Climate change and sustainable tourism in the new normal

How can we learn from the Covid-19 pandemic?

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Chapter 1. Project overview

The COVID-19 pandemic has had devastating effects all around the world, in all parts of our communities. The tourism industry was hit especially hard. To understand these negative effects, a lot of research and many projects are now being carried out. Scholars note the potential of COVID-19 pandemic as a transformative moment to change the way we understand, practice and develop tourism (Hall, Scott and Gössling, 2020). Dealing with the pandemic, like dealing with other sustainability challenges (such as climate warming), needs to build resilience, adaptivity, flexibility, collaboration, and co-creation (Persson-Fischer and Liu, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic showed how the tourism industry is innovative, resilient, and adaptive. Many tourism companies around the world developed new products, services, and business models to address the sudden and drastic crisis. These innovations deserve attention and could inform our knowledge and responsiveness to other global crises like climate change and other sustainability challenges. Climate change is not as rapid as the pandemic and has long-term impacts, not solely on tourism. When it comes to tourism, coastal and winter destinations are the ones expected to be impacted the most. Nevertheless, the tourism industry is the least responsive sector to take measures to mitigate its carbon footprint (Scott et al., 2016). As climate change requires immediate and innovative solutions just like the pandemic did, in this project, we focus on the potential for innovation and change.

1.1 What we did

In this project we captured the experience and knowledge of tourism companies and Destination management Organisations (DMOs) developed during the pandemic and negotiated it in a sustainability context to respond to other sustainability challenges such as climate change to increase the resilience of destinations and of companies within the destinations. We used individual interviews and collaborative workshops to develop this
knowledge further and enable a discussion with stakeholders around changes in our understandings of development, vulnerability, climate change and sustainability.

The **PURPOSE** of the research was to:

**Collect, explore, and develop the knowledge (initiatives, actions, business models, products, etc.) developed during the COVID-19 pandemic among tourism stakeholders, that can also form solutions to mitigate climate change (and other sustainability challenges) within the tourism**

More specific **OBJECTIVES** of the project were to:

- **Enable companies to co-create knowledge, understanding and solutions to meet future sustainability challenges in the “new normal” in the wake of the pandemic**
- **Develop a methodology to co-create knowledge with the use of dialogical and disruptive methods**
- **Disseminate knowledge among tourism industry and academia in Sweden and internationally**

Some of the **QUESTIONS** we worked with during the project were:

- **What measures have companies taken as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic?**
- **What measures are companies currently taking to mitigate climate change?**
- **Which of the innovations developed as a response to the pandemic has potential to be developed into measures to mitigate climate change and to deal with other related challenges?**
- **What types of methodologies are suited to work with a ‘solution’- and vision-oriented approach?**
- **What actual innovative ideas come out of workshops using such**
1.2 Our study areas

In this project we have worked with these questions together with tourism stakeholders (DMOs and tourism companies) in two destinations, Gotland and Dalarna. These are two different and yet similar destinations. Although Gotland mainly a summer destination, Dalarna has a strong winter as well as a summer destination character and both regions are heavily dependent on tourism. Both host universities with research and education on tourism and the researchers involved in this project are active in these respective universities creating opportunities for learning and dissemination.

1.3 The research process

The project was developed as following: First we performed desk research around COVID-19 related initiatives on the websites of companies in the two destinations to see what kind of knowledge around COVID-19 was available there. We also conducted informal interviews with destination managers to identify good practices and sources of information both around COVID-19 as well as sustainability. During this first step, we also conducted interviews with companies in Gotland and Dalarna. During those interviews we explored what companies currently do to mitigate climate change, as well as what they did and how they innovated to combat the effects of the pandemic. The research process is illustrated on Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: The research process
With the results from the desk study and the interviews we started to prepare the interactive workshops, with the intention to let the participating companies and stakeholders develop the innovations from the pandemic further, into possible solutions that deal with climate change and other sustainability challenges. We used different interactive workshop methodologies that would enable the participants themselves to come up with ideas, rather than us providing them with our solutions. We found this more accurate, both because they know their own circumstances better, and because it will be the tourism actors who must implement the ideas afterwards. However, we provided both the methodologies and our analysed results as a point of departure for the workshops. As a basis for our process, we chose the so-called ‘backcasting’ methodology. Rather than starting from where we are now and base solutions on the current situation, this methodology starts with a future vision of a sustainable future and then works with finding a pathway to achieve this future. This is a powerful tool for sustainability work where the aim is to stimulate a new understanding and innovations rather than ‘business as usual’, or, with words from tourism research, to reach a situation of ‘path creation’ rather than ‘path dependency’ (when patterns from before are simply reproduced). Creating future visions for sustainability is considered particularly useful in managing the complexity of sustainable development and in guiding action for sustainability. (Guillen Mandujano et al., 2021; Mendoza et al., 2017; Schiølin, 2020). The method we worked with is further illustrated later in this report.
Chapter 2. The Outcomes

So, in effect there are two kinds of outcomes of this project:

1) The findings from the interviews and the actual ideas that came out of the workshops. It is interesting to note that the ideas generated were not about ‘bouncing back’ to how things were before the pandemic, but rather to create a ‘new normal’, incorporating the experience of the pandemic.

2) The method we developed and used on how to create such types of visions and ideas.

This methodology is different from many others on the one hand because we collected data from the destinations (through desk study and interviews) and analysed this before the workshops, and brought this to the workshops as a point of departure. It is thus not only what the participants bring to the table at the workshop which is the “data” we worked with, but that we had already analyzed data beforehand. So, as workshop facilitators we did not only contribute with a generic workshop format, but with rather deep knowledge about the situation in which the participants work, which can help them feel engaged and take ownership of the results.

On the other hand, this methodology distinguishes itself from other participatory methodologies in that it is based on back casting, on how to realize visions, whilst first identifying visions. ‘Everything you can imagine is real’, so visions of the future are needed to create this desired future. When working for sustainability solutions, it can be rather problematic to think about ‘solving problems’, because even if we do manage to ‘solve problems’ in the current system, the current system may in itself be unsustainable, so solving problems might actually perpetuate problems. Starting with visions, on the other hand, ensures that what is proposed really contributes to sustainability in the ‘new normal’, rather than simply ‘bouncing back’.
2.1 The outcomes of the interviews and the workshops

2.1.1 Lessons learned from the pandemic

Through interviews and desk research we have learnt how companies have experienced the COVID-19 crisis and the lessons learned so far. The tourism businesses in both destinations of Dalarna and Gotland experienced the pandemic as a challenge and at the same time as an opportunity. The pause in business activities offered a space to reflect, think and work on old and new ideas. Some reported a lack of system support and companies active in the meetings industry and in urban areas were impacted more than nature-based tourism businesses.

**Domestic tourism** was of course on the rise. With closed borders around the world, the turn to the Swedish market was the way to go. Companies who could adjust their services and products to domestic market managed well. “Flight shame” before the pandemic, or even “Travel shame” during the pandemic, and “Staycation” played a role in expanding the demand from the Swedish market. This was an important intake to consider in working further with companies: How are these trends likely to affect tourism in the new normal? What do we need to develop them further?

**Diversification** was also a success factor. Companies who had a variety of products and services to offer seemed to perform better during the pandemic. Diversified communication channels with the customers were mentioned among companies to cope with the pandemic. For example, using Facebook groups and other presence in digital environments were among the strategies used. Fast responses in businesses were also vital in a changing environment.

**Collaboration** was also mentioned by interviewed companies as an important factor contributing to better coping with the pandemic. Collaboration between different administration organisations at different levels (national, regional, local) and companies but also between companies and between companies and the destination management organizations. Increased cooperation was seen as reducing also competition and creating better circumstances to cope with the pandemic crisis. It thus became a
question in the project how can we bring in a collaborative culture and some knowledge co-creation in the destinations to handle other crises? The method for collaborative workshops presented later in this document is relevant to this question.

**Digitalization** was also found to be crucial. Turning events and experiences digital with a profit was a strong survival strategy during the pandemic. Digitalisation could be an interesting development to address the flight and travel shame after the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Nature-based tourism** and taking activities outdoors became more popular during the pandemic. The trend was evident before, and now even more. Companies working with nature-based tourism did not have to change much, and other stakeholders followed. Taking for example business meetings outdoors in nature was considered as cutting-edge during the pandemic.

### 2.1.2 Perceptions of climate change and sustainability among companies

Most companies are aware of climate change and sustainability issues. Companies are aware of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and in a few cases they try to use them as a general guideline for sustainability. However, climate change is perceived by a number of companies as something to come rather that a crisis already here. Their relation to nature also differs with some considering nature as an integral part of their operations while for others it is a resource to use and protect on a win-win basis. Staying close to nature and creating connections to it is considered as something to be used to raise environmental awareness among guests.

Companies’ main strategy to adapt to climate change is through **technology-based solutions**. Using renewable energy sources and turning to electrification of several operations to reduce fossil fuels use were most prominent. Electric cars and charger installation are among the priorities for several companies. Small changes in daily operations to reduce energy use are also considered. Managing **food waste** and **recycling** were also found to contribute to mitigating climate change.
2.1.3 Visions of sustainable destinations

In the first workshop participants from both destinations developed the vision for a sustainable future for their destination. Although working in mixed groups, participants from both destinations were able to create a common ground and discuss their own visions for a sustainable destination.

These can be summarised as to: Develop businesses to **stand on more than one leg**, to increase the opportunities for **distribution of tourists within time and place**. The value lies in the **people** who work in the hospitality industry and it is they who can develop and make a difference in the future. **Fossil free** destinations is also part of the vision. Important elements of these visions include among other things flexibility and resilience such as to have a diversified product to offer, understanding the importance of people like community members and employees, but also tourists with a pro-environmental mindset and sustainable behaviour, and the need for developing towards a fossil free destination.

What the pandemic showed is the importance of diversification and standing on more than one leg. Participants discussed the role of new products and trends which appeared during the pandemic such as ‘hemester’ (staycation). Further, being able to work remotely during the pandemic changed the way we think about workplace and leisure and has opened new possibilities for tourism companies and destinations even after the pandemic.

Overcrowding has been a problem in certain destinations even before the pandemic. Certain attractions such as historical city centres and places in nature had an overflow of visitors often with limited environmental awareness. Raising awareness and nudging sustainable tourism behaviour is important to limit impacts. The pandemic, according to the participants, also showed that it is possible to have fewer visitors but increase in the per capita spending. Participants from both destinations also discussed the need to balance the seasons and redistribute visitors more evenly in time and space rather than attracting more tourists in a year-around destination. Balancing seasons can be an adaptation strategy for climate change when it will be difficult to rely on one - possibly
shorter season. Moreover, discussions around seasonality have been prominent in the tourism sector for a long time. Distributing visitors in time and space has been a big concern for sustainability in the destinations. Having more than one extensive high season including the implementation of diversification strategies is crucial to adapt to a changing climate. It is also crucial in order to be able to retain populations as well as a skilful and competent workforce.

Destinations are communities and what the pandemic brought again to the surface is the importance of people: people as residents, as employees, as visitors. It is vital for a sustainable destination to be a place for all of them, meaning ways to include locals in a tourism product or service, working together as well as retain employees in the tourism sector. One major challenge that intensified during the crisis were people leaving the hospitality industry and consequently many workplaces cannot be filled. The generation of future employees will need to see secure and desirable work opportunities in the sector.

More specifically, tourism must create opportunities for locals and for employment. “Going local” is a trend in tourism worldwide. Locals and their knowledge as well as products can make tourists' experiences unique. But what does that include? Local food? Local products? Exchange with community members? How might we involve locals in the creation of tourism products and experiences for a sustainable future? Finally, considering travel to and within the destination in addition to emissions and unsustainable practices in business operations have to be urgently addressed for a sustainable future. Visitor flows need to be regulated in numbers and frequency, especially to protect nature, as it is our greatest asset. Digital tools will enhance the tourism offers and nudging tourists can distribute visitor streams in a balanced way.

2.1.4 From vision to action: enabling a sustainable path in the new normal

In the second workshop participants worked in finding ways to realize the visions identified. Based on our analysis of Workshop 1, we chose three of the themes appearing in participants discussions and prepared a so called “mash-up workshop” to introduce them to the participants of Workshop 2. The aim was to enable them to think out of the
box and develop innovative ideas on how to implement these three themes. The three themes were staycations (hemester), workations, and involving local communities in the destination. Unfortunately, some participants had to cancel last minute so we worked with two themes in two groups instead of three:

1. Staycation
2. Involvement of local community members

**Staycation**

Nature was at the centre of attention when developing the staycation theme. Nature is an asset for an improved quality of life, a quality of life that one often does not need to travel far away to get. It offers relaxation and disconnection from our hectic lives. Staycation holidays can be spent together with friends and family, and thus allow for more togetherness, and a sense of belonging to create memorable experiences together. Creating visitor packages that allow tourists to go out of their comfort zones, while being together in the small and great things is another vital part for vacations close to home. Product developers thus need to consider both the feeling of novelty and challenge but also of comfort and togetherness, something for everyone. This can mean cooking together or spending the night outdoors to connect to each other and to oneself. Local knowledge and local hospitality can play a crucial role here. We often travel to see how other people live, as well as to experience other cultures. But maybe we can rediscover our close environment and culture: How can one make a Dala-horse? How to look for mushrooms? Where to find the favourite places of (other) locals?

**Locals’ involvement**

To experience a local feeling, local knowledge is needed. Integrating local knowledge for staycation experiences can be an important element as described before. To establish a sincere connection to the community it is necessary to start with the locals themselves, to connect to the local pride and to acknowledge the present cultures. Locals’ involvement should start by addressing community members directly, as well as their identity. This can result in a shift from non-involvement in the tourism sector or even
dislike of tourism, to welcoming visitors and acknowledging the benefits of tourism. Workshop participants described this shift very vividly in a metaphor of an angry landowner that turns into a proud visitor guide.

So, how does involving locals in tourism experiences look like in practice? One big part of local engagement are local guides. Sharing their stories and local knowledge can point out the uniqueness in rather simple things or places. Thereby it is not always necessary to try to find something spectacular, what seems everyday for the local community can be exciting for a guest. It is the stories and the feeling of a place that locals carry with them that make the difference.

Local food culture – Besides stories, the typical flavours of a place are a great way to discover a destination. Working with the local food culture is already in place in many of the participants destinations, but bears great potential for being extended and deepened as well as connected to other forms of locally relevant aspects. Such food tourism products can consist of a joint cooking experience, where the tourists take part in the preparation process of a traditional dish, learn what ingredients are needed and how to cook it. This process can start as a full package tour, in which tourists visit the producers of the ingredients directly or produces themselves come to join the meal preparation, present their product and are in exchange with the visitors.

Developing sustainably in the new normal is our big challenge. Experiences we make during the pandemic crisis can be used to learn to cope with other sustainability crises now and in the future. Traveling in our proximate environments and integrating local people were only two ideas that can support our transition into the new normal.
2.2 The Collaborative method used

2.2.1 Interviews

We conducted 30 interviews in total. We interviewed 26 tourism companies of which 9 companies were from Gotland and 17 companies from Dalarna. Among these 26 companies, there were 4 hotels/hostels, 6 outdoor activities, 10 resorts (accommodation, outdoor activities, food and conference), 3 restaurants, and 3 transportation companies. Appendix 1 provides an overview of participating companies in the interviews. We also interviewed (4 interviews) stakeholders from Region Gotland, visitDalarna and Destination Sälenfjällen.

During the interviews we explored three main topics: how the companies have responded to the COVID-19 crisis (e.g. what ideas and initiatives did, what did they learn from it); and also on how they think of climate change (e.g. if climate change has been a consideration in their business offer, if they are working actively towards it or towards other sustainability issues, if the pandemic has changed the way they see sustainability and climate change); and also how they would see the future of their business and their destination in the new normal.

Master students of both Dalarna and Uppsala University had the opportunity to participate in the interviews and develop their master's theses based on them. A list of master theses topics developed maybe be found in here and here; alternatively search in diva-portal.org: go to register card “Advanced search – Student theses”, search for “Degree Project in Sustainable Destination Development” or “SAMINT-HDU” in the free text search (include quotation marks in the search).

2.2.2 The co-creation workshop method

In this section we present the method we designed and used. We used an iterative process, which is particularly relevant in transformative approaches, where the outcome of one stage becomes an input to the next workshop.
We designed two online, interactive, co-creation workshops, based on the back-casting methodology. This means that the actors were first asked to create a future vision for their respective destinations (Dalarna or Gotland), to then co-design ´innovations´ that target these visions. These interactive workshops are described below.

An overall conclusion is that the actors find it valuable to come together and talk about these experiences. To just share and exchange ideas and experiences helped the actors in that moment. A space (digital or physical) that enables actors to do this seems to be appreciated.

Below we illustrate the steps one needs to take to develop similar workshops. The aim is to disseminate the knowledge around the method use and develop a culture of collaboration and knowledge co-creation.

**Recruiting participants**

A difficulty in the process, and that is one commonly known, is to attract actors to participate in the workshops. Even though the research group has a network in both Dalarna and Gotland, the participation rate was lower than expected. Especially on Gotland this seemed to be a difficulty. This is something to take into consideration when developing workshops and the effort needed to invite relevant participants. As one interviewee from a regional DMO explained, it is important to attract the companies with the right mind-set meaning that have an interest on the topic and which engage and contribute to ideas generation. With that in mind we performed follow-up rounds in the invitations to increase participation on a targeted list of companies together with open invitation via DMOs social media and mail lists. Participants comprised DMOs representatives and a variety of companies from the two destinations including small and big resorts, tourism activities, transportation companies etc.

**On-line workshops**

Online workshops allow for greater flexibility and also reduce geographical limitations. In order to facilitate participation of companies from various areas in our destinations but also because of the pandemic, we designed and organised the workshops online.
2.2.3 Workshop 1 - visioning a sustainable destination

Step 1: preparation for the workshop

As a preparation to the workshop, participants were sent a video summarising the findings from the interviews. The aim was to introduce the project to the participants and very importantly, to share some of the knowledge generated already in the project as an input in the process and stimulate participants creative thinking. The video can be found here: Lessons learned from the Covid pandemic

Participants were also invited to upload on Padlet a picture or a photo accompanied by a small text/statement illustrating their vision for a sustainable destination. This was to stimulate their interest and engagement and make them prepare for the workshop. The uploaded photos with accompanied text formed the base for the initiation of discussions in the groups (Figure 2) (See Appendix 2 for the pre-workshop 1 instructions)

Figure 2. Visions of participants uploaded on padlet
Preparation also included the formulation of groups, appointing moderators and developing a manual for moderators (available on Appendix 2 and 3). We created three groups of 3-4 participants each, to stimulate engagement and to make it easier for everyone to speak. Each group had a moderator (one of the researchers) who facilitated the whole process for the participant, explained the tasks and helped with the software used.

**Step 2: during the workshop**

The workshop had a duration of 2.5 hours and was divided in five parts as illustrated on the Manual for Workshop 1 appearing in Appendix 2: (1) Start of the workshop; (2) Visioning part 1; (3) Introduce Challenges; (4) Visioning Part 2; (5) closing

The overall aim of the workshop was to help local tourism stakeholders create future visions for their respective destinations, which drew upon lessons learned from current (and future) challenges such as climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Following the conversation starter, we let the participants discuss their views on a desired future. During the workshop, the first task was to present these images to each another. This was a way to start the conversation, and create the space of sustainability visions discussions and development of an understanding of each other’s position. After 20 minutes we introduced to the groups the first challenge: the COVID-19 pandemic. All moderators told the participants: *now you have had some time to think about the future of the destination. But what about the COVID-19 pandemic? Can you think back at what impact this had on Gotland/Dalarna and on you as a stakeholder? What do you think and feel when thinking back on this (and even on how it still affects you now)? What does this pandemic mean for the future you have developed now?* Then, participants were asked to implement this in their future vision. After 20 minutes a second challenge was introduced: heatwave (caused by climate change). The moderators informed the participants with the following: *It is not only the pandemic which is creating a challenge for places and people. Climate change is also affecting us all. Now think about how a heatwave can affect the place you live. What can the consequences be? How can you deal with this challenge as a stakeholder? How does this affect your vision?* The groups
got 20 minutes to talk about this and to implement it to their future vision. We wanted to integrate real life challenges in order for them to integrate these problems in their future.

The workshop ended with a discussion and a reflection with all participants. First all groups presented their vision and/or their main discussion points. Then we had a short reflection session, where people could respond to each other's visions and make any other comments regarding the workshop.

We used online collaborative tools to enable brainstorming during the workshop. Padlet functions as a notice board or wall, and for this workshop we let participants upload the photos of their desired future including a small text with explanation. We used also Jamboard for the actual brainstorming, because it is easy to create online sticky notes and participants are able to draw and write (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Jamboard of brainstorm session visioning workshop
Step 3: after the workshop

After the workshop, the moderators took notes from the workshop and started reflecting on them. We also had a group meeting to discuss our reflections and share our notes. We went back to our notes to analyse the outcomes of the workshop and had another meeting to discuss further the outcomes.

2.2.4 Workshop 2 - From vision to action: enabling a sustainable path in the new normal

The second workshop built on the visions created (in other words: the outcomes) in the first workshop. The participants see an opportunity to develop hemester (staycations), workations and local involvement in tourism products and services. We designed activities to target these tourism futures with innovative ideas. Again, we worked online in two smaller groups, each facilitated by a moderator. The full workshop was facilitated by an overall moderator.

Step 1: preparation for the workshop

As a preparation to the second workshop, we send a second video to the participants summarising the outcomes of workshop 1. In this way participants were informed about the activities if they had not participated before, or their memory was refreshed. It also allowed us to continuously share knowledge and keep the participants engaged. The aim was to introduce the project to the participants and very importantly, to share some of the knowledge generated already in the project as an input in the process and stimulate participants creative thinking. The video can be found here: Visioner för hållbar turism: från vision till handling

Preparation again included the formulation of groups, appointing moderators and developing a manual for moderators (available on Appendix 4). We created two groups of 3-4 participants each. Each group had a moderator (one of the researchers) who facilitated the whole process for the participant, explained the tasks and helped with the software being used. As an extra preparation we formulated problem statements and categories for the mash-up exercise (see for further explanation step 2). These were
based on the themes identified in workshop 1. We prepared ‘slides’ on the online tool Jamboard, to facilitate easy collaboration between participants.

**Step 2: during the workshop**

The workshop had a duration of 2.5 hours and was divided in five parts as illustrated on the Manual for Workshop 1 appearing in Appendix 4: (1) Introduction of the workshop; (2) Mash-up exercise (3) Reflection; (4) Closing

The overall aim of the second workshop was to come up with tangible actions based on the visions created in workshop 1 and to facilitate a space where tourism stakeholders could come together and possibly start new collaborations.

During the Introduction phase we welcomed all the participant and explained briefly the planning of the workshop. Then we asked everyone to introduce themselves and share their expectations of the workshop. The we continued with the “ice-breaker”. We asked the participants to identify the strengths of the companies the participants worked for or owned. We asked them: *Which achievement of the last 1-2 years are you most proud of? What are the competences of/within your company?* These answers were used later in the reflection part of the workshop.

Then the mash-up exercise started with the “**Introduction to problem statement**”. Each group was introduced to one problem statement that was linked to the visions created in workshop 1:

Hemester/Staycation: *How might we develop different forms of staycation products and services further?* (staycations here were defined more broadly to include also domestic tourism)

Local involvement: *How can we involve the locals in the creation of tourism products and experiences?*

The moderators also explained shortly the idea behind the exercise to the participants (see appendix4).
The next step called “Idea generation on categories” was about coming up with various innovative ideas as answers to the problem statement. The idea of this part of the mash-up exercise is that participants connect seemingly unrelated things together in order to create innovative ideas. We formulated these ‘seemingly unrelated things’, also called categories, before the workshop. One of the categories is related to the problem and the other one seem to be unrelated. The categories we formulated for this workshop were as follows:

Staycation
- Category 1: Things that make you feel at home
- Category 2: Going on an adventure

Local involvement
- Category 1: Things only locals know and do
- Category 2: Having the neighbours over for dinner

The participants were presented with the first category, and were asked to write down their associations with it in a very short time (3 minutes). Then we asked to do the same thing with the second category. We gave them only 3 minutes of time, to encourage the participants to write down everything that comes to mind without giving it too much thought. For this brainstorm activity we used the online tool Jamboard. To make it clear for moderators and participants we gave each category a colour. The sticky notes under category 1 yellow and under category 2 pink. See figure 4 for an example of the brainstorm session.

After writing down a list of associations under category 1 and a list of associations under category 2, we asked the participants to mix the associations to create new ideas that target the problem statement. We gave them 30 minutes for this task. An example of associations on Staycation mixed together were freedom, positive loneliness, just being without stress and nature experience. This led to the idea to develop a product/service where nature is combined with relaxation. An example of mixed associations on Local Involvement is: laughter and joy, singing and the unexpected. This led to the idea of organised choir singing in a forest or by the sea.
After the 30 minutes had passed, we asked the participants to vote for their favourite idea and to discuss for 10 minutes the resources (natural resources, competences, skills, knowledge) needed to create and run the product/service (Figure 5).

Figure 4. Mash-up brainstorm exercise result

Figure 5. Identified resources needed to develop idea
At the end of the workshop the participants were brought together in the general online room and presented their ideas to the other group(s). Then we asked all the participants to individually reflect on the ideas generated during the mash-up, and in which ways they could contribute to these ideas with their own competences, skills, knowledge and other resources (which the participants identified at the beginning of the workshop during the ice-breaker phase). Then we created break-out zoom rooms without any predetermined participants assigned to them but the moderators. Participants could move freely between the break-out rooms and discuss the ideas further for 20 minutes. We provided them with some guiding questions during this phase:

Why is this idea relevant for you?
How would it be of use in your area and company?/ How could your company work with this idea?
How would you develop this idea further?

**Step 3: after the workshop**

After the workshop, the moderators again took notes from the workshop and started reflecting on them. Then we had a group meeting to discuss our reflections and to share our notes. We went back to our notes to analyse the outcomes of the workshop and had another meeting to discuss further the outcomes. Although this was the last workshop, we created another video to disseminate the findings with the participants. This video can be found here: [Hemester och lokal engagemang - Hållbara turism i det nya normala](Hemester och lokal engagemang - Hållbara turism i det nya normala)
Chapter 3. Conclusions

In this project our aim was to gather the knowledge and experience developed during the pandemic and negotiate it and develop it further to mitigate other sustainability challenges and especially the climate change challenge. We worked collaboratively with DMOs and companies in two popular destinations in Sweden and offered the space and the tools for them to share their visions and understandings of a sustainable destination development integrating the knowledge from the pandemic. Participants were able to negotiate their understandings of sustainability in a tourism destination, their visions of it, get inspired for each other and get exposed to the complexity that a sustainable destination entails. The workshops were ‘vision driven’, i.e. back casting. Rather than taking as starting point how the situation is now, and how that can be slightly improved, we started with thinking about how we would like our destinations to be, and what we could do to make that happen. So, we are not focused on ‘solving problems’ but on ‘realizing visions’, arguably more creative, more fun and more accurate for sustainability challenges (which are about what a desirable future could look like). The participating companies and actors developed new or refined existing ideas within our project. How they take these further and implement them will be for the future to see. Even though the main result of the project is for the participating companies and actors, some generic results can serve as inspiration for others. This regards the content of the ideas generated, like focusing on involving locals, developing staycation and workation products, and working towards fossil fuel free destinations. This also regards the method of working, using co-creating workshops formats with a focus on visions for the future, rather than the immediate problems in the present. Related to this is the value in just having a fora to discuss things like this, where other pressing issues for a moment are left behind. We hope that the outcomes of the workshops are directly relevant to several destinations and that the method developed can be of direct use or of inspiration to many more destinations.
References


Appendices

Appendix 1 Types of companies interviewed
Appendix 2. Pre-workshop 1 instructions

Instructions pre-workshop 1

Welcome to the first workshop of the project sustainable tourism and the new normal: learning from COVID-19 pandemic
When: XXXX
Where: zoom link or place

In this workshop we will develop a future vision for Gotland/Dalarna. The central question in this first workshop is: *How would you describe the desirable future of the region Dalarna/Gotland?* This future vision will help you in finding ways to deal with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change, and to think outside the box to find new business opportunities for a sustainable future.

In preparation for the first workshop we ask you kindly to upload an image that represents your desirable future for the place you live in. In order to do this follow this link (link to pandlet for the project)

Once you are in the page, double click or click the pink plus sign in the right corner of the page (see red arrow). This will make a comment section pop-up (see picture below).
Now you can write a title (see ‘subject’), upload an image (the left green sign for uploading from your computer, the camera sign to take a photo, the orange link sign to link to a website, the orange image search sign to find an image from the catalogue and the pink sign for more options). You can also write a description of your desirable future underneath (see ‘write something fantastic’).

When you are done, click publish (upper right pink sign). The comments/images are visible for all participants.

The photos will be used as a basis to start conversations in the workshop. During the workshop we will give you more detailed instructions of the workshop activities.

Warm greetings and see you soon
## Appendix 3. Workshop 1/Manual for moderators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Who</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Start of workshop</strong></td>
<td>Participants are entering the zoom space</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Participants need to be divided into break out rooms</td>
<td>Moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:00-13:05</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>Describe the schedule and activities</td>
<td>Moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:05-13:15</td>
<td>Short presentations</td>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>Present yourself shortly</td>
<td>Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visioning Part 1 13:15</td>
<td>Going in break out rooms</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Put people in break out rooms</td>
<td>Moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:15-13:25</td>
<td>Sharing images</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>Explain your desired future based on the images you have chosen</td>
<td>Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Moderator needs to share screen to show images on Padlet</em></td>
<td>Group moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Links to padlet</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:25-13:45</td>
<td>Brainstorm common vision</td>
<td>20 min</td>
<td>Help participants where needed</td>
<td>Group moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Use Jamboard. Show participants shortly how it works. Tell them jamboard can support them in discussions and also be used as a presentation tool</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Link to jamboard</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BREAK</td>
<td></td>
<td>5 min</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:55-14:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge 1 14:00</td>
<td>Introduction of the COVID pandemic challenge</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Let participants reflect on how the pandemic has made them feel and let them implement this in their vision</td>
<td>Group moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Session</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:00-14:20</td>
<td>Visioning</td>
<td>Groups envision future incl challenge 1</td>
<td>20 min</td>
<td>Help participants where needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:20</td>
<td>Challenge 2</td>
<td>Introduction of Heatwave challenge</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Let participants think about how to deal with climate change consequence and let them implement this in their vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:20-14:40</td>
<td>Visioning</td>
<td>Groups envision future incl challenge 2</td>
<td>20 min</td>
<td>Help participants where needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Marije will send out message 3 min before the end at zoom</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:40-14:45</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td></td>
<td>5 min</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:45-15:00</td>
<td>Visioning pt 2</td>
<td>Going back to main room</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Put people together in the main zoom room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:50-15:00</td>
<td>Presentation of visions</td>
<td>The groups present the futures developed</td>
<td>15 min</td>
<td>Keep track of time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:00-15:10</td>
<td>Identification of key elements/Reflection</td>
<td>Together identifying similarities in visions</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>Help participants identify the similarities/key words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:10-15:20</td>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>Discussion on each other’s visions</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>What does this mean for the future? How do they want to relate to these visions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:20-15:25</td>
<td>Thanks and short summary</td>
<td></td>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>Short summary of what they did, how they can use it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:25-15:30</td>
<td>What follows</td>
<td>Explain shortly what workshop 2 will be</td>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>Short intro on next workshop and invitation to join Thanks!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Information for moderators for workshop 1

Visioning future of places
Duration: **2.5 hours**
During this workshop participants will envision a desirable future for their destinations, as the place they live in, within the framework of sustainability.
The question central to this workshop is: *How would you describe the desirable future of the region/destination Dalarna/Gotland?* Important is that the actors think about their own role/purpose herein as an active stakeholder.

Challenge 1 – COVID PANDEMIC
Make the group stop their discussions. Tell them: now you have had some time to think about the future of the destination. But what about the COVID-19 pandemic? Can you think back at what impact this had on Gotland/Dalarna and on you as a stakeholder? What do you think and feel when thinking back on this (and even on how it still affects you now). What does this pandemic mean for the future you have developed now? Implement this thinking in your future vision.

Challenge 2 – HEATWAVE
Make the group stop their discussion again. Tell them: It is not only the pandemic which is creating a challenge for places and people. Climate change is also affecting us all. Now think about how a heatwave can affect the place you live. What can the consequences be? How can you deal with this challenge as a stakeholder? How does this affect your vision? Implement this thinking in your future vision.
# Appendix 4. Workshop 2 / Manual for Moderators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13:00-13:15</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Create break out rooms</td>
<td>Moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:00-13:05</td>
<td>Welcome &amp; Agenda</td>
<td>Explain workshop</td>
<td>Moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:05-13:15</td>
<td>Participant presentations</td>
<td>Tell name, company, and expectation of workshop (SHORT – in one sentence)</td>
<td>All participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Keep track of time!</td>
<td>Moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:15-13:20</td>
<td>Icebreaker part 1+2</td>
<td>Individually identify strengths of company and of yourself as professional</td>
<td>Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Which achievement of the last 1-2 years are you most proud of?</em></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>What are the competences of/within your company?</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Let participants write on chat</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:20-14:20</td>
<td>Mash-up exercise</td>
<td></td>
<td>Moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:20-13:25</td>
<td>Problem statement</td>
<td>Present shortly the exercise and the problem statement to the participants <em>(see script below!)</em></td>
<td>Moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Problem statement 1: Minea</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Problem statement 2: Ioanna</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Problem statement 3: Ulrika</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:25-13:35</td>
<td>Idea generation on categories</td>
<td>Present category 1 to participants, write the category on the left side of the jamboard</td>
<td>Moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*Let participants write down associations with category 1 for <em>3 minutes</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Present category 2 to participants, write the category on the right side of the jamboard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*Let participants write down associations with category 2 for <em>3 minutes</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Role</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:35-14:05</td>
<td>Mash-up</td>
<td>Let participants mix the associations of the categories to create new ideas that target the problem statement, ask them to group them and name them</td>
<td>Moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:05-14:10</td>
<td>Prioritization</td>
<td>Ask participants to vote for their favorite ideas. Give out 3 votes (with circle in jamboard), the one with the most votes wins.</td>
<td>Moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:10-14:20</td>
<td>Needs identification</td>
<td>Ask participants to discuss which resources and competences/skills and resources are needed for the ideas (use second slide in jamboard)</td>
<td>Moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:20-14:30</td>
<td>10 min BREAK</td>
<td>Letting participants back in main room</td>
<td>Moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:30-15:20</td>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td></td>
<td>Moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:30-14:45</td>
<td>Presentation of ideas</td>
<td>Groups present their best idea in <strong>max 5 min</strong> including the competences, skills, resources</td>
<td>Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:45-14:50</td>
<td>Icebreaker 3</td>
<td>Ask participants to individually reflect on presented ideas and to which ideas they could contribute with their competences, skills, resources</td>
<td>Moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:50-15:10</td>
<td>Break-out talks</td>
<td>Create break out rooms for ideas generated. Participants can freely move between break out rooms to discuss generated ideas further</td>
<td>Moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Guiding questions:</strong> Why is this idea relevant for you? How would it be of use in your area and company?/ How could your company work with this idea? How would you develop this idea further?</td>
<td>Participants, Moderators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Take notes of the discussion</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:10-15:20</td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>Let participants tell main take-outs of the workshop</td>
<td>Moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thank you</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thank participants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Information for moderators for workshop 2
Today we are going to do an ideation exercise, which means that we will come up with many creative ideas within our groups. In order to do this we have formulated a problem statement, which derives from workshop 1. Various themes came forward in this workshop, and we wanted to enable you to think of tangible actions and innovations that target these themes. Your problem statement connects to one of these themes, and is as follows:

**Problem statement 1 (Moderator 1) – Theme ‘Hemester’** (explain shortly what we mean with hemester)
*How might we develop different forms of staycation products and services further?*

**Problem statement 2 (Moderator 2) – Theme ‘Workactions’** (explain shortly what we mean with workation)
*How might we create a tourism product for workations?*

**Problem statement 3 (Moderator 3) – Theme ‘local involvement’** (explain shortly what we mean with involving locals)
*How might we involve locals in the creation of tourism products and experiences?*

This exercise will allow you to generate ideas that target this problem statement. The exercise we are going to do is called mash-up. The idea is that you will connect seemingly unrelated things together, in order to create innovative ideas.

Now I will present you with two categories, and I want to ask you to write down as much associations or thinks you think about when reading this as possible. There are no wrong answers!!! You will get 3-4 minutes per category, so it is really about brainstorming as fast as possible and to write down as much as possible. We can use the jamboard and sticky notes – Link to jamboard

Now write down your associations and ideas related to the first category. What do you think of when you read this? What are your associations with this? Write down what
pops up in your mind, there are no wrong ideas. You have 3-4 minutes to write things down. Use the yellow sticky notes.

Moderator 1: Things that make you feel at home
Moderator 2: What makes a good workplace or work environment
Moderator 3: Things only locals know and do

Now write down your association, ideas related to the second category. What do you think of when you read this? What are your associations with this? Write down what pops up in your mind, there are no wrong ideas. You have 3-4 minutes to write things down. Use the pink sticky notes.

Moderator 1: Going on an adventure
Moderator 2: Crossing the Atlantic on a sailboat
Moderator 3: Having the neighbours over for dinner

You have come up with many ideas under each category. The following step is to mix the ideas of category 1 and category 2, to generate new ideas, products or services, or you name it. Again, there are no wrong ideas! Just try to think out loud, if you have an idea then share it with the group, discuss it. Create various connections like this. **Think about the problem statement!** Try to create ideas that target or work towards the problem statement.
Contact us!!!

For more information about the project, its methods and outcomes you are welcome to contact:

Ioanna Farsari, Dalarna University, project leader ifa@du.se
Ulrika Persson-Fischier, Uppsala University, ulrika.persson-fischier@angstrom.uu.se

The project was cofinanced by Tillväxtverket