

Kolding

Regenerative tourism: Through collaboration to desirable futures

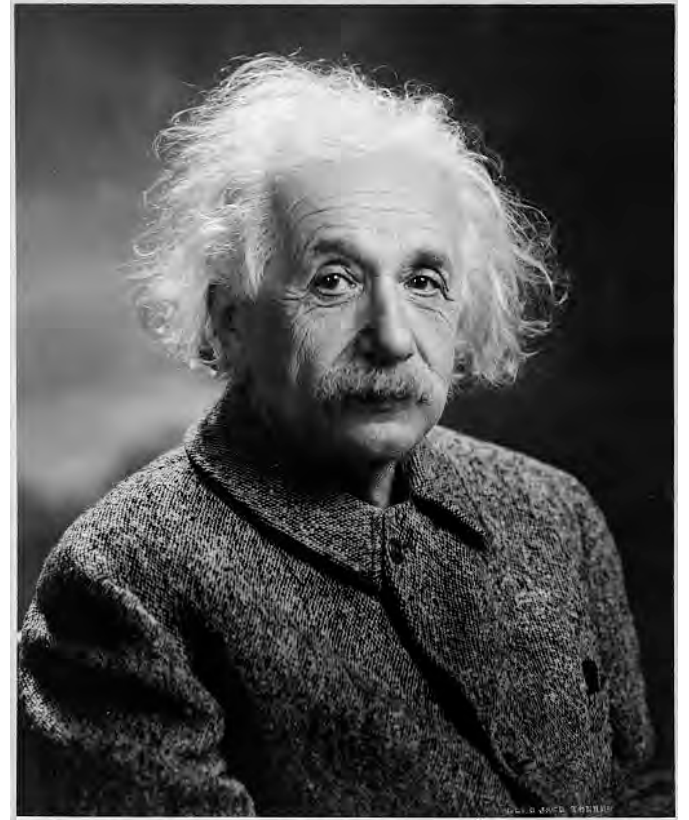
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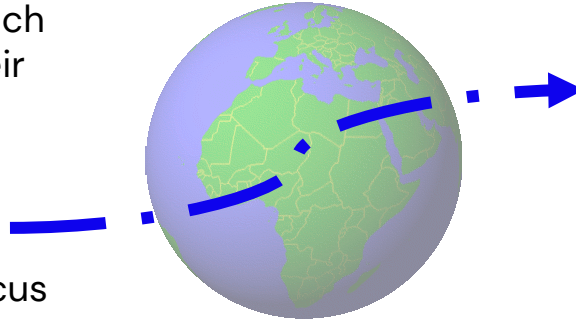
“A new type of thinking is essential if mankind is to survive and move to higher levels.”

Albert Einstein, June 23, 1946, in the *New York Times*



Separation leads to *degenerative* practices

- Separation of humans/culture from nature
- Separation of individuals from each other and from their community
- Economic competition in scarcity
- Reductionism – focus on the parts rather than the whole
- ...



- Scientific discoveries
- Technological breakthroughs
-

But also...

- Reducing human development to economic growth
- Negative externalities
- Taking more from the Earth systems than giving back
- ...
- Decreasing the ability of Earth systems to regenerate for maintaining their functions

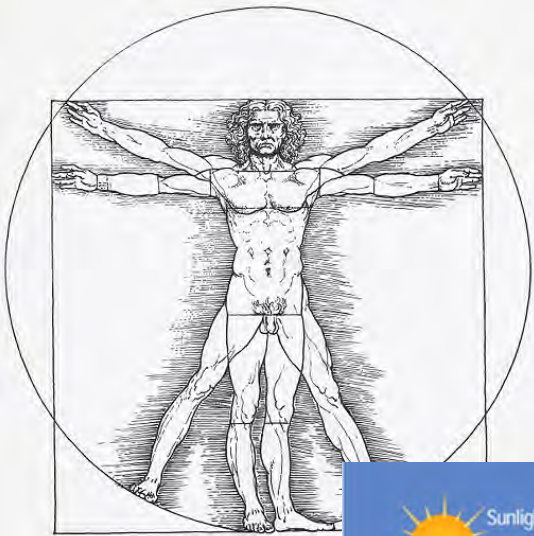
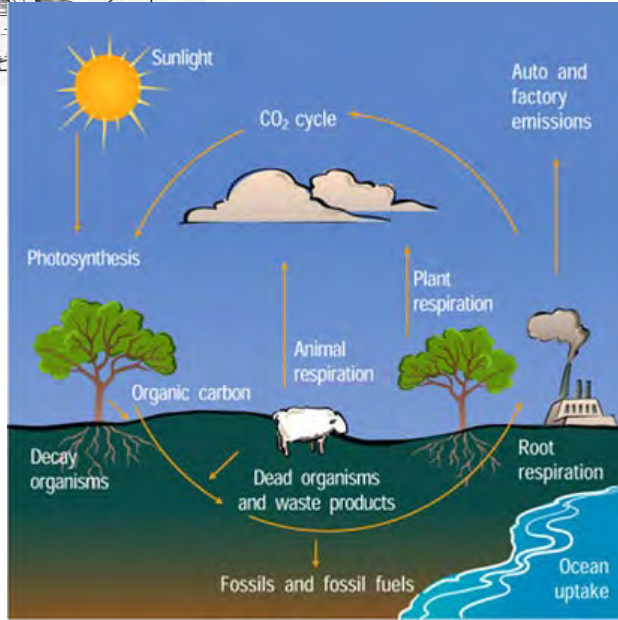


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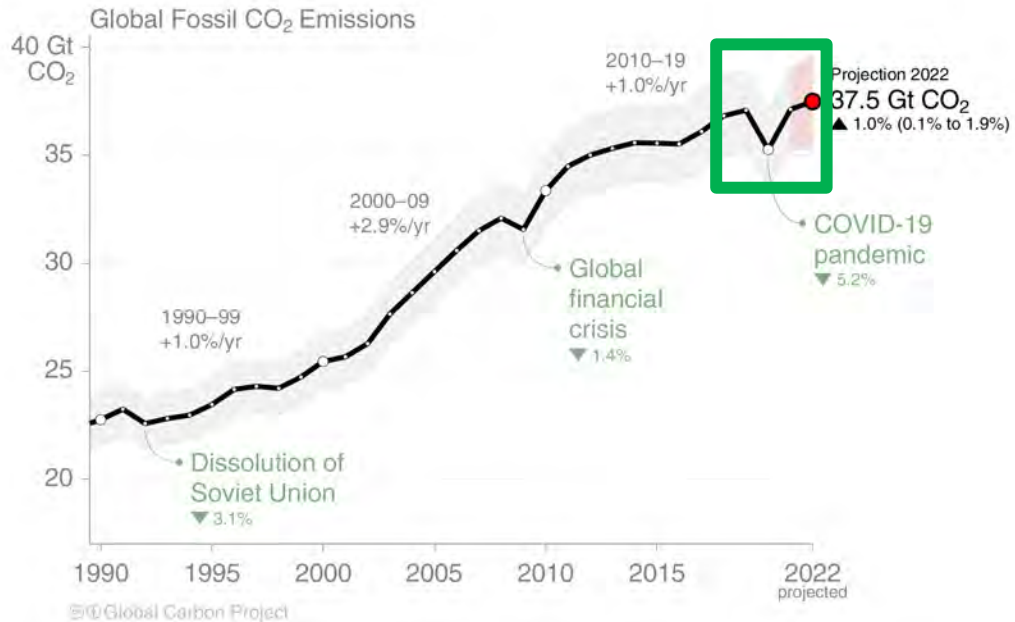


Regenerative thinking

- Inspired by the functioning of **living systems**.
- The various *parts* join together into a single *whole* through their complex and symbiotic relationships.
- For a *whole* to develop (generate and regenerate), each part has to contribute something to the system and not just gain from it.

The mystery of sustainable tourism

What if we all stopped travelling?



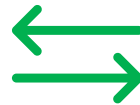
Regenerative tourism – tourism as a living system and as part of a larger living system.



Future-oriented



Reflective

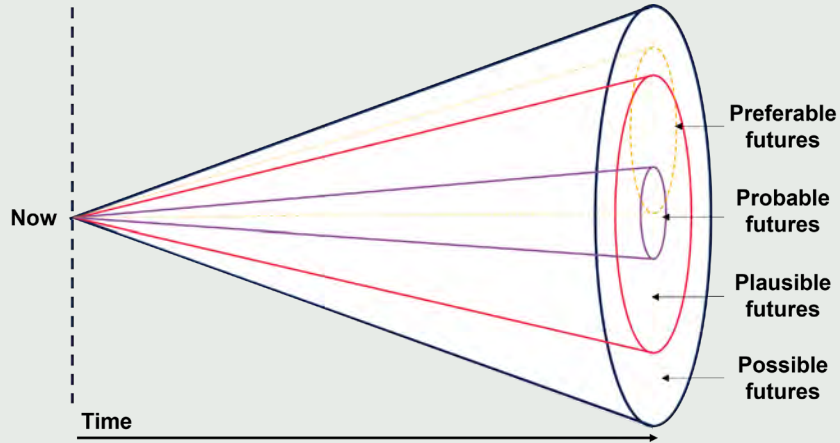


Relational



Based on
collaboration

Future-oriented



- Motivating
- Focus on enabling desirable futures rather than preserving the past
- Multiple co-existent futures

Reflective



Who (not only humans) benefit from our activities? At whose cost?

Who are "tourists" in our community?

Whom and what do we depend on?

- Challenging assumptions, beliefs and practices
- Asking questions rather accepting solutions
- Identifying degenerative practices and innovating with regenerative practices

Relational



What are our relationships with non-human actors?

Which are our key relationships?

What actions can be beneficial in our local context?

- Sustainability as “a property of a web of relationships rather than a characteristic of a single entity” (Fritjof Capra)
- Human and more-than-human actors
- Embedded in the local context and ecosystem

Collaboration



- Activating the synergetic potential of “parts” coming together into a “whole”
- Relating, sympathizing with each other
- Co(IIaboratively)–designing desirable futures

Countours of RT: Oyster Safaris in the Wadden Sea

A nature-based tourist/leisure activity

Local context:

- Oyster-eating as a part of local tradition and culture
- Pacific oysters are an invasive species

Beyond economic benefits:

- Decreasing the population of invasive species, helping the local ecosystem
- Sharing knowledge about ecology, local traditions



Contours of RT:

Hiking between summerhouses in Northern Jutland

Tour organizer *Oh so quiet!* offers hiking routes connecting summerhouses which provide accommodation for the hikers

Local context:

- Increased demand for hiking experiences
- Unused capacity of summer houses in off-season

Beyond economic benefits:

- Adding value by “slowing down” tourism (adding overnight accommodation)
- Dispersing visitor flows



Countours of RT: Tourists as Citizen Scientists in Norway

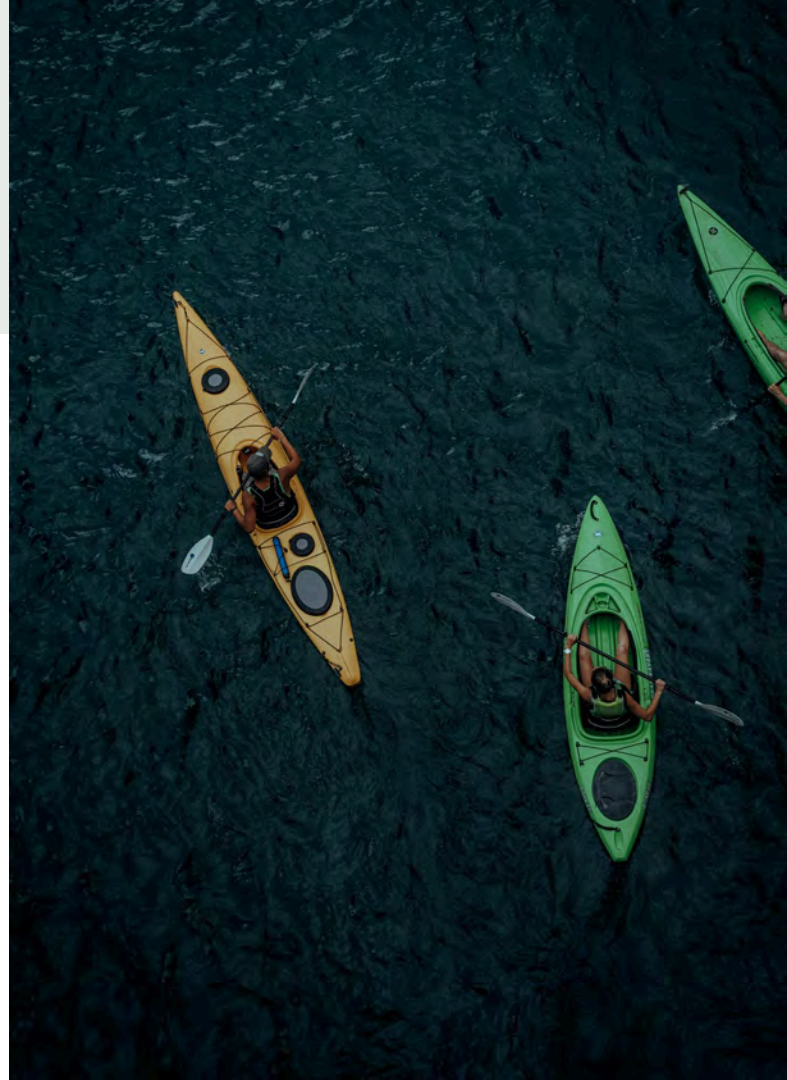
Norwegian tour organizer *Wondering Owl* offers several tours, where tourists engage in collecting data for solving biodiversity issues

Local context:

- Combining the presence of tourists in remote areas with the need of data from these remote areas

Beyond economic benefits:

- Data for science
- Education for participants

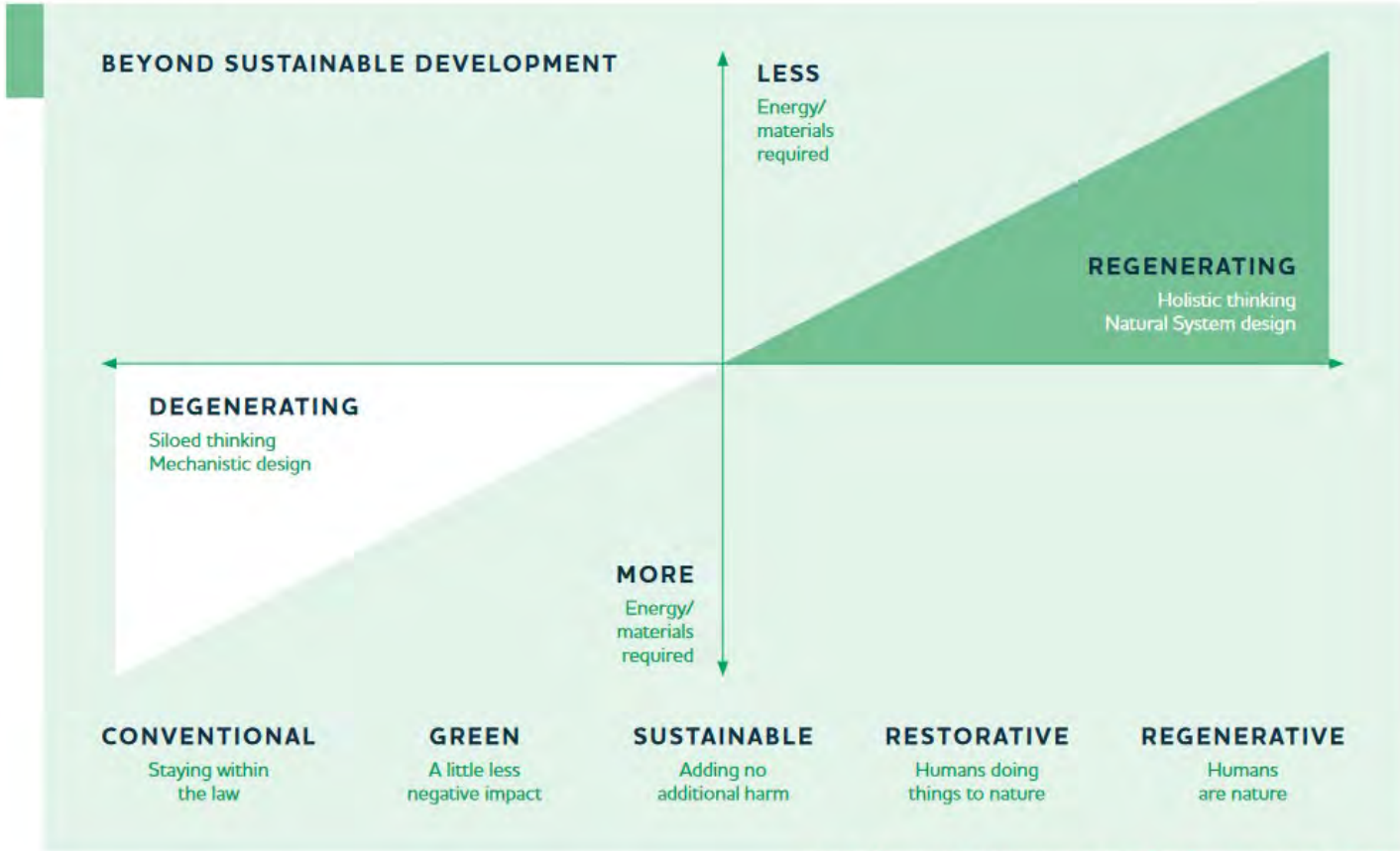


So what is regenerative tourism?

- It is not an alternative or form of sustainable tourism development.
- It covers or even necessitates many existing sustainability efforts, but also demands new ones.

However, regenerative tourism refers to a fundamentally different way of thinking underlying sustainability efforts:

- Focus on existing and new relationships.
- Focus on local context.
- Focus on desirable futures.
- Focus on creating values.



Inspired by Fullerton (2015) Regenerative Capitalism. Capital Institute: Greenwich, CT, USA

So what is regenerative tourism?

It unlocks new opportunities for those in and outside the tourism industry.

- Retail:
 - Can visitors help maintain infrastructures for sustainable production and consumption in a community?
 - Can local retail provide connections between local producers and visitors for local consumption?
- Agriculture:
 - Can tourism help return the human element into agriculture?
 - Can agriculture stakeholders help create more attractive and livable natural landscapes?
- Digital technologies:
 - Can digital technologies facilitate collaboration across stakeholders?



Thank you for
your attention!

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