

The 24th Nordic Symposium in Tourism and Hospitality and Research
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 Session 9: Proactive Management of Responsible Tourism in the North

Polar Guide ethics and Codes of Conduct among staff and students.



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Goals of presentation:

Study to address guide practice and guide ethics
 Based on ows experiences and observations.



Paulet Island, Antarctica



Neko Harbour, Antarctica

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Background:



Tourism is growing and diversifying in both the Arctic and Antarctic.



Polar Regions are remote, environmentally vulnerable and extreme regarding climate.

These characteristics pose particular safety risks, risk of environmental damage, and risk of disturbance for both wildlife and other human activities in these areas.

This leaves sustainable practice and management of tourism in the Polar Regions largely in the hands of the guides that accompany visiting groups of tourists.

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Background:

Limited scientific knowledge is available about guide-tourist-environmental interactions

or the role of the guide on tourist behaviour and environmental impact, tourist experience, value transformations and take-away experiences from the visit.



Arctic Fox New Siberian Islands

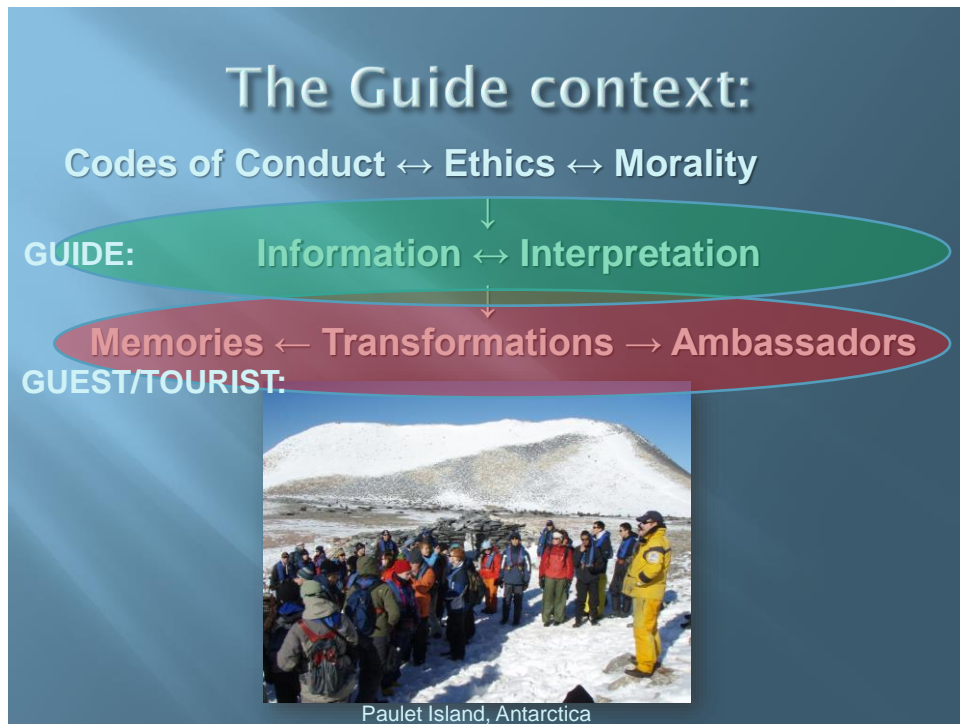


Pinguiluit NP, Nunavik



Pinguiluit NP, Nunavik

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What is Ethics and Morality?


Ethics (Greek *ethos*) is about intellectual and rational reflection about right/wrong and good/bad

Morality (Latin *moralis*) is how ethics is expressed in our actions and practical behaviors – my actions, my way to be

⇒ ethical theory & morale action



Baily Head, Deception Island



No ethics, No morality

Ethical tools:

- Responsibility
- Honesty
- Justice
- Respect

“Walk Your Talk”

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Examples of ethical problems

Disturbance People: AECO:Be considerate to other people or activities



Kangiqsujaq, Nunavik



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Examples of ethical problems

Disturbing Wildlife

Whalers Bay, Deception Island, Antarctica



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Baily Head, Deception Island, Antarctica

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Ethical Guidelines for Guides

general
Ethics

↑

- National & International laws
- WTO: Global Code of Ethics for Tourism
- WWF: Code of Conduct for Arctic Tourists
- Code of Ethics for Tourism by Ecumenical Coalition on Third World Tourism
- National Codes of Ethics & Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism
- Destination Codes Svalbard Environmental Protection Act
- Wildlife interaction Codes
- Professional Codes of Ethics and Conduct (Guide Associations)
- AECO's Guidelines for Expedition Cruise Operations in the Arctic
- AECO's Guidelines for Visitors to the Arctic
- Company Codes
- Personal Codes

↓

Morality
specific

Personal Actions




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Aim:

The aim of this study was to address the attitude, ethics, practice and methodology of **polar guides** in relation to management of guest experience, behaviour and environmental impact.



Solovetsky Island, White Sea, Russia

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Method:

A questionnaire addressing the guides

- background and education (6)
- certification professional experience (10)
- personal views & values (18)
- guiding practise (9)

and consisted of open questions, multiple choice questions and a 5 scale value questions.



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Study:



This study was conducted in collaboration with:

- AECO on their Expedition leader conference on Svalbard 2008
- Hurtigrutten Antarctica guides
- the UNIS Polar Guide Education at Svalbard
- Nature Guide Education at Umeå University.



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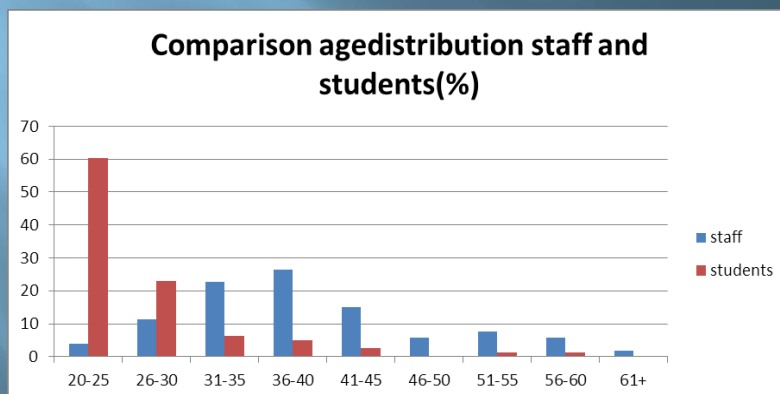
Empirical data:

Category	n
AECO Staff (2008)	44
Hurtigrutten staff (2011)	9
Staff total	53
ANG Students (2009, -10, -11, -13)	62
KNG students (2010)	16
Students total	78
TOTAL	131

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Results:

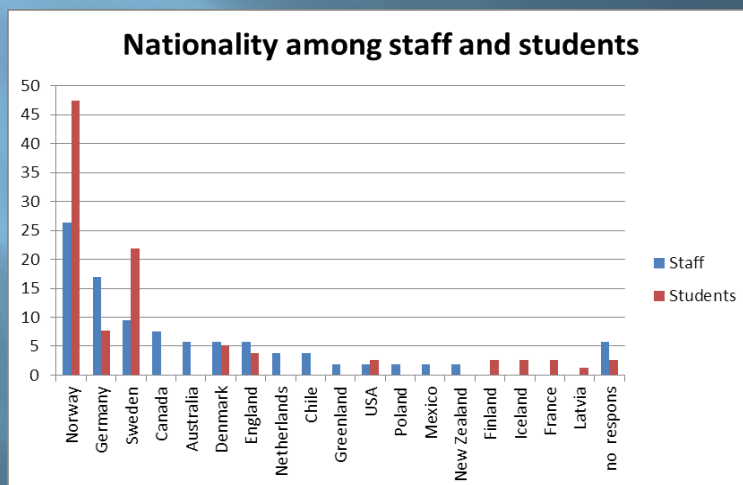
The mean age among staff was **39,5 years** (range=41 (22-63)mod=29,0 median=39,0) and among students **26,6** (range=36 (20-56), mode=21,0, median025,0)



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Results:

he staff represented 14 countries, whit most from Norway (26%), Germany 17% and Sweden (9%), while the students represented 10 countries with most from Norway (47%), Sweden (22%) and Germany (8%),



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Results:

The survey showed that the education background among staff was high with **81% having an university education**,

while among ANG students 66% had an prior university education and among KNG 25% had a previous academic education.

Almost staff almost 1/3 of those with an academic education have studies 2 or more subjects of 27 listed by the respondents ,

with the most common academic subjects being:

biology (49%),

Friluftsliv & outdoor Education (16%),

Environmental Science (12%)

5% guiding,

7% Geology

5% Archeology

2% oceanography

while only 2% have studied tourism

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Results:

Among AECO staff

- 52% had a formal guide education
- 43% a guide certification,
- none of the Hurtigrutten staff had such education or certification

among students,

- 6% had a prior guide education
- 13% a guide certification

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Results:

The working experience seems to be high among staff

- 74% have been working as guides for 5 years or more
- 36% for more than 10 years.

Among students,

- 13% have been working for more than 5 years as guides,
- 15% of the students have worked as guides before their study program.

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Among Staff:

51% were employees,
43% worked as freelance,
6% had their own company.

Among students

4% had their own company,
27% work as freelance
29% had an employment.



Piteå, Sweden

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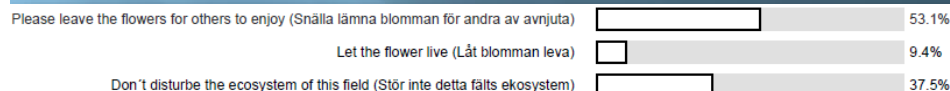
Among staff most, 77% were working as Cruise ship guides, 47% also labeled themselves as Nature/wilderness guides, 68% indicated multiple guiding categories

Guide category	Staff (n=53)	Students (n=78)
Cruise ship Guide	77%	6%
Nature/Wilderness guide	47%	32%
Kayak guide	26%	9%
Tour guide	25%	10%
Snowmobile Guide	23%	15%
Dog Sledge Guide	19%	9%
Boating/rafting guide	17%	8%
Ski guide	15%	12%
Fishing guide	2%	3%
Hunting guide	2%	0%
No answer	4%	51%

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Results:

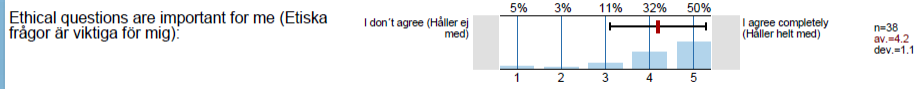
- Interestingly, among staff a majority were oriented towards an anthropomorphic view on nature



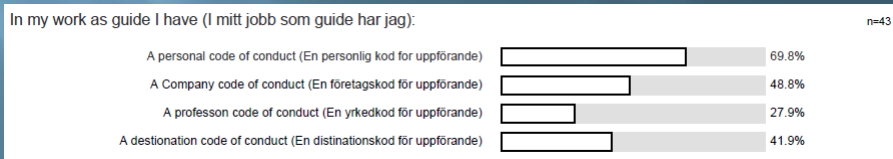
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Results:

- The majority agreed that ethical questions are important



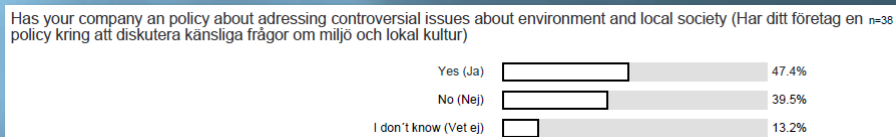
- Most had not reflected over their ethics & practice
- Most guides (70%) had a personal ethical code of conduct



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Results:

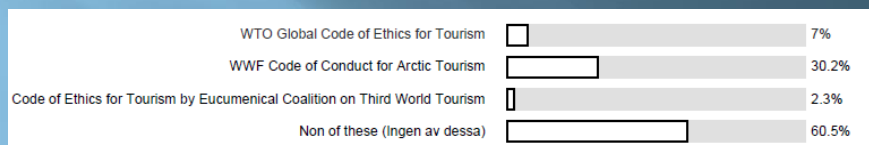
- About half of the guides had tour operator with ethical guidelines or were aware of such guidelines



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Results:

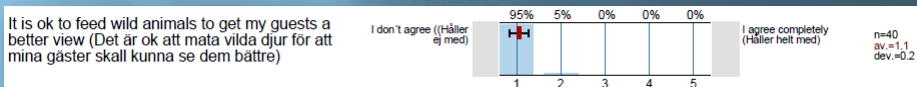
➤ Most guides had not read International Codes of Conduct



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Results:

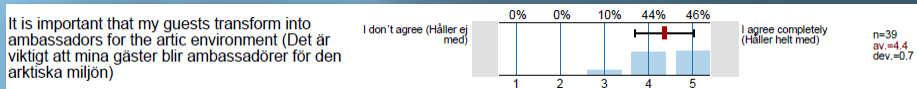
➤ The majority agreed that feeding wild animals was not OK.



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Results:

- The majority agreed that transforming tourists into ambassadors for the Arctic was important



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Conclusions so far:

Most of the guides see their main goal as guides to be:

- the guest safety and experience
- the importance to transform tourists into ambassadors for Polar environments.

Most guides had an unreflected ethical codes, and were unaware of international and business codes of conduct

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Implications:

1. Existing code of conduct must be communicated better
2. Ethical discourse introduced among guides by tour operators
3. Educational programs for in practice-guides
4. Ethical discourse in Guide Education Programs such as UNIS Svalbard Nature Guide Program



Longyearbyen, Svalbard



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Thanks for Your attention!



North Cape

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