



Norwegian protected area policy, tourism and recreation:

A comparative analysis of the
international context with
reference to New Zealand

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Monitoring and Management of Visitors
in Recreational and Protected Areas

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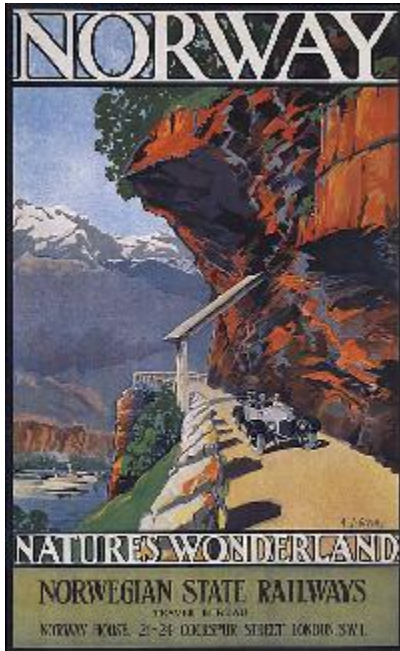
PROTOUR
international collaboration

Introduction



Background:

- History: The management of Norwegian protected areas has paid little attention to the potential for nature-based tourism developments. The national parks are traditionally seen as 'wilderness areas'
- Recent political signals: Growing interest in tourism expansion in and around the parks to counteract marginalization of rural communities

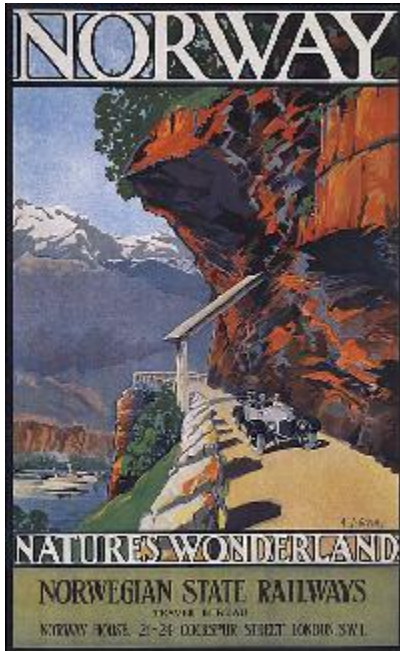


Introduction

The PROTOUR project:

- General aim: *Identify, analyze and present the potentials for managing nature-based tourism developments in Norwegian national parks and their buffer zones*
- Funded by the Norway Research Council and the Norwegian Farmers' Union
- A cooperation between various research institutions - headed by the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (UMB)





Introduction (cont.)

PROTOUR Task D

- Aim: Position the Norwegian protected area policies with regard to tourism and recreation in an international context - based on comparisons with other countries, particularly New Zealand but also USA
- Objectives: Analyze and compare conservation policies in the various countries and their respective management policies and tools - particularly with respect to visitor management principles in New Zealand



Introduction (cont.)



Research team members:

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The Norwegian context

(the basis for comparison)



- Extensive protection policy over a short period of time:
 - First national park (*Rondane* NP) launched in 1962, today 17 per cent of the land mass is protected (35 national parks). National parks are generally located in remote, mountainous rural areas with scant human impacts
- Main focus on 'classical' nature protection and the principle of 'common access'
 - Protection of wilderness qualities and ecosystem conservation has been the paramount concern and management of tourism and recreation is given little attention:

The Norwegian context

(the basis for comparison)



- Management based on natural scientific knowledge and ‘the precautionary principle’
- ‘Common access’ (*allemannsretten* in Norway’s *Outdoor Recreation Act* (1957)) allows for unrestricted foot access to all in wilderness areas. The Act supports self-organised, ‘simple’ outdoor recreation activities with little emphasis on visitor services and facility development



Conservation and nature-based tourism – an emerging partnership?

Interests in integrating recreation/
tourism and conservation
management at the national political
level.



Insights based on international
comparisons (e.g., New Zealand) may
be informative in this context.



Comparative case:

1. New Zealand

Selection criteria:

Long-standing association between tourism/recreation and conservation management.

- 1887: Tongariro National Park
- 1901: *New Zealand Department of Tourism and Publicity* (NZTP) established (world first)
- Established to promote the wonders of New Zealand's natural environment and to foster tourism, particularly from the 'Old Country' (England)
- Based largely upon the developing National Park system that existed at that time.

Waitomo Caves



NEW ZEALAND

And...
The World
Glow-worms

Sport in NEW ZEALAND



TROUT AND
SALMON FISHING.

Through the
RIVER COUNTRY

NEW ZEALAND Invites You



Department of Conservation

Established under major reform of environmental administration in mid-1980s

- *Conservation Act 1987*
 - Creation of the Department of Conservation (DOC) April 1, 1987.
 - Single and coordinated government department responsible for the management of the 'conservation estate' (PNAs) including all national parks.
-
- World leader in various aspects of conservation management
 - E.g., restoration of critically endangered species
 - Under the *Conservation Act 1987* DOC is obliged to foster tourism and recreational use of heritage resources “so far as it is *consistent with the conservation* of natural and cultural heritage values”
(New Zealand Government - *Conservation Act 1987*)

Integration of conservation management and recreation/tourism

- Continues to serve as a justification for designation of national parks
 - e.g., Kepler Track 1987 (Fiordland National Park).
 - e.g., NW Nelson Ecological Region - Kahurangi National Park 1996
 - e.g., Rakiura National Park (Stewart Island) 2002
- Inter-agency interaction/collaboration
 - Ministries of Economic Development/Tourism, Environment
 - New Zealand Tourism Industry Association
 - Tourism New Zealand (*100% Pure New Zealand*)
 - Local/regional conservation groups
 - TLA/local government/Community agencies (e.g., trail development)



The New Zealand context, therefore, offers a comparative case that is unique in the longstanding and formalized relationship between tourism/recreation and conservation management.



Methods:

Phase 1: Document search and retrieval

- Historical documents
- Legislation/policy frameworks
- Planning and Management statements
- Strategy documents
- Science/research series
- Academic publication
- Media

Phase 2: Interview programme

- To be informed by Phase 1
- Norway/New Zealand
- Senior agency representatives

Elements/dimensions of comparative analysis

1. Historical context: Environment, society and economy
2. Conservation status and designations
3. Conservation management policy (vis-à-vis recreation/tourism)
4. Public use of conservation areas (tourism/non-tourism)
5. Visitor services and facilities
6. Key issues in tourism/recreation and conservation management

Conclusion

Cautionary note:

- Comparative analysis can be informative
- *But context is critical*
 - Varied historical and evolving contemporary contexts: Traditional land use practices, attachments to place, socio-economic contexts.
 - Must be acknowledged and respected in the drawing of insights from comparative cases.
- Highlight alternative policy settings and practices
- Draw attention to potential opportunities
- Avoid adopting/imposing models uncritically
- Make recommendations that must be carefully negotiated