked to developing countries in prior research.

When applying this to the concept of a responsible destination, one might add that the integration of the local food industry into the tourism industry benefits much more than just these two industries but has significant consequences for the local cooperation networks, family and community structures, preservation of known industry-structures and landscape for the locals. Indeed, these direct and indirect impacts seem to be followed by further additional impacts which actually influence the behaviour of people. Hence, considering responsible tourism where people and the behaviour of people is at the centre, the main conclusion must be: Local food products, which are produced, processed and sold to locals and tourists at the destination, have a significantly more substantial impact on a further development of responsible tourism than previously discussed.

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SHORT FOOD SUPPLY CHAINS – LOCAL FOOD AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

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BACKGROUND

There is no exact definition for local food which makes it a bit difficult to study. However there are some widely agreed aspects which can be linked to local food. Local food is produced near the consumers and origin as well as producer are known and can be tracked (MTK 2013). Traceability is the key in local food. Also terms like secure, fresh, high-quality and delicious are linked strongly in local food. Each destination, region and country have their unique local food products, cuisines and food culture whose distinctive resources could be used as marketing tool to attract more responsible tourists. (UNWTO 2012.)

Social capital is another key concept in this project: “Short food supply chains – Local food and social capital”. Social capital has been under active discussion and research especially starting from 1990 until 2000. It has been noted that social capital has positive connection to smaller communities, enterprises as well as societies ability to function and their profitability. (Alanen & Iisakka 2006.)

Social capital is one part of responsible production system where the other parts are labor, natural resources, physical and human capital. Social capital differs from human and physical capital being relational and not just individual feature, being shared by group and being producible by investments of time and effort. (OECD 2001.)

Social capital consist of working networks together with commonly shared norms and values and understanding within groups that help working together within and among groups. Trust is seen as integral element of social capital and it can be viewed as people trusting others and being trustworthy. Through networks members cooperate, communicate and utilize common resources as well as coordinate and integrate operations. This produces generally economic and political fluency in life as well as personal wellbeing and responsibility. For the company social capital is considered to lower the cost of doing business, e.g. making the contracts is simpler due to trust between buyer and seller and operations of the networks is generally more predictable as well as

interactions are easier. (Glowacki-Dudka, Murray & Isaacs 2012; OECD 2001.) These principles apply also to responsible tourism.

Project Sustainable tourism development (2013-2014) studied and developed a model for sustainable tourism business development for SMEs in rural areas. Some findings in that project was that tourists have a responsible image about small and micro rural tourism enterprises because of their clean nature, local food, diverse culture and intensive rural communities. Other findings about local food was that many of studied places it was a part of the story of the destination's history, culture and people. Through food the visitors got a story and taste of the destination. On holiday people want to have different kind of food experiences than their "everyday" eating and most of all we are seeking great experiences. Small rural tourism enterprises favor local food as much as possible and they usually market it to their customers. (KESMA II 2014.) And looking from other angle: small rural tourism enterprises are important sales channel for local food producers (Mäkipeska & Sihvonen 2010).

There has been big expectations towards social capital outcome over the years. People have been looking for answers to increase economic efficiency, prevent social problems, patch up gaps in welfare state, activate political participation as well as explain the health inequalities observed in the general population.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project name	Short food supply chains – Local food and social capital
Project duration	1.1.2015-31.12.2016
Project funding	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and The Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners (MTK)
Partners	University of Turku, JAMK University of Applied Science, HAMK University of Applied Science

For the purposes in this project, social capital refers to cohesion, which manifests itself in different ways to materialize a joint activity and interaction, and mutual trust. It means the common conclusion or common interests, the smooth functioning, joy and spirit.

OBJECTIVE OF THE WORK

In this project, "Short food supply chains – Local food and social capital", we have examined the role of social capital within local food networks, how it can

be revealed, utilized and developed further. We cooperate with 16 different local food enterprises and networks in six regions in Finland. Tools used in project are interviews, web discussions, social media (e.g. Facebook) and workshops. Aims for the project are to

- help local food entrepreneurs' to recognize and understand their social capital's possibilities and meaning in business and cooperation.
- find new and concrete ways to utilize social capital in the chain of local food's supply and demand e.g. new business model, sustainable tourism or improved direct sale channels/networks.
- verify the local and communal social sustainable development in local food chains.

Local food gives extra value; e.g. cultural, ecological, authentic and social for responsible tourists. Findings could be utilized in tourism industry.

FINDINGS

Framework for first web discussions was taken from social capital aspects: social networks, trust, communication and norms. Discussions topics were defined based on general understanding of social capital's five dimensions: 1. participation, 2. control and capability, 3. detection of community structures and features, 4. social interaction, networks and support and 5. trust, reciprocity, social cohesion. Web discussions participants consisted of people actively involved in the local foods movement as producers, educators or customers.

Results from first web discussion showed that fairness (direct profit to entrepreneurs), freshness and quality are the most important reasons to buy local food. Short food supply chain without additional intermedia as well as information of the origin of the food and the method of production are valued highly. Encounters with the producers, social aspects of meetings and easiness of buying food were also mentioned during the discussions. Customers also want to promote and do lobbying for their local food providers, for example sharing their experiences in direct encounters as well as in social media. Local food definitions: e.g. secure, fresh, high-quality and delicious were self-evident for people who take a part on our web discussions.

Involvement in local food networks gives to participant information and facts and thus trust about producers and products, good spirits and support directly for producers, time saving, good feelings and social contacts and experiences of country life. Nowadays there is hardly any social interaction,

networks, feedback channels and support without Facebook. People are searching mainly for facts from electronic channels and they receive a lot of information through their social network than just visiting shops. Personal contacts to producers add on trust, respect and willingness to buy and pay. Possibility to have influence on production or products give meaning of significance for buyers. Trust is the cornerstone for local food producers and no to be lost. The second web discussion was a continuum for the previous one and main themes in this discussion were: communication, interaction, quality of service and trust.

Participants were invited to evaluate the customer commitment statements that producers have opened. Generally, producers had managed well with their commitment statements and they have even exceeded customers' expectations. People valued the products and their features, service and meeting the customer expectations and general presentation of the company's values in customer commitment statements. People valued interaction with the producers and other customers. They receive additional value by receiving answers to their questions, facts how the food have been produced, tips for the local food recipes.

It was also asked in the second web discussion the participants' opinion of the pictures chosen by the companies to present their products or company. Participants all agreed that picture is a strong tool to communicate and raise feelings. Pictures should demonstrate customer commitment statements, give a view of locality, positivity, clarity and authenticity. Humor can be used if it is part of image of the company.

As conclusion customer experience and social capital within local food chains is based on three aspects: product, service and environment. Basement is always quality product that is local, good and somehow distinguishable. Service gives the additional and inseparable value and experience for local food and is determining part of decision between local and chain products. The environment (or pictures of it) can evoke positively or negatively customers' interest and make the first impression of the products and their quality at one glance.

But producers need more than these to increase social capital within local food chains. They need to have interactions and networks working in different ways and in different media. This way people learn to know and trust producers and each other and cooperation strengthens at the same time knowledge is shared. Unfortunately interaction is personal capability and there is no use of copying all practices from each other.

CONCLUSIONS

Following eight tips: “How to use social capital in your daily business” (Picture 1) were collected from the discussions with entrepreneurs and consumers.

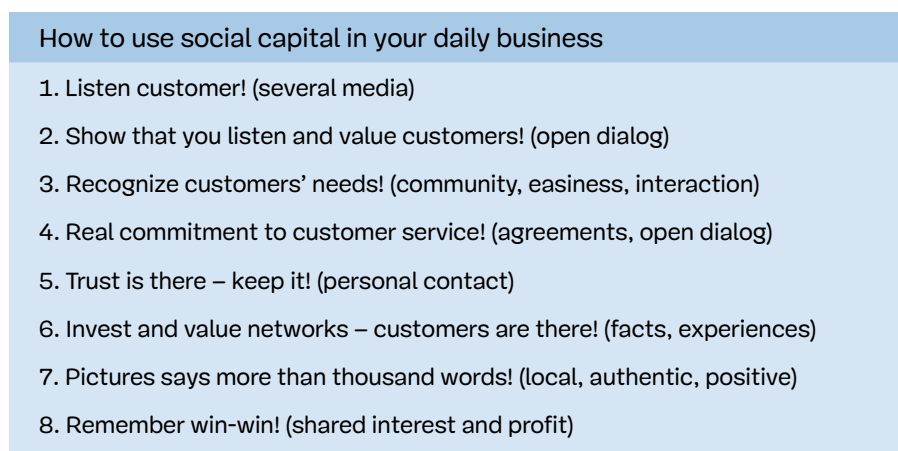


Figure 1. How to use social capital in your daily local business or in responsible tourism business?

Local food is a responsible choice in many ways for consumers, customers and tourists. Ecological benefits are gained when food transportation shortens, because for example carbon dioxide emissions decreases and less packing materials are needed. Economic benefits are achieved when money stays in local area enabling business and employment, keeping the countryside vitality. Also North food culture is maintained by eating and using local food. Also in small scale the service is adaptable and personal which makes it unique experience. (MTK 2013.) Food is a dynamic tool for sharing stories, forming relationships and building communities. By combining local food to tourism it offers all parties an authentic taste of plate and contribution to sustainability. (The Rise of Food Tourism 2015.)

Food and all the events gather people together. We grow it, we cook it, we eat it and we talk about it - daily. With food we share the joys and sorrows as well as casual news and business deals. There is also intense social media activity about unique food experiences so the pictures, praises and locations about great food are spread fast all over the world to our friends and acquaintances. Through our behavior (and postings) regarding food we

can identify who we are as well as show it to others. Food can be a symbol for love, security, values or lifestyle – you can just choose it.

Tourists and consumers are increasingly more environmental and health conscious which increases the demand of local food with an image of pure and fair production as well as high quality. It is also ecologically, socially and culturally sustainable choice to use local food.

Food is important contributor to the total tourist experience in any destination. When local food is combined with local special activity, it influence customers to choose that destination. Unfortunately, entrepreneurs rarely remember to communicate the history, availability and value of the local food to the tourists. There is still lot of work for branding. Regional products e.g. plate of Päijänne (including local fish) could market region as a whole and would be more effective than several different products.

Local food is a possibility and responsible choice for local people as well as tourists.

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It is commonly known that tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world. At its best, tourism yields positive economic impacts for the target area, e.g. by providing tourism income and jobs. Local self-esteem, as well as the image of the region, may also improve. On the other hand, tourism may also limit the regional economy, and the seasonality of the industry may increase. The major concerns are ecological detrimental effects, e.g. effects on climate, vegetation and fauna. Promoting responsible and sustainable tourism requires multidisciplinary research and proactive planning between different actors.

The publication combines a wide range of studies conducted in Europe and also presents practical solutions to develop responsible tourism. Part 1 deals with examples of platforms and networks for developing responsible tourism in Finland and part 2 introduces research articles presented at The 12th International Conference on Responsible Tourism in Destinations – ICRT conference in Jyväskylä.

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