

Community Development and Regenerative Tourism: What can we learn from their integration?

Jessica Aquino, Associate Professor

Department of Rural Tourism

Hólar University, Jessica@holar.is

Magdalena Falter, Ph.D. candidate

Department of Geography and Tourism Studies, Institute of Life and Environmental Sciences
University of Iceland

Francesc Fusté-Forné, Associate Professor

Department of Business, University of Girona;

Centre for Innovation and Research in Culture and Living in the Arctic (CIRCLA), Aalborg
University;

Sustainability and Resilience Institute New Zealand



Outline

- Introduction and background
 - Community Development
 - Regenerative tourism within a Nordic context
- Community development and Nordic regenerative tourism. What can we learn in their integration?
- The future of Nordic regenerative tourism



Nordic Regenerative Tourism



NorReg

Nordic Regenerative Tourism

www.norreg.is

- Started in 2022 as a pilot project. Continued in 2023-2024
- aims to develop place-based practices for small and micro-sized tourism operators that contribute to the regeneration of natural and cultural resources.



Introduction and Background: NorReg Academic Group



NorReg

Nordic Regenerative Tourism



Jessica Faustini Aquino
Associate Professor

Hólar University, Iceland
Academic Fellow

Teaching Academy of Public Universities



Magdalena Falter
PhD Candidate

University of Iceland
Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences, Iceland



Francesc Fusté Forné
Professor

Department of Business, University of Girona,
Catalonia, Spain.

Centre for Innovation and Research in Culture and
Living in the Arctic, Aalborg University, Copenhagen,
Denmark.

www.norreg.is



Háskólinn á Hólum

What Community Development is NOT

Not just about:

- Economic development
- Development of infrastructure
- Top down
- Bottom up



What Community Development is:



“the concept of community development has a strong emphasis on **equality** with a focus on **building** and **sharing capacity** for improvements in a community” (Aquino et al., in press)



Community Development

IACD (2016) defines community development as:

“A **practice-based profession** and an **academic discipline** that promotes **participative democracy, sustainable development, rights, economic opportunity, equality and social justice**, through the organization, education and empowerment of people within their communities, whether these be of locality, identity or interest, in urban and rural settings.”



Community Development Approach

lead to redirecting tourism development towards:

- social change,
- environmental protection, and
- community empowerment.



Table 1. Community development (adapted from Aquino et al., in press).

Community oriented process that leads towards social movements:

- Learning
- Networks
- Mobilizations

Practice of community development:

- Participative democracy
- Social and environmental justice
- Sustainable development
- Economic opportunity
- Equality
- Capacity sharing



Table 1. Side-by-side comparison of community development and Nordic regenerative tourism. (Aquino et al., in press).

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	NORDIC REGENERATIVE TOURISM
<p>Community oriented process that leads towards social movements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning • Networks • Mobilizations 	<p>Holistic oriented process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interconnectedness of natural and social environments • Reciprocity • Place-based
<p>Practice of community development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participative democracy • Social and environmental justice • Sustainable development • Economic opportunity • Equality • Capacity sharing 	<p>Interconnected principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social values related to local empowerment • Environmental values through land-based practices • Enoughness: Business in balance with regenerative economy



Applied regenerative tourism: lifestyle entrepreneurs as potential agents of degrowth and regeneration

- **we see lifestyle entrepreneurship as the type of small tourism business owner, whose business operations positively affect their surrounding environment and local community by finding the right level of growth.**
 - This is referred to as ‘enoughness’ (Sharpley, 2020).



Community development and Nordic regenerative tourism. What can we learn in their integration?

- **Regenerative tourism intrinsically focuses on:**
 - community, the natural environment, and our interconnections to both the natural and social world.
- **Focusing on the process and practice of community development could help with social and environmental transformations leading to better wellbeing of a place.**



The future of Nordic regenerative tourism

should focus on developing tools that aid in capacity sharing and equitable partnerships through a community development approach

Both regenerative tourism and community development share:

- Ethics
- Values



Step 1: Ethics



Community Development Practice: Ethics

Community development are values and ethics-based practice (Clarke & Crickley, 2022; Vincent II, 2015).

Ethics

- Selflessness
 - Treating people equally
 - Integrity
 - Objectivity
 - Accountability
 - Honesty
- Transparency
 - Duty of care and ethics of care
 - Respect
 - Trust
 - Compliance
 - Autonomy

See (Clarke & Crickley, 2022, p. 30)



Step 2: Values



Community Development Practice: Values

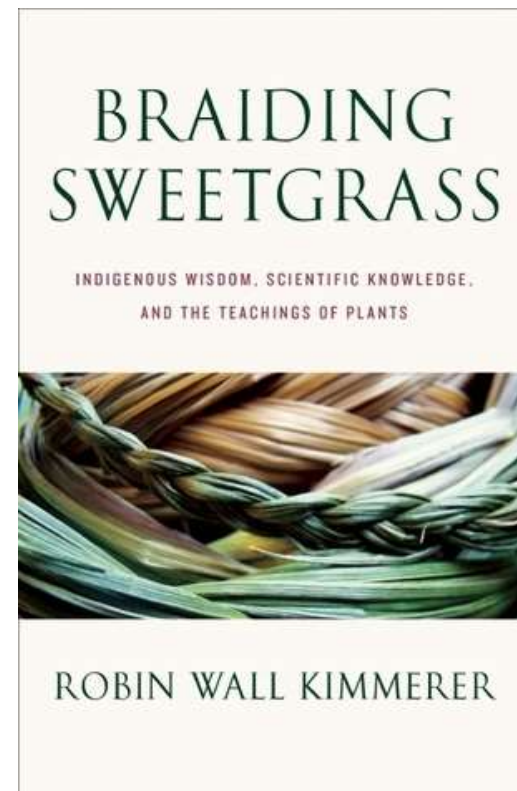
- Different cultures may emphasize different values, and this becomes important when we think about regenerative tourism (see Becken & Kaur, 2022).
- However, within the CD practice it typically follows these set of core values
 - Participation
 - Sustainable development and environmental justice
 - Equality and human rights
 - Social and economic justice
 - People and empowerment
 - Collectivity

See (Clarke & Crickley, 2022, p. 31-32)



Why are Ethics and Values important?

- Duty of care and ethics of care
 - Reciprocity
- Values help with checks and balances (Ledwith, 2020), it helps to keep local voices at the center, and helps to focus tourism on community (Higgins-Desbiolles & Bigby, 2022).



Step 3: Get Started



- Learning
- Networks
- Mobilizations



Put into practice

Phillips (2015) recommends the following process to start:

- **What do we have?** Inventory of assets.
- **What do we want?** A vision that guides us. Should consider ethics and values.
- **How do we get there?** Outline the steps needed—set goals and actions.
- **What have we done and what do we need to do now?** Reflection of what of what we have done is important, it helps celebrate milestones and also helps to monitor any issues that may need adjustment.



Thank you



Dr. Jessica Aquino
Associate Professor
Department of Rural Tourism
Hólar University
Iceland

Jessica@holar.is



Háskólinn á Hólum