ProWell
- towards a new understanding of rural wellbeing tourism

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FOREWORD AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research report was supported by the European Commission (EU), awarded under the 2013 call for proposals "Supporting the enhancement and promotion of transnational thematic tourism products". To stimulate competitiveness in the European tourism sector, EU encourages the diversification of tourist services and products. By supporting projects that promote sustainable thematic tourism products the EU aims at:

- Strengthening transnational cooperation with regard to sustainable tourism
- Encouraging the higher involvement of small and micro enterprises and local authorities
- Stimulating the competitiveness of the tourism industry by means of an enhanced focus on the diversification of sustainable thematic tourism products

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1. ABSTRACT

The aim of this report is to explore and outline the wider features of rural wellbeing tourism in the overarching, transnational geographical context of Denmark, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania and Norway. In addition, the opportunities for a sustainable and market-based exploitation of the special and unique Baltic and Nordic rural resources and advantages will be articulated. This endeavour will be undertaken in order to create a foundation for a rural wellbeing concept development. Accordingly, this joint research will lead to a more profound understanding of the driving forces for a successful development of coherent rural wellbeing tourism in all the five countries involved in the ProWell project.

This report defines rural wellbeing tourism and determines that in recent years, social, economic, demographic and welfare developments have increased the attention to touristic experiences in rural environments, and the rural is becoming a selling point. The Northern European countries have advantages and disadvantages, referring to the variation in rural space and the climatic and spatial circumstances. A chapter of the

report examines ten development trends for rural wellbeing tourism. It emphasized the increased individualism and the plea for excitement but also the ethical dimensions in tourism. The holistic health orientation is a crucial issue. Creating value in rural tourism depends on a range on factors. Another chapter of the report critically outlines value chains for tourism, and it examines different landscape types and their appropriateness for the local development of rural wellbeing tourism. Rural areas have many resources, and the next chapter systematically identifies such resources that can be added into creative development processes so as to be able to satisfy upcoming consumer needs and tastes. Many destinations are working with wellbeing tourism, but there is often a lack of a systematic approach. The concluding chapter describes the processes of "wellbeingization" at the destination and the business levels.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1. PROWELL AND THE PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

The ProWell project – towards a new understanding of rural wellbeing tourism aims at enhancing, developing and promoting sustainable thematic rural wellbeing tourism products in Europe. This objective is pursued through a transnational cooperation between different tourism stakeholders: small and micro tourism enterprises (SMTEs), destination management organizations (DMOs), tourism development organizations, and research institutes. In a wider perspective, the project aims to profile and add competitiveness to Northern Europe as a Rural Wellbeing Tourism Destination.

More specifically the project objectives are:

1. To define the concept of sustainable Rural Wellbeing for marketing and further development purposes (e.g. related to the Finrelax® concept in Finland, WellCome in Denmark and other national or regional products and product lines).

2. To identify products and product lines of Rural Wellbeing, including the identification of the service components that focus on or arise from specialties of the natural and cultural heritage of Northern Europe.

3. To develop guidelines for sustainable thematic Rural Wellbeing tourism product development.

4. To form a transnational network (the Rural Wellbeing Tourism Network) of organizations for the promotion of Rural Wellbeing tourism products and sustainable practices, and to increase competitiveness and development of such tourism products. This includes also sharing best practices in marketing and sustainability activities.

5. To provide settings that encourage SMTEs, DMOs and other stakeholders including local authorities to participate in promotional activities and enhance their own product developments and other activities related to the theme.

6. To promote Rural Wellbeing at a European level by using a range of methods, including interactive marketing methods that innovatively activate service providers and customers.

Figure 1: The location of the project partners

The participating countries are Denmark, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania and Norway, with an emphasis on actors in regions that are dominated by natural and rural resources. Northern Europe is an important tourism region but also a "remote" region for principal European and overseas markets. National and regional authorities in the countries have a political focus on tourism as a growth driver. However, it is clear that due to natural

circumstances and particularities, tourism has to develop in congruence with rural resources and potentials.

The project partners are as follows:

- Latvijas Lauku tūrisma asociācija "Lauku ceļotājs" (Latvia) http://www.celotajs.lv/en
- Lietuvos kaimo turizmo asociacija (Lithuania) http://www.atostogoskaime.lt/lt/lkta/apie-asociacija
- Hardangerrådet (Norway) http://www.hardangerraadet.no/
- VisitVejle, Vejle Erhvervsudvikling, Erhverv & Kultur (Denmark) http://www.vejle.dk
- Kalajoki Sani Oy (Finland) http://www.kalajokiresort.fi/en/
- Finnish Tourist Board/Visit Finland (Finland) www.visitfinland.com
- University of Southern Denmark, Danish Centre for Rural Research (Denmark) http://www.sdu.dk/clf
- University of Eastern Finland, Centre for Tourism Studies (Finland) www.uef.fi/mot

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The ProWell project addresses transnational thematic tourism products contributing to more sustainable tourism and is co-funded by the EU, awarded under the 2013 call for proposals "Supporting the enhancement and promotion of transnational thematic tourism products". ProWell also receives significant support in kind, and crucial information and knowledge from its project partners in all five countries.

2.2. THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

The aim of this report is to outline the wider features of rural wellbeing tourism in the overarching, transnational geographical context of Denmark, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania and Norway. In addition, the opportunities for a sustainable and market-based exploitation of the special and even unique Baltic and Nordic rural resources and advantages will be articulated, and this endeavour will be undertaken to support the Rural Wellbeing concept development. Accordingly, the joint research towards a more profound understanding of the driving forces is assumed be of importance for the successful development of coherent rural wellbeing tourism in all the five countries involved in the project.

Tourism in Northern Europe is not a new phenomenon but analytically, and in the general European consumer's perception, Northern Europe is a destination considered perhaps less accessible or attractive than the traditional mass tourism destinations in Southern Europe. That perception is changing, both due to a stronger emphasis among actors and governments in the north and also among tourists who look for broader diversity in tourism products. Populations in Northern Europe welcome tourism as a new contribution to the economy and employment, but simultaneously actors warn about developing tourism forms that might compromise the sustainability of the major attraction values – the natural and rural environments. The ProWell project addresses

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the ongoing trends and the need to look for a balance between economic opportunities and caring for the fundamental characteristics and attractiveness of Northern Europe.

Further, the purpose of the research is to support the development of specific Rural Wellbeing tourism products and to promote an increase in the competitiveness of the Rural Wellbeing offerings supplied in Northern Europe under the Rural Wellbeing theme. Countries in Northern Europe are generally high-cost countries, and the competitiveness vis-à-vis products from other parts of Europe and elsewhere is critical. There is a strong request for a reinterpretation of business cases and models. New ideas about marketing are also in demand.

The research activities for the ProWell project in total are divided into three elements:

1) Reviewing the literature and trends related to rural and wellbeing tourism, thus aiming to define and set the foundation for the concept of Rural Wellbeing

2) Building up Rural Wellbeing tourism product development guidelines

3) Undertaking market research to identify the appeal of the products and to identify the right distribution channels.

The present report presents the findings of the first and second themes. The market research report will be launched in a separate publication.

2.3. MAIN TARGET GROUPS

ProWell is planned to benefit businesses, organizations and destinations that provide or want to enhance the provision of rural and wellbeing tourism products. In addition, project activi-ties are organized to assist SMTEs to promote and target their services to potential customers and help them profile themselves as Rural Wellbeing tourism businesses. This is of relevance in all five countries.

In Finland existing and potential rural and wellbeing tourism businesses collaborate with Finpro and Visit Finland, and they will benefit from the promotional activities of the Rural Wellbeing outcomes and concept development of Finrelax®. As the Finre-lax® concept will be part of the Rural Wellbeing theme the whole of Finland will be able to make use of con-cepts. This is due to the fact that thematic destination production also includes Finland as a Rural Wellbeing Tourism Destination. Hence, the activities support and benefit the operations of Finpro and Visit Finland. The project also supports the activities of Finnish association Lomalaidun that aims to develop and market sustainable and customer-based rural tourism in Finland. Lomarengas is the biggest intermediating organization for rural accommodation in Finland. Lomarengas markets services from 2000 businesses and cottage owners and has over 70,000 regis-tered customers. The small tourism enterprises are involved through partners and benefit from information and results in their networks.

In Denmark the direct beneficiaries are businesses involved in the WellCome network. The network includes more than 60 SMTEs and a handful large operators within the

fields of tourism, wellness, outdoor activities and the producers of local foods. The SMTEs engaged in ProWell activities via VisitVejle are able to access the project activities and results. In addi-tion, the Vejle area and beyond profiles itself as a Rural Wellbeing destination.

In Latvia, the Latvian Country Tourism Association is involved in the project, and it has ap-proximately 400 members, predominantly owners of rural accommodations (SMEs) all over Latvia. These are important target groups of the project.

In Lithuania almost 400 countryside tourism service providers benefit from the project through being part of the Lithuanian Countryside Tourism Association, which is the main national level association in Lithuania in this particular field of tourism.

In Norway the project is emphasizing the needs of the municipalities and stakeholders in the seven municipalities that are part of the Hardanger Region and a number of close collabora-tors in the region.

Indirectly, the project also has an audience in the numerous actors related to reference groups. Different regional and national tourism development and marketing organiza-tions as well as SMTEs may find new business advantages if they relate their products and services to the concepts of Rural Wellbeing tourism. If their products and services fit under the theme they can also utilize the development guidelines for the products and services. This might lead to an increase in the Rural Wellbeing tourism products in Northern Europe. As the provision of rural wellbeing tourism is rather geographically scattered, the project also, although indirectly, supports the consumers looking for this kind of products and services.

2.4. READING GUIDLINES

This report is divided into five sub-chapters so as to be able to address different issues of rural wellbeing. In Chapter 2 a definition of rural wellbeing is discussed addressing the standard understandings of wellness and wellbeing, and confronts this with the concepts of rurality. Chapter 3 elaborates on ten significant and internationally notewor-thy trends in rural wellbeing tourism. Chapter 4 in turn presents a value chain approach to rural wellbeing tourism and underlines the necessity to understand not only consumer demands but also service production and delivery logics. In Chapter 5 a typology of rural wellbeing tourism resources are presented and discussed, attempting to get closer to the uniqueness of the rural contribution to wellbeing tourism. Finally, Chapter 6 demonstrates the guidelines for Rural Wellbeing innovations, with distinctive destina-tions and with enterprise angles.

3. DEFINING RURAL WELLBEING TOURISM

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This report addresses a quite a complex phenomenon, which may be understood and exam-ined in a number of ways. Rural wellbeing tourism is linked to contemporary consumer and tourism service developments. Presumably, the constellation of words also indicates a reflec-tion of territorial dynamics. In addition, there are cultural differ-ences and spatial variation across national borders, which also lead to a discrepancy in definitions and ambiguities in understanding.

Very basically, the following serves as the main definition of 'rural wellbeing tourism' for the ProWell project:

Rural wellbeing tourism is a form of tourism that takes place in rural settings and that interconnects actively with local nature and community resources. Based on the rural tangible and intangible, openly accessible and commercial ingredients, wellbeing tourism is holistic mode of travel that integrates physical and mental wellness and health and contributes to wider positive social and individual life experiences.

This section approaches this definition of rural wellbeing tourism and discusses briefly what it implies.

3.2. TRADITIONS IN WELLBEING TOURISM

As indicated in the definition, rural wellbeing tourism is related to wellness and health tour-ism, for example as defined by Sheldon and Bushell (2009), but it has a broader stance, and it might be seen as a further development of historical trends (Connell, 2006; Erfurt-Cooper & Cooper, 2009; Müller & Lanz Kaufmann, 2001; Smith & Puczkó, 2009, 2014).

Over the past decades spa and wellness tourism has increased in popularity, and there is a mushrooming of concepts. There is for example spiritual tourism, thalasso tourism, occupa-tional wellness tourism, yoga and meditation tourism, and many forms of sauna (Smith & Puczkó, 2009, 2014). The development of the traditional spa and wellness resorts towards a more holistic paradigm is prevalent. According to García-Altés (2005) diverse demographic, economic and lifestyle related factors have enhanced this. Many people are stressed by living in work-obsessed, time-pressured, materialistic and over-individualistic societies (Laing & Weiler, 2008; Sheldon & Bushell, 2009; Smith & Puzckó, 2009, 2014). In addition, the aging population, changes in lifestyle and alterna-tives in tourism. Where experienced travellers seek new experiences (Konu & Lauk-kanen, 2010), this adds to the increased emphasis on more holistically oriented wellness products (Koh et al., 2010; Lehto et al., 2006; Mak et al., 2009).

Smith and Puzckó (2009) have listed both internal and external factors that affect the growth of and the increased demand for wellness tourism. External factors include governmental policy, nutrition, psychology, therapy, and healing and medicine. Internal factors are the search for a community, a desire to "downsize", new spirituality, time-poor and cash-rich elites, and curiosity. They also mention fashion and tradition, obses-sion with self and celebri-ty, and fitness and sport.

It can be concluded that the main motivating push factors in the wellbeing and wellness tour-ism sector seem to be relaxation, escape, pampering, physical activity, avoiding burn out and mental wellbeing. Relaxation is in many cases connected to "rest" and "physical relaxation". Escape is in many studies seen as one of the most important motivations. Pampering seems to be a motivation that is characteristic of wellness and spa tourism (Laesser, 2011; Mak et al., 2009). Pampering is connected to the enjoyment of comfort (Laesser, 2011). Physical activity includes sports and multiple activities, and also physical health and appearance. Mental well-being is likewise a motivation that can be seen to be specific to wellness tourism. It includes motivations such as "to seek mental peacefulness" (Mak et al., 2009) and "to help me gain a sense of balance" (Lehto et al., 2006).

Health tourism and medical tourism concepts are used in conjunction with wellness tourism. According to García-Altés (2005) health tourism is based on travelling outside the home to take care of one's health, and the purpose of the trip can be healing illness or preventing it and promoting general health related wellbeing (Finnish Tourist Board, 2005; Kandampully, 2013; Suontausta & Tyni, 2005). In addition to preventing illness and maintaining wellbeing, the goal of wellbeing tourism is to experience pleasure and luxury. As forms of tourism, wellbeing tourism and healthcare tourism are not very

distant from each other. For instance, healthcare tourists may travel to the same destinations and use the same recreational services as wellness tourists (Finnish Tourist Board, 2005; Müller & Lanz Kaufmann, 2001; Suontausta & Tyni, 2005).

Figure 2: The rual wellbeing tourism arena

In this report the aim is to clarify the understanding of wellbeing tourism, as the use and understanding of terminologies vary from country to country. As Smith and Puczkó (2014) state, there are different historic, cultural and linguistic understandings of health and wellness but wellbeing encompasses both and it meaning is even wider than that. Thus, wellbeing tourism may include pampering, various (sports and fitness) activities and experiences of luxury but also more primitive facilities and outdoor activities (Kangas & Tuohino, 2008).

Figure 2 illustrates that rural wellbeing tourism may take in both wellness and spa tourism and health and medical tourism, but the rural setting provides a wider base for wellbeing tourism. Likewise, the figure recognizes that wellbeing tourism is not only for rural areas. There are colleagues and competitors in urban areas, and there is a basis for advanced specialization between the rural and urban environments.

3.3. RURAL LOCATION AND WELLBEING TOURISM

What is rural, and what is not rural? This question is also raised in the ProWell project and potentially a matter of definition. There are absolutely no universal measures, and ProWell – constituting a transnational endeavour – has to employ a pragmatic approach.

Generally "the rural" can be defined either in administrative terms or by relating to interpretations of attrib-utes, sensations, images etc. of rurality. Concerning the interpre-tative way, it is relevant to seek inspiration in ideas set by Woods (2011) and Halfacree (2006, 2007). Rural can be ap-proached from different, but intermeshing, facets: those of spatial practices (rural localities), representations of space (formal representations of the rural) and lived spaces (everyday rural lives). In short, these ideas refer to the production, reproduction and employment of rurality and rural space (Woods, 2011).

Many administrative understandings of rurality rely on composed statistics, for exam-ple, rely-ing on population density, as seen in Denmark (Kristensen, 2004) and in Lithuania. In Lithua-nia a rather exact definition of rural tourism is applied, on the basis of that a definition for rural areas can be developed: they are small towns with total population under 3000 people. The distance to larger cities can also be a parameter, and in numerous cases the understanding of rurality is supplemented with socio-economic data, indicating that rural areas may be eco-nomically or socially disfavoured regions (Anderson, 2004). In most countries, the specifica-tion of the rural aligns carefully with the areas that are eligible for various types of develop-ment support.

In a tourism context, and particularly in relation to wellbeing tourism, the attributes of rural are, however, more interesting as they are of significance not only for the provi-sion of the products but also for marketing and branding.

Rural is also often approached as an opposite to urban. When referring to tourism, it can be a highly valuable way of definition. Both rural and urban attributes can then be structured via opposing adjectives linked to them: e.g. clean–polluted, tranquil–turbulent, natural–artificial, authentic–staged, silent–noisy, spacious–crowded, safe–dangerous etc. (Bell et al., 2009). The Finrelax study (Tuohino et al., 2015) analyses Finnish wellbeing tourism in rural areas and identifies the following attributes, most of which are non-compatible with the urban image: lakes, watersheds, coasts, the archipel-ago, the sea, forests, hills, fields, meadows, tundra, wil-derness, natural phenomena (northern lights, seasons), landscapes, cleanliness, clean air, water, resources (berries, mushrooms), topography and unbuilt countryside. These give the most "au-thentic" nature, food (game, wild food, countryside food, traditional food), peace and quiet, safety, freedom, uncrowdedness, non-violence, diversity of activities (ice swimming, rowing, cruises, courses, familiarization with forms of agriculture), traditions and cultural experiences.

Moreover, as Sharpley and Sharpley (1997: 14) state: "it is the comparison between the tour-ist's home (and usually urban) environment and the characteristics of the destina-tion that mark it as rural." Approaching the term in this way gives an idea about the potential of the rural to contribute to wellbeing; especially so, when taking into account the central motivation factor of wellbeing tourists, namely escape. In addition, as Jepson and Sharpley (2014: 2) note, the "fundamental attraction of the countryside as a tourist destination" is greatly woven into a sense of rurality. It is not only the physical attrib-utes and intrinsic elements of the countryside but the idea of what the rural space represents to them. In addition, the size of the settlement may be an important marker for rurality, economy and the presence of traditional social struc-tures or a certain backwardness and physical isolation from economic, social and cultural net-works

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(Bramwell & Lane, 1994; Sharpley & Sharpley, 1997; Butler et al., 1998; Juska, 2007). There is a high level of ambiguity in such interpretations, and the fine-tuning of these defini-tions is always made on an individual level by the tourist and also by the stake-holders at the destination.

However, rural space can also be related to certain locations or specific kinds of activi-ties, symbols of the rural and the resources for tourism (Sharpley & Sharpley, 1997). It is often connected to agriculture and food supply but it is also massively connected to natural re-sources. Worthy examples are mineral waters and hot springs that are be-lieved to have healing powers (Erfurt-Cooper & Cooper, 2009). Also some of the wellbeing and wellness tourism concepts – such as Alpine Wellness (Pechlaner & Fisher, 2006) and Lake Wellness that are under development (Konu et al., 2010) – are heavily based on specific and distinctive natural resources.

The social fabric of the rural also has to be considered (Pesonen & Komppula, 2010). It acti-vates resources and entrepreneurial activity embedded in the rural environment, and human interaction is often considered an important part of satisfactory holiday experi-ences. In all ProWell countries, the social fabric in the rural areas is under structural change. Lately, and most importantly for this project, rural space is increasingly turned into an area of consump-tion and production, not solely an area for the production of food and raw materials (Ilbery & Kneafsey, 2000). This change has affected and contin-ues to considerably affect rural locali-ties. Besides the traditional modes of production and consumption of the countryside, such as agriculture, rural areas are increasingly taken over by second homes. Even though second homes (Halfacree, 2012) modify the rural space in many ways, they are, nonetheless, consid-ered the "last fortresses of the traditional and real countryside" that promote a connection to wild nature, and a coun-ter-balance to urban life. This is about family togetherness and the possibility to engage in various nature-based activities (Vepsäläinen & Pitkänen, 2010). The constant chang-ing of the rural is the results of trends such as counterurbanisation and com-muting practices, and it challenges the ideas of the rural idyll (Pforr et al., 2014). Thus, the rural locality as seen by tourists' eyes remains the one modified mostly by agricultural and forestry practices rather than by these newer trends.

The aspects of rural lives complete the understanding of the rural space (Juska, 2007). The rural is a reality in the sense that the countryside is the home and working area of many peo-ple. Those local people may enjoy perfect lives, but they may also be strug-gling with unem-ployment and similar issues, commuting to growth centres for work. Even though these lived lives may take place in surroundings that hold the characteris-tics of rural idylls, the lived lives may be something very different from the tourists' understanding of them. As Frisvoll (2012) states, the lives of the rural may mostly include the locals' everyday chores in relation to their livelihoods (e.g. farming, fishing, tourism services, commuting to work in urban areas etc.) and homes. Interestingly, as Herslund (2007: 55) mentions in her study concerning Estonia and Latvia, it is possible that the everyday chores among rural tourism entrepreneurs some-times do not include many practical chores to do with tourists but rather consist of struggles to make their business profitable: "At the moment there are more tourism businesses than there are tourists. The few that make an income have specialised in specific markets like hunting

tourists or religious groups from abroad based on specific personal contacts." Moreover, agri-culture, fishing and tourism often utilize a seasonal workforce.

As discussed above, there is not one specific rurality, and there is not one understanding of wellbeing either. However, the above-discussed viewpoints indicate the most inter-esting po-tential resources for rural wellbeing tourism. Rural wellbeing tourism could indeed be imple-mented on the basis of the resources and needs of the local community, therefore benefitting mostly the local community in a way that it can give added value to the local community. For the emerging number of tourists the rural areas can also provide access to nature, local food and local ingredients: the rural is a playground not yet fully explored.

4. TEN TRENDS IN RURAL WELLBEING TOURISM

4.1. INTRODUCTION

In a brief trend study, this section deals with the potential futures of rural wellbeing tourism. The purpose is to loosen the backward looking perspectives on traditions and cultural heritage, so often seen when addressing the prospects for rural tourism (Briedenhan & Wickens, 2004; Hoggart et al., 2014; Roberts & Hall, 2001). Hence, the ambition is to investigate tendencies for the future that might positively or negatively affect what actors can make of wellbeing tourism in a rural setting.

Trend and future studies have been well-known for a large number of years, and they seem to remain of importance as the speed of change is amplifying and the complexities of societies tend to increase. This also accounts for tourism related issues and (rural) places that accommodate for tourism. Trend and future studies can be regarded as indispensable instruments in continual development processes. The future will, of course, always be open and unpredictable, and trend research does not have the full capacity to predict long-term (or even medium- and short-term) situations with any impressive accuracy (Slaughter, 1995). However, the worthy aim of the endeavour is to raise attention, at the earliest possible stage, to changes that might eventually affect the

normal lives of people, enterprises or communities. Trend and future studies try to travel into the future in order to inform the present. This is about creating both individual and collective foresight and planning aptitude. Early awareness can lead to a suitable reaction or pro-action to exploit opportunities or, for that case, to prevent disasters.

Marketing research has applied trend studies to a significant extent (Aburdene, 2007; Naisbitt & Aburdene, 1990; Varey, 2013; von Groddeck & Schwarz, 2013). In fact, from a broader tourism perspective, such studies have been applied to a considerable extent in tourism fields, for example in attempting to predict the risks and implications of environmental developments (Edwards et al., 2008; Gössling et al., 2010) and as a means of identifying new customer segments and understanding their behaviour (Buhalis et al., 2006; Leigh et al., 2013). The ProWell project also has an emphasis on new categories of tourism wellbeing services and on the interpretations of needs and demands that may emerge in a rural context. Wellbeing travel activity (and particularly wellness and spa tourism) has also received immense attention in academic and trade trend studies (Smith & Puczkó, 2013, 2014). Currently broader wellbeing perspectives are included in tourism trends studies, but the field is still emerging (Hjalager et al., 2011; Konu, 2010).

4.2. TRENDS – SOME DEFINITIONS

In this chapter, a trend is understood as *the particular direction that something, over time, is developing into. The situation is not yet there in extended forms, but possibly there in embryonic forms.*

Trend analysis is the practice of collecting information and attempting to spot a pattern, or *trend*, in the available information. It includes for example forecasting based on historical data. Additionally, studies may detail the driving factors that enhance embryonic tendencies into mainstream futures. Analysis can also consist of the identification of upcoming phenomena among first-mover customers and enterprises. Methods include extracting information from interviews or behavioural studies, where such first-movers expose their thoughts, tastes and preferences.

It makes sense to distinguish between the following trend formats:

- *Gigatrends*: Large evolutions, for example demographic shifts, refer to changes in various aspects of population statistics, such as size, racial and ethnic composition, birth and mortality rates, geographic distribution, age and income. Gigatrends may also comprise major science and technology inventions. Economic dynamics are changes in the production and exchange of goods and services globally, and gigatrends map principal changes in the policy approaches to prices, unemployment, banking, capital and wealth distribution etc. Environmental changes and challenges can be considered important gigatrends. Eventually, gigatrends define social and cultural shifts in core values, beliefs, ethics and moral standards.

- *Paradigms:* Ways of understanding how society operates, for example how political ideas and regulations can shape the prospects for enterprises and the lives

of people. Paradigms are prevalent in the fields of health and welfare, where they govern the way that facilities are provided for citizens. Paradigms – for example, ideas about certification and data openness – emerge to be of relevance for tourism and wellbeing. In some cases the sophisticated interlinkage of paradigms takes place in order to create a higher level of political coherence and synergy.

- *Megatrends:* Patterns that last for some years or even decades and define how people choose to live their lives. Megatrends include for example holiday patterns that reflect the fact of an ageing population or the development towards one-person households. Megatrends include values related to leisure and spirituality, and attitudes to responsibility in health and wellbeing. Megatrends also embrace issues about the nature of human interaction including the role of technology in enhancing human connectivity. Megatrends may express comprehensive prospected changes in consumption patterns; for example as a response to environmental or economic constraints.

- *Fashions:* Short-term changing styles and consumption manners. This is about new food products, upcoming colour schemes and tastes and also must-experience hypes related to tourism. To a considerable extent, fashions are adopted by people in order to mark their social connectivity.

In practice the distinctions between these four categories are not entirely clear, but nevertheless the list provides an idea of levels. In this chapter the trends provided will mainly have a focus on megatrends but with references to paradigms as well as to examples from fashions.

4.3. TREND STUDIES – APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

This trend study is elaborated with the following steps:

- A literature review of academic sources, with a particular emphasis on contributions that address not only wellness but also a wider range of wellbeing and health prospects. This study does not have a uniformly rural perspective as new trends and consumer needs may emerge in urban agglomerations yet be applied in rural settings and contexts to raise new and different market perspectives. The literature review also looks into sources that address ecosystems services, thus assuming that human wellbeing is in this context based on daring reinterpretations of how nature and rural space can serve the desires of tourists.

- A search through commercial and trade-based trend studies with an emphasis on tourism and wellness. These sources are plentiful and tend to draw attention to the commercially directed demands of "first movers". They offer particular insight into consumption patterns and fashions, which can provide supplements to the academic literature.

- The performance of a "trend workshop" with 21 participants in the ProWell research project group. The participants were business and DMO professionals

mixed with a group of tourism researchers. The trend session took place in two phases. First, sub-groups of three were asked, in a moving and dynamic process, to respond to possible future scenarios, some of these less likely occur than others. Those proposed elements had emerged from the literature and trade search as described above. During the second phase reshuffled groups were, in a similarly dynamic process, urged to suggest more specific innovative rural wellbeing products with a commercial twist and consumer appeal.

The material from the workshop, in the form of many Post-its, was the first step in the elaboration of trend proposals for this text. The statements provided were organized according to topic, and then reorganized on a "disruption axis" (Hjalager, 2014). A quite large majority of the contributions from workshop participants suggested trends with fairly cautious attitudes to the future. They mainly came up with bids and ideas for sustaining and enhancing natural resources. Dimensions of radical disruption were seen but not often. This analysis of the workshop contributions led to critical reconsiderations of the potential speed and scope of future changes. Thus, the process of analysis has raised reflections that might be of importance for an assessment of actors' inclination not only to envisage changes but also to proactively work for their occurrence at an accelerated speed.

In the following, the ten identified trends will be presented.

4.4. TREND 1: TOWARDS THE HOLISTIC WELLBEING

Tourism no longer just provides opportunities to relax and recover from arduous daily lives with stressful working conditions, overburdened and spatially confined family lives, long commutes and polluted city climates. For many holidaymakers in modern welfare societies daily life is actually challenging and beneficial, and people are used to high-class facilities at or near home, or even at the workplace. However, that does not lower the demand for inter-esting and rewarding holiday experiences but requirements in terms of quality and variety tend to increase.

Tourists may seek contrasts to their daily life but also the enhancement of preferred lifestyle elements and life endeavours. Holidays are intermingled with and are part of a whole-life progression where it is essential to keep a balance, remain capable to face changes and prevent lifestyle related negative symptoms (such as burn-out, tension, stress) with a sense of control.

Wellness centres and spas are responsive to this change, and many of them are changing names and practices towards "body and mind". The range of water-based treatments, balance exercises, massages, muscle therapies, acupuncture services, chiropractic care, reflexology services etc. are being continuously developed. But increasingly, such spas and wellness facil-ities also include, for example, yoga, stress coaching, training of communication skills etc. "Whole individual" concepts lead to the integration of nutritional counselling, psychotherapy, emotional guidance and other elements of functional body and mind care.

From a rural perspective this trend can be regarded as highly promising, as the use of outdoor facilities in the body and mind integration may become far more prevalent. Reconnection with nature is shown to improve mental and emotional wellbeing more than just indoors re-laxation, exercising or receiving therapy and guidance. Traditional spas expand outside with gardens and trails into nature. Entrepreneurs in the field provide, for example, riding therapy or other facilities that allow a (re)connection with animals. Kayaking, trekking or other physi-cal sports and activities are also reinterpret-ed into body and mind totality concepts. Spiritual training and stress therapy may rely on the interpretative interlinkages between nature and healing but also relate directly to narratives of healing "powers" and "flows" in specific natu-ral environments.

Many people now in their fifties and sixties are captivated by the concepts of body and mind wellness. They are well aware of the potentially longer lifespans that they may face and the need for preventive health and fitness. They want to go on holiday, but they will not want to return home feeling sluggish and weighing three kilos more than when they   left.

4.5. TREND 2: CONNECTING WITH NATURE AND ITS RESOURCES

Traditional wellness products tend to be international, and wellness concepts travel. It is possible to acquire Dead Sea treatments all over the world, and Wat Pho traditional Thai wellness massage may be more well-recognized in the US than in Thailand. Volcanic rocks are shipped to equip hot stone massages in many non-volcanic places. However there is a tendency to relate wellbeing tourism more with the specific local and natural resources, and base it on what is available in order to ensure the development of new wellbeing products and services.

For example, thalassotherapy is well-known, but there can be an emphasis on exploring local algae, seaweed and alluvial mud in combination with climates and marine envi-ronments so as to not only create new touristic experiences but also to efficiently link up the local and regional spaces in a way that can assist recognition, image and branding.

Food is a major object for this endeavour, used to reconnect and to boost the wellbeing dimensions in rural tourism. Shying away from typical tourist behaviour, tourists express an interest in authentic experiences and community-based exploration, and food allows them to get to know locals in a meaningful way. A tendency consists of the inviting attitudes that intersect soundly with wellness travel, for example, the opportuni-ty to attend cooking classes, learn about local agriculture and to participate in river and open sea fishing. It is a particular experience to follow food on its way from the farm/sea to the table that emphasizes the emotional, social, intellectual and sustainable aspects of wellbeing. Local food related traditions and events may also be opportunities in terms of wellbeing developments, such as "medical food plant festivals", an "apple and cider harvesting, preparation and tasting event" etc.

Working with ambience, for example, for example how it is created by building style and building materials, underlines the connectivity between tourism facilities and rural resources. A rural setting can encourage the use of stone, wood, water, clay creating an

ambience that can enhance the feeling of wellbeing and also create distinctive images of place and space.

4.6. TREND 3: THE ALTRUISTIC FLING

Very clearly, traditional spas and wellness centres have a focus on the individual's ego, his or her enjoyment and pleasure (Pesonen & Komppula, 2010). The products and services can be described as pampering, often also with the social element of being together with others with the same aspirations. Habitually, a prime matter of attention for customers in spas is the quality level that is likely to be synonymous with the standard of luxury.

However, new strata of holidaymakers tend to recognize that they do not necessarily leave a wider responsibility at home when they travel to their holiday destination. It is not only about having a good time but also about being responsible and taking care of the social and physical environment. There are enhanced psychological and economic links between altruism and wellbeing. Giving back is often found to be more joyous than receiving, and it is correlated positively with happiness and health. "Voluntourism" has become an increasingly popular travel option. Affluent and well-educated travellers looking for personal growth and discovery are turning to experiences that connect them to charitable causes and local communities while on vacation. The pleasure of contributing to a higher purpose is indeed a wellbeing issue.

This can be considered an opportunity for many rural areas. However, altruism is not a product that develops itself and it is demanding in terms of entrepreneurial creativity, initiative and local follow-up. Touristic products can consist of, for example, letting tourists assist in fields or help out in environmental and nature regeneration projects. Less strenuous versions can be the "adoption" of environmentally vulnerable trees, endangered species or historical buildings, where tourists both co-finance and commit themselves to operating as ambassadors for the protection of such resources.

Spiritual resources (religious sites, magical natural phenomena etc.) may be particularly powerful in terms of creating platforms for relationships between locals and guests in a way that may lead to a beneficial feeling of wellbeing. There is a plea for considerate rural wellbeing entrepreneurs with high ethical standards. Wellbeing products in this category require reciprocity.

4.7. TREND 4: RURAL AS A MEDICAL PRESCRIPTION

Welfare economies in the EU are under financial pressure, and the constraints may increase with an ageing population, but also paradoxically as a consequence of better medical treatment opportunities. There is a trend that there will be an intensified focus on preventive medicine in order to stop expanded public expenditure, and populations will be required to take more self-preventive action.

It is not unusual for persons with health risks to take trips on their "doctor's orders", as physicians increasingly prescribe vacations as antidotes to stress. Doctors may recommend various kinds of physical activity to combat obesity and diabetes. In this devel-

opment, rural areas can potentially become the location for a niche health business with services in care and treatments, and in the training of citizens so that they raise the level of their self-care competences.

Nature as a healer is widely discussed and quite well documented but still to some extent it lacks commodification. For example, silence may be a health remedy but enjoying silence properly prompts a demand for supplementary accommodation, catering, transport etc.

A restriction to such prospects may be the requirement for standardized and certified medical treatment provided by trained and professional staff. Such human resources might be lacking in areas far from urban agglomerations. Presently, preventive health provision in rural areas is often mainly found in unorthodox medical specialties. Overcoming the barriers and building bridges between alternative medical practices and mainstream health systems is a task for rural actors who will want to exploit the potential that emerges from this trend. This strategy alley also embraces inviting new health experts to start businesses in rural areas.

4.8. TREND 5: WORK-LIFE BALANCE

This trend represents a challenge to the standard understanding of citizenship. The assumption is that "dual" or even "triple" or "quadruple" citizenships will emerge, and people will not only live in one single place. Technology allows the emergence of virtual workspaces and simultaneously work will become less spatially restricted – the workplace can be moved between urban and rural localities. In the future, the inclination to combine work, leisure and tourism in outdoor environments will become more pronounced and integrated into comprehensive life strategies. We are talking about creating an optimal work–life balance for families with young children, semi-retired professionals and also for people in other phases of their lives.

The customers for rural wellbeing in this category will be private persons and possibly also enterprises. Occupational health issues related to work–life balance may become reshuffled, particularly in the case of indispensable employees with scarce qualifications and competences. If indispensable staff suffers from stress and also health threatening obesity, mental problems etc. it is a major concern for employers. Embracing employers as potential customers for wellbeing tourism may call for entirely new types of spatial organization and modes of collaboration. Partnerships with insurance companies and professional medical bodies may also become more prevalent.

Rural areas, particularly in attractive vicinities of urban agglomerations, may have to organize spaces and services in order to be more attractive for beta citizens. Beta citizens have homes in several places and they feel at home, for example, both in towns and in rural areas. Typically, they are mobile job-wise. In terms of adding to the wellbeing profile of a rural community, it is a core challenge and undertaking to make these inhabitants feel like citizens and not like just tourists or guests. The term "tourist" may become less concise, and there is a necessity to reconceptualise the idea of a rural community and what is a "homeland". In addition, there is a demand for reconsidering

the locations and designs of beta homes for beta citizens, possibly also including mobile categories thereof.

4.9. TREND 6: WELLBEING DIVERSIFICATION THE RURAL WAY

Hej Above, it was emphasized that rural areas possess many resources of relevance for human wellbeing, resources that are specific for areas outside urban agglomerations and related to the existence of geographical breadth and open spaces. The rural also comprises resources that are related to rural traditions and practices that can be integrated into the development of new products. Any ambition to develop and innovate wellbeing tourism products may include the material or immaterial assets of the place. Rural wellbeing tourism may become significantly more than accommodation and spa facilities in rural areas.

However it must also be envisaged that rural areas are in competition with urban areas and that resources, however firmly defined as rural, may not be sacred and strapped to the rural environment. Continuously urban areas are found to steal, copy, transfer and reconstruct rural wellbeing resources. For example, London is planning a green bridge over the Thames, which is a natural area in the middle of the city. Copenhagen has a scheme to establish a large ski-mountain, integrated into the harbour leisure development. It makes it increasingly difficult for rural areas to genuinely distinguish themselves and to profit from their rural resources. These are not "real" rural facilities, but in the mindset of some city-dwellers these facilities can nonetheless be perfect substitutes.

Good odds may exist if rural areas can maintain an interlinked, multidimensional rural profile. Such composite styles and trends will be harder to mimic by urban wellbeing actors. It will require a significant collaborative organizational setup in rural areas, if the image of the rural should transgress the products of several providers in a larger area.

A consistent and constant reinvention of traditional rural tourism products may also be a crucial ingredient. In addition, this will require professional inputs as well as local commitment and foresight.

It is worth noticing that rural wellbeing products, as they are now, mainly rely on fairly "superficial" and easily understandable resources, for example forests, wind, water, food etc. Less intensively, attempts are seen to include "hidden" and "intricate" resources. An outsider's view is essential to "excavate" such resources. Future rural wellbeing may embrace the extraction of resources less "beautiful" and obvious, for example resources available in mining areas, on seabeds or in less accessible nature areas in general. This can, for example, inventively lead to "shock" therapies or "dirty" experiences. The excavation of nonconformist resources can include new types of raw materials for the portfolio of spa products or food ingredients and also experiences where the tourists interact with the resources as part of wellbeing consumption. This kind of diversification may be less replicable by actors in urban settings and thus be a way to maintain a competitive profile and distance.

4.10.   TREND 7: TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE CLIMATE SQUEEZE

There are many predictions about the changed and changing climate, but quite consistently, scientists assume that the weather in Northern Europe is likely to become more unstable, with more severe, rough incidents with heavy rain, storms and flooding. Gradually, the average temperature will probably rise. For better or worse, these are very important signals for rural wellbeing tourism.

Basically, warmer temperatures will benefit the rural tourism product as much of the experience takes place in outdoor environments. Biodiversity may benefit or degrade in a changed climate. Seasons may be prolonged. However, unpredictable weather conditions will urge a need to develop products that will be attractive no matter what the weather conditions are. This may consist of an increased emphasis on indoor facilities, possibly with opportunities to gaze at nature, in case outdoor environments are not accessible all the time and in all seasons. In winter sports areas, climate changes are particularly complex and ambiguous.

Alternatively, the development of touristic wellbeing products may benefit from the volatility and enhance products that can make sense of and take advantage of, for example, heavy rainfalls or extreme winds. New categories of outdoor equipment may be invented for this purpose, with narratives that support the experience to follow. Likewise, the development may include safety equipment, remedies and procedures so that the wellbeing element is not compromised.

Slowly, sustainability is moving into tourism as a managerial prerequisite. Some spa facilities are taking their environmental footprint very seriously. However, the distinct rural particularities – in general and in the specific locality – still need emphasis and communication to a tourism audience.

4.11.   TREND 8: OPENING THE DIGITAL CHANNELS

Social media influences all aspects of tourism. However, the communication imperative can be so intense that people nearly become "digital addicts", and in this case rural wellbeing can be a chance to turn off the mobile phone and the computer, and become disconnected for a period of time – for example for the purpose of reducing stress or addressing other health issues. The rural may offer medically supported help for digital addition victims. Thus, the rural environment can be an escape, a hideaway from the monstrous "surveillance" of daily life, and the tourist can be provided with the freedom to do things that are socially not fully accepted.

However, digital connectivity may offer opportunities in the completely opposite direction for rural wellbeing tourism. Potentially, users of social media do not want to be disconnected. This can be considered essential, which intrinsically means moving away from the social variety and turmoil of agglomerated places, but staying in digital contact. People may seek rural silence and peacefulness but within limitations: social media provides the (self-controlled) possibility to stay connected. While on holiday they may even increase their inclination to tell others about their experiences and thus compensate for disadvantages of geographical distance. They will be the nodes in

interrelatedness across geographies. For rural tourism destinations and facilities the high frequency of updates is a "viral word of mouth".

Social media is entering the rural and outdoor experiencescapes in other important ways. Tracking instruments can map personal performances on trails – for example distance, speed, endurance, moods and feelings. Systems can tag places of particular interest visited. The results are "personal" data, which may affect the individual's behaviour. The performance data and tagging can, however, also be shared with friends, and they can be the initiators of new relationships, for example with other people who incidentally happen to be in the same rural area at the same time. Indirectly and through social media, valuable marketing may take place outside the specific region. The e-rumour is, of course, difficult or impossible for rural destinations or wellbeing enterprises to control. Working in social media environments is a new discipline for rural wellbeing operators, and integrating them into rural storytelling and ever-evolving narratives is a challenge.

In this process of adapting to new ways of communication, rural actors will have to reinterpret their roles and the roles of the visitors. Visitors are not only customers; they may also be friends, associates, collaborators and information pushers. If the relationship goes wrong, the visitors may become communicators with negative implications; disseminating reproachful and, in the worst case, wrongful information.

4.12.   TREND 9: NEW PURITANISM – THE RURAL STYLE

Immanently, the rural has connotations with being "pure", "clean" and "healthy". Taking a wider stance, the rural can be the environment for initiating a healthier lifestyle, and popular self-help literature offers many allegations for this endeavour, for example de-clotting, de-toxication, simplicity, recycling, slow living etc. The rural may be the perfect place to acquire the genuine competences and skills to shift from an over-complex and hectic modern lifestyle to a purer one.

This wellbeing trend manifests itself in many, although not exactly coherent, ways. Enterprises in the rural tourism wellbeing field may grab this opportunity, for example by providing "grow-your-own food" and "collect-your-own herbs" courses and events, offering simple health treatments using local plants and foods in detox etc. The built ambience can also illustrate a strategic pureness, for example in the use of building materials, the handling of waste etc.

However, an honest shift may include a wider community in order to give an air of solemnity and urgency. The emerging "Slow Cities movement" demonstrates an indication of how a concept can gain some momentum by a comprehensive and coordinated attention and branding. Slow Cities is also an illustration of the fact that models must become global in order to gain dynamism and the power of persuasion. This is a challenge for small and remote rural areas, which are not always well accommodated within these context relevant competences and high quality global connections.

4.13.   TREND 10: THE GEAR DIMENSION

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4.14.   CONCLUDING REMARKS

This section sought to capture ten trends that may affect the future of rural wellbeing tourism.

- A movement towards holistic wellbeing
- Connecting with nature and its resources
- The altruistic fling
- The rural as a medical prescription
- Work–life balance
- Wellbeing diversification the rural way
- Taking advantage of the climate squeeze
- Opening digital channels
- New puritanism – the rural style
- The gear dimension

Obviously, modern tourists will want the rural wellbeing product. However, demand changes due to complex demographic, environmental, economic and other shifts in society. Rural wellbeing is far more than just building additional spas.

The outline of the trends suggests that rural areas have development and market oppor-tunities in the wellbeing fields, and there are distinctive resources available that can be the foundation of innovative progressions of products. It also becomes clear that rural areas are in multifaceted and rather severe competitive situations with urban areas, and

they will have to take a closer look at trends and cultivate a suitable anticipation of their prospects. However, the trends illustrate that rural areas need to foster strategic relationships with actors in urban areas, as rural communities and actors seldom possess the full array of skills and investor potential for a massive expansion into wellbeing tourism in its wider varieties.

The trend analysis is far from definite, and there are considerable uncertainties about the when and how changes will affect rural practices. There is also a significant ambiguity about where in space new ideas will be created and how they will disseminate to other geographical areas. The ProWell project includes the participation of a number of countries in Northern Europe, and these countries represent quite different economic backgrounds, traditions, institutional structures and policy directions. Progress with rural wellbeing ideas will hardly be entirely uniform across this geographical area.

5. THE VALUE CHAINS IN RURAL WELLBEING TOURISM

5.1. INTRODUCTION

ProWell is about enhancing thematic rural wellbeing products in Europe in order to increase market visibility and in order to support service providers and destinations that seek to create more value and higher competitiveness. In the previous chapters, the nature of rural wellbeing has been defined and developed, and market and development prospects have been identi-fied. In this section the aim is to pin down and discuss more exactly where in a value chain benefits are created. The logic is simple: if no value is created for the wellbeing tourists, no demand will emerge. And if no value is created for the providers, they will withdraw from the field and allocate their resources and initiative elsewhere.

The issue of value for tourists and tourism providers can be approached in a great number of ways. Economics and sociology, for example, employ different definitions of value. In this section the issue is addressed through a value chain approach. Value chains are frameworks well-known from economy and business studies, influentially conceptualized by Porter (1985). The analytical advantage emerges from the distinct process view where the provision of a service is made up of a system with subsystems,

each with inputs, transformation pro-cesses and outputs. At each step in a process additional value of some sort and size is sup-posed to be generated. The carrying out of value chain activities in mutual dependency de-termines how and where benefits will eventually materialize (Kaplinsky & Morris, 2001).

Being created by economists, the value chain is usually comprised of money benefits. The value for business enterprises and, indirectly, for societies is measured in profit terms, refer-ring to the margin between turnover and costs. Although it raises some methodological chal-lenges, the same reasoning can be applied for aspects of the inputs and outputs of resources understood as being of a more qualitative nature. Additional benefits and social values – whatever they might be: pleasure, comfort, knowledge, relationships etc. – could be values inspected in the process (Cerin, 2006).

Since the 1980s, the value chain has been used on many scales: from its application to conti-nents, nations, sectors and industries down to single organizations. Tourism and tourism des-tinations are objects of analyses in different ways, as shall be illuminated in greater detail be-low. The purpose of this chapter is to critically discuss the value chain model in a rural wellbe-ing tourism context and to determine its potential value for problem diagnosis and policy making. The chapter provides an input to subsequent chapters that shall, in a more detailed manner, recommend future directions for rural tourism providers.

5.2. TWO APPROACHES TO VALUE CHAINS IN TOURISM

Over the recent decades tourism practitioners and researchers have embraced the value chain model. However, looking in detail at the practice and research, it appears that the application of the model takes place in two rather incompatible ways:

- *Destination logic.* In this logic, the destination is analysed as a composition or sequence of services that the tourists can benefit from during their entire holi-day. Destinations with a varied amount of products that are transparently and ac-cessibly linked together and cover all needs, from decisions prior to travel to af-ter visit services, are considered more likely to create higher value for tourists than destinations with weaker product coherence. Moreover, tourism businesses will benefit to the extent that a value chain that satisfies the totality of the needs of tourists and providers will be more profitable if tourists pay for the additional and comprehensive services.

- *Supply chain logic.* This logic relies more on Porter's original production orient-ed model. Any single tourism product consists of a chain of production steps, where material and immaterial resources are added subsequently. At each step, new value is added to the product. The production may take place in a single or-ganization from the very start to the delivery, or it may be produced by a number of actors in a supply chain. The focus in this logic is on business models and how value is generated across sectors by refining and developing products. The point of view in supply chain logic refers to business and production logic, and the value chain may be completely different from what the tourist will experi-

ence. Well-coordinated supply chains will enhance profits at each step in the chain and potentially also benefit tourists through lower prices.

Destination value chain logic seems to have received far more attention in the tourism context than the supply chain model. In the following, both models will be illustrated with examples from rural wellbeing tourism.

5.3. THE DESTINATION VALUE CHAIN

The foundations of the tourism destination value chain seem to derive mainly from marketing discipline (Song et al., 2012). When observing tourists' behaviour and perceptions, the destination as a service system in its comprehensiveness will, for the tourist, inevitably be the essential item of interest and purchase. Most often the tourists select the destination first and select specific hotels, particular restaurants, theme parks or any other single element as secondary choices (Dallert et al., 1998). Tourists may visit Lapland to in order to see the northern lights, pursue their interest in angling or enjoy trails for physical fitness purposes. They will need accommodation but a hotel will hardly be able individually to evoke an action of demand, no matter how comfortable or spectacular it might be.

The destination value chain (Figure 3) articulates that any tourist will need a range of different services during a holiday, for example travel services, transportation, accommodation, catering, experiences, shopping etc. It is also envisages that the consumption of these services takes place in some sort of logical order throughout the extended holiday. The figure shows a commonly seen mode of illustrating this sequence of service purchase (Weiermair, 2006). From this point of view, well-supplied destinations with a variety of providers will be able to generate better tourism with a higher value to the tourists. Destinations with a variety of offers will also breed a higher turnover and economic value than destinations with fewer services to offer tourists. Tourists will benefit from the transparency of the components of the tourist product and, when closely coordinated, this will include the service concept, service process and service system.

Figure 3: The customer flow destination model of the value chain (adapted from weiermair, 2006)
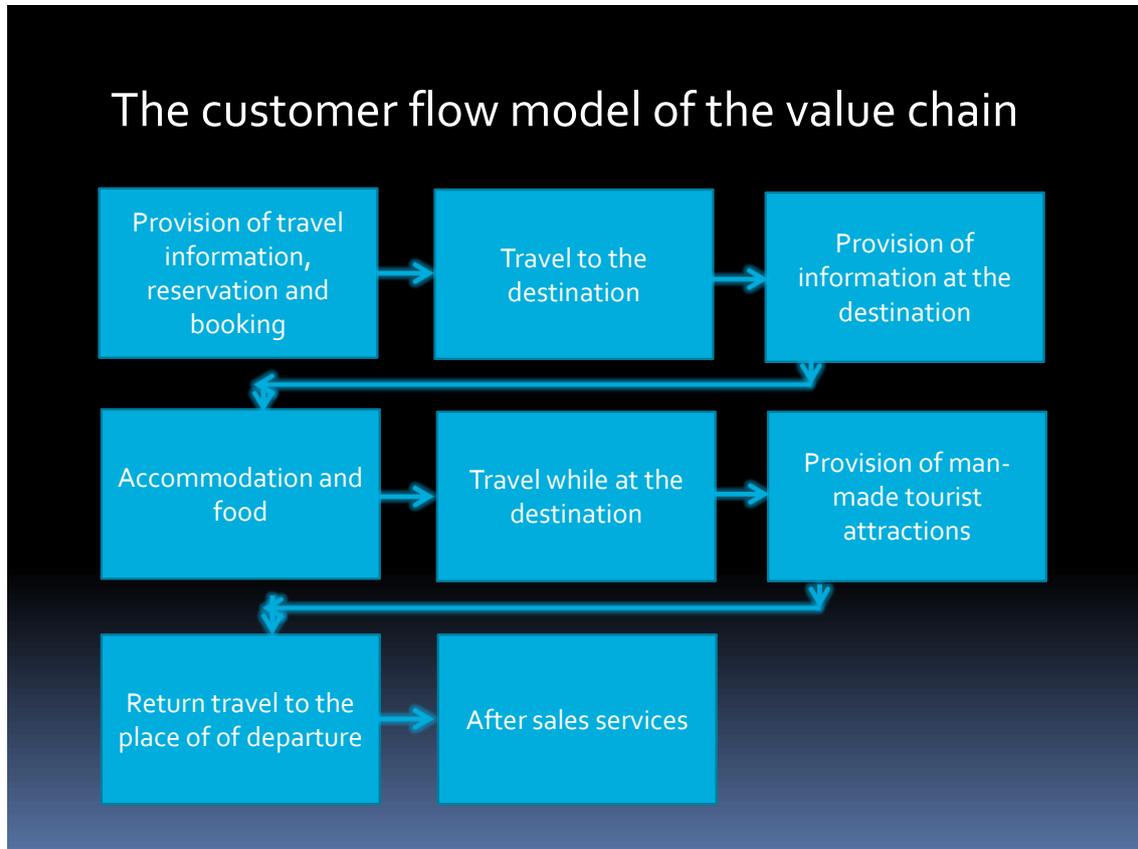
Actors in charge of destination management, for example DMOs or regional governmental agencies, are strategically occupied with the value chain model in three different ways:

- Product upgrading strategy
- Plentification strategy
- Horizontal coordination strategy.

The product upgrading strategy may consist of adding quality to tourism products. Raising standards can consist of many different elements, depending on the character of the destination. Seaside destination actors can, for example, choose to enhance beach maintenance and cleaning, and destinations may also stimulate hotels to renovate and obtain higher levels of standards and certification. Additionally, upgrading can entail better accessibility, such as improved train or flight connections and enriched web-booking facilities. In this perspective on the value chain, upgrading should raise levels in ways so that no part of the value chain is significantly below level, assuming that tourists will expect somewhat uniform quality standards.

Plentification is about closing gaps in the value chain. For example, in the case of a destination with good bicycle trails there should also be bike rental, and the strategy can be dedicated to stimulating entrepreneurs to establish relevant products and services

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(Mojic, 2012). Widening the capacity and the diversity of accommodation can be part of an effort to address different target groups. Plentification can aim at prolonging the stay of customers, because there will be more to experience at the destination.

The horizontal coordination strategy deals with the efficient linking, including even genuine blueprinting, of the entire process. In such situations, tourists will experience an ease of access, such as the possibility to purchase a package consisting of travel, experience and accommodation elements. From the point of view of the providers, well-constructed packages or consumption sequences may increase sales and revenues, even if customers are offered price premiums or supplementary benefits. Linking resourcefully is also about information and referrals that raise the likelihood of extra sales not only in a single enterprise, but also in the destination at large. Horizontal coordination is embedded in the collaborative structures usually found in destinations. The destination chain bonds local resources for enhanced tourism specific value creation (Gibson et al., 2005; Shtonova, 2011).

Analytically, the use of the destination chain strategy has been applied particularly intensively in third world development contexts (Harrison, 2008; Cole & Morgan, 2010; Holden et al., 2011). Pro-poor tourism initiatives aim at plentification as well as upgrading, and this process also aims to limit the influence and dependency of international tourism operators. Appropriate measures consist of stimulating local entrepreneurship, and ensuring solid and transparent governance systems. It is also profoundly about minimizing economic leakages and in this process creating tourism jobs for locals. The same logic is applicable in cases of tourism in peripheries and rural areas in the developed world (Bakucz, 2011).

This destination approach to the value chain model does have some benefits as a strategic framework for local action. It is easy to find support among actors for the logic that knitting the destination product closer together will elevate the coherence and quality of the product and ensure that products are adequately marketed. However, the model is insufficient if we want to comprehend production logic (Flagestad & Hope, 2001; Yilmaz & Bititci, 2006; Zhang et al., 2009). Accordingly, tourism researchers and practitioners have somewhat failed to make full use of the value chain model in Porter's original sense, and this dimension will be shown in the section below.

5.4. THE SUPPLY VALUE CHAIN

The supply value chain distinguishes itself from the destination value chain. The supply value chain (Figure 4) is a description of the full range of activities required to bring a product or service through the different phases of production (including physical transformation and the inputs of various producers and services) in response to consumers' demand. The chain may not at all be recognizable for the tourists and should not be so either. The supply value chain envisages the full production of a product, not the consumption. A restaurant's service to a quest is composed of many elements, including food components at different stages of preparation and many other items, for example the décor, the service sequences with the including narratives, and the entertainment. Value adding takes place at each single stage from the farmer to the guest. Principally,

the more value-added and the longer the service sequence that the guest is willing to pay for is, the better it is for the providing enterprise and the destination.

Figure 4: The supply value chain
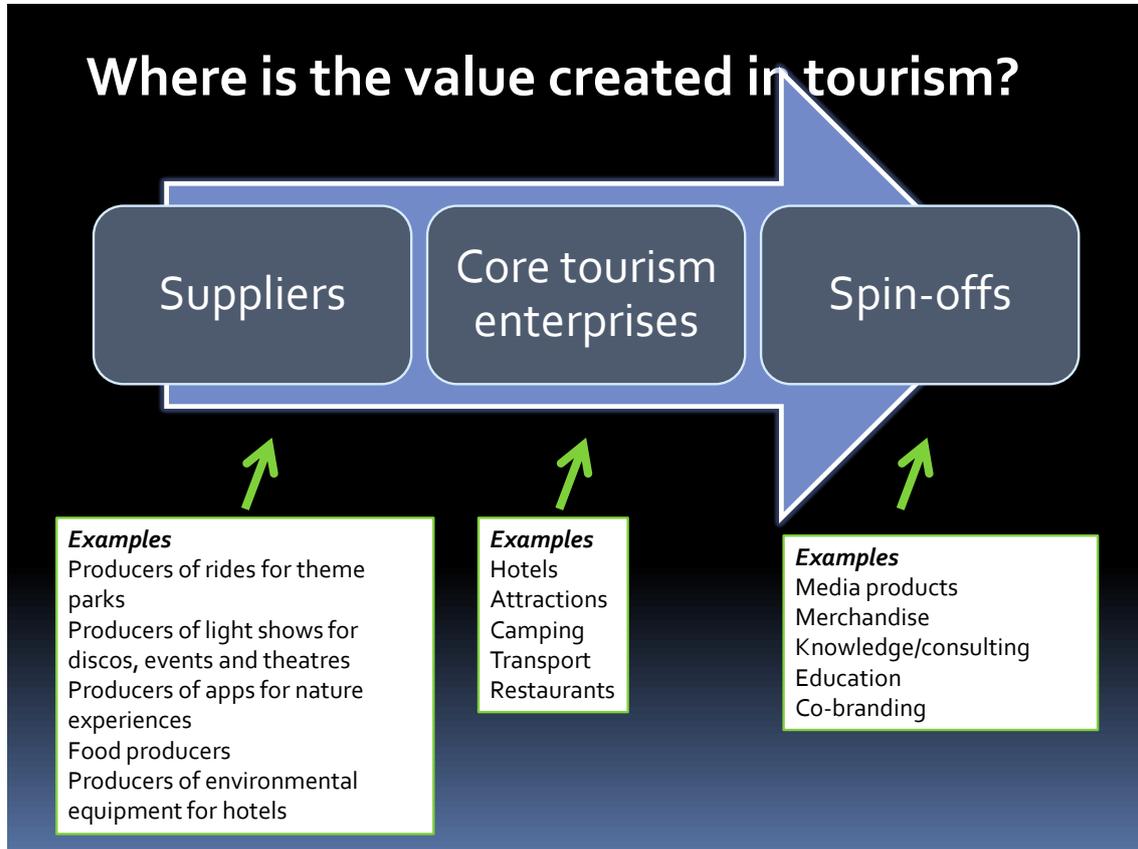
Any enterprise, including tourist enterprises, can choose to outsource elements in the production chain to suppliers and collaborative partners. On closer inspection most enterprises make constant choices between whether to make a product themselves or buy it from others (Espino-Rodríguez et al., 2008). As shown in the figure, suppliers are seldom parts of the core tourism industry. Food and drinks are produced in specialized plants, and food and catering industries have specialized in the provision of pre-cooked items for tourism caterers (Hjalager, 1999). The basic components of rides in amusement parks are manufactured in, for example, Italy and the US and sold worldwide, only being modified on the surface for the local context (Milman, 2010). The ICT sector delivers a large portfolio of products and services for hotels, museums and other attractions, and through these products tourism enterprises are capable of enhancing back-stage productivity and front stage guest experience and satisfaction (Berne et al., 2012).

Any type of tourism enterprise could be analysed in this manner. In 1994, by decomposing a hotel building and its services, Poon (1994) already demonstrated the massive globalization trend in tourism operations. In tourism, as in other business sectors, some foreign materials are better or cheaper than local materials and are therefore imported. Much of the effort in pro-poor tourism, eco-tourism and the like has an emphasis on the shortening of backward supply chains in order to limit economic leakages (Meyer,

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2007), and multinationals are particularly criticized for neglecting local welfare (Mitchel et al., 2009). There are examples of efforts to create denser links between tourism dinosaurs and local micro scale supplying economy, and more tourism multinational corporations adapt to this philosophy as part of the corporate social responsibility (CSR) policy. Swedish Skistar is an example of a large and internationally operating company that has enhanced local networking and involvement (Nordin & Svensson, 2007).

Tourism enterprises may be in juxtaposition with forward value creation in a chain, as illustrated on the right side of the diagram. In this case tourism enterprises are directly or indirectly (but not so transparently) suppliers to other value processes. Some tourism enterprises are proud of being incorporated in systematic trade training, for example, this is done traditionally in Swiss hotels and for them the training product is another value chain, beyond (although possibly intermingled with) the tourism service. There may be spin-offs of other kinds as well. Popular travel related TV shows produce added value, for example, when enterprises or destinations deliver the scenery and symbolic images for travelling chefs. Destinations may see this as free and much appreciated marketing, but there is also a significant business element and value creation in its own respect when TV viewers are willing to pay for the services. In this situation, TV customers are not tourists to the destinations thus exposed in the media, even if they become so at a later stage (Hall & Mitchell, 2002).

Thus, in scope the supply chain is bridging tourism supply, creating benefits across tourism elements and – most importantly here – across industry sectors.

The perspective of the supply value chain dramatically enhances the ideas of a tourism economy. It illustrates the dependency of tourism on other segments of the economy – for better or worse. In terms of innovation, tourism is found to be a low performer (Sundbo et al., 2007; Hjalager, 2002) but in alliances with suppliers and other partners, the innovative ability is widely expanded. For example, hotels can implement innovative energy systems but basically the technical revolutions are likely to be located with the supplier, not with the hotels. In this respect, the economic development of tourism will benefit from taking into account the value chain from the supply chain perspective rather than solely considering the destination value chain (Rønningen, 2010).

5.5. VALUES CHAINS IN A RURAL CONTEXT

Referring to Chapter 5 in this report, rural wellbeing tourism is an amalgamation of tourism services that hold strong and clear spatial attributes. The notion of the rural evokes images of landscapes and outdoor activities using natural resources and adapting to the challenges of climatic conditions. Accordingly, rural wellbeing tourism products are closely bound to a location and the natural environment, and they cannot easily be moved around.

However, the rural is not a uniform concept, as landscapes and climates differ. Hence, wellbeing attributes may vary according to spatial contexts. As noted by Erfurt-Cooper (2013), even otherwise quite standard spa facilities attempt to diversity by relating carefully to the local ambience. The figure below shows a continuum of rural settings of relevance for wellbeing tourism purposes. The continuum ranges from remote, sparsely

populated wildernesses with difficult accessibility at the top of the figure to the areas where human interference is strong, for example because of agriculture at the bottom of the figure (Bell et al., 2010). The composition of a value chain for rural tourism depends on the types of landscape and configuration of rural life and activity (Figure 5).

Figure 5: The landscape continuum
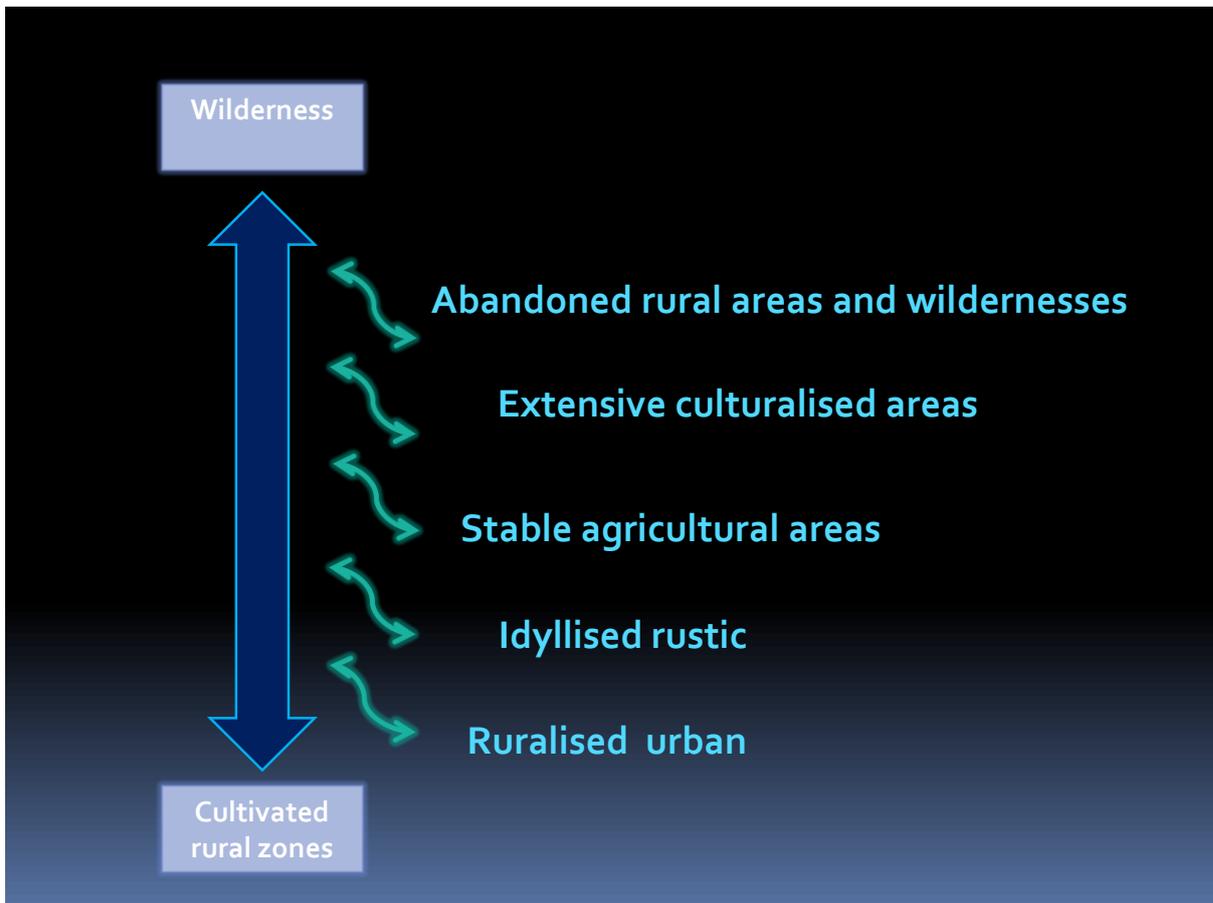
In the following, the two different approaches to value chains will be addressed with special attention paid to landscape and rural features' issues and mosaics.

5.6. RURAL WELLBEING TOURISM AND THE DESTINATION VALUE CHAIN LOGIC

The development challenges in rural areas and the need for action is widely described in the research literature (Shucksmith, 2010). Particularly in terms of tourism related developments, the low density of tourism facilities and strong seasonality create gaps in the value chain as tourists experience it. Being a tourist in peripheries and in wildernesses may require that the tourist possess abilities to improvise and compensate, and tourism products are constructed to help the more incapable and less well-equipped tourists to overcome such challenges and thus generate consumer value.

Wellbeing destination value chains in wildernesses, remote and protected areas, and abandoned zones. In the most sparsely populated areas, guided tours are prevalent for the composition of tourism value chains. Bertella (2011) and Saarinen (2013) make inquiries into the activities organized for trips in the arctic. They identify entrepreneurial plentification endeavours to make the value chain more accessible to tourists less familiar with rural and peripheral attractions and qualities. Not surprisingly, transportation is a key binding factor, and transportation may consist of boat trip facilities, as is the case with whale watching, or dog sledge trips. The plentification is not only about ensuring the means of transportation but in particular, there is an intense communication and interpretative element. It is essential to explain and create narratives in order to make the tourist appreciate the benefits of tourism in the wilderness and very remote areas. Nevertheless, it is also necessary to compensate for the inconveniences and lack of smoothness in the consumption process through action and information. Thus, guiding services with quite rigidly packaged elements come up strongly as part of the plentification.

The wellbeing ingredient in adventure tourism may not be entirely obvious, as the trips are often strenuous and not obviously soothing for the mind or the body. However, satisfactory travel experiences in remote and not easily accessible rural areas may include wellbeing elements such of learning, reflection and self-efficacy. Little (2012) mentions that using the rural to discipline and exercise the body can also be mental therapy.

Tourism in the wilderness might also be self-organized. In that case, facilities may consist of well-communicated trails, shelters and other accommodation facilities, adapted catering etc. The value chain may be a composite package of services provided at the place of departure – for example fishing or hunting permissions, gear for sale or rental for the trip, extensive guidebooks, emergency backup services etc. Mordue (2014) describes the human–nature connectedness in angling tourism and finds that an overreliance on guiding may even be counteractive in terms of wellbeing. Putting together the ingredients of a self-service package may be in the hands of the tourist information offices, however, in the case of special interests, gear shops are keen on organizing the product in a wider respect, foreseeing that the creation of services for tourists may benefit tourism business on other levels of the value chain (Cater, 2013). Accordingly, the retail features are essential in the plentification and upgrading strategies in the self-provided outdoor tourism destination value chains.

When talking about placing wellbeing facilities geographically "in the middle of nowhere", it is possible to refer to Iceland for good examples. Spas utilize natural resources but also ensure a sustainable use of the resources and the environment (Huijbens, 2011). In many countries hubs for more active outdoor wellbeing consist of lodges and camps, for example lodgings dedicated to the needs of bird watching. Like in others resorts, corporations providing such facilities will be likely to control the value chain and capture a large amount of the consumption in the locality.

Wellbeing destination value chains in agricultural and forestry landscapes. When assessing the potentials of wellbeing in these landscapes it is important to envisage that competition of spatial resources may arise and, potentially, lead to a conflict of interests

(Frisvoll, 2014). Tourism activities are not necessarily welcomed warmly in agricultural and forestry areas, particularly not if the production paradigm requires monocultured landscapes and the operation is undertaken by noisy and even polluting machinery. However, even in such zones niches might occur for wellbeing tourism, and there are examples of tourism services that align very well with the concepts of health and wellbeing.

For many decades farm tourism has flourished and is regarded by many customers as the ultimate way to get into an authentic "nature" mode. The rural tourism offerings are many, for example participation in farm work, food preparation and garden work. Farms may also be equipped for a range of sports and fitness activities or have merely attractive relaxation, or even spiritual, possibilities (Sharpley & Jepson, 2001). Cawley and Gillmor (2008) analyse attempts in Ireland to establish networks among rural providers in strategically concise destination value chains. The effect is that tourists to rural areas can experience a broader variety of products in a more transparent market.

Rural areas represent spatial opportunities for touring, for example horse riding, paddling, mountain biking, dog training etc. Plentification and upgrading strategies may consist of creating and ensuring feasible trails and tracks and minimizing the risks of conflicts with agriculture and forestry. There is a range of services related to this, for example, in the case of equestrian tourism services include the renting of horses, hay hotels, riding lessons, riding therapy etc. (Ollenburg, 2005).

Spas and other wellbeing resorts can be located in or near agricultural areas, for example in zones with some amenity values such as coastlines, forest views, lakes etc. The outmigration from rural areas of the population and of economic activities has resulted in the vacation of numerous buildings, not only of agricultural buildings but also of social institutions etc. Some of these rural brownfields have turned out to be suitable for remediation and reuse as wellbeing resorts (Palmer et al., 2004; Skala et al., 2013). Resorts may also exploit particular microclimates generated as a consequence of the landscape structures, for example humid or dry climates, sunny or shady zones (Daugstad, 2008).

Wellbeing destination value chains in idyllic landscapes. Idyllic landscapes close to larger urban or touristic areas are characterized by more heterogeneous land use, smaller scales and shorter distances. Organic cultivation is more prevalent within more intensively cultivated zones and thereby possibly contributes with higher landscape values in aesthetic and health senses than traditional agricultural landscapes. Thereby, such rural zones have prospects to create day-based wellbeing facilities to supply the (urban) leisure and tourism influx. The peri-urban landscape contains types of tourism facilities that rely on natural scenic views or succeed due to access to artificial landscapes. Tourism providers in such amenities add value by supplying catering, accommodation and interpretative services. Manufactured wellbeing landscapes may consist of, for example, multisensory gardens (Rickly-Boyd, 2009).

Green and blue gym facilities are spreading to rural zones but particularly to areas in the vicinity of urban agglomerations, where tourists share facilities with the citizens (Curry, 2008). Given denser geographies, the gym services are linked up to an accommodation

service portfolio, where hotels guests may borrow, rent or purchase gear and acquire guided access. Marine environments are comprised of both natural phenomena (Wyles et al., 2014) and man-made facilities, and therefore with the potential for value chains that consist of harbours, saunas, swimming and diving facilities, and also catering services with distinct marine features. Coastal tourism destinations are well-known for including such offers, some of which can be claimed to support the wellbeing agenda.

5.7. RURAL WELLBEING TOURISM IN THE SUPPLY VALUE CHAIN LOGIC

In this section the three principal spatial characteristics will be addressed in a supply value chain perspective. A supply chain interpretation focuses on the bridging of the resource provision across sectors. The principal focus in on the production of wellbeing services rather than consumption.

Wellbeing destination value chains in wildernesses, remote and protected areas and abandoned zones. Economic activities in such areas consist of, for example, extractive functions such as forestry, mining, hunting etc. Some tourism activities may be related to these. Hunting may not only be for business but also for leisure, and there are distinct product and service linkages. For example leisure hunting may be integrated in comprehensive wildlife management and protection, and the management of hunting may be integrated in a commercial flow, where hunters are not allowed to take away their bag. In these cases, tourists have to relate more to a hunting industry system than to a tourist destination.

The wellbeing dimension is not the most obvious in the case of mining (Conlin & Jolliffe, 2010). However, mining tourism is very popular, although mainly for the heritage elements. The remains of mining industries can be transformed into resources for tourism, for example quarry lakes, which can make new landscape qualities or be the location of outdoor and wellbeing facilities. Salt mines are reused as spas. Wellbeing tourism in functioning mining areas may be more questionable, but there are Italian examples of utilizing marble quarries for spectacular pools and these may also attract interest in other marble products of the area (Cominato et al., 2012).

Forestry and husbandry (for example keeping sheep) are prevalent in remote areas. Tourism can be aligned with these production functions, for example in Denmark, where tourists, in the spring, are invited to participate in bringing the sheep to grassing fields on remote, tiny islands and to rope in the sheep again at the end of the grassing season. Tourists get an experience, but they also become part of the value chain for the sheep farming.

Citizen science and tourism are becoming more interrelated. Diving tourists contribute to the whale shark research project ECOCEAN by taking pictures and sharing these on a joint website serving both tourism and research. In the northern peripheries the same concepts are implemented in connection with whale watching and bird watching (Hoarau & Kline, 2014). In terms of the environmental monitoring of vulnerable nature areas, environmentally dedicated tourists undertake to report questionable and hazardous incidences. Voluntary participation in conversation activities and local community work is a form blending with wellbeing, and new forms are emerging. Nature conserva-

tion projects attract volunteers, and the motivations for participating transcend individual needs and include the needs of others (Hjalager et al., 2011).

Spectacular landscapes and the activities in those landscapes attract media attention. Media include both TV and newspaper launches, books, movies, dedicated websites, apps etc. Good tourism holds the potential to transmute into excellent media products for a far larger audience, although this may affect local economies by an increase in tourism in specific places as a result of media attention. Thus the media represent an extended value chain. Examples include meditation or angling DVDs that are embedded in and refer to specific locations and landscapes. Tourism research tends to have an emphasis on film-induced effects on local economics, but there is limited focus on the full value chain and the economics of the media industry.

Wellbeing supply value chains in agricultural and forestry landscapes. Food is the principal item that efficiently bridges the value chain gaps between agricultural and forestry landscapes on the one hand and tourism on the other. Food is not only a mere necessity. The health industry and massive media attention on uncovering foodies' holiday lifestyles, raise the attention given to particular food items and food habits as key matters for human wellbeing. Food is an agent of wellbeing and thereby value creating links to agricultural areas are shaped. Looking in detail, the food and health issue can be implemented in wellbeing tourism in a great number of ways, most simply as healthy and local food in spas, hotels and restaurants (Green & Dougherty, 2008). However, the integration of food and tourism has many supplementary elements, such as the establishment of health food events, learning activities and participation in the production activities (Yoo et al., 2013). Creating direct and personal relationships between tourists and food producers may enhance the marketing value of the food sector, increase the exposure of the product in urban areas, and eventually lead to changes in food delivery systems (Kline et al., 2014).

Agriculture, forestry and the traditional and new bioenergy and renewable energy exploitation may co-exist and co-develop creatively with wellbeing tourism products. Firewood from forests can, for example, contribute to the heating of spas, and sun and wind add more sustainable categories (Nawrocka, 2013). Many components of spas have their origins in bioresources, developed and used for medical and cosmetic treatments, and as remedies in relaxation. The cosmeceutical industry is emerging and the links to tourism seem not yet fully exploited (Hjalager & Konu, 2011; Sarmidi & Enshasy, 2012).

Wellbeing supply value chains in the idyllic landscape. Basically, the idyllic landscape will be more supportive to the ideas of wellbeing than traditionally and extensively cultivated agricultural areas. The idyllic landscape offers a variation in flora and fauna, and the aesthetic dimensions contribute to a healthy feel-good factor (Smith & Reisinger, 2013). However, in a supply value chain visual impressions are not enough. Sensory benefits – feeling, seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting – are supplemented by enhancing interpretative services, such as therapeutic offers, healing and curing. The medical aspects of the idyllic landscapes are many faceted but not integrated into value chains until supplemented with human services and auxiliary products. The innovative creativity is emerging, as demonstrated by Stigsdotter el al. (2011).

Sometimes tourists not only enjoy landscapes, but also accept participating in the creation and development of landscape resources. Wellbeing emerges from taking part in the community and "giving back" (Hjalager et al., 2011). Such "transcendence" activities consist of making it possible for tourists to lend a hand in gardening and landscape maintenance. Along the same lines, Puczkó and Smith (2012) identify "charity landscapes" that allow tourists to contribute to a good human or environmental purpose. Organized leisure husbandry can also be integrated in wellbeing services, for example including looking after chickens, bees etc. in the totality of a rural wellbeing tourism product. The produce from the participation may be items for purchase and not necessary at a lower price to compensate for the manpower input in the production.

Increasingly, traditional spas facilities are objects of keen design efforts so as to create distinctive images and marketing values. Spas can be set in idyllic landscapes – such as vineyards, orchards, rural fishing quays, manor houses, greenhouses etc. – exploiting the extra value of the surroundings.

The two previous sections elaborate on the connections between landscapes and the value chain, in subsection 4.5 the destination value chain and in subsection 4.6 the supply value chain. Table 1 summarizes the logic and the examples, and illustrates the importance of connecting ideas about value creation in rural wellbeing tourism with the spatial characteristics.

5.8. USING VALUE CHAIN LOGIC FOR RURAL WELLBEING TOURISM POLICIES – A DISCUSSION

As illustrated above, the value chain can be helpful for a more inclusive analysis of rural wellbeing tourism. In the case of the destination value chain, the logic helps to see the provision of wellbeing services mainly from the customers' point of view and challenges issues about product quantity, variation and quality. In the case of the supply value chain, the focus is on the sector-overarching production system that includes suppliers and other collaborating actors in a systemic tourism context (Rønningen & Lien, 2014).

The value chain can open the analytic mind, but more operatively and practically, it can be seen as a diagnostic tool. Hence, the chain model can assist in identifying:

- The dynamic linkages between productive activities. How are different links in a chain held together; what is the "glue"? What is the geographical distribution of the different links in the chain? When one link in a chain changes, what happens to the prior and subsequent links? Will new value windows for profit arise, or will the opportunities be closed in the case of change?

Table 1: A summary of actions

	Destination value chain Bonding resources, plentification and unification of the product image	Supply value chain Bridging resources, creating value and innovations in tourism and other sectors
Wildernesses, remote and protected areas, low population density rural zones, abandonment zones	• Guiding services that link sights, services and experiences into flows and packages • Self-service provision, ex retail, renting, angling permits, trails and related (paid) services • Theme based wilderness all inclusive hubs, for example hunting, health, spa	• Embedding tourism in extraction functions quarries, forestry, hunting • Citizens/tourists science, investigative tourism, participation in wellbeing research projects • Media productions in connection with tours, for examples expedition bulletins • Conservation holidays co-creating healthier landscapes or environmentally safe tourism facilities
Agricultural and forestry landscapes and competition for resources	• Farm relaxation and participation in farm life activities, for example growing/gathering/preparing food etc. • Touring, animal related wellbeing services (for example horse riding, dog training) • Forestry spas and resorts that exploit microclimatic conditions in a composite product	• Healthy food development and subsequent new delivery systems that include tourism • Bioenergy exploitation for wellbeing tourism products, for example when bioenergy is used for the heating of spas and in spa products and ingredients
Idyllic rural landscapes, closer to urban areas	• Artificial landscaping and the provision of catering, accommodation and other services in connection with sceneries • Sensory garden services, barefoot gardens, silent landscapes etc. • Green and blue fitness areas and related services	• Participative landscape arts and landscaping, creating and amending the landscapes for wellbeing • Urban or close-to-urban leisure husbandry – chicken, bees etc. • Traditional spas in untraditional settings

- Constraints and levels of inefficiencies that prevent the further addition of net value, innovation and competitiveness. What missing links prevent the emergence of an efficient and attractive rural wellbeing cluster? What elements are underperforming? What additional links could be of importance for a changed product profile? What landscape related resources are inactive in the tourism value chain, and could they be activated?

- Recognition of value created in and beyond tourism. What are intrinsic interdependencies and flows created in the supplier's part of the value chain? From a rural development perspective, is the economic turnover larger among suppliers than in core tourism actors? Are jobs in the supply sector more favourable in terms of payment, competence requirements and seasonal issues? Can outsourcing or insourcing benefit the local tourism labour market?

In a wider perspective, the value chain analysis can inform policymakers at local and national levels and help in the following:

- Identification of points of entry for policy. Are incentives to collaborate and exploit values lacking at any specific points in the value chain? What policy bodies are in charge of the specific points of entry? Is it necessary to activate policy bodies beyond the traditional tourism policy organizations and DMOs? In the case of rural wellbeing tourism for example, policy makers in agriculture, pharmaceuticals, landscape and planning, extractive sectors etc.?

- Re-assessment of the economic power of target beneficiaries and the "rules of the game" in the value chain. How are actors likely to react to policy incentives? How to ensure the right enablers are selected; those who can promote and enhance processes?

- Focus on structural impacts. How will policies impact/affect broader social and economic processes in local areas, including the leakages into and out of the local areas? How will policies contribute to the building of persistent and beneficial relationships between rural and urban areas?

- Value chain stewardship. How is a continuous value chain stewardship installed, and who takes responsibility for this in local areas (Cerin, 2006)? What, more specifically, are the tools in value chain stewardship in a rural wellbeing tourism setting?

This publication addresses rural wellbeing tourism, and this chapter illustrated the potential of two categories of value chain analysis for examining the phenomenon. It also took into account the different types of landscapes that decisively affect the composition of the value chains and the logic of their development. In tourism literature, this approach has not been implemented to any significant degree, particularly not the supply chain version. There is a need to validate and to enrich the concepts with more concise empirical studies and to test the diagnostic as well as the policy prospects.

6. A typology of rural wellbeing tourism resources

6.1. Introduction – a resource based view of "rural" as a therapeutic measure

Rural areas, following the definition above, offer many resources that can be, and are already being, utilized in rural wellbeing tourism. In this section, the groups of resources are discussed from the point of view of their contribution to or potential to enhance wellbeing. This is, however, a difficult task as the needs and desires of wellbeing tourists are individual and their understanding of wellbeing may differ considerably. The main idea of this chapter is, however, to contribute new thoughts and ideas, and widen the understanding of the scope and possibilities of rural wellbeing tourism.

Tourism spa and wellness facilities are sometimes established on concepts that are brought from somewhere else, a "footloose" facility established in a specific place but without any particularly relation and reference to the location. However, increasingly developers of tourism facilities take into account the local resources in order to create and underline unique experiences. Wellbeing tourists are in search of the authentic and unique (Pforr et al., 2014), and in order to accommodate this demand, tourism resources

may be created in collaboration with a wide spectrum of the region's different stake-holders so as to make the most of local knowledge and resources.

This chapter first presents some ideas about the rural space as a framework for wellbeing, and then it develops a more specific typology about the potential resource elements of rural wellbeing tourism.

The framework for wellbeing tourism in rural spaces is developed mainly on the basis of the characteristics linked to it, such as the beauty of the environment, silence, clean air and nature, tranquillity and remoteness. This framework does not limit itself to sensed experiences (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch) but may also include aspects that relate to pain, balance, temperature etc. The creation of multi-sense wellbeing tourism experiences may increase the mental and emotional engagement in consumption of things related to the rural, which can lead to increased tourist satisfaction and to the development of positive memories (Tarssanen, 2004). In general, several studies have suggested that the location for doing physical exercise affects mental wellbeing, and outdoors and environments linked with nature have a particular distinctively positive impact (Thompson Coon et al., 2011). Moreover, in an urbanized world, rural space as such may be an entirely novel environment for many people. Studies have shown that the mere experience of novelty can increase mindfulness, which results (among other things) in reduced burnout and an increase in competence, memory, health, positive effect, creativity and charisma (Grant et al., 2004). Therefore, the rural space in general has high potential to add value to wellbeing tourism.

Academically, a resource-based view assumes that firms and destinations create a competitive advantage by bundling tangible and intangible resources into a product and service (Penrose, 1959; Wernerfeldt, 1984). The interpretation of the resources is critical, and interpretation is a continuous process. In this chapter the understanding of rural as a resource is highlighted. Furthermore, the bundling practice is crucial for obtaining competitive advantage.

The resource-based view underlines the need for the identification and evaluation of the resources and capabilities. In this process, enterprises (and in this case, also destinations) are urged to seek out resources that can be characterized as:

- *Valuable*, in the sense that they can be employed in a specific rural economic and social value creation process
- *Rare,* as other enterprises and destinations do not have the same opportunities, and they cannot immediately create such resources, for example because resources are embedded closely into natural environments: being in possession of these resources will give the area or the enterprise a special advantage and potentially higher returns
- *Inimitable;* where the region or the enterprise has such control over the resources and the resource combination that it is hardly possible for anyone else to compete. This is a consequence of natural environments but also of intellectual property and add-ons

- *Non-substitutable;* which means that only this resource is considered the "right" one for the purpose and for the customer. Thus, it is hard for competitors to come up with, for example, technological "fixes" that can substitute it fully or partly.

In the following sections, some potential resources of the rural environment are discussed on the basis of both research papers and examples of wellbeing tourism products. In a sense, the following typology draws on theory and concepts. In practice many of the discussed elements are interwoven and interlinked, and will be so when enterprises and destinations take them on board and utilize them for the benefit of wellbeing tourism.

Below, the following resources are scrutinized:
- Climatic and weather particularities
- Rural flora
- Rural fauna
- Geologies
- Remoteness and distance
- The urge for mobility
- Connectivity between earth and water
- Cultural landscapes and rural traditions

6.2. WELLBEING BASED ON CLIMATIC AND WEATHER PARTICULARITIES

The importance of climate as a tourist attraction or resource is a well-known but complicated fact (Boniface & Cooper, 1994; Gössling & Hall, 2006). Even though certain generalizations such as climate zones with mild temperatures and little precipitation or with cold enough temperatures and snow (precipitation) have been created (Vuoristo & Vesterinen, 2001; Gössling & Hall, 2006), individual and cultural preferences make it impossible to make universal statements concerning the potential of climatic conditions as tourist attractions.

Nevertheless, it is possible to spot elements of climate that may hold significance for the overall aim of creating wellbeing. Some climates or weather conditions are traditionally regarded as a drawback – such as cold, rain, polar nights, rapid changes in weather conditions (Tervo-Kankare et al., 2013). However, with an open mind they may be reinterpreted as an advantage and turned into successful wellbeing tourism products: "*In a bizarre way I enjoy the weather changing so much … it brings you back down to earth sometimes and makes you realize that there are greater things out there … nature is a lot greater than mankind*" (Jepson & Sharpley, 2014: 11). The sounds and connectivity of the breeze, rain and similar weather phenomena can also be considered resources. For some people listening to the wind or heavy rain, even to thunderstorms, from a warm and cosy shelter, or being outside, in direct connection with the weather phenomenon, can be enjoyable and have a positive effect on wellbeing.

Climate zones, such as the arctic, have a certain attractiveness by themselves as they enable many attractions that cannot be experienced in international tourists' home regions; for example the connection with snow and ice. Walking, skating on lake/river/sea ice can be a highly valued physical and mental experience for many tourists. Moreover, regions often have specific microclimates that can be utilized as resources: moist versus dry air, cold fronts versus warm fronts. Climatic specialties have also affected the formation of the landscape in several ways (erosion, landslides etc.) and defined the successful forms of agriculture.

In Northern Europe, the consideration of seasonal variation (having four seasons) is evident. In destinations where the activities are currently focused mostly on spa experiences, which are to some extent weather and climate resistant, adding an outdoor element that utilizes a locality's particularities (e.g. cold, heat, rain) could, under the right circumstances, constitute completely new resources and bring more variation to the product repertoire.

6.3. WELLBEING BASED ON RURAL FLORA

Green elements in general, but especially in a rural context, are considered to contribute to human wellbeing, even merely by their presence (Pforr et al., 2014). According to Deery et al. (2014), for example, green areas contribute positively to mood, may help to reduce blood pressure and indicators of stress as well as irritability. In addition, they may improve cognitive functions. With this perspective, rural tourism can itself promote tourists' wellbeing without any added elements.

Rural flora consists of several elements that may be attractive for wellbeing tourists. Elements such as smell and taste are essential, but a whole range of emotional sensations can also be related to flora. In addition, seemingly simple things, such as observing vegetation, for example moss and lichen, and sensing the surrounding flora (and fauna) may create wellbeing. In their study of the Australian wellness resort, Pforr et al. (2014), for example, discuss how interacting with the native flora bring tourists back to their childhood and activates positive memories.

The consumption of food during the holiday can be seen as a strategic element of the sustainable destination construct (Berno, 2011), and local products are progressively added value to understanding the travel experience (Cianflone & Cardile, 2014). Moreover, the local foods (e.g. berries, fruits) are "superfoods", which have value as such and promote human wellbeing in many ways. Quality regional products can be considered as a means to define the cultural identity of a location while also providing enjoyment and possibly also education for the visitors.

Increasingly, wellbeing tourism is about finding one's own food, preparing, eating and cooking as close to the place of origin as possible. This is a social issue, but it also has a meaning for experience features, and connects the human digestion system better with the rural environment and ecosystems.

6.4. WELLBEING BASED ON RURAL FAUNA

Rural fauna have numerous qualities with distinct wellbeing features. Wildlife is a key element, and the mere presence of fauna can be a resource for wellbeing. Similarly to observing flora, observing animals can provide wellbeing. Birdsong, for example, is often considered a rural signature element. Animal sounds and smells may be considered resources from this point of view, which can be experienced incidentally when visiting remote areas. Some wellness facilities are placed in or on the fringe of nature reserves so as to allow a visual contact with fauna. Wellbeing derived from rural fauna can come about from observing and interacting with animals, and the senses activated may be ambiguous.

The rural fauna related wellbeing products often include tame animals. Animals can be petted, and it is possible to create an affectionate relationship with them. Horseback riding, husky and reindeer rides, taking care of rural animals etc. are included in tourism products, and in a sense the animals are utilized for creating wellbeing via physical activity or via therapeutic add-on services, where animals are trained to co-deliver the product.

In addition, local animals may contribute to the development of wellbeing tourism as healthy and sustainable choices served on the plate, and the culinary profile may rely on the fauna resource of the area. With local ingredients, the origins of food are visible and storytelling can be included to complete tourism experiences. Local cheese and cold cuts or other type of local meat, for example, are common throughout the ProWell region and are an excellent examples of increasing the uniqueness of the destination.

Hunting and angling are often considered as wellbeing activities as well, and they can mean meditative action to some, while for others the adrenaline bursts and excitement are the source of wellbeing. However, as legislation in many countries restricts or even prevents hunting for commercial purposes, other, non-consumptive forms or substitutions can have potential in this sense. Photo safaris and birdwatching, for example, may be more acceptable forms of fauna-related wellbeing tourism, and as suggested by Pforr et al. (2014) wildlife and wildlife landscapes hold high wellbeing tourism potential.

Fauna includes types of resources that are not fully included in the wellness and wellbeing products, such as insects and sea animals. Historical traditions for bloodsucking leeches and other live, small animals for health purposes are being reinvented. Likewise with the production of health ingredients from animals, such as horn products and products created from fur or leather. Some fauna products, for example horn and fur, have symbolic values with reference to prehistoric life modes.

6.5. WELLBEING BASED ON GEOLOGIES

In this section, the geologies refer to the Earth's resources that are neither flora nor fauna. The utilization of geological resources has long traditions in the history of tourism. Tourists have always been attracted to the beauty geological landscape formations, but also the healing impacts of certain terrestrial substances and mineral waters, for example, have had an important role in the development of tourism (Rocha

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& Ferreira de Silva, 2014). Geological formations, some of the most well-known and spectacular examples being Uluru in Australia and the Grand Canyon in North America, are very high attractive due to their spectacular qualities. Certain geological phenomena, such as geysers and hot springs, are famous for their claimed health benefits.

In the context of wellbeing tourism, mineral waters, natural springs and thermal spas are maybe the most traditional elements of geological resources utilized in this context. Especially in Latvia and Lithuania these elements have an important role, and to a certain extent, wellbeing tourism is built on these traditions (Smith & Puczkó, 2014). Also, medical geology in the form of the intake of mineral and chemical elements in order to heal or prevent illnesses has a long tradition in wellbeing tourism. Nevertheless, geological elements have much more potential to be developed into wellbeing tourism products.

The intuitive aspects and memories are part of the activation of the geological resources, and some people feel that connection with nature can transport them back to childhood or even to their life as an embryo. History is particularly long in the case of geology, as rocks and cliffs, as well as sand and almost any formation shows marks and holds memories from the Ice Age and beyond. Thus, connecting and interacting with them, acknowledging their age and history may emphasize feelings of harmony and stability. Geoparks, with their outstanding geological heritage, for example, have high potential to create added value to the more traditional uses of geological elements.

Innovative thinking and simple solutions are the key to utilizing elements situated under this category. Mud, thermal spas, mineral waters, rocks, sands, dunes, soil, groundwater, springs, peat, landscapes etc. and the stories of their formation give enormous resources for rural wellbeing tourism. One example is the use of healing stones in a way that connects tourists to nature. During a relaxing walk in nature the visitor searches for stones that he/she finds appealing and then these stones are used as healing stones in meditative or pampering (e.g. hot stones) activities, providing a highly personal and unique experience.

6.6. WELLBEING BASED ON REMOTENESS, DISTANCE

Due to their location outside urban areas, rural locations hold attributes that are not always connected to tourism in a positive way. However, several successful examples exist, where the previously disadvantages of peripheral areas have been turned into main attractions. These include Santa Claus tourism in Finnish Lapland (especially in Rovaniemi) and ice tourism in Swedish and Finnish Lapland (Tervo-Kankare et al., 2013). However, often the attractiveness of peripheral areas lies in the opportunities they provide for experiencing solitude and pristine nature (Hall & Boyd, 2005) rather than certain touristic attractions. For example, according to Sharpley and Jepson (2011) and Laing and Crouch (2009), it is sometimes the remote and challenging environment – where the life is harsh – that brings added value to the tourist experience. It provides self-insight and leads to the achievement of critical life competences. Remoteness also fits nicely with the idea of wellbeing tourism providing enjoyment and relaxation for the mind and body, as well as provoking mindfulness.

Distance (from urban centres, from the equator, from the nearest road etc.) is an asset that is already understood and utilized in the ProWell project where actors already use marketing slogans such as *"as far east/north as you can go"*. Distance as a term is complicated in the sense that tourists are not necessarily willing to travel for a long time to reach a certain destination. Therefore remoteness, which can be considered as more relational term, may be more useful in this context. Remoteness can refer to apparent remoteness, as in Denmark, where urban dwellings are always near when measured in actual distance, or to actual remoteness. Remoteness can also be seen as something mythical (Amoamo, 2011), stories can be told and developed to support the remote image of a destination. In addition, travel to remote areas can be seen as an escape from routine and responsibility, which gives distance to everyday routines and problems, thus acting to promote wellbeing in this sense. The importance of silence and solitude for the wellbeing of the mind is high (Jepson & Sharpley, 2014). Wellbeing that is based on remoteness can also be seen as escape from urban pollution – lights, noise, WiFi and being online constantly. Natural light and darkness (away from light pollution) increase the potential to see the sky, the stars and the northern lights (a particular potential of the north that may not have been utilized well enough yet). Being outside coverage areas and offline can act as a detox from mobiles, the internet and the requirement to be available 24/7. Thus, a lack of connectivity opportunities can, in some cases, be an advantage.

Remoteness as a state of mind might also comprise remoteness in a historical sense. Intuitively, rural areas are found to be "old fashioned or "authentic", depending on one's point view and perspective. Exploitation of historical and contextual remoteness is often used in tourism and also in wellness and wellbeing, for example in spa and sauna traditions and rituals. Participating in old or ancient rituals may provoke different kinds of feeling of remoteness that relates to distancing or disentangling oneself not just from the everyday routines but also from time. Events and festivals can also rejuvenate the remoteness theme.

6.7. WELLBEING BASED ON THE URGE FOR MOBILITY

Humans' urge for mobility forms the basis for the whole tourism phenomenon – tourism is about moving from one place to another and back. Nonetheless, little attention has been directed to the mobility that takes place at the destination, even though many tourism activities are based on mobility (e.g. surfing, kayaking, sailing, bungee jumping etc.). Responding to tourists' urge for mobility can be undertaken in different ways, it can rely on humans' physical mobility (walking, cycling etc.), or on nature's forces, such as the wind, waves, currents or gravity.

According to Haldrup (2004) the act of moving through space can create the experience of pleasure: the body experiences the environment by moving and being within it, and this experience can shape self-perception. Also, mobility can allow for self-reflection, self-reliance and sensual experiences of place and, when the movement includes physical activity (as is not always the case), also bodily experiences. The outcome is a feeling of accomplishment after struggle. These all are aspects that are pursued by wellbeing tourism as well.

Interestingly, the mobility element of the rural space has not been considered widely in wellbeing tourism. There are not many examples of wellbeing tourism products under this category besides walking, even though it has high potential. Experiences of mobility can be provided in very simple ways, as the following examples suggest:

1)*"Floating on the Vuoksi river gives you the opportunity to enjoy the soothing embrace of the flowing water. Floating dry suits your will float 1 km in about 10–20 minutes depending on the flow. Floating can be done all year round, regardless of the weather."*

2)*"Relaxation-float is a floating shortcut to deep relaxation. Relaxation-float may be carried out anywhere. Relaxation-float may resolve stress related health problems, sleeping difficulties, give stress-relief and ease pain conditions."* (http://www.waterskizoo.com/eng_floating/)

Mobility has mental aspects and benefits that are better achieved in rural rather than in urban environments, which can be characterized by congestion and "imprisonment". In rural areas, the message and feeling of freedom can be better explained, recreated and included in wellbeing products that utilize opportunities linking with unbounded access and flow.

6.8. WELLBEING BASED ON CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN EARTH AND WATER

Access to water is considered an important requisite for many forms of tourism activity. An abundance of water can be seen as a resource in that it is possible to build visions of tourism destinations around it (e.g. in Iceland, as examined by Hujibens (2011). As Berezin (2012) discusses, the proximity of water plays a significant role in the tourism industry as it is linked with many forms of tourism. In addition, humans seem to have a natural desire for aquatic realms and waterscapes such as beaches, seas, lakes, rivers and channels, and running water is often considered visually attractive.

In the UK, the importance of water for human wellbeing has been studied in the Blue Gym programme, where activities in a coastal marine environment (ranging from the mild activity associated with rock pool rambles and coastal walks to more vigorous pursuits such as swimming, sailing, kayaking and surfing) are being used to motivate people to spend more time outdoors engaging in physical activity and thus increasing their wellbeing. Depledge and Bird (2009: 947) report on the Blue Gym project as follows: "[the project aims at] *increasing people's level of physical activity, improving mental health and wellbeing … ensuring enjoyment of the experience".* They also report that time spent by the sea (river/lake) is beneficial to health and wellbeing, a fact that has been widely known for many generations.

Tourism activities realized in nature, by waterscapes, seem to be well developed among the project participants already; yoga lessons take place on beaches and cliffs, facing lakes or seas. These may represent the connectivity between earth and water as well. Swimming in natural waters instead of pools is sometimes also included in the potential wellbeing tourism packages but it seems not to hold such an important role in the

current products. In addition the activities undertaken in mineral water spas etc. are not well reported at the moment.

The "blue economy" is multifaceted, and wellbeing tourism is one of the facets. It also includes possibilities for food foraging, for example angling and collecting seafood, the use of seaweed for food and health products. The transformation of resources for rural wellbeing use has hardly been fully exploited as yet.

6.9. Wellbeing derived from the cultural landscapes and rural traditions

The utilization of cultural landscapes and rural traditions as resources in wellbeing tourism is to some extent already understood. As indicated above, wellbeing products include activities such as traditional cupping, baking, sauna/bathhouse traditions or rituals, occasionally spiced up with rural myths and storytelling. However, there seems to be a lack of product ensembles. The tourism products are presented or just mentioned as separate units having tourism potential rather than well-developed wellbeing packages. This might be an issue that needs further development in order to create innovative rural wellbeing tourism products.

Landscapes in Northern Europe are characterized by a great variety; from agricultural and silvicultural lands to untouched nature. The landscapes can be understood as resources for wellbeing, but this potential should be wrested from the rural environment. This can take place in concise storytelling activities where tacit local knowledge is transferred to an open resource of a place-related understanding of the rural. This may include landscape related artifacts, such as haycocks, grain reserves etc.

The symbols of the cultural landscapes also include religious elements and places of sacrifice, churches, ancient cult places, holy wells etc. (Foley, 2011). Binding the spiritual elements together with rural wellbeing is an exercise where great care and respect is needed. The local affiliation is also an important aspect (Fonneland, 2013). Sensitivity and respect is part of the exercise when commoditizing elements belonging to a cultural group (the Sami, for example). When successful, this can create interest among groups of tourists who are seeking the subtle interlinkages between the landscape and the "creative forces" or "spiritual elements" (Conradson, 2005).

6.10. Conclusion

This chapter addresses rural wellbeing tourism from a resources-based view. It establishes important resources arising from flora, fauna, climatic and weather particularities, geologies, the aspect of remoteness, connectivity between earth and water, humans' urge for mobility, and cultural landscapes and rural traditions. Hardly any elements are sufficient on their own and require supporting elements and entrepreneurial endeavours. In order to ensure success, the supporting environments hereunder, locals' support and infrastructures etc. are essential. Success stories are possible to obtain with a unique combination of natural resources, cultural elements and an overall determined policy in the field (Wray & Weiler, 2014).

What is suggested in this chapter is that there is an abundance of resources in rural environments for rural wellbeing tourism. However, the resources and capabilities are not always taken into consideration and used. There is not an accurate understanding of the value of resources or combinations thereof in terms of economic potential and social benefits.

Are the resources valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable? They may be, but this also depends on a contextual understanding. The resource attributes are immanent in the rural but may also be to some extent artificially constructed or enhanced, for example the reinvention of rural traditions.

Further, there might be mental models and traditions that hinder progress in this respect. It is necessary to have a dynamic understanding of the resources. Some resources may be depreciating over time, others may increase, depending on the nature of action taken by stakeholders in the rural areas, as emphasized by Ritchie and Crouch (2003). The way from a resource to a competitive advantage for a specific region is not straightforward (Bennett & Lemelin, 2010).

7. GUIDELINES FOR RURAL WELLBEING TOURISM

7.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapters in this report addressed a variety of topics concerning rural wellbeing. Comprehensively, the chapters stated that there are significant potentials for the development of new rural wellbeing products. There are also prospects for the enhancement of the scope of the present tourism offerings in Northern Europe. Simultaneously, it was underlined that the variety of spatial environments and the natural particularities of the rural differ considerably across the countries involved in the ProWell project. This unlocks opportunity not only for enhancement but also for differentiation.

In this section the initial inquiries are concluded with some guidelines for the future. The target groups of the guidelines are:

- Destination management bodies, which include dedicated tourism DMOs but also other authorities and organizations with a qualitative link to and influence on the rural environment that is a cornerstone of rural wellbeing

- Commercial and semi-commercial tourism enterprises that have the ambition of exploiting and increasing rural dimensions for the benefit of their wellbeing products.

It has become clear in the ProWell project's initial phases that it will not be possible to establish guidelines for rural wellbeing tourism that uniformly fit all destinations and all enterprises across the countries, destinations and enterprises. There is a need to accommodate the differences in resources but also to accommodate the variations in the ambitions and targets of individual destinations and enterprises. As a consequence, the guidelines are practical in the sense that they point out the ways to work with processes.

7.2. MAINSTREAMING A "WELLBEINGIZATION" PROCESS AT THE DESTINATION LEVEL

The rural wellbeing term is complex and adaptable. As with other tourism facilities and attractions, rural wellbeing grips a large number of both "tangible" and "intangible" issues, which are open for interpretation by local actors. Rural wellbeing takes place in living communities. In correspondence with the potentials for tourism, communities are obliged to ensure living conditions and room for development. Rural wellbeing is the bonding of practices, knowledge, objects, natural and cultural artefacts etc.

For the institutional actors in destinations, the process "wellbeingization" embraces the following:

- Captivating the history of nature and culture
- Integrating into the rural fabric
- Value adding
- Narrating the rural
- Reconnecting

Captivating the history of nature and culture. The essence of living and working in rural areas has many aspects, and some of them are about to be forgotten as a consequence of rural depopulation and deprivation. A foundation of wellbeingization reiterates the history of nature and culture in the particular destinations.

Captivation can be achieved by, for example, collecting photographs and related stories from the local population. Methods are being developed, including the use of social media for the purpose. The process engages the population, and immanently, it creates pride in the area, and it contributes to the generation of a local "memory". Working with history this way has wider perspectives than that of tourism as it contributes to the consolidation of local cultures. The process might also consist of creating electronic and paper-based maps that can document the development of the landscapes and cultural artifacts.

Rural wellbeing experiences depend on a "rural proofing", and what is suggested here is a way to materialize the process and the results. Tourism research documents the importance and perspectives of such processes of creating authenticity, for example Aitchison et al. (2014), Anthopoulou and Melissourgos (2012), Daugstad and Kirchengast (2013) and Guttormsen and Fageraas (2011). Museums, environmental NGOs and agricultural associations may be co-actors in the process where the history of nature and culture is excavated and illuminated, and the local press can provide an assisting role.

Integrating into the rural fabric. Wellbeingization is also about closely integrating what the tourist can experience into the local areas and the physical and environmental fabric of the location.

A key responsibility is placed with public authorities who are usually in charge of providing a variety of infrastructures. In the case of rural wellbeing tourism it is essential that the destination is supplied with, for example, publicly owned and private tracks and trails for walking, riding and cycling. Such infrastructures must correspond well with the location of hotels, spas and other facilities. It is also of importance that the planning of trails reflects the landscape values and the potential wellbeing benefits and health issues, such as those described in the literature on the topic (Olafsson & Skov-Petersen, 2014; Timothy & Boyd, 2014). There are many other leisure infrastructures mainly meant to serve the local population but nonetheless intermingling with wellbeing tourism customers in a region, for example yacht harbours, outdoor fitness areas, golf courses, mountain biking areas etc. Appropriate planning, coordinated with tourism facilities, is crucial (Medina–Muñoz & Medina–Muñoz, 2013). The local authorities are responsible for protective measures as well, ensuring that neither locals nor tourists compromise the nature qualities that deliver wellbeing benefits.

Landowners are also potential actors in terms of integrating wellbeing tourism into the rural fabric, although this is a more ambiguous issue (McAreavey & McDonagh, 2011). There might be controversy if tourists utilize privately owned forests and meadows. Integrating wellbeing tourism into the rural fabric is about finding a solution for the access questions, for example as discussed by Howley et al. (2012). Local authorities and tourism DMOs may be in charge of negotiating access opportunities.

Value adding. The wellbeingization process is also about adding value, and values are to be regarded as extras that customers consider essential for wellbeing. Much of the value added takes place in the enterprises, which is described below. But ensuring added value is also a task at the destination level, in the hands of local authorities, tourism DMOs, local trade association, NGOs etc.

Working with nature regeneration is an issue in this respect. It can be a question of beautification (Metro-Roland & Knudsen, 2012) or "rewilding" landscapes (McKnight, 2014), both measures potentially planting new layers of value into the rural environment. Removing obstacles to health and wellbeing, and improving accessibility are ways to ensure higher value. That may consist of reducing negative health implications from noisy, polluting and visually obstructive elements.

Biodiversity is a particular area of discussion in this respect, and it is gaining momentum in regional tourism strategies. Higher biodiversity will provide tourists with visually improved experiences and can also benefit possibilities for activities such as angling, hunting, foraging etc. (Olsson et al., 2011). Health benefits that derive from listening to birdsong are directly linked to natural biodiversity (Child, 2013).

Narrating the rural. Who talks the rural wellbeing language at the destination level? It is essential to recognize that rural wellbeing narratives are substantiated in a great number of ways and not only through the destination's marketing and branding efforts and materials. Narrating is complex and multifaceted, and it includes many media and methods. Sometimes the "medium is the message".

The wellbeing issue is embedded in the images that emerge throughout the media. But the images are also in the landscapes and the towns, the building structures, the sign boarding and the welcoming facilities. It is likely that tourists are met with many, and sometimes very contradictory, narratives before and during a trip. Narrating the rural is also embedded in, for example, food products from the region. The labels on a bottle of juice or a package of smoked venison is often a far better narrative and a more efficient means of promotion than more traditional tourist commercials as the products carry stories that appeal to several senses.

Thus, narrating rural wellbeing will to a considerable extent include any event that might be organized in the local region (Panyik et al., 2011). Many types of event may be fairly directly related to the wellbeing agenda, for example food events and festivals, sports competitions, health seminars, colloquia of health specialists, cosmeceutical fairs, courses related to specific traumas etc. When integrated firmly into a strategic communication profile, such events possess considerable narrative potential.

Reconnecting. Presently, the rural focus is changing from a dominant emphasis on an indigenous development with reliance mainly on its own resources. The new agenda includes recognition of the needs for rural areas to be firmly connected to other areas. In other words spatial and social boundaries are changing and that also affect tourism actors and destinations. Development is polycentric, and rural–urban partnerships take place in new patterns that go beyond the normal urban hierarchy.

Also rural wellbeing tourism destinations may need to reconnect in new ways. In the case of Northern European peripheries, the interlinkages could include other peripheries.

Reconnecting also has social dimensions, and here the development in social media seems to become dominant in the marketing aspects of tourism (Sigala et al., 2012). Spa and health tourism is approaching this option as well, so as to boost the provision of information and as a remedy in the delivery of services (Smith & Puczkó, 2014). It is immensely important to address the fact that health services are not only personal and face-to-face but are also adding e-dimensions, although there is still uncertainty about how to suitably exploit this in rural wellbeing tourism areas (Guzzo et al., 2014). Moving towards such ambition will also include a better understanding of human–

environment interaction taking into consideration the dynamics of landscapes and the local population in time and space (Strzelecka & Wicks, 2010).

7.3. QUALITY GUIDES FOR RURAL WELLBEING TOURISM ENTERPRISES

Tourism enterprises are very important stakeholders in rural wellbeing products. Without a commercial supply, there would hardly exist a demand and an inflow of tourists of any importance to rural areas. Such rural enterprises might consist of a variety of different categories of service providers, the following accommodation facilities (hotels, B&Bs, camping sites, cottages etc.), catering (restaurants, food stalls, farm shops, retail outlets etc.), transportation (public transport, cars, bicycles, hired boats, chairlifts etc.), information and guiding services (visitor centres, museums, outdoor guides etc.) and attractions (events, museums, sites in nature, water-based entertainments etc.). In addition, a very large variety of services relate to spa, health and wellness, as it is traditionally understood (Smith & Puczkó, 2014), with pampering, fitness, and health-related and medical packages (often intermingled with social elements and traditional tourism activities) at the premises and outside it.

When observing this variety of services, it is not possible to be very clear about what belongs to a rural wellbeing tourism package and what does not. Accordingly, it is hardly feasible to recommend very precise and categorical measures and certification programmes that specify the way to establish, increase, maintain and promote quality in the rural wellbeing tourism product at the enterprise level.

However, there are indeed points of communalities across types of rural wellbeing enterprises. With a particular rural emphasis, and aligning with the points mentioned above about quality and innovation recommendations for the destination level, the following precautions can be outlined at the enterprise level:

- Defining and imaging the rural wellbeing product ingredient
- Ensuring visual and physical interconnection with the rural environment
- Linking into add-on activities in the rural community
- Specifying quality at the sub-industry level
- Professionalizing staff and services
- Improving and innovating on a continual basis
- Collaborating locally and globally

Defining and imaging the rural wellbeing product ingredient. Rural wellbeing tourism is to be considered special. It learns from tourism in other places but it has its own features, borrowing from the particular landscapes, cultures and tradition. Any enterprise that provides rural wellbeing products should look closely at its own rural environment and from that pick up on and develop authentic features. This is about creating products in unique ways, providing them with character and generating memorable experiences for the tourists.

Authentic representations and connecting with the rural environment can consist of, for example, using local building styles or materials and local plants can be of importance

for the organization of gardens and sanctuaries (Huijbens, 2011). Spa and cosmeceutical merchandise can be produced from local ingredients. Authentic symbolism can also be immaterial (for example, embedding stories from the local area in marketing materials and in the naming of places, dishes etc.) or embedded closely into, for example, the choreography of guided tours and outdoor therapies.

Ensuring a visual and physical interconnection with the rural environment. Tourists often complain that there is a lack of accessibility to nature (Fredman & Tyrväinen, 2010). Individual tourism enterprises can work with accessibility in a number of ways. Tourism facilities can ensure that they are located closely to trails and tracks, so that the opportunities to experience nature are found directly on the doorstep. It might be necessary to have agreements with landowners so as to give guests special and complementary treatment. Some guests may want seclusion and solitude, and the providers can make sure that the surrounding environments can accommodate this.

Accessibility is also about information, for example the development of tour maps, fitness trails guides, mobile apps and other materials that can ensure the best possible interlinkage between the facility and the rural environment.

The location and views of nature are part of wellbeing tourism. Much relaxation and wellbeing comes from simply gazing at nature from comfortable locations – rooms, restaurants, special relaxation spots (Daugstad, 2008). In this context, "gazing" might also consist of sensing pleasant smells from the surrounding landscapes and water, feeling the wind in particular ways and hearing the sounds or experiencing silence (Tuohino et al., 2015). Planning and architectural design can actively include such aspects.

Linking into add-on activities in the rural community. Tourism enterprises are not isolated units in the communities. As illustrated in an earlier chapter in this report, the value chain encompasses other types of enterprises in the community and beyond. Generally, it will benefit rural wellbeing tourists if they can get add-on experiences in the local communities, for example the possibility to participate on courses or in events organized in a village. Local entrepreneurs may provide guided tours or be responsible for important supplementary activities and services. Micro-businesses and lifestyle entrepreneurs are frequently seen in rural areas, and they can be valuable resources for wellbeing tourism.

Add-ons also comprise food products and food related activities, which can be crucial in a rural context. Locally grown food ingredients and healthy food items correspond well with the idea of wellbeing for tourists and also with economic wellbeing for the local community at large (Green & Dougherty, 2008; Hjalager et al., 2011).

Specifying quality at the sub-industry level. It is difficult to consolidate certification systems for products if they are not comparable in at least a number of ways. There are, however, sector based certification systems for hotels, camping, spas etc. In order to guarantee quality, local units can attempt to dutifully obtain certification, as membership can be important in gaining an economically feasible market (Garcia et al., 2015).

Typically however, these types of certification system do not usually align particularly with rural elements.

Individually, rural enterprises or groups of enterprises can work on the supplementary codifying of quality standards with a more comprehensible rural emphasis. For example, such standards can consist of detailed descriptions of sauna rituals and sauna therapies for customers to get a solid understanding of the nature of the products. In the case of (semi-) medical treatments, there might also be consolidated and recognized procedures that are important to demonstrate. For food items and food rituals the question can be to ensure organic origin or to specify nutritional details.

In Northern Europe, there are heavy seasonal weather and other conditions, and the provision of information about the availability and variety of the products across seasons is important for customers. The nature of the wellbeing product may change according to season, and explaining the advantages and disadvantages is indispensable.

A whole area of interest in a Northern European context relates to environmental sustainability, and this is relevant for rural wellbeing tourism. There are numerous programmes and initiatives, and systems for enterprise to measure and publicize their carbon footprint. Specific local versions and additions may make sense in some cases. It should be taken into account that there may also be problems with a lack of transparency if standardization programmes are uncoordinated and too many.

Professionalizing staff and services. Tourism in rural areas is often hampered by a lack of qualified staff. When talking about rural wellbeing tourism, it may for some categories of enterprise be essential to ensure accredited and recognized professional competences, particularly in fields where health and safety are crucial issues. That accounts for (semi-)medical treatments and also for outdoor activities. When included in certification programmes the enterprises may use these as platforms for promotion and marketing.

Language skills are equally of importance, including the ability not only to communicate at the premises but also to produce written materials and web content in several languages.

Improving and innovating on a continual basis. Rural wellbeing tourism is not a well-specified category of travel products, and there is a need for continual enhancement and development. That is also the responsibility of the individual enterprise. Dedicating staff to assist in and inspire innovation processes is a managerial task, and it demands a considerate leadership attitude (Hjalager, 2011).

Collaborating locally and globally. As noted above, rural wellbeing tourism is not isolated. In any attempt to develop and promote it there is a need to be aware of and build relationships beyond the local borders. Such relationships take place in a variety of ways. It is essential that rural wellbeing enterprises enhance their capability in the handling of social media and that they raise their reputation by imaginative and ethically consistent interventions with present and future customers.

Likewise, collaboration can be enhanced with con-colleagues in the same area and in comparable rural wellbeing destinations in other regions and countries, the aim being to create new alleys of sourcing, seeking volunteer approval and assistance etc. Rural wellbeing tourism will have to be able to efficiently exploit the intersection of local and global influences. Alliances with other local enterprises are to be teamed and spiced up with strategic external relations.

7.4. CONCLUSION

This section provided lists of guidelines and recommendations for rural wellbeing tourism destinations and rural wellbeing tourism enterprises. The guidelines are fairly wide-ranging and not extremely detailed, as neither destinations nor enterprises are fully comparable. Rural wellbeing destinations are at different levels of development. However, the list provides a framework for destinations and enterprises to work with.

When analysing the prospects for wellbeing tourism in rural areas, it becomes apparent that leadership is needed if small areas with micro-providers are to gain momentum and expand their market volume and recognition. Who will provide this? This is not at all clear. There will hardly be just one responsible actor to take the responsibility. DMOs are essential and may start comprehensive processes. But others are to be included in prospective processes as well, such as nature authorities, agricultural and silvicultural organizations, NGOs, trade actors etc.

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