Comparison and cross-case learning in Arctic cruise tourism

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Project video:
Sustainable Arctic Cruise Communities: frompracticetogovernance - YouTube

Honningsvåg

Alta

Lofoten

Isafjorður

Nuuk

Sustainable Arctic Cruise Communities: from practice to governance´

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Why *study* Arctic cruise?

Arctic cruise will never go away, so how to live (better) with it?

Study – and suggest interventions into – how to get on better together

Get close to practices - to understand local views and perceptions

Study approach

PRACTICE THEORY

STAYING WITH TROUBLE

QUALITATIVE COMMUNITY-BASED STUDY

Earlier experience and research in case communities

Several community visits in each case (interviews, observations)

Participation in community events, conferences, meetings

Follow local news (press and social media)

«Keeping a conversation going»: community workshops, lectures at local high school, publication in local newspapers.

Community-based approach

Key local issues connected to cruise
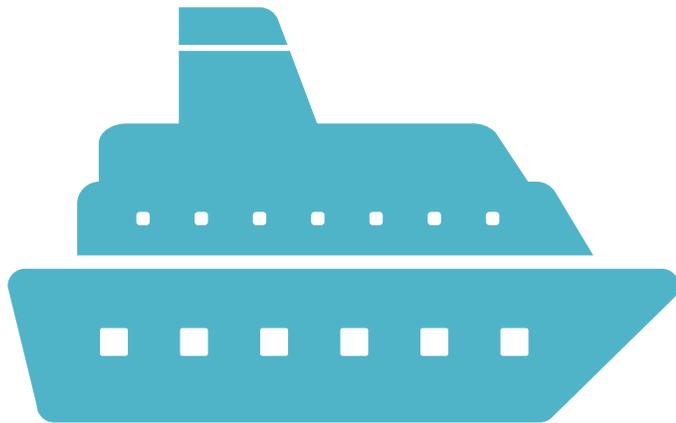
Shared infrastructure and space

Cruise tourism shares port areas other industries and infrastructure with other tourists

Impact on environment

Human resources and knowledges

Sesonality in operations

After COVID-19 recovery

Temporalities

Micro-dynamics on cruise days to accommodate a heavy concentration of incoming tourists

Photo: Julia Olsen

Key issues (1): Shared infrastructure and space

Cruise tourism takes place in the same marine and land spaces as other industries (fishing industry and cargo handling) → a lack of tourism related information/facilities and safe transfer.

Cruise tourism share same infrastructure, natural attractions and other facilities with other tourists and residents → overcrowding, traffic jams and clashes between different groups.

Impact on the natural environment: waste, pollution, acoustic disturbance

Key issues (2):
Human resources, knowledges, and competencies

- Staffing and recruitment: tourism personnel is usually hired during the peak season from outside the local communities → salary and taxes do not stay in the community (leakage).

- Local employment is an important aspect of the social sustainability. Still, the younger generation tends to be less willing to be at work during unconventional hours.

- Skills and competences of local stakeholders: personal network connections, professional skills, social skills, informal networks

Key issues (3): Temporalities

Cruise 'on/off':

- Accommodating many visitors during concentrated times. Prioritization of the cruise-based tourists over the land-based tourists.

- The short-term planning can make it difficult for stakeholders to predict and plan for cruise days.

Seasonality:

- Difficult to provide people with full-time jobs in the cruise tourism industry when seasons are only three-four months.

-Work-life balance during a whole year

-Lack of control and management difficulties over visitors crowds

Key values connected to cruise

Photo: Julia Olsen
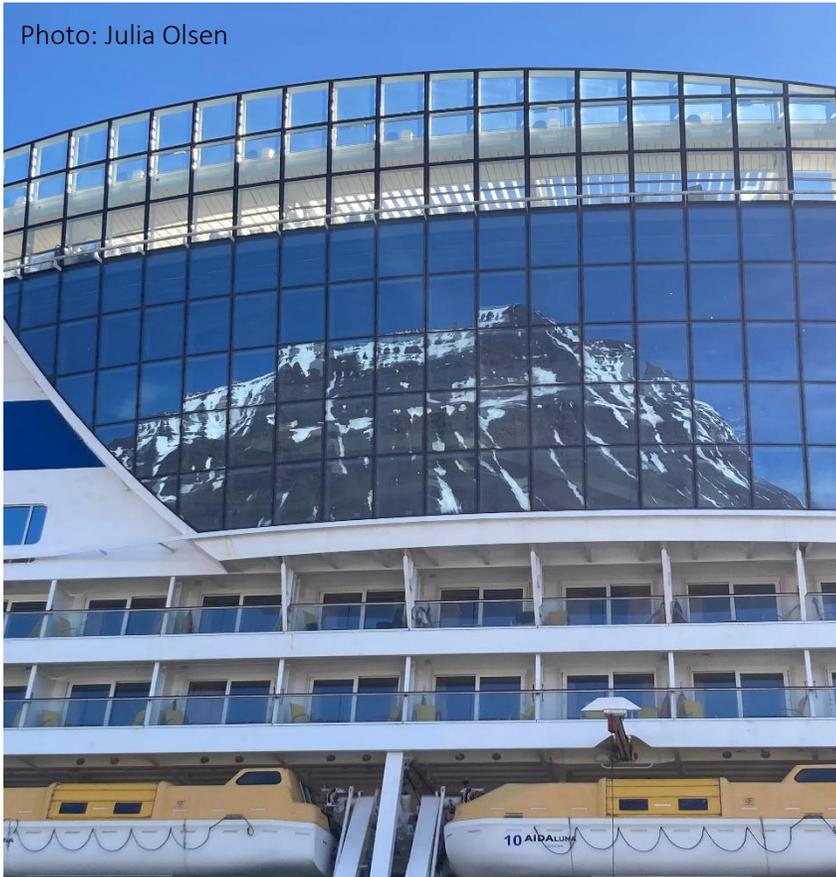
- Local control of incoming cruise ships and tourists

- Balancing cruise and land-based tourism

- Defining 'the right tourist'

- Setting local prices and premises

Tools and best practices

Pricing

Innovating

Investing

Regulating

Networking

Pricing

Example from Alta

The local community wanted to limit the number of visitors accessing the mountain of Komsa to ensure nature preservation. To restrict the access to this popular hiking destination, the guided tours to Komsa were adjusted, making them significantly more expensive and offering fewer trips. This pricing measure both reduced the number of hikers and the environmental damage they caused.

Example from Honningsvåg

The involvement of intermediaries between the cruise tourist customer and the local tourism actor. In Honningsvåg, small-scale tourism providers, often family-owned businesses, gain more income from direct bookings by cruise passengers. However, they are also more impacted by cancellations and cannot always predict how many customers they will receive from an arrival.

Regulating

- Taxation and fees
- Guidelines developed by the destination and the industry (AECO)
- Limitation on cruise arrivals and passengers
- Putting demands on duration of docking/staying
- Adaptive pricing for experiences
- Informing and deliberating about cruise arrivals

Example from Lofoten
In Moskenes (Lofoten), a public discussion on mapping local carrying capacity was conducted together with the local community and industry. As a result of the meeting, the maximum number of passengers was set to 500 tourists per day. In Leknes, the number is 4000 passengers per day.

Networking

- Cruise network and cross-municipality cooperation to coordinate the tourists' distribution

- Learning and mentoring between actors/sectors

- Public meetings and consultation with local communities

- Learning from other destinations

Example from Nuuk:
In Nuuk, cruise tourism stakeholders coordinate and collaborate with each other through formal and informal networks. Cruise tourism stakeholders hold a meeting before the cruise season begins to discuss any potential problems and improvements that could be made. There is also collaboration taking place within the Nuuk Maritime Network.

Conclusions

CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS AND ADDRESS INCREASING LOCAL CONCERNS ON SUSTAINABILITY
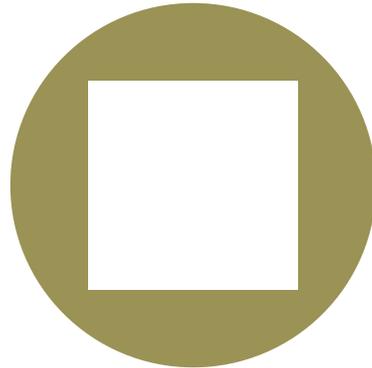
DESTINATIONS DEVELOP LOCAL PRACTICES THAT ARE CONTEXT DEPENDENT
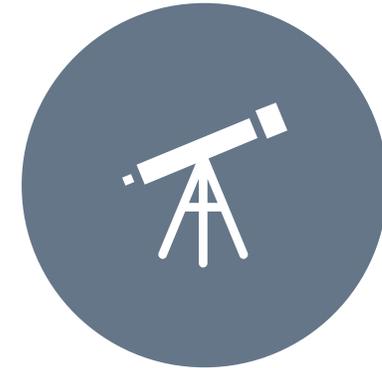
- BUT COULD LEARN FROM OTHERS TO MINIMIZE IMPACTS FROM OPERATIONS, ENHANCE LOCAL VALUE AND REDUCE LEAKAGE

Fig. 4. Arctic region and its main tourist destinations.

Tourism comparison

New ways to look across destinations, that have previously been addressed and understood singularly.

Build synergies, cross-case learning, capacity and solutions for often small destinations, tourism actors and communities.

Trace development paths "that expand beyond, and are more meaningful, than colonial or cookie-cutter models" (Ren & Markussen, 2024:119)

Thank you for your attention

Want to know more?

https://site.nord.no/sustainable-arctic-cruise-communities/