



Participation tourism development in Aurland

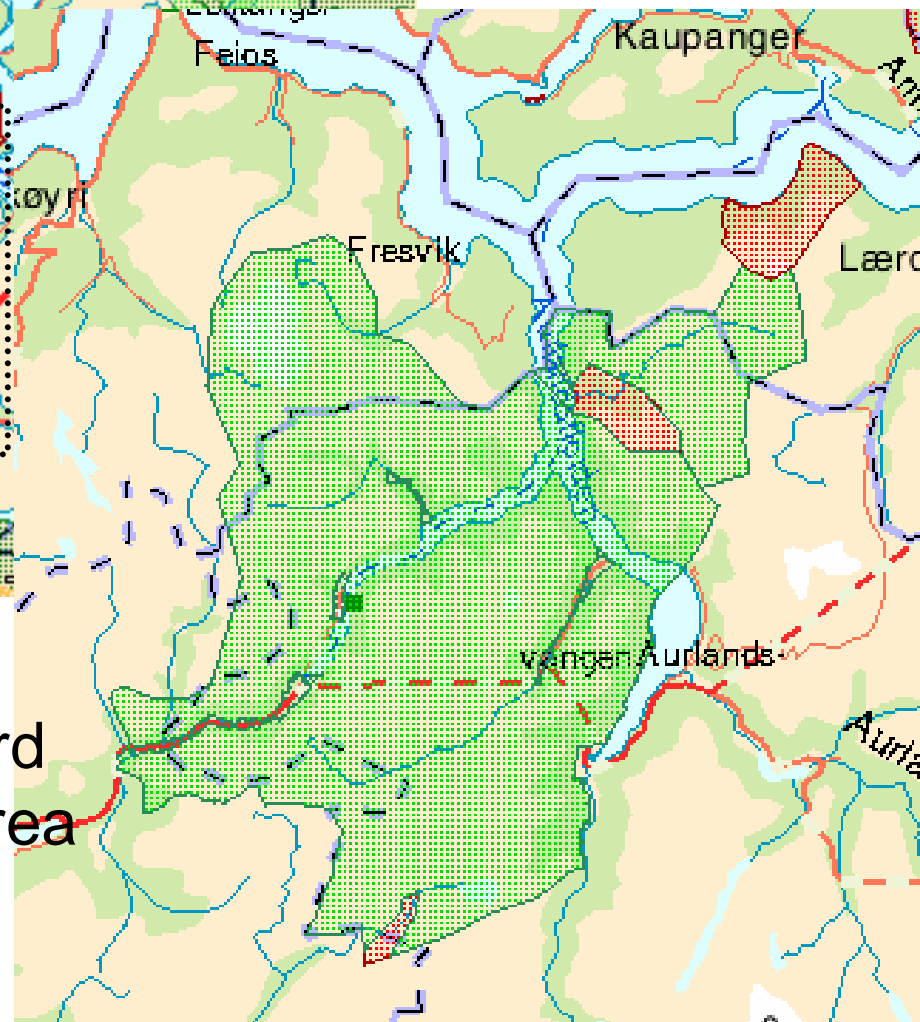
Presentation for the Scottish partnership
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Introduction

- Western Norway Research Institute:
 - Business and community innovation and change in rural areas
 - Sustainable development
 - Information technology
- Who are you and what interest do you have?
- Employed by Aurland Nature and Cultural Heritage to improve marketing and co-operation (year 2005)
- My presentation
 - Background: what kind of destination
 - The development process and results
 - Further perspectives

Flåm Valley and Nærøy Fjord

- Transport based destination (railway-boat-buss-railway):
 - "Norway in a nutshell" still the main promoting concept for the destination
 - Tourists passing through: possibility to improve the local benefits?
- Aurland investment company with Flåm Development (FD) received the management responsibility for Flåm Railway in 1997
 - A strategic concept:
 - Flåm railway and public boat transport on Nærøy Fjord
 - Building a cruise quay: today over 100 cruise ships yearly
 - Enlargement of Fretheim hotel
 - Develop small scale cultural and nature heritage products
 - A success in economic terms for FD and in amount of tourism, but still most tourism are passing through



•Sognefjord

•Nærøy Fjord
protected area

Background

- A local Landscape consultancy business emerge in 1999
- Change in national and international agriculture policy:
 - Need for new income strategies on small scale farms
 - Local food products and farm tourism
- Aurland Nature and Cultural Heritage
 - Fjord Experience (2004): booking business for small scale activity products
- Small scale actors:
 - How do the volume tourism strategy influence the community?

West Norwegian Fjords – Geirangerfjord and Nærøyfjord

- "The West Norwegian Fjords are classic, superbly developed fjords, considered as the type locality for fjord landscapes in the world.
- ... are considered to be among the most scenically outstanding fjord areas on the planet."



•National Geographic Traveler: Norwegian Fjords best destination:

"This place has wonderful, living traditional culture, wonderful landscape, not crowded. I am very happy how this destination is managed. Excellent environmental quality, local people involved in a very smooth way. Very good."



- "Need to pay attention to environmental impacts, built heritage well preserved, great scenery."

A situation of paradox

- WNRI employment:
 - How can promotion and sale of small scale activity tourism products be improved?
- Kind of paradox with more than 500.000 in Flåm!
 - But most of them past through
- Our assumption:
 - Establish a partnership between the small scale and the large scale tourism organization
 - But, existing positions, relations, conflicts and resources would be a hindrance

Bringing the actors together

- Principles of a democratic dialogue:
 - Everybody with interest in the defined issue are welcome to participate
 - Equality: everybody have skills and experiences relevant for the dialogue
 - Everybody should participate in the communication, and the dialogue management had to create such conditions
 - Dialogue ambition: searching for the best analysis, argument and action
- Seminars, meetings and information gathering:
 - Managed by the local actors and WNRI
 - Communication between the actors emerge

Bringing the challenges to the surface

- Statements by the participants:
 - *“The lacking marketing coordination between the tourism organization and Flåm development is stupid”*
 - *“The three “local Kings” had to be agree, so we others can adapt”*
- The three “local Kings” avoided meeting face to face during the process
- Joint understand for the need for systematic coordination and co-operation in the destination:
 - Promotion and sale
 - Common arena for information and strategy development
 - Improve the knowledge of activity products among accommodation business
- But, has changes been made in practice?
 - Fjord Experience: a part of the Aurland investment company
 - Fjord Experience: more viability web-site
 - The municipality administration is more involved
 - Communication between the tourism organization and small scale enterprises through the Nærøyfjord World Heritage Park concept

Promotion and sale

- One entrepreneur: “According to Fjord Oppleving I feel as I have bought a too large tractor”
- What is needed?
 - When and how do tourists buy activity products?
 - Do costumers book activity products on Internet?
- How do you develop a sale organization:
 - The *technical* approach: system for online booking
 - The *network* approach: sale and promotion channels through other businesses
- Who are responsibility to what?
 - What happened if the booking company do not sell?
- Internet web site, challenges:
 - Visibility: do the web-site emerge on search-motors?
 - Usability: is the web-site easy to use for costumers?

Entrepreneurship

- Different strategies:
 - The “hard” way: new buildings, kitchen and facilities for food production
 - The “easy” way: develop interpretation knowledge according to exciting products
- Critical questions:
 - What is unique with my product?
 - Who are potential customers?
 - Do the product match potential costumers in the destination today?
 - Can I reach the costumers through other businesses?
 - How do I make profit?
- How to spread competence from the success businesses?
 - Consultants adviser
 - Business Park: network of enterprises located at the same place
 - Courses and education

More tourists or...?

- Need for common arena for coordination and joint strategy development
- Choose strategy or “yes thank you, both”?
- The volume approach:
 - When better infrastructure inside the destination – no problem
 - The local air pollution could be solved
- The quality approach:
 - A question of community and people development
 - To meet the tourists face to face
 - Improve local economic benefits

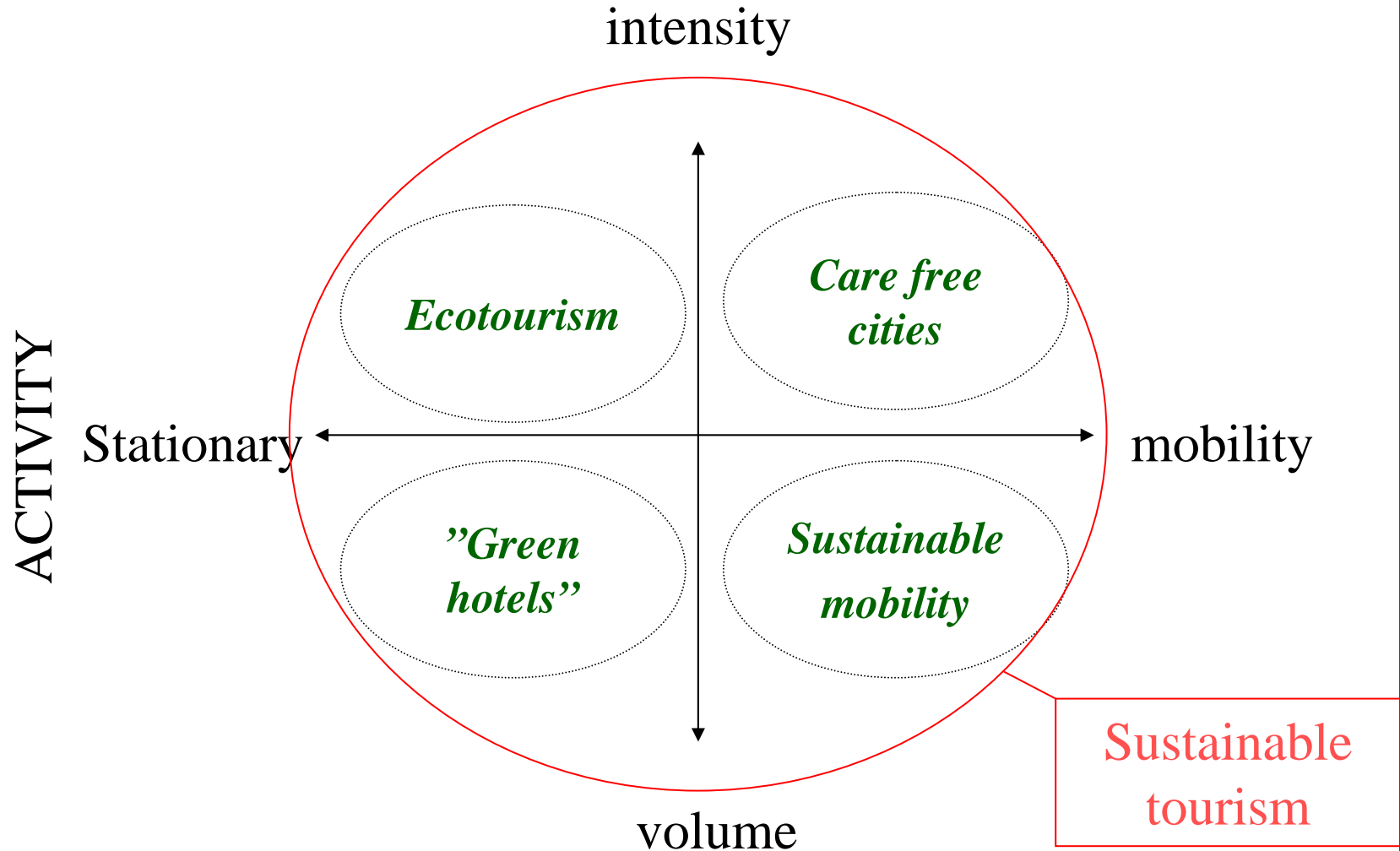


National Geographic

- West Norwegian Fjords Challenges:
- "A visitor management plan is completely lacking"
- "Some information on its history is available, but there's not yet an emphasis on touring there"
- "[hotells and restaurants] close rather early"
- "But is [the local] farming sustainable, and can it continue?"
- "will the settlements become subject to the pressures of camping and cruise tourism"

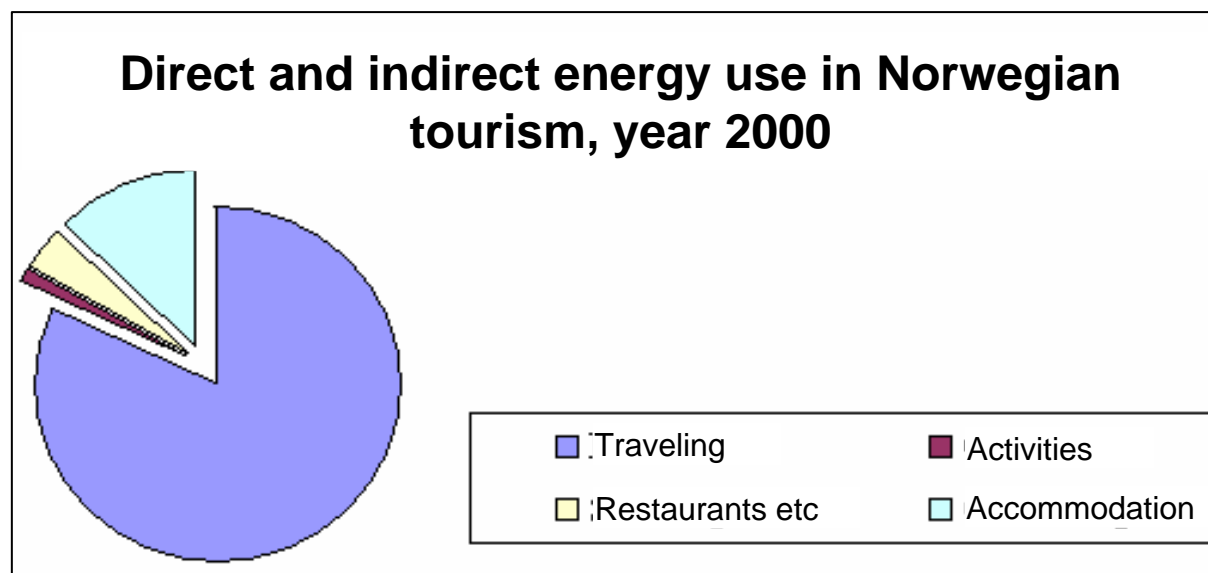
The problem of scale and mobility

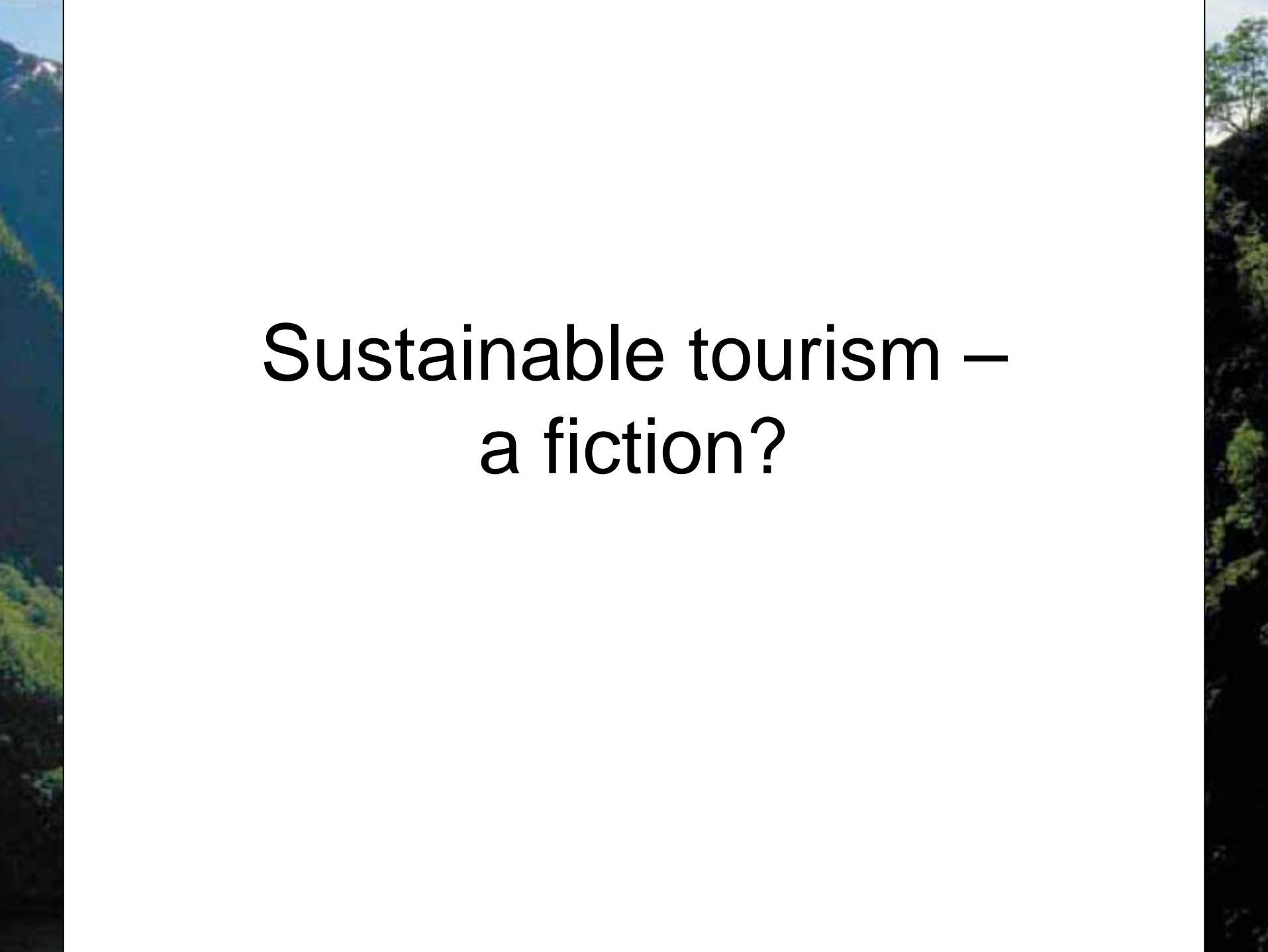
ENVIRONMENT PROBLEM



Transport- & tourism

- 1800: railway tourism
- 1850: steamboat tourism
- 1930: private care tourism
- 1950: national & continental airplane tourism
- 1980: intercontinental airplane tourism
- 2000: low mobility tourism? (bicycle, walking, by horse, ski, rafting....)





Sustainable tourism – a fiction?