

The 2012 Thorvald Stoltenberg Conference, Kirkenes, Norway 2-3 October 2012  
The Barents region as a tourism destination?

# Eco tourism as the northern tourism *salvator*



Hans Gelter,  
Luleå University of Technology



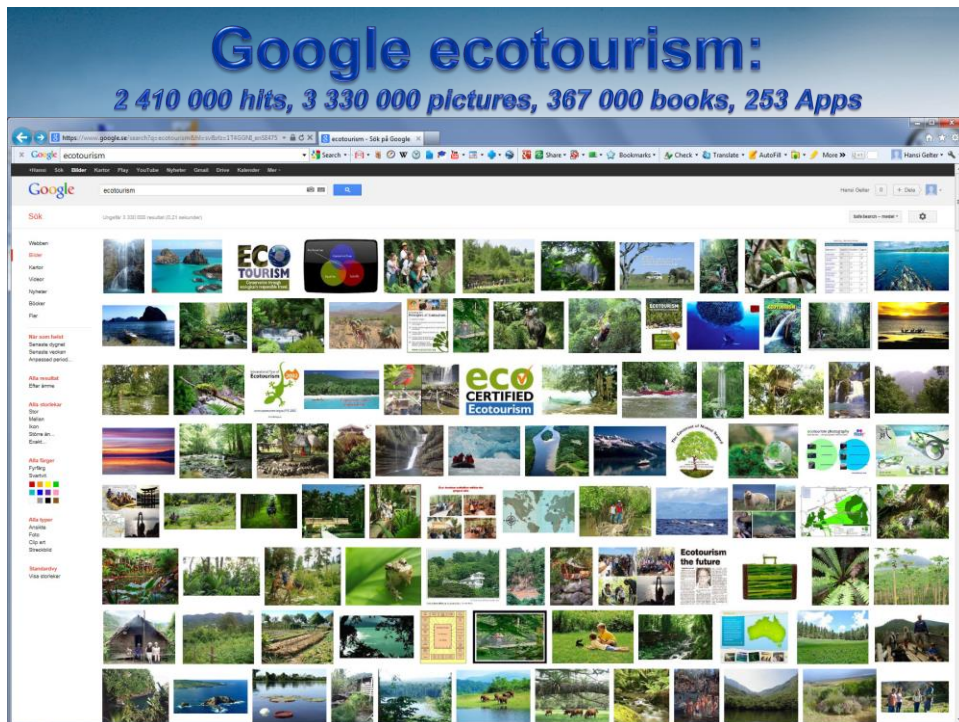
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## Topics of presentation:

1. What is ecotourism?
2. What is it not!
3. Example of Ecotorism – or not!
5. Conclusions - Eco tourism as the *salvator* - or not?



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# What is ecotourism?

Ecotourism typically involves travel to destinations where **flora, fauna, and cultural heritage** are the primary attractions.

Ecotourism is intended to offer tourists **insight into the impact of human beings** on the environment, and to foster a greater appreciation of our natural habitats.

Ecotourism is a form of tourism involving:

1. visiting fragile, pristine, and relatively **undisturbed natural areas**
2. intended as a **low-impact** and often **small scale** alternative to standard commercial (mass) tourism.
3. Its purpose may be to **educate** the traveller
4. to provide funds for **ecological conservation**
5. to directly **benefit the economic development** and political empowerment of local communities,
6. to **foster respect** for different **cultures** and for human rights.

Generally, ecotourism focuses on:

- socially responsible travel
- personal growth
- environmental sustainability

Wikipedia

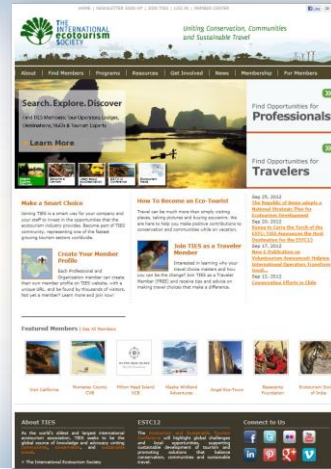
The diagram consists of three overlapping circles. The top circle is labeled 'Environmental sustainability'. The bottom-left circle is labeled 'Personal growth'. The bottom-right circle is labeled 'Responsible travel'. The intersection of all three circles is shaded, representing the core of ecotourism.

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# What is ecotourism?

**Definition:** "Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people." (TIES, 1990)



*Uniting Conservation, Communities  
and Sustainable Travel*

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# What is ecotourism?

Ecotourism is about uniting **conservation, communities, and sustainable travel**.

This means that those who implement and participate in ecotourism activities should follow the following ecotourism principles:

1. Minimize **impact**.
2. Build environmental and cultural **awareness and respect**.
3. Provide **positive experiences** for both visitors and hosts.
4. Provide direct **financial benefits** for **conservation**.
5. Provide **financial benefits** and empowerment for **local people**.
6. Raise **sensitivity** to host countries' political, environmental, and social climate.

(The International Ecotourism Society, [www.ecotourism.org](http://www.ecotourism.org))



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# What is ecotourism?

## Conservation

Offering market-linked long-term solutions, ecotourism provides effective **economic incentives** for **conserving** and enhancing bio-cultural diversity and helps **protect** the natural and cultural heritage of our beautiful planet.

## Communities

By increasing local capacity building and employment opportunities, ecotourism is an effective vehicle for **empowering local communities** around the world to fight against poverty and to achieve sustainable development.

## Interpretation

With an emphasis on enriching **personal experiences** and **environmental awareness** through interpretation, ecotourism promotes greater understanding and appreciation for nature, local society, and culture.



(The International Ecotourism Society, [www.ecotourism.org](http://www.ecotourism.org))



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# What is ecotourism?

Martha Honey, expands on the TIES definition by describing the seven characteristics of ecotourism, which are:

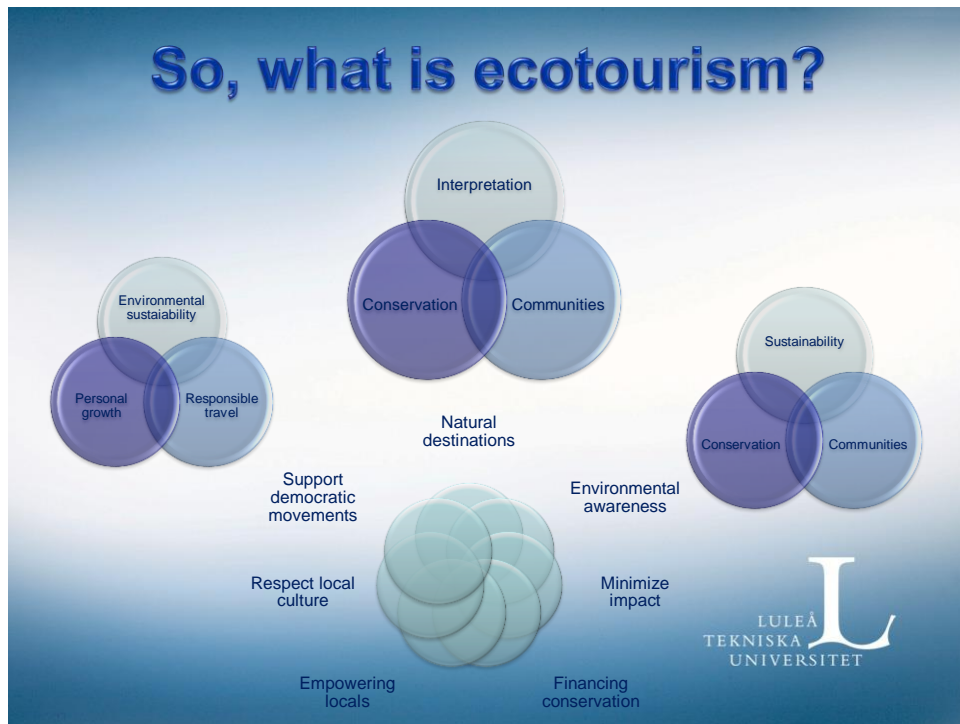
1. Involves travel to **natural destinations**
2. Minimizes **impact**
3. Builds environmental **awareness**
4. Provides direct **financial benefits** for **conservation**
5. Provides **financial benefits** and empowerment for **local people**
6. **Respects** local **culture**
7. Supports human rights and **democratic movements**



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# Interpretation!

Interpretation is a means of communicating ideas and feelings that help people enrich their understanding and appreciation of their world and their role within it.  
*(NEAP in Honey, 2002).*

**Tilden' s Interpretation:**

- Provoke**
- Relate**
- Reveal**

Learning goals  
Emotional goals  
Behavioral goals

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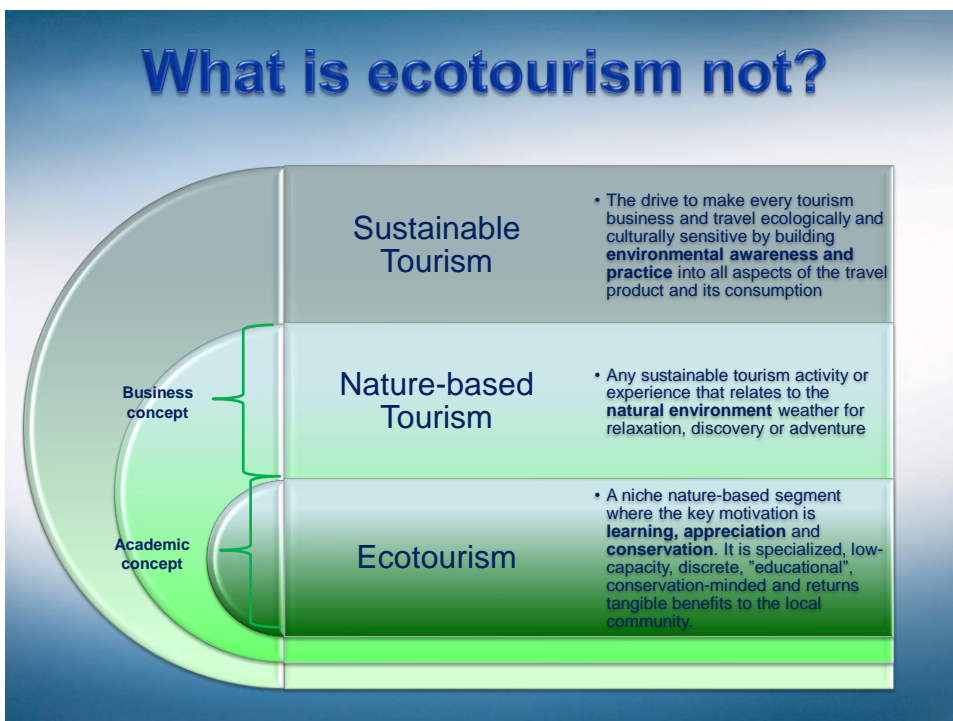
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## Challenges in ecotourism!



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## What is ecotourism not?



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## What is ecotourism not?

Ecotourism is often **misinterpreted** as any form of tourism that involves nature, such as of placing a hotel in a splendid landscape

**Environmental organizations** have generally insisted that ecotourism is nature-based, sustainably managed, conservation supporting, and environmentally educated.

The **tourist industry** and governments, however, **focus more on the product aspect**, treating ecotourism as equivalent to any sort of tourism **based in nature**.



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## What is ecotourism not?

complicating, **many terms** are used under the rubric of ecotourism:

- Nature tourism
- Low impact tourism
- Green tourism
- Bio-tourism
- Ecologically responsible tourism
- etc.

They are not necessary synonymous with ecotourism.



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## What is ecotourism not?

Some operators **greenwash** their operations by using the labels of "**green**" and "**eco-friendly**", while behaving in environmentally irresponsible ways, like underwater hotels, helicopter tours, wildlife theme parks, etc.

Regulation of ecotourism may be poorly implemented or nonexistent, allowing ecologically destructive greenwashed operations that puts legitimate ecotourism companies at a **competitive disadvantage**.



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## Eco-certification?

We lack a **global standard of accreditation**, differentiating ecotourism companies based on their level of environmental commitment.

(Too) Many national and local eco-certification systems (>60 in 2002, WTO):



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# Swedish Ecotourism



**Nature's Best six basic principles**

1. Respect the limitations of the destination – minimize the negative impacts on local nature and culture.
2. Support the local economy.
3. Make all the operators activities environmentally sustainable.
4. Contribute actively to nature and cultural conservation.
5. Promote knowledge and respect and the joy of discovery.
6. Quality and safety all the way.

Today 87 certified operators in Sweden.






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		Tourism	Nature Tourism	Ecotourism	Transformation Tourism
<b>Economic Sustainability</b>	1. Business Management and Operational Planning	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2. Business Ethics	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3. Responsible Marketing	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4. Customer Satisfaction	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Environmental Sustainability</b>	5. Natural Area Focus		✓	✓	✓
	6. Environmental Sustainability		✓	✓	✓
	7. Interpretation and Education		✓	✓	✓
	8. Contribution to Conservation		✓	✓	✓
<b>Social Sustainability</b>	9. Working with Local Communities			✓	✓
	10. Cultural Respect and Sensitivity			✓	✓
<b>Personal Sustainability</b>	11. Value and attitude transformation				✓
	12. Behavioral transformation				✓
	13. Lifestyle transformation				✓

Gelter 2009

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## Good and bad examples of ecotourism!

Bad Example: I (red), C (green), C (green)


Good Example: I (green), C (green), C (green)


Bad Example: I (green), C (red), C (red)

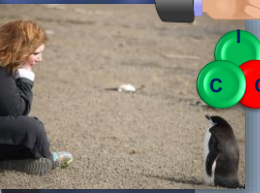


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## Deception Island, Antarctica







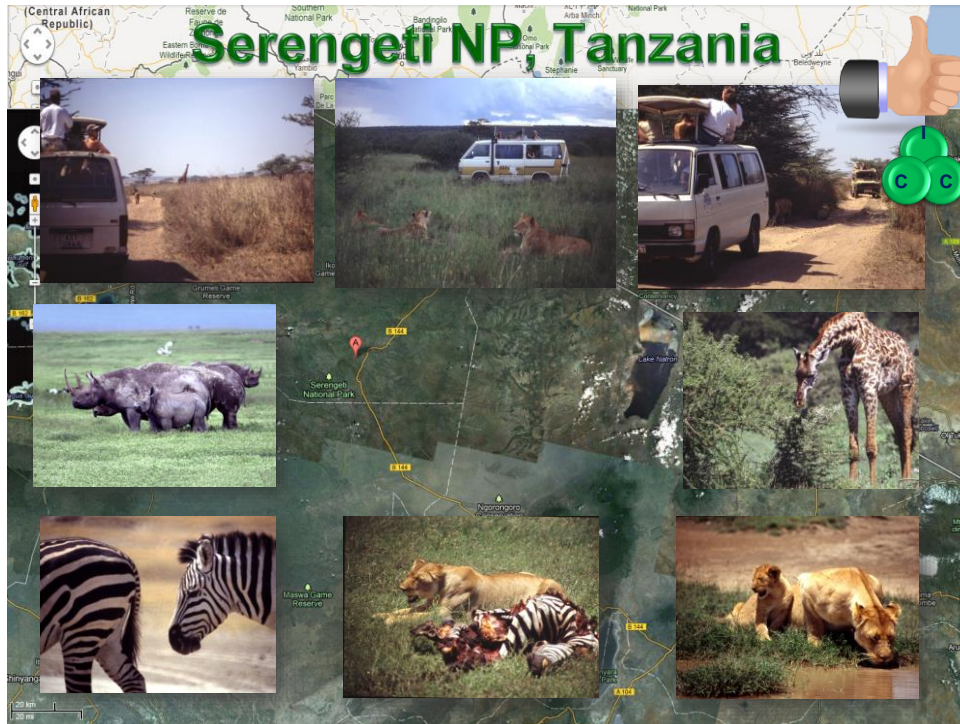




Baily Head
Whalers Bay

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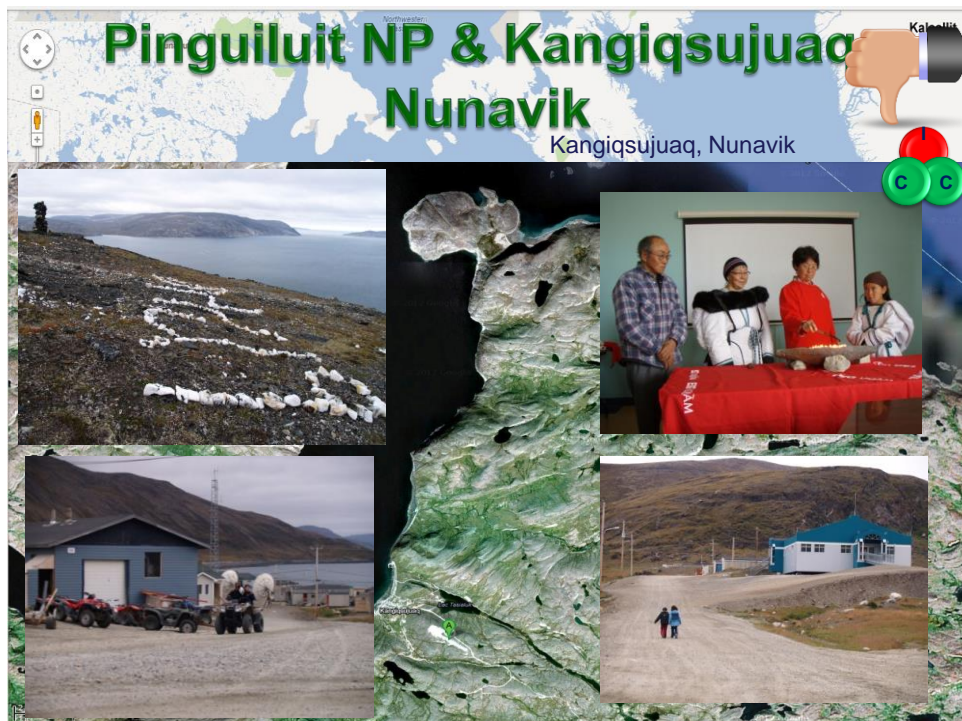


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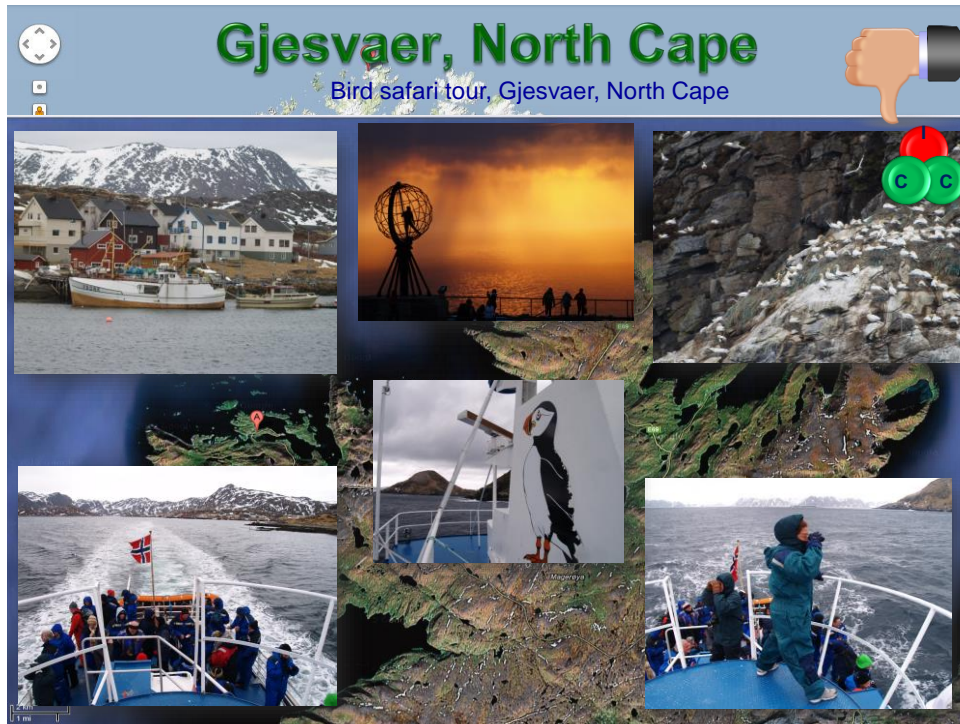


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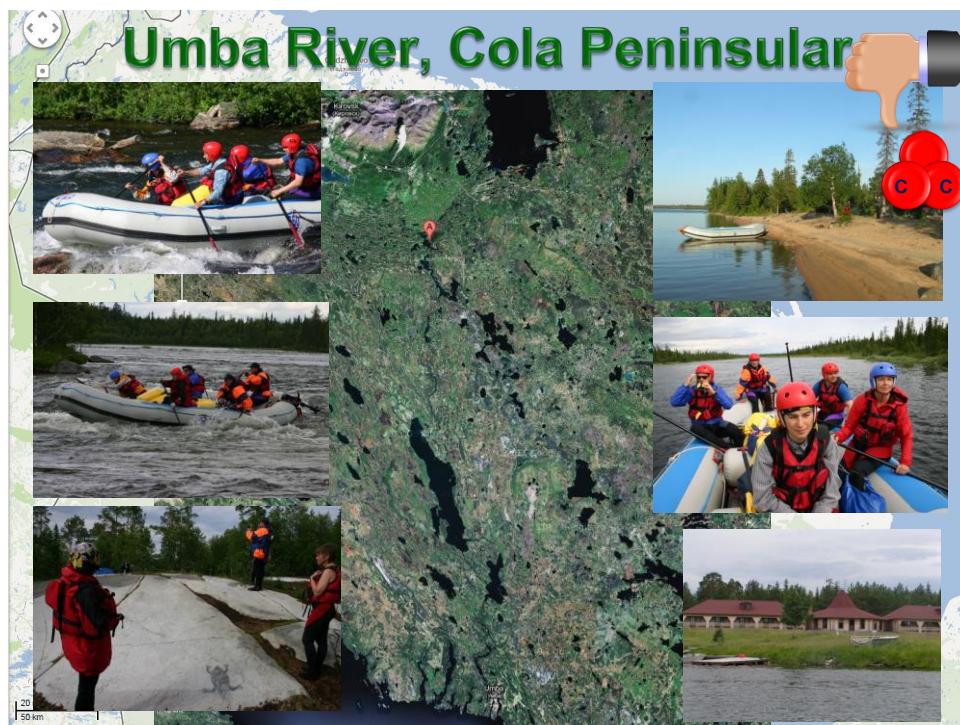


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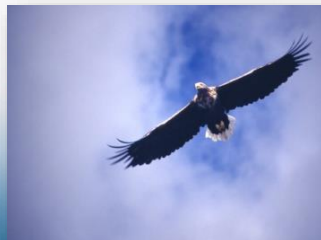
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## Conclusions

1. Importance of USP – icon species, landscape, culture
2. Professional interpretation usually lacking
3. Local community involvement & benefits necessary
4. Remotedness not necessary an disadvantage – high pricing is.
5. Ecotourism is undeveloped in Barents tourism
6. Ecotourism has potential in some areas of Barents (#1)



## Icon species - USP



## Interpretation

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