

COMMERCIALIZATION OF NATURE THROUGH TOURISM

Lusine Margaryan

Main supervisor: Peter Fredman

Co-supervisor: Sandra Wall-Reinius

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Commercialization of Nature through Tourism

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Faculty of Human Sciences

Mid Sweden University, SE-83125, Östersund

Phone: +46 (0)10 142 80 00

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Abstract

This dissertation contributes to developing knowledge on the commercialization of natural resources through tourism. This is achieved by means of understanding the main avenues through which natural resources are commercialized, and analyzing the operational setting of tourism firms. The focal area is nature-based tourism– a type of tourism, taking place in comparatively unmodified natural areas, which has emerged as a powerful gravitational force, integrating an increasing variety of natural resources into the commercial domain. The point of departure is the assumption that for nature-based tourism firms, nature is simultaneously the main object of commercialization and the operational setting, where this commercialization happens. The attention here is, therefore, on the supply side, i.e. on the small and micro firms, acting as the agents of commercialization. The empirical data come primarily from a nation-wide survey among the nature-based tourism firms in Sweden, generating the most comprehensive information about this sector to date. Additional data come from in-depth interviews and observations among the nature-based tourism firms in Sweden, as well as secondary sources (official statistics on natural resources and a survey in Norway).

This is a *compilation thesis*, i.e. it consists of a cover essay and five individual papers. The cover essay offers a bird's eye view on all the papers, frames them theoretically and synthesizes all the findings into a coherent contribution. Papers I and II create the foundation, necessary for understanding the processes of nature commercialization and the operational setting of nature-based tourism firms, while Papers III, IV and V provide supplementary insights into these areas of inquiry. Paper I starts by building on existing knowledge in outdoor recreation to approach nature-based tourism. Paper II focuses on the operational setting, conceptualizes and explores its dimensions. Building on this, Paper III looks at how the presence of various amenities in the operational setting can explain the localization patterns of the firms on various geographical levels. Paper IV focuses on the operational setting dimensions omitted in the previous papers, i.e. the continuous efforts of the firms to negotiate the inherent uncertainty within the setting. Finally, Paper V looks at various characteristics of nature-based tourism firms to understand the specifics of sustainability strategies.

The main findings in these five papers demonstrate that the nature-based tourism is an active integrator of a wide variety of natural resources into the commercial domain, and approaching them from the supply perspective provides an additional understanding of the sector. This approach suggests that the nature-based tourism supply could be understood not only from the perspectives of tourist activities offered, but also from the perspective of operational setting preferences (e.g., the axes of high-low specialization, and high-low dependence on specific setting features), providing a new insight into the ways of nature commercialization through tourism. The operational setting itself becomes an important resource, being simultaneously part of the supply and the environment of a tourism system, bringing together a multitude of dimensions and actors. The resources nature-based tourism depends on defy 'commercialization-friendly' criteria, creating a context of uncertainty and demanding higher levels of creativity and agency on behalf of the firms. Commercialized nature experiences become important not only for specialized, skill- and equipment-intensive activities, but also for rather simple and relaxed ones, on both international and domestic markets. This suggests the growing importance of commercial nature-based tourism, linked to growing sustainability challenges. The sustainable resource use within the Scandinavian nature-based tourism context, however, is deeply entrenched in unique local specifics, and the entrepreneurial characteristics are not always compatible with market-based sustainability policies, suggesting the need for more fine-tuned approaches.

Svensk sammanfattning

Denna avhandling bidrar till att utveckla kunskapen om kommersialisering av naturresurser genom turism. Det uppnås genom att dels förstå på vilket sätt naturresurser huvudsakligen kan kommersialiseras, dels genom att analysera de operativa miljöer i vilka turistföretagen verkar. Fokus för avhandlingen är naturbaserad turism – en typ av turism som ofta äger rum i jämförelsevis orörda naturområden och som bidrar till kommersialisering av en mångfald av naturresurser. Utgångspunkten är antagandet att de naturbaserade turistföretagen har naturen som kommersialiseringens huvudobjekt samtidigt som det är den operativa miljö där kommersialiseringen sker. Fokus ligger således på utbudssidan, det vill säga de små- och mikroföretag som uppträder som kommersialiseringens agenter. Det empiriska materialet kommer från en rikstäckande enkätundersökning av Sveriges naturbaserade turistföretag, vilken har genererat den mest omfattande kunskapen om denna sektor hittills. Ytterligare data kommer från djupintervjuer och observationer av naturbaserade turistföretag i Sverige, samt från sekundära källor (officiell statistik samt en enkätundersökning om naturturism i Norge).

Avhandlingen består av en kappa och fem fristående artiklar. Kappan innehåller en introduktion till artiklarna, ger dem ett teoretiskt ramverk samt sammanfattar resultaten. Artikel I och II ger en grund för att förstå de processer som kommersialisering av naturen innebär och de operativa miljöer som naturbaserade turistföretag verkar i. Artikel I bygger på befintlig kunskap om friluftsliv i syfte att ge en närmare förståelse av naturbaserad turism. Artikel II konceptualiserar den naturbaserade turismens operativa miljö och utforskar dess dimensioner. Artikel III bygger vidare på detta arbete och analyserar hur närvaron av olika resurser i den operativa miljön kan förklara företagens geografiska lokalisering. Artikel IV fokuserar på några av de dimensioner av den operativa miljön som utelämnats i de tidigare artiklarna, bland annat vad företagen gör för att hantera den inneboende osäkerheten som finns i dessa miljöer. Slutligen tittar artikel V på vilka egenskaper hos turistföretagen som kan bidra till att förstå deras överväganden avseende hållbarhetsstrategier.

Resultaten från avhandlingens fem artiklar åskådliggör hur den naturbaserade turismen bidrar till kommersialisering av naturresurser, och genom att se på processerna från ett utbudsperspektiv erhålls ytterligare

förståelse av denna sektor. Avhandlingen visar att utbudet av naturbaserad turism inte bara kan förstås genom de turistaktiviteter som erbjuds, utan även utifrån förhållningssättet till de operativa miljöernas egenskaper (till exempel hög/låg specialisering, och högt/lågt beroende av specifika egenskaper i omgivningarna), vilket ger nya insikter i hur naturen kommersialiseras genom turism. Den operativa miljön blir en viktig resurs i sig själv eftersom den är den del av utbudet i det turistiska systemet som sammanför en mängd dimensioner och aktörer. De resurser som naturbaserad turism är beroende av är som regel mindre "kommersialiseringsvänliga", vilket skapar osäkerhet och kräver en högre grad av kreativitet och handlingskraft hos företagen. Kommersialiserade naturupplevelser blir viktiga, inte bara för mer specialiserade aktiviteter som kräver mycket kunskap och utrustning, utan även för tämligen enkla och vardagliga friluftaktiviteter. Det gäller för både internationella och inhemska marknader. Resultaten pekar också på den ökande betydelsen av kommersiell naturbaserad turism kopplat till de växande hållbarhetsutmaningarna. Sett ur ett Skandinaviskt perspektiv är användningen av resurser inom naturbaserad turism djupt förankrad i de lokala förhållandena, vilket innebär att företagens agerande inte alltid följer en mer marknadsbaserad hållbarhetspolitik.

List of papers

- Paper I.** Margaryan, L., & Fredman, P. (2017). Bridging outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism in a commercial context: Insights from the Swedish service providers. *Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism*, 17, 84-92 (<http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jort.2017.01.003>).
- Paper II.** Margaryan, L. (2016). Nature as a commercial setting: The case of nature-based tourism providers in Sweden. *Current Issues in Tourism*. Online publication ahead of print, 20 September (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2016.1232378>).
- Paper III.** Margaryan, L., & Fredman, P. (2017). Natural amenities and the regional distribution of nature-based tourism supply in Sweden. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 17(2), 145-159 (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15022250.2016.1153430>).
- Paper IV.** Margaryan, L. & Wall-Reinius, S. (2017). Commercializing the unpredictable: Perspectives from wildlife watching tourism service providers in Sweden. *Human Dimensions of Wildlife*, 5, 406-421 (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10871209.2017.1334842>).
- Paper V.** Margaryan, L. & Stensland, S. (2017). Sustainable by nature? The case of (non)adoption of eco-certification among the nature-based tourism service providers in Scandinavia. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 162(20), 559-567 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2017.06.060>).

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1. Introduction

Tourism has become a truly global phenomenon. With the expansion and affordability of air travel and the rise of the middle classes, starting from the second half of the 20s century, tourism has become a powerful force and an agent of change on a global scale. Due to the heterogeneous nature of the tourism sector, its interconnection with other human activities, as well as Earth-systems in general, is highly complex and multiform. Closely interlinked with the globalization processes, tourism has become ubiquitous, experiencing an (as yet) uncurbed growth trajectory, generating and distributing its costs and benefits unevenly and unequally (Mowforth & Munt, 2015; Gren & Huijbens, 2016). This has to be emphasized because tourism has for a long time been (and in many places still is) uncritically perceived as a primarily light, clean, low-impact and non-consumptive regional development alternative to heavy industries. In the academic domain, however, this view is largely a thing of the past, giving space for a more in-depth, holistic and critical understanding of this sector (Ateljevic, Pritchard, & Morgan, 2007; Gren & Huijbens, 2016; Hall & Boyd, 2005; Mowforth & Munt, 2015). We live in the times when, on the one hand, the natural environment is facing an unprecedented anthropogenic crisis in the modern history, while on the other hand, is attracting unprecedented awareness and interest among the general public. One manifestation of this is the growing popularity of travelling to natural areas and seeking out nature-related experiences – a phenomenon observed in Sweden and globally (Markwell, 2015; Mowforth & Munt, 2015; Newsome, Moore & Dowling, 2012; Wall-Reinius, 2009).

In light of the increasing demand for nature experiences, firms within nature-based tourism (hereafter NBT) become active agents of commercialization, integrating more and more diverse natural resources into global markets. Given the low entry barriers and development of information technologies reducing marketing costs, NBT has turned into a lucrative business, attracting a growing number of entrepreneurs, also observed in Northern Europe (Fredman & Margaryan, 2014; Stensland, et al., 2014). Moreover, NBT has become a go-to regional development tool, recommended to rural and peripheral regions, where other industries struggle (Hall & Boyd, 2005; Lundmark, 2006; Brouder, 2013). In addition, NBT has become tightly integrated with the rhetoric of sustainability and conservation, often expected

to provide the monetary foundation for these projects (Cousins, Evans, & Sadler, 2009; Duffy, 2015; Mowforth & Munt, 2015; Wall-Reinius, 2009). But how exactly is nature commercialized through tourism?

Previous research suggests that access to resources is vital for the competitiveness of business firms, and that these resources have to correspond to certain criteria, such as heterogeneity, immobility, rarity, inimitability or market value (Alvarez & Busenitz, 2001; Barney, 1991; Barney & Clark, 2007; Barney, Ketchen, & Wright, 2011; Harrison et al., 1991; Hart, 1995; Wernerfelt, 1984; Wernerfelt, 2011). In the case of NBT, however, the resources rarely correspond to these standards. Natural resources used for tourism more often than not have common pool-, public good- or quasi-public good properties, being indivisible and non-excludable, free and incidental (Castree, 2003; 2013; Harris & Roach, 2013; Leiper 1979; 1990; Scorse, 2010; Tietenberg & Lewis, 2016). This is further exacerbated by the local specifics of Sweden (along with other Nordic countries) – the Right of Public Access, which, inter alia, makes it more difficult to charge entrance fees or prevent others from entering nature areas (Sandell & Fredman, 2008).

This brings us to a rather interesting feature of the NBT. From the classic systems theory perspective, a given system, having multiple components, is located within an environment with which it is in the process of constant interaction (Bertalanffy, 1968). This idea has found its application in many fields, including tourism (e.g., Leiper, 1979, Lohmann & Netto, 2016; Zillinger, 2007; Wall-Reinius, 2009). Thus, according to Leiper (1979), a tourism system, where supply is one of the ‘building blocks’, is located in an environment, which can be understood in terms of physical, socio-cultural, political, economic and other dimensions. Interaction of a system with its environment, however, has traditionally been paid little attention to (e.g., ruled out as ‘externalities’ within the economic theory), which resulted in the emergence of specific sub-disciplines, such as environmental and ecological economics, aiming to address this shortcoming (Clawson & Knetsch, 1966; Harris & Roach, 2013; Scorse, 2010; Tietenberg, & Lewis, 2016; Venkatachalam, 2007). In the case of NBT, the environment, particularly its natural dimension, is hard to ignore, and the border between the supply and the environment is especially porous and blurred. In fact, it can be claimed that NBT firms operate in the ‘environment’ on a daily basis, and it is an indivisible part of the supply, which needs closer attention (Hart, 1995; Hart & Dowell, 2011).

In order to understand the operational environment, and the way it is created and utilized by firms, it is necessary to turn to service and marketing

literature, where the influence of a commercial setting on consumer experience has been extensively pointed out, also visible in the context of tourism research (Mossberg, 2007; O'Dell & Billing, 2005; Prebensen, Chen & Uysal, 2014). Since tourists spend a prolonged period of time in their experience setting, it could be assumed that it will have a significant influence on their experience (Heerde, Botha, & Durieux, 2009; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996; 2016). Moreover, recent studies suggest that the experience setting, where tourism happens, is of immense importance to the process of tourism value creation regardless of tourism properties (Prebensen, et al., 2014; Bertella, 2016). Within the NBT context, natural resources become integrated into tourist experiences, while the natural space itself is constructed (with the aid of both physical and social means) as a commercial setting where these experiences are created and facilitated (Hultman & Gössling, 2008). Depending on the specifics of the NBT, nature can literally be a setting, stage or a background for an activity (e.g., adventure tourism, extreme sports tourism), or be both a setting and an important part of the main experience (e.g., wildlife watching, hunting, fishing, and hiking). Thus, it can be assumed that while not much different from other types of tourism in terms of its structure (i.e. requires transportation, accommodation, catering, guiding), NBT has a uniquely high dependence on natural resources in its operational setting, which, most often, have characteristics of a public good, beyond immediate control of NBT firms (e.g., scenery, wildlife, weather). NBT firms, therefore, work with natural resources *in situ* under predominantly uncertain conditions, comparing with other economic activities in general and other types of tourism in particular. These unique features of NBT, exemplified by the case of Sweden, are the central focal point of this thesis.

The literature review suggests that the role of the commercial operational setting and its specifics in the NBT has not been sufficiently scrutinized, especially not from the supply perspective (see Chapter 2). There have been some exceptions of explicitly engaging with the operational setting in the NBT (Arnould & Price, 1992; Arnould, Price, & Tierney, 1998; Chui et al., 2010; Fredman et al., 2012), or using it for understanding specific NBT experiences (Bertella, 2016). The existing studies, however, are largely based on limited convenience sampling or secondary data. One reason for this lack of attention could be the implicit perception that the commercial operational setting for NBT is simply 'nature', whereas the researchers' focus has primarily been on the controlled man-made environments, i.e, where the managers can manipulate the setting components and cues based on their needs (e.g., Bitner, 1992). Furthermore, the NBT has traditionally fallen into the analytical

domain of natural science, prioritizing such research streams as management of nature resources for recreation, leaving social science and business perspectives lagging behind, compared to the body of literature on other forms of tourism (Egan, Hjerpe & Abrams, 2011; Hintz, 2005; Minteer, 2003; Stokowski, 2003). In addition, the research attention in NBT (and arguably tourism in general) has been historically skewed towards the demand perspective rather than the supply (Fredman & Tyrväinen, 2010; Lundmark & Müller, 2010). There is a relatively good knowledge base and understanding of experiences, motivations, wants and needs of nature-based tourists (e.g., Kompkala, 2006; Mehmetoglu, 2007; Markwell, 2015; Pearce, Strickland-Munro & Moore, 2016; Picard & Zuev, 2014; Reis, 2012), comparing to the knowledge on service providers' perspectives on commercializing nature for tourism.

In light of the aforementioned, this thesis is positioned within the following areas of inquiry. First of all, from within tourism studies it becomes possible to focus explicitly on the NBT sector, linking it to the progress in the knowledge about tourism in general. Furthermore, from the service and marketing perspective, attention has been lacking in the very context or setting where this commercial activity happens and what the important factors are for it to succeed (Fredman et al., 2012; Mari & Pogessi, 2014). Finally, from natural resource management and sustainability perspective, an updated and deeper focus is needed of the processes of nature commercialization through tourism, or, in other words, understanding the ways through which tourism businesses 'convert' natural resources into experiential products on the market, and the accompanying sustainability issues. Theoretically, this dissertation is inherently interdisciplinary as is the field of tourism studies itself, dealing with the contact points between the fields of tourism studies, service and marketing research, human geography and environmental economics. Overall, commercialization of nature through tourism becomes an important facet of the overall theory of human relationships with and in nature.

On a more practical level, gaining more knowledge on the complex operational context of NBT is important for environmental and regional development policy-making, which should be based on in-depth and updated information of this sector. Sweden has a long tradition of natural resource extraction industries (e.g., forestry, farming, fishing) and the knowledge base around these, comparing with the newer, primarily non-extractive recreational use of these resources. This dissertation, therefore, seeks to

contribute to the analysis of nature commercialization through tourism by focusing on the operational setting of the NBT supply. Specifically, the focus here is on using nature as a setting for a commercial encounter by the NBT firms in Sweden. Sweden offers an interesting and highly relevant study area, characterized by the abundance of natural resources, a long history of outdoor recreation (i.e. engaging in leisure activities outdoors (Jenkins & Pigram, 2004), a relatively young and developing commercial NBT sector, and a strong reputation in sustainability performance.

1.1 Aim and research questions

The overarching aim of this dissertation is to analyze commercialization of natural resources through tourism. The research questions and sub-questions formulating the main focal points within this aim are the following:

RQ1. How are natural resources commercialized in NBT?

1a. How can the knowledge of outdoor recreation participation help understand commercialization of nature?

1b. To what extent can the characteristics of NBT firms help understand sustainable resource use practices in this sector?

RQ2. What is the commercial operational setting in NBT and how can it be conceptualized?

2a. What are the key characteristics of the NBT operational setting?

2b. To what extent can the availability of natural resources explain localization patterns of NBT firms?

2c. How do NBT firms negotiate uncertainties within their commercial operational setting?

1.2 Thesis outline

This thesis is comprised of a cover essay (known as *kappa* in Swedish) and five independent but interrelated papers, addressing the posed research questions. The relationships between each parts of the thesis can be seen in Figure 1. The **cover essay** provides a literature review, offers a bird's eye view of all the papers, frames them theoretically and synthesizes all the findings into a coherent contribution.

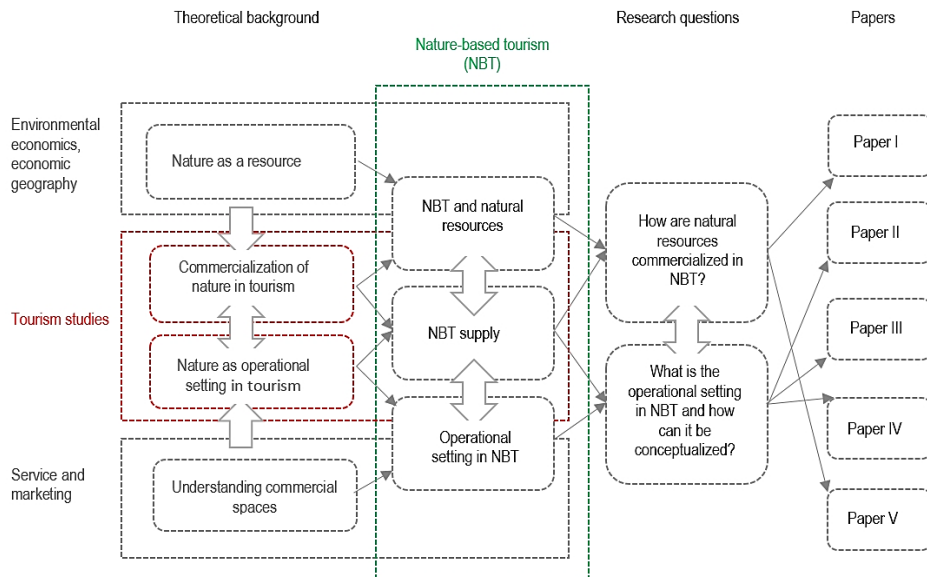


Figure 1. Thesis outline.

Paper I lays the foundation for understanding NBT supply by building on Swedish history and knowledge of outdoor recreation participation. This is chosen as a relevant starting point since Sweden has a long outdoor recreation tradition and much more research exists about this compared to the NBT sector. The first paper helps in understanding the structure of NBT supply based on statistical analysis of the outdoor recreation activities offered commercially and pinpoints some key characteristics of this sector, such as the types of business operations, size, income, seasonality and markets.

Paper II focuses on the operational setting of NBT firms, conceptualizes and explores its dimensions, specifically *natural* (wilderness properties, natural landscapes, wildlife species); *man-made* (infrastructure) and *socio-political* (access to nature, other resource users). The paper shows the importance of various types of natural resources for the firms and shows the variations of different setting preferences among the NBT firms across the country.

Building on this, **Paper III** looks at whether various natural and man-made components of the operational setting can explain the localization patterns of the NBT firms on county, regional and national levels. It discusses the distribution of natural resources across Sweden and how it affects NBT.

Paper IV focuses on the operational setting dimensions left out in the previous papers, i.e. the role of the guides, the continuous efforts of firms to negotiate the socio-political context and the inherently present uncertainty that many NBT operations feature. This paper also takes the opportunity to go more in-depth with the help of qualitative methods to better understand the realities of NBT firms up close and personal on the ground.

Paper V looks at various characteristics of NBT firms (e.g., size, income, motivations, gender and beliefs about the formalized sustainability schemes) to better understand the specifics of sustainability considerations present in this sector of tourism.

Thus, Paper I and II lay the foundation with the central concepts of this thesis. Papers III and IV are linked to Paper II and focus directly on the operational setting of the NBT. Paper V is thematically linked to Paper I, but provides supplementary insights that are also related to previous papers, while the data set is enriched with cases from Norway. A concise overview of all of the papers can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of papers

	Paper I	Paper II	Paper III	Paper IV	Paper V
Title	<i>Bridging outdoor recreation and NBT in the commercial context: Insights from the Swedish service providers.</i>	<i>Nature as a commercial setting: The case of NBT providers in Sweden.</i>	<i>Natural amenities and the regional distribution of NBT supply in Sweden.</i>	<i>Commercializing the unpredictable: Perspectives from wildlife watching tourism service providers in Sweden.</i>	<i>Sustainable by nature? The case of (non)adoption of eco-certification among the NBT service providers in Scandinavia.</i>
Aim of the paper	To find out how the knowledge of outdoor recreation participation can help understand commercialization of nature through NBT.	To analyze a commercial operational setting in the context of NBT its characteristics.	To find out to what extent the distribution of natural resources within the NBT operational setting can explain localization patterns of NBT firms.	To understand how NBT entrepreneurs negotiate uncertainties within their commercial operational setting.	To analyze to what extent the characteristics of the NBT entrepreneurs can help understand sustainable resource use practices in this sector.
Theme	Commercialization of nature through tourism.	Nature as a tourism setting.	Nature as a tourism setting.	Nature as a tourism setting.	Commercialization of nature through tourism.
RQ	RQ1	RQ2	RQ2	RQ2	RQ1
Data source	Survey of NBT service providers in Sweden.	Survey of NBT service providers in Sweden.	Survey of NBT service providers in Sweden; official national statistics on resource distribution.	Interviews and participant observations with wildlife watching tourism service providers in Sweden.	Survey of NBT service providers in Sweden; secondary statistical data on NBT from Norway.
Status	Published in the <i>Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism</i>	Published in the <i>Current Issues in Tourism</i>	Published in the <i>Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism</i>	Published in the <i>Human Dimensions of Wildlife</i>	Published in the <i>Journal of Cleaner Production</i>

2. Framing tourism and/in nature

This chapter discusses the academic literature, important for the theoretical positioning of this thesis. Literature on the following key aspects is reviewed: development of an understanding of nature and natural resources in social sciences; properties of natural resources used for tourism; specifics of nature-based tourism and tourism firms; commercial operational setting as an avenue of understanding nature commercialization and as an important resource for tourism; and the surrounding issues of uncertainty and sustainability.

2.1 Nature as a resource: Evolving understanding of nature in social sciences

Nature is perhaps the most complex word in the language... Any full history of the uses of nature would be a history of a large part of human thought.
(Williams, 1983:219)

Defining nature is not an easy task. Despite the long-standing critique on the reproduction of the age-old human-nature dichotomy, prevalent in Western thought, division into natural and urban environments, outdoor and indoor experiences, wild and man-made spaces seems to remain the most commonly operationalized approach within tourism literature. There is little doubt that conceptualization of and relationships with nature in the Western world have been changing over time. Several disciplines within the social science have been explicitly concentrating their analytical efforts on this issue, most notably environmental and ecological economics, sociology, anthropology and human geography. A notable intellectual effort within these disciplines, especially starting from the end of the 20s century, has been aimed towards deconstruction of the nature-culture dichotomy theoretically, yet failing to put it into practice, a brief overview of which will be provided below. All of these disciplines are major contributors to the interdisciplinary field of tourism research, so elucidating these transformations is important for understanding the theoretical positioning of tourism.

The etymological dictionary of the English language indicates that the word *resource*, meaning ‘means of supplying a want or deficiency’ was introduced into English in the 17th century from French *ressource* ‘a source, spring’, in its turn originating from the Latin *resurgere*, meaning ‘rise again, spring up anew’ (etymonline.com). This initial understanding, therefore, viewed nature as an endless source of meeting human wants and needs, capable of perpetually renewing itself. This is important to reflect upon in light of the current usage of this term, often also referred to as abstract ‘inputs’ or ‘factors of production’, i.e. dominated by strictly instrumental, utilitarian framing, especially in economics.

Perhaps in no other discipline within the social sciences was the ontological division between nature and the human world more pronounced than in economics (Gómez-Baggethun, De Groot, Lomas & Montes, 2010; Harris & Roach, 2013; Venkatachalam, 2007). In their excellent analysis of the historical evolution of the conceptualization of nature within this discipline, Gómez-Baggethun, et al. (2010) demonstrate how the initial understanding of nature, and its benefits in terms of their use values, in Classical economics, has become substituted with the understanding of nature primarily in terms of its exchange value, in the Neoclassical economics. In other words, if nature (or *land*) was initially analyzed as a separate production factor generating income (rent), later on it was removed from the production function, being understood as substitutable by capital and, therefore, monetizable and commodifiable (ibid; Harris & Roach, 2013). Following the conceptualization of nature throughout the evolution of economic theory, we see how nature has been gradually losing its importance and a status of a distinct analytical unit within the discipline of economics, disappearing completely by the second half of the 20s century. If the pre-classic Physiocrats (who argued that the wealth of nations is derived solely from the available natural resources), and the Classical economists (who were more concerned with the importance of labour and capital as wealth generators) both maintained that nature is a non-substitutable primary production input, the Neoclassical economists almost completely removed nature from their analyses, substituting it with a monetary equivalent (Gómez-Baggethun et al., 2010). The physicality of nature, the specific properties of various natural resources vanished from the scope of economic analytical interests, becoming viewed as something disposable and interchangeable. Robert Solow, a Nobel Prize laureate in economics, stated in the 1970s: ‘[i]f it is very easy to substitute other factors for natural resources, then there is in principle no ‘problem.’ The world can, in effect, get along without natural resources, so exhaustion is just an event, not a catastrophe’

(Solow as quoted in Gómez-Baggethun et al. (2010:1212). While this perspective nowadays would (hopefully) sound rather naïve at best, the implicit ethos of Neoclassical economics' treatment of natural resources still lingers, especially in relation to the current environmental challenges of e.g., climate change and biodiversity loss. An American satirical newspaper, for example, has recently parodied this mindset, releasing an article titled '*Study finds mass extinction could free up billions of dollars in conservation funding by 2024*' (The Onion, 2017). It could, therefore, be summarized that the developments of the economic theory have been largely embedded in the dualistic ontology, where human and natural worlds are imagined to exist independently from each other, and which has been extensively analyzed (and criticized) within Western academic thought (Adams, 2003; Franklin, 2002; Hall & Page, 2002; Merchant, 1989; Thomas, 1983; Castree, 2013).

To address these shortcomings, environmental and ecological economics sub-disciplines appeared starting from the second half of the 20th century. Environmental economics and ecological economics, while overlapping and having the same goal of understanding the interactions between humans, their economic activities and natural resources, are not entirely similar. The mission of environmental economics was to fill the gaps within economic theory by explicitly engaging with the neglected dimension of *land* (to which they referred to as *natural capital*), but remaining true to the traditions of their discipline (e.g., believing in rational choice, market-based solutions, growth-oriented economy). Due to the efforts of environmental economists, such sources of environmental problems as a market failure, tragedy of the commons and depletion of public goods received explicit attention and analysis (Scorse, 2010); methods were developed to estimate nature's value in a recreational context (Clawson & Knetsch, 1966). Ecological economics, emerging in the 1980s, went further by incorporating a wider range of interdisciplinary analytic approaches, such as ecological modeling or systems analysis (Harris & Roach, 2013; Venkatachalam, 2007). One of their most crucial theoretical contributions in this regard has been the conceptualization of an economic system as a sub-system of a global ecosystem (Beaton, & Maser, 2012; Endres, & Radke, 2012; Tietenberg, & Lewis, 2016; Venkatachalam, 2007). If in the traditional economic models nature primarily appears as an external supplier of raw materials, ecological economists suggest that the economic system must be viewed as subordinate to nature and not the other way round (Endres & Radke, 2012). The growing interest towards nature-centered economy is also illustrated by the mainstreaming of *bioeconomy* – a development vision emphasizing a shift to an economy based

on the sustainable use of renewable natural resources, respecting planetary cycles and boundaries (e.g. European Commission, 2012). It can, therefore, be argued that there has been a shift towards bringing back nature into the economic models and people's minds, which also can be traced in other research areas, including tourism.

Similar trends have been observed within the contiguous disciplines of sociology, anthropology and human geography. Various analyses of the conceptualizations of nature within these disciplines indicate that the older boundaries between humans and non-human worlds have been unraveled and rejected, at least in theory (Franklin, 2002; Castree, 2013; Eder, 1996; Macnaghten & Urry, 1995; 1998). Generally speaking, within the social theory of Western societies, the evolution of human relationships with nature is viewed through the prism of primordial, modern and post-modern periodization (Franklin, 2002). Here it has to be emphasized that this periodization is not necessarily strictly defined temporally and spatially, since all of these perspectives still coexist and permeate each other. The primordial ontological perspectives are usually associated with a seamless connection between human and non-human worlds, where the major contribution comes from historians and anthropologists, analyzing the worldviews of traditional non-industrial societies. The period of modernity, giving birth to urbanized society and the myth of emancipation from nature, witnessed a proliferation of dualistic perspectives, positioning nature as a place 'out there', a world of its own, with which urbanites interact primarily in the context of resource extraction and, later on, also recreation. This is important to emphasize, since the discourses around tourism, and particularly, nature-based tourism (which is the focus of this thesis) have been largely dominated by this ontological perspective, which will be elaborated on more in the next sub-chapters.

Fully illustrative in this context of nature theorization, is a rather vitriolic debate within social theory between social constructivists and realists. The first stream of researchers was interested not so much in nature and environmental issues but rather in the environmental movement itself and the way nature is 'constructed' within the societal discourses. The extreme position within this perspective is the claim that our knowledge of nature is purely conventional and even arbitrary. This has been especially attributed to some post-modern thinkers, e.g. Derrida, and his questioning of the relevance of the very concept of *animal*, which is unable, in his view, to account for '*the abyssal differences and structural limits that separate, in the very essence of their being, all "animals", a name that we would therefore be advised, to begin with, to keep*

within quotation marks' (Derrida & Wills, 2002:402). Along these lines, Tester (1992:46), for example, stated that *'a fish is only a fish if it is classified as one ... animals are indeed a blank paper that can be inscribed with any message and symbolic meaning that the social wishes'*. The post-modern thought has witnessed disintegration of strictly dualist vision in favour of a multiplicity of fragmented, diversified perspectives, ranging from the 'end of nature' (e.g., Beck, 1995; Giddens, 1994; Žižek, 2007; Morton, 2007) to myriads of 'contested natures' (Macnaghten & Urry, 1998), to different takes on blurring the boundaries through hybridity, networks or embodiment approaches (e.g., Castree, 2013; Ellen, 1996; Franklin, 2002; Haraway, 1991; Ingold, 1993; Latour, 2005; Whatmore, 2002). This standpoint provoked a harsh backlash from the second stream or researchers, known as realists, being grounded in Marxism as well as being heavily informed by natural sciences. They argued that social constructivists are undermining the environmentalist cause by denying nature any autonomous agency outside the human-produced discourses, refusing to face the 'reality' of nature and being simply anti-scientific (e.g., Benton, 1992; Soper, 1995; Martell, 1994). In American literature this debate is very vivid regarding the concept of 'wilderness' (e.g., Cronon, 1995; Callicott & Nelson, 1998; Hintz, 2005; Nelson & Callicott, 2008). Franklin (2002), however, argues that these debates are symptomatic of a misunderstanding and exaggeration of each other's positions, rather than any real insurmountable ontological rifts. The debate can be mitigated by recognizing that nature is *both* a physical reality *and* discursively constructed notion, and each unit of analysis has its own value (Castree; 2003; Franklin, 2002; Macnaghten & Urry, 1998), which is also concurrent with the pragmatic perspective adopted in this thesis.

This unprecedented interest and explicit engagement with the theoretical underpinnings of human relationships with nature within the social sciences in the end of the 20th century is not accidental. This time period witnessed the growth and maturation of environmental movements, proliferation of ecological organizations and increasing environmental awareness. This culminated in the birth of 'sustainable development', popularized by the well-known *Our Common Future* report, which was presented by the World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Commission) in 1987 and further endorsed at the Earth Summit in Rio De Janeiro in 1992. Interestingly, the sustainable development concept was also, in its own way, a result of the ongoing efforts to bridge the ontological dichotomy to mitigate the persisting antagonism between ecological and economic interests, or, in more abstract terms, between nature and culture. This is important to

emphasize due to its particular relevance for the advance of nature-based tourism, which received explicit legitimation and popularization as an income-generating activity based on (comparatively) low-consumptive use of natural resources, thus being viewed as a win-win tool for 'marrying' ecological and economic interests. Year 2002, for example, was declared the International Year of Ecotourism by the UN, stressing that:

The implementation of Agenda 21 requires the full integration of sustainable development in the tourism industry in order to ensure, inter alia, that travel and tourism provide a source of income for many people; that travel and tourism contribute to the conservation, protection and restoration of the Earth's ecosystem (UN ECOSOC, 1998: para. 1).

When analyzing these recent developments an understanding of nature across social science disciplines, it may even be suggested that the most rabid ontological debates regarding the 'nature of nature' have been left in the last century and there is a certain supradisciplinary consensus. On a very general theoretical level there does not seem to be much disagreement that the human and natural worlds are inseparably interrelated, and humans depend on natural resources for their everyday survival, regardless of their culture, geographical location, income amount or the way they construct their realities. In addition, the vocal heritage of the environmental movements, and the past thirty years of the sustainable development agenda have mainstreamed the growing concerns regarding natural resource use within the public, academic and policy discourses. Sustainable development, in fact, has become a central concept in the global policy-making (Söderbaum, Dereniowska, & Spangenberg, 2016). Whether and how this has been translated into an individual and collective action, however, remains highly questionable. There are, in fact, multiple symptoms indicating that our very modus operandi, the whole economic system as well as the surrounding language are structured in a way *as if* the deep ontological rift between human and natural world still exists (Hall, 2016).

On a practical level, the challenge of operationalizing nature as a meaningful category still exists. If nature is everywhere, and humans are part of nature, how can we meaningfully talk about NBT and natural areas? A classification by Castree (2003; 2013) becomes handy here. Castree (2003) differentiates among four types of understandings of nature within the contemporary Anglophone society: external (non-human world), universal (physical world in its entirety, including humans), intrinsic (distinguishing quality of living and inanimate phenomena), and super-ordinate (power, force, organizing

principle of everything). Despite the differences and contradictions among these meanings, *'a common semantic denominator is that nature is defined by the absence of human agency or by what remains (or endures) once the human agents have altered natural processes and phenomena'* (ibid.:10). Castree acknowledges the need to overcome the nature-culture divide but also suggests that some form of practical definition of nature is necessary in order to understand the degree of human agency in certain areas. In other words, while understanding nature as something purely *external* to the human world might be delusional, understanding nature as a *universal* or *super-ordinate* entity might not necessarily provide any analytical edge or help understand issues related to natural resource use. Emphasizing the difference in the degree of human agency, while acknowledging the embeddedness of humans in nature, therefore, might be a fruitful way to approach this problem. This pragmatic understanding of nature is adopted in this dissertation.

2.2 Tourism in nature

Tourism in natural areas, or nature-based tourism, has frequently been described as one of the fastest growing sub-sectors of tourism, while also becoming a maturing area of academic research (Balmford et al., 2009; Mehmetoglu, 2007; Matilainen & Lähdesmäki, 2014; Mowforth & Munt, 2015; Tyrväinen, Uusitalo, Silvennoinen & Hasu, 2014; Vespestad & Lindberg, 2011). This growing interest towards nature and nature-based tourism (NBT) is contextualized within the larger global modernization trends, accelerating in recent decades, such as development of communication technologies, liberalization of transportation, the rise of the middle classes, increase in disposable income and leisure time, growing urbanization and disconnection from nature as well as, ironically, escalating environmental challenges, such as *inter alia* shrinking natural areas and a global decline of wildlife populations (Curtin & Kragh, 2014; Dowson, 2016; Forman, 2016; Gren & Huijbens, 2016; Mowforth & Munt, 2015).

But how can tourism be understood to begin with? According to a well-known definition by UNWTO (2014: para. 1) tourism is *'a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes'*. Even the very simple phrase 'movement of people' within this sentence already raises a whole plethora of surrounding questions, which are at the heart of

tourism studies: who are these people on the move, what characterizes them, where do they move to, how do they do it, what impact their activities have, who are the people who serve tourists, among many others. The multiplicity of components integrated in the tourism process gave rise to the need of understanding tourism holistically and systematically.

One such way of understanding tourism is through systems theory or systems thinking. Systems theory has pervaded all fields of science and can be traced back to the classic thinkers of antiquity. According to Bertalanffy (1968: 35), systems are '*complexes of elements standing in interaction*' and themselves may vary in complexity, ranging from basic static closed systems and Newtonian clockworks to living organisms, humans, to socio-cultural, and symbolic systems (languages, logic, etc.). For Bertalanffy (1968), a system should have: an environment (location); units (its parts); relationships (among the units); input; output; feedback (regulation within the system); and a model (be understandable). Based on these principles, one of the most prominent adaptations of systems theory to tourism is attributed to Leiper (1979; 1990), whose model has received a wide recognition in tourism research (Lohmann & Netto, 2016; Zillinger, 2007; Wall-Reinius, 2009). According to Leiper, tourism system can be conceptualized in terms of four units (or elements, as Leiper calls them): (i) geographical (tourism generating region; transit region; tourism destination); (ii) tourists; (iii) tourism industry; and (iv) interactions with the environment (which can be understood in terms of physical, socio-cultural, political, economic and other dimensions). Understanding tourism as a (complex) system is well-established and continuously refined in the tourism literature (e.g. Baggio 2007; 2008; Baggio, & Cooper, 2011). This systemic view of tourism, while facing some criticism, typical for the systems thinking in general (e.g., challenges associated with the delimitation of a certain system from a larger 'supersystem', understanding the relationship of a system with its environment, quantification of resource inputs and outputs), has many analytical advantages. Thus, it allows conceptualizing tourism 'as a whole'; it enables separating tourism from other systems; segmenting tourism system into parts and studying them separately; and finally, it allows studying tourism from an interdisciplinary perspective (Lohmann & Netto, 2016). Based on this logic, it becomes possible to focus on a part of a tourism system, while acknowledging that strict delineation and disentanglement of this part from its environment, as well as other parts of the system, is not fully feasible.

Given the aim of this thesis, the focus here is primarily on the supply side, i.e. one part of the tourism system, but also on its environment, since, as will be discussed later, the line between these two parts is blurry in the case of NBT (empirically explored in Paper II). Tribe (2015:101) suggests that tourism supply can be conceptualized in terms of *land, labour, capital and enterprise*, i.e. '*fixed and variable factors of production*', which is based on classic understanding of business resources (e.g. Barney & Clark, 2007). Here it has to be mentioned that Leiper (1979), when talking about various types of resources as inputs into the tourism system supply side, specifically mentions '*free inherent and natural resources*' (Leiper, 1979: 399), referring to such items as '*climate, landscape, beaches, water resources, scenery generally, flora and fauna, and local people who provide hospitality for visitors in an incidental voluntary manner*' (ibid.). Special attention should be paid to the *free* and *incidental* properties of these resources, which are vital for tourism but are *fundamentally nonindustrious*, i.e. their existence is not stipulated by tourism but is necessary for tourism to take place (ibid.). In Leiper's model, however, these resources are not visible, and it is unclear where they are positioned, being part of both the geographical element and the general environment. This ambiguity with regard to natural resources is not accidental, but rather typical for many industrial models, especially of the past century, as discussed above in Section 2.1.

In light of the aforementioned, the following suggestions can be made with regard to this thesis. In the case of NBT, the natural resources, which have been chronically underrepresented in many economic models are vital and need to be explicitly highlighted. They do, in fact, appear in tourism systems primarily in the supply side and the general environment (i.e. location of the system). There are several challenges associated with understanding this part of the system. Given the inherent properties of many natural resources necessary for NBT, it becomes very challenging to separate them from their environment (e.g. climate, wildlife), so the location or the '*setting*' of the system becomes part of the supply itself (Section 2.4). The *free* and *incidental* nature of many of these resources raises the issue of uncertainty and lack of control during the commercialization process, to be solved via various entrepreneurial strategies (see Section 2.4.2). Further, the fact that many of these resources are *free*, i.e. have the characteristics of public goods, has resulted in their underrepresentation in theory, and overexploitation in practice, raising major sustainability concerns (see Section 2.6). Overall, the natural resources and the setting where the tourism happens, or in Leiper's terminology, the supply side inputs, and commercialization of these inputs, are the central focus of this thesis.

2.2.1 Defining nature-based tourism

Before proceeding with the analysis of nature commercialization through tourism it is worth discussing how NBT could be defined to begin with. Ontologically speaking, it can be claimed that the definitions of NBT largely fall within the dichotomous way of thinking, since nature here is a place 'out there', a place to travel to (Hall, 2016; Reis & Shelton, 2011). There is, however, a practical need to differentiate this type of activity from others, which is a rather challenging task.

From the supply perspective, NBT could be understood as a branch of tourism that deals with selling nature (i.e. a place where the degree of human activity is relatively low) through creation of nature-related experiences). This is achieved with the help of the supporting tourist services which add value to the 'raw' resources, such as guiding, provision of accommodation, transportation, local cuisine, special activities and the whole service setting in general. NBT is understood as a rather broad concept which may include virtually all types of tourist activities as long as they happen in relatively unmodified, undeveloped natural areas (Fennel, 2008). However, stricter and narrower definitions also exist, most often focusing, for example, on tourist motivations, i.e. the importance of direct enjoyment of and learning about relatively undisturbed nature areas and wildlife during the trip (Bollasson, Hull & Patterson, 2008; Goodwin, 1996, Mehmetoglu, 2007; Valentine, 1992; Weaver, 2008). For this reason Newsome, Moore and Dowling (2013) also suggest that adventure tourism should be treated rather cautiously, since the focus of tourists in this context is primarily on the activities rather than on nature, which becomes a background or a setting but not an object of direct consumption. Newsome et al. (ibid.) stress that ecological sustainability and management for optimal visitor experiences is an important aspect of all NBT sub-sectors. Similarly, Lindberg (1991) for example, states that even though beaches of Thailand are natural attractions, the tourism there cannot be considered as NBT, since it is 'mass tourism'. Lundmark and Müller (2010), however, argue that exclusion of certain activities from the NBT spectrum, based on their perceived impacts, e.g., those involving motorized transportation, reflects ideological bias and is not self-evident at all. Even though there has been some critique calling to abandon futile taxonomical and terminological efforts in order to focus more on the NBT practices and experiences (Buckley & Coghlan, 2012; Hall & Boyd, 2005; Weiler, 2012), improving theoretical and conceptual understanding of NBT and its boundaries is still important (Fennel, 2012).

One consequence of the lack of the common definition of NBT has been a vast diversity of approaches towards NBT segmentation, which in itself can be considered a way to conceptualize this type of tourism. Segmentation of NBT by tourist activities has been one of the most wide-spread approaches (also utilized in Paper I of this thesis). Mehmetoglu (2007), for example, segments NBT activities into historical/cultural, challenge-, relaxation- and pleasure-oriented. Lindberg (1991) identifies four different subgroups of nature-based tourists (hardcore, dedicated, mainstream and casual). Buckley (2011) divides NBT into consumptive (hunting and fishing), adventure (focuses on excitement and thrill) and non-consumptive tourism (takes place mostly in protected areas). Goodwin (1996) stated that nature tourism includes the whole tourism spectrum, ranging from mass tourism, adventure tourism to low impact and ecotourism. Mayer, et al. (2010) develop a framework of sixteen different types of NBT products, based on the crossover of two dimensions: travel motivations (nature protection, nature experience, sports and adventure, hedonistic) and service arrangement (independent, *a la carte*, customized, fully standardized). Newsome et al. (2013) divide NBT into ecotourism, wildlife tourism, geotourism and adventure tourism. Lundmark and Müller (2010) identify bath and boat, hunting and fishing, and nature experiences categories. Fredman et al. (2012) suggest a typology of extractive, self-propelled, water-based and 'enginized' activities. Overall, the NBT typologies have been suggested based on the analysis of primarily demand perspective, emerging from empirical data but more often from conceptual generalizations. It can be generally concluded that different authors distinguish among various types of nature-based tourists (and tourisms) by placing them on the so-called ecocentric/anthropocentric or high/low impact spectrums.

Overall, it can be assumed that the majority of authors, especially in the recent literature, avoid confining NBT in strictly defined normative borders, which is also visible in the Swedish context. Lundmark and Müller (2010) in their study understand NBT as any tourism taking place in areas rich in nature, based on activities related to nature (e.g., wilderness tourism, ecotourism, adventure tourism) as well as indigenous tourism (being a combination of both nature and culture tourism). This principle is also followed in this thesis, since no theoretical or empirical gain is envisaged from politically, ethically or aesthetically-motivated restrictions. Fredman et al. (2009; in Fredman et al., 2012:3) proposed a broad definition of NBT as '*human activities occurring when visiting nature areas outside the person's ordinary neighbourhood*'. The major defining principle here is 'nature areas', which could be rather loosely

understood as any geographical area which is dominated by natural processes rather than human design or planning (Castree, 2003; 2013). This definition of NBT is adopted in this thesis, since it has been among the most widely used definition and allows for a comprehensive overview aimed at in this thesis (Fredman et al., 2009; Fredman & Tyrväinen, 2010; Tangeland, Vennesland & Nybakk, 2013; Lee, 2013; Matilainen & Lähdesmäki, 2014). See Section 4.2 for the detailed information about the operationalization of this definition and Paper I for in-depth discussion of differences and overlaps between NBT and outdoor recreation.

2.2.2 Nature-based tourism as an avenue of nature commercialization

A growing interest towards nature and nature experiences opens new ways of commercializing nature. In this light, NBT has emerged as a powerful gravitational force integrating an increasing variety of natural resources into the commercial domain. Commercialization can be understood as the last stage of commodification (Gómez Baggethun & Ruiz-Pérez, 2011). Commodification of any phenomenon occurs after it is *assigned* a commodity status, i.e. is commodified, becoming tradable through the medium of money and integrated into the market economy. It is important to emphasize that phenomena can move in and out of the commodity status, depending on cultural, political, spatiotemporal and other factors (Gómez Baggethun & Ruiz-Pérez, 2011).

Commodification of nature does not happen unproblematically. The theory of nature commodification is rooted within the critical tradition of such disciplines as human geography, political ecology or Marxist economics. Commodification has traditionally held a rather negative connotation, related to the critique of capitalism, which, simply put, strives to make commodities out of things (tangible or intangible), which used to be freely available for everyone. It is argued that capitalism penetrates all spheres of the human and non-human world, creating conditions to bring literally everything into the arena of market exchange (Cousins et al., 2009), with the ultimate goal of 'financialization of everything' (Harvey, 2005:33). Stated pessimistically, *[a]ll that counts is the rate at which we turn natural wealth into cash. If this destroys our prosperity and the wonders that surround us, who cares?* (Monbiot, 2017; para. 3). This development is also attributed to the proliferation of the logic of neoliberalism, which emphasizes the benefits of free markets, free trade and private entrepreneurship – processes by which market is expanding to

commodify nature (Duffy, 2015; Gren & Huijbens, 2016; Hultman & Gössling, 2008; Kovel, 2007). Hall (2016:65) has argued that '*[t]ourism can be understood as a tool of capital to commodify nature for direct and indirect consumption*'.

Since the advance of the sustainable development agenda at the end of the last century, commercialization of nature through tourism has received a widespread general support and legitimation as a potentially win-win market-based solution and a regional development mechanism, based on the hope that tourist flows would help generating income for the local communities, which, in its turn, would stimulate conservation of natural resources. This ideological approach, despite critique, has remained dominating over the last thirty years (e.g., UNWTO, 2017). As a result, NBT can now be frequently encountered in regional development strategies around the world, due to the assumed ability of this business to contribute to local job creation, income diversification or nature conservation, and to generate multiple other benefits, while having comparatively low requirements in training and infrastructure (e.g., Ashley, 2000; Dissart & Marcouiller, 2005; Saarinen, 2003; 2007; Spencely & Manning, 2013; Marcuiller, 2015; Mollard & Vollet, 2015). It is, therefore, hardly surprising that an increasing number of specialized enterprises professionally involved in the NBT appear, commercially offering an ever-diversifying 'menu' of nature experiences (Buckley, 2011; Duffy, 2015; Fredman, Stenseke & Sandell, 2014; Keul, 2014; Mowforth & Munt, 2015). Kaltenborn, Haaland, and Sandell (2001:425) pointed out that '*[t]he commodification of experiences is widespread and evident. Nature-based attractions are increasingly turned into commercial products*'. Growing number of remote places rich in relatively unmodified nature are turned into tourist destinations full of experience promises (Cloke & Perkins, 2002; Cousins et al., 2009). Following the imperative of capitalism, an ever-increasing and diversifying supply of nature experiences is developed and consumed through mediation of commercial tourist entities (Cousins et al., 2009; Duffy, 2015; Sandell & Sörlin, 2008). Hall (2016:65) has argued that '*[t]ourism can be understood as a tool of capital to commodify nature for direct and indirect consumption*'.

A long-standing critique within NBT literature, for example, has been the concept of 'wilderness' and the creation of 'wilderness experience' as a tourist product. While the wilderness concept itself has been criticized extensively within environmental literature (e.g., Cronon, 1995; Birch, 1998; Adams, 2003; Nelson & Calicott, 2008), critique on nature commodification through the concept of wilderness in tourism is more recent. Waitt, Lane and Head (2003), for example, explore the ways how the NBT marketing materials (i.e. pictures

and the language of tourist brochures) help construct, circulate and ultimately consume natural landscapes. In particular, the attention is paid to how human landscapes are naturalized as 'wilderness' and packaged as 'wilderness experience' for tourists. Hall (2016:56) states that '*[t]he commodification of nature as a spectacle by tourism is clearly integral to nature-based tourism, where representations of, and connection to, places, people and causes has long been mediated through commodified images*'. In a similar vein, Brooks et al. (2011) discuss the creation of the so-called 'third nature' through NBT (by the analogy of the 'first nature' referring to the original nature, and 'second nature' - nature transformed by human labour). Third nature refers to the recreated wilderness, used for providing wilderness experiences for nature-based tourists. Quite often, as a result of these activities, the histories of local farmers are obliterated, and a multi-layered landscape becomes 'wilderness' to be commodified and consumed as a tourist product and/or service (ibid.). King and Stewart (1996) point out that through tourism and its monetary power hosts' environment becomes a commodity. Places that used to be used for daily activities, as well as the activities themselves, become valued as market commodities. This phenomenon has been most pronounced (and attracted the most critique) in the context of ecotourism and indigenous communities. In this case, commodification of nature implied change in meaning of the nature, from a source of subsistence (with use value) to a commodity (with an exchange value), which resulted in a tangible shift of relationships between the people and their environment (King & Stewart, 1996). The shift from traditional life-sustaining activities to tourist-oriented service activities may also be perceived as negative in many cultures, and may change not only people's view of nature but also people's view of themselves (ibid.).

The problematics of nature commodification also has its relevance for the Western post-industrial societies. Kaltenborn, et al. (2001), discussing NBT in the Swedish context, also suggest that the commodification process of nature and tourism experiences has profound effects, reaching beyond the aspects of industry and finance, but affect e.g., perceptions of the area from both the tourists' and the locals' perspectives, their identities and their relationships with the place. Wall-Reinius (2012) makes the analysis of the NBT in the Laponia world heritage area, which is represented in the tourist marketing, media and conservation policies as 'the last wilderness of Europe' despite having been populated and bearing traces of human activity for millennia (ibid.). This is also confirmed by the finding from the interviews with the hikers of the same area, who predominantly travel in hope of the 'wilderness

experience' (ibid.). To a certain extent, it can be argued that the image of the wild nature as a primary international tourist product is attached to Sweden as a country in general, as opposed to other countries in mainland Europe (Fredman et al., 2006). Moreover, this is not unique to Sweden only, but is shared by other Nordic countries as well (ibid.). Schram (2011), for example, analyzing the tourist representation of Iceland, calls this phenomenon 'borealism', an analogy of 'orientalism' (Said, 1978), stressing similar patterns of exoticization and mythologization of the 'mysterious North' in contrast to the civilized continental Europe, through images of wild, rough nature and aspects of culture, which are perceived as pre-modern.

The commodification approach to understanding economic relationships with nature has also been widely adopted by less critical authors in various contexts, e.g., in 'commodity chain analysis', so tying it to purely critical perspective would be no longer correct (Castree, 2003). It is, therefore, necessary to look at some general theoretical foundations of this idea. Thus, Castree (2003) was among the first to introduce the much-needed clarification into the processes and types of nature commodification. To put it very succinctly, for Castree (2003), nature commodification in Western societies may take the following forms: nature as something external ('traditional' commodification of natural resources, direct commodification of 'pieces' of the environment, proxy commodification through e.g., hedonic pricing in real estate); nature as something *internal* (natural entities become 'pure' commodities, e.g., agricultural plants, animals); nature as a human body (e.g., trade of internal organs); nature as information (e.g., bioprospecting, genetic research). This classification, however, does not explicitly account for a unique feature of tourism, which sets it apart from many other industries: tourism commodifies nature by turning natural phenomena into experiences (Cousins et al., 2003), and tourism has been the experience industry par excellence long before the advance of 'experience economy' paradigm (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). Cousins et al. (2009) notice that a growing proportion of outdoor tourism occurs in a commercial environment, representing a form of economic exchange. Nature experiences are sold as a form of commodity, and being in nature (as well as conserving nature or helping the local population) is marketized or commercialized. It can, therefore, be argued that even though Castree (2003) hints that tourism might fall into the category of 'proxy commodification', selling nature through experiences has not been explicitly accounted for in his definition. This gap has also been identified within environmental economics literature, by pointing out the need for more attention to the cultural ecosystem services, where NBT and outdoor

recreation usually fall (e.g. Grunewald & Bastian, 2015; Milcu et al., 2013; Plieninger et al., 2013).

Commodification of nature through tourism has another specific. It has been argued that commodification of nature takes place in four main stages: economic framing, monetization, appropriation, and commercialization (Gómez-Baggethun & Ruiz-Pérez, 2011). The four-stage process of nature commodification, clearly visible in the traditional extractive industries (e.g., forestry or mining), is far from straightforward in tourism. This particularly refers to the appropriation stage, which usually presupposes privatization and well-defined property rights over a certain resource. The same is visible in the classification by Castree (2003), who identifies the necessary precursors to the successful commodification of nature to be privatization, alienation, abstraction, valuation and displacement of natural resources. In case of tourism, the main resources often have intrinsic public good and/or common pool characteristics, making appropriation/alienation/displacement stages challenging and in many cases impossible (i.e. are non-excludable). This is especially relevant in the case of Sweden, which has a tradition of the public right to access nature areas for recreation purposes (discussed further in more detail). In this case, tourism has to operate under conditions of 'incomplete' or 'contested' commodification, a context where external and internal barriers exist to physical alienation and privatization of an entity on the market (Castree, 2003; Radin, 1996).

The ever-expanding and diversifying tourism sector, driven by the global environmental and social transformations, becomes a powerful agent of commercialization of natural resources. Here it has to be emphasized that this commercialization processes may potentially happen not only in a destructive but also in a sustainable way, where tourism can, in fact, become a force of conservation and sustainable resource use (Newsome et al., 2012; Markwell, 2015). This dual and highly context-dependent property of tourism business makes any generalizations rather challenging, creating a case-study dominated knowledge base. There is a danger of NBT falling victim to its own success: viewed as an easy income generation avenue it can be uncritically recommended as a regional development strategy to areas rich in natural resources but otherwise disadvantaged (rural, peripheral, impoverished, depopulated). In fact, NBT is frequently suggested as an income-generating alternative in areas where other businesses are struggling, e.g., peripheries (Brouder, 2013; Hall & Boyd, 2005). As a result, we can often observe protected areas established in hope of a tourist influx, nature conservation rhetoric

revolving around wildlife species' ability to 'pay their stay' through tourism, or increasing number of entrepreneurs turning to NBT as a lucrative business opportunity. More often than not, however, there is a lack of theoretical understanding, grounded in solid empirical evidence, of the necessary factors for sustainable NBT to succeed. This relates to the very processes of commercialization of natural resources and turning them into tourist experiences as well as using nature as the operational setting where these experiences are created.

Several conclusions can be made from the aforementioned, which are of high relevance to this thesis. First, NBT is a powerful agent of nature commercialization. It may happen in many different ways, but most often it involves exchanging money for a certain experience of nature – an area which is not as well researched comparing to traditional ways of nature commodification. Second, NBT happens under conditions of incomplete or contested commodification, since it has high reliance on natural resources which have a common pool, quasi-public good or public good characteristics, i.e. they cannot be appropriated and controlled (Section 2.6). Lack of control creates an operational context with high degrees of uncertainty for the NBT firms (Section 2.4.2). Specifics of NBT firms per se are discussed below.

2.3 Tourism firms as resource-dependent entities

As was discussed in previous sections, enterprises, labour and capital are important factors of supply within the tourism system, in addition to natural resources. Tourism firms¹ are agents of commercialization of natural resources, so it is necessary discuss these entities, i.e. commercial organizations, operating on a for-profit basis and selling goods or services to consumers. The resource-based theory (RBT) emerged as a way to understand firms, approaching them from the resource side, rather than the product side. Although looking at economic units and their resource utilization has a long tradition in economics, the focus has been primarily on labour and capital and, to a lesser degree, on land (Wernerfelt, 1984). The importance of paying attention to and identifying tangible and intangible resources for the business success has been pointed out already by Penrose (1959), but the RBT started

¹ In the subsequent papers the term *firms* is used interchangeably with *businesses*, *companies* or *service providers*.

to take shape only in the late 1980s and 1990s. During the three decades of its evolution, RBT has undergone maturation and refinement, encompassing multiple aspects of a firm and its strategic management (e.g., Alvarez & Busenitz, 2001; Barney, 1991; Barney & Clark, 2007; Barney, Ketchen, & Wright, 2011; Harrison et al., 1991; Hart, 1995; Wernerfelt, 1984; 2011). Originating from the research field of strategic management, RBT is naturally integrated with other neighboring areas of inquiry, including economics, entrepreneurship, marketing, business and human resource management.

The main foundational principles of RBT could be found in the work by Wernerfelt (1984), Rumelt (1984), Barney (1986) or Dierickx and Cool (1989). Thus, Wernerfelt (1984) aimed to develop a theory of competitive advantage of a firm, based on the resources a firm has at its disposal. In other words, it could be claimed that there is a link between a firm's performance on the market and the resources it controls. As stated by Wernerfelt (1984: 171) '*[f]or the firm, resources and products are two sides of the same coin*'. Similar ideas have been independently expressed by Rumelt (1984). Barney (1986), went further and initiated a shift towards a *resource-based view* by arguing that such approach would, in fact, have quite different implications than the product- and market-based one. This idea was further elaborated by Dierickx and Cool (1989), who argued that a firm needs to have a control over a resource for it to be able to generate economic rent. This path was followed by multiple research contributions forming the scientific body of RBT, represented by three main streams: the resource-based view, the knowledge-based view, and the relational view (Acedo, Barroso & Galan, 2006). From the historical perspective, the RBT has its theoretical roots in the traditional inquiry into business competences, theory of firm growth by Penrose (1959) as well as David Ricardo's classical analysis of land rents (Barney & Clark, 2007).

Within the RBT, a resource is understood quite broadly. Based on the RBT body of literature, a resource could be defined, for example, as '*tangible and intangible assets firms use to conceive of and implement their strategies*' (Barney & Arikan, 2000). Some authors may distinguish between *resources* and *capabilities*, suggesting that resources are the 'fundamental' physical, financial or organizational attributes, whereas capabilities are the attributes, which allow a firm to utilize these resources (Hitt, Ireland & Hoskisson, 1997), akin to the concept of *operand* and *operant* resources discussed in marketing literature (Nelsson & Ballantine, 2014; Vargo & Lush, 2004). According to Barney and Clark (2007), firm resources could be classified into *physical, financial, human, and organizational*. Physical resources imply e.g.,

technological equipment used in a firm, but also such aspects as geographical location or access to raw materials; financial ones include revenues, debt, equity; human resources include trainings, experience, relationships; and organizational ones are exemplified by a firm's culture, structure, reputation, relations between a firm and in its environment (Barney & Clark, 2007). Similar segmentation is provided by Tribe (2015), classifying (tourism) resources into land, capital, labour, and enterprise. Although each of these type of resources have received attention in the RBT context to various extent, a literature review suggests that physical resources/land have not been in the spotlight as much as the intangible resources.

According to the RBT, in order to ensure a sustained competitive advantage, a firm needs access to resources which correspond to certain criteria. First, it is assumed that the resources need to be *heterogenous* and *immobile* (Barney & Clark, 2007). This means that a firm is unlikely to succeed if its resources are equally available to all competing firms and are highly mobile (i.e. can be easily transferred from one firm to another). Furthermore, in order to ensure long-lasting business opportunities, the resources have to be *valuable*, *rare*, *inimitable*, and be supported by complex *organizational processes* (Barney, 1991; Barney & Clark, 2007). Value is defined by the ability of a resource to increase a customer's willingness to pay; rare resources enable a firm to avoid a perfectly competitive market; inimitability arises from the uniqueness of a resource, which makes it hard for the competitors to replicate; and finally, the organizational structure of a firm, its supporting assets and routines, is necessary for facilitating the successful utilization of these resources (Barney, 1991; Barney & Clark, 2007; Hart & Dowell, 2011). These properties can, in fact, be understood as empirical indicators of heterogeneity and immobility.

Although this view on the resource characteristics has made an important contribution to understanding the sustained competitive advantage of a firm and the nature of the firm's resources, it had a shortcoming, pointed out by Hart (1995), in what became known as the natural-resource-based view. Natural-resource-based view (NRBV) of the firm is an important spin-off perspective within the RBT, in light with the environmental economic thought. Generally speaking, NRBV pointed out that RBT ignored the interaction of a firm with its natural environment. As stated by Hart (1995:991) '*it is likely that strategy and competitive advantage in the coming years will be rooted in capabilities that facilitate environmentally sustainable economic activity— a natural-resource-based view of the firm*'. Specifically, NRBV focused on the importance of pollution prevention, product stewardship and sustainable development as important capabilities a firm has to possess (Hart & Dowell,

2011). It can be argued, that here we see the repercussions of the larger transformations within the field of economics, management and social sciences in general, i.e. the dawn of the sustainability agenda and insertion of nature, natural processes and sustainability concerns into the theoretical and practical business models. Hart (1995) simply argued that natural environment has the ability to create constraints on firms' attempts to generate competitive advantage, and ignoring this reality would mean perpetuating the flaw of abstract model-building, disconnected from natural world we are embedded in. This development, in fact, brings the discussion back to the systems theory approach to tourism, which also emphasizes the environment or the 'location' of the system, and its interaction with the system units. One of the main aims of NRBV was to establish a theoretical mechanism which would support a link between pro-environmental or 'green' strategies of firms and their profits. It is interesting to note, that Hart (1995) separated pollution prevention and product stewardship from the sustainable development. This could most likely be explained by the relative novelty of the sustainable development discourse in the 1990s, and the focus on pollution as a primary concern of natural resource use back in the day. For the purposes of this thesis, there is no practical reason to divide sustainability into these categories, which will be merged, therefore, under the umbrella of environmental sustainability, discussed in further detail in Section 2.6.

Overall, although NBT firms are resource-using entities, similar to many other firms, the resources they depend upon and their own characteristics have a number of specifics. First, the natural resources NBT firms depend upon, do not always qualify to the criteria of immobility and heterogeneity (especially in the Swedish context), which is also related to the challenges of nature commodification process through tourism, related to the inherent properties of natural resources (Section 2.2.2). In addition, NBT firms have some other interesting characteristics, which affect the resource use, as discussed below.

2.3.1 Specifics of tourism firms working with(in) nature

Since the unit of analysis in this thesis are NBT firms, it is necessary to say a few words about these type of service providers (discussed in more detail in Paper V). Although there is no extensive literature on NBT firms and their entrepreneurial specifics, useful parallels could be drawn from the accumulated knowledge on tourism firms in general, as well as rural or agri-tourism ones in particular. A few general assumptions could be made in this regard. Thus, it has been known that tourism is dominated by small and micro

businesses and their survival rates are usually not very high (Ateljevich & Page, 2009; Brouder, 2013). Further, business motivations of small firms, which dominate the tourism sector in general and the Scandinavian one in particular, are complex, heterogeneous, vary over time and cannot be explained solely within the rational utility-maximization framework (Sampaio, Thomas, & Font, 2012; Thomas, Shaw and Page, 2011). Considerable literature has been accumulated about 'lifestyle entrepreneurs', i.e. owner-managers of usually small firms, mainly guided by certain lifestyle preferences, values and goals rather than profit maximization and growth, which are also visible in tourism (Anderson Cederholm & Hultman, 2010; Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Bredvold & Skálén, 2016; Lundberg & Fredman, 2012; Lundberg, Fredman, & Wall-Reinius, 2014; Sampaio et al., 2012; Thomas et al., 2011; Tzschentke, Kirk & Lynch, 2008).

It can be assumed, that all the aforementioned is applicable to the NBT sector, which is also supported in the existing literature. Lundberg, et al. (2014) suggest that the identity of an NBT entrepreneur is often incompatible with profit and growth, prioritizing such non-economic goals as living close to nature, being authentic, sustainable and, most importantly, environmental-friendly and responsible. Iversen and Jacobsen (2016) find that lifestyle is an important motivation for migrating into rural areas to start a tourism business, and that many of the entrepreneurs interviewed did not even recognize themselves as business owners. Swan and Morgan (2016) find that despite the existing business challenges the strategy of eco-tourism entrepreneurs included remaining small, low-impact and maintaining eco-values. They state (Swan & Morgan, 2016:129):

Eco-entrepreneurs prefer to remain on the financial edge rather than pursue growth strategies. Financial threats are ever-present from sources including fluctuating demand and variable government charges. These factors limit opportunities for business investment or accruing of capital reserves whilst inhibiting staffing continuity. Eco-entrepreneurs nevertheless remain steadfast when faced with ecotourism business challenges by remaining true to their social and sustainable values. However, eco- entrepreneurs in the business of ecotourism also seek an idealized lifestyle.

It can, therefore, be concluded that NBT service providers can be understood through such parameters as size and motivations to operate their business (i.e. the lifestyle perspective), which is adopted and empirically tested in this thesis.

In the process of turning natural resources into a tourism product a major role is played by the tourism businesses. Even though the tourists create their own subjective experiences based on their individual background and interests, their experiences, nevertheless, converge by co-creation and mediation (Ooi, 2005). This is an important aspect to note, since it emphasizes that tourism researchers approaching tourism with the prism of experience, should not be trapped within the subjectivity of an individual tourist's idiosyncrasy. As pointed out by Ellis and Rossman (2008), although, the tourists should be encouraged to create experiences on their own, at the same time, unmanaged environments and poorly thought through events rarely result in rewarding experiences. The right environment, information, props and cues will affect people's experiences and personalize them for each tourist, leaving them more satisfied. The mediating entities, i.e. NBT firms, play a crucial role in creatively orchestrating this process of experience co-creation.

Employees of tourism firms have been discussed as very important mediators and agents of experience co-creation, since personnel's behavior and image are capable of greatly influencing customers' experience (Weiler & Black, 2015; Wong & Wang, 2009; Mossberg, 2007; Mossberg, Hanefors, & Hansen, 2014; Weiler & Davis, 1993; Cohen, 1985). In case of NBT, the guides are perhaps the most important employees, most directly engaging with tourists and affecting their experiences, and, therefore, deserving special attention. According to Cohen (1985), tourist guides' role could be understood in terms of (i) leadership (instrumental function - showing directions in geographical space, providing access to social space, controlling the situation; social function- managing tension, integrating the group, keeping the group in good humour and animating) and (ii) mediation (interactive function- representation, organization; communicative function- selecting the points of interest, providing information, interpretation and sometimes fabrication of reality). Guides are responsible for what Arnould et al. (1998) call 'communicative staging' of the setting, i.e. how the service environment is presented and interpreted. For example, one way to influence tourist experience, suggested by Ooi (2005), is through tourist attention management. Mediators can help direct tourists' attention and interpretation. As stated by Ooi (ibid.: 56), *'[o]ur immediate experience depends on what we pay attention to at any given moment, because it is then we are explicitly aware of the situation...With the control of attention, strong emotional experiences can be evoked'*.

Although there is multiformity of literature on the impact of guiding on tourist satisfaction, studies on specialized guides, as in the context of NBT, are still scarce (Weiler & Black, 2015). In their analysis of wilderness servicescape,

Arnould et al. (1998:111) conclude that *'successful service delivery in a complex elaborate serviscapes may rely heavily on the communicative and performative skills of highly involved service providers'*. Salazar (2005) gives an interesting example of how this *'experiencescapes'* process can take place under the skillful agency of local tour guides, who intentionally folklorize and exoticize their destination. It is important to point out that guides are not just mediators between the tourist and the place; they not only explain and interpret the unknown reality into the language of tourists, but also try to actively create the reality and tailor it in accordance to tourists' expectations (e.g. experiencing *'authenticity'*).

Nature-based tour guides have some specifics. As a rule, in addition to leadership and mediation, they also have a third focus, that of the environment and nature resource management, where the guide assumes a role of a motivator and environmental interpreter, urging tourists to better understand the nature and, as in the case of e.g., ecotourism, adopt more environmentally-friendly behavior (Carmody, 2013; Weiler & Davis, 1993; Black & Ham, 2005). As Black and Ham (ibid.:179) state *'[t]he ecotour guide can play a vital role in the ecotourism experience in protecting the natural and cultural environment by performing a number of roles such as interpreter of the environment, motivator of environmentally responsible behaviour and conservation values, and specialist information giver'*. In addition, the NBT guides are responsible for providing the feeling of safety and security, since the tourists are often inexperienced and clueless in the new environment, particularly in wilderness or extreme terrain (Beedie, 2003; Rantala & Valkonen, 2011). Further, guides are able to choreograph the details of tourist experience (both by script and improvisation) through selecting particular viewpoints, making stops, drawing attention to some things and omitting others (Beedie, 2003). Similarly, Arnould and Price (1993) point out that the cues to have *'an extraordinary experience'*, experience *'the river magic'* in their case, are provided to the tourists by the guides. The guides use verbal and non-verbal means to facilitate and enhance the experiential process of the tourists. It has been acknowledged that narratives, stories and themes play an important role in formation of tourist experience (Kim & Moon, 2009; Lin & Mattila, 2010; Mossberg, 2007; 2008; Moscardo, 2010). It can be argued that the most obvious (and oldest) providers of narratives, stories and themes, or the main storytellers within the tourism industry are the guides, who *'weave local knowledge and culture into a larger 'set' of cultural meanings'* (Wynn, 2005:404). However, these processes might also be disconnected from a particular

narrator and be mediated by various tourist media, such as guidebooks and of course, Internet websites or smartphone apps.

Here it has to be emphasized, that active participation and dedication on behalf of the tourists proved to be of no less importance for the experience. An important assumption, stressed by Arnould and Price, (1993:41) is that *'[e]motional outcomes associated with extraordinary experience are embedded in relationships between customer and service provider'* and that more attention has to be paid to *'boundary open transactions where the demarcation between service provider and client are blurred'*, which was not sufficiently elucidated in preceding literature. It can be assumed that the insight of Arnould and Price (*ibid.*) basically foreshadows the experience co-creation paradigm in tourism, which will be more explicitly conceptualized in the tourism literature to come (e.g. Mossberg, 2007; Prebesen et al., 2014). The shift towards 'co-creation' paradigm in the twenty-first century has been so noticeable that Prat and de la Rica Aspiunza (2011:11) suggest the rise of *'second generation experience economy'*, which shifted the tourism marketing focus from 'what I offer you' to 'what you want to experience' mindset. In other words, a tourist is not simply a consumer anymore but a 'prosumer' as forecasted by Toffler (1970) or a partner, a friend, a co-creator, whose opinion matters during the experience creation process (Prat & de la Rica Aspiunza, 2011).

Thus, it can be concluded that in the context of the specifics of natural resources used for tourism (being part of the supply and also the environment; not fully 'commodifiable' etc., Section 2.2), tourism firms, in order to succeed, have to be able to work with the tourists to ensure the commercial process of transforming resources into visitor experiences, bringing them to another level through providing information, motivation, interpretation, security, and 'staging' of the whole setting, as is discussed below.

2.4 Operational setting as a tourism resource

Discussing the operational setting or the commercial space is inevitable when talking about tourism, since the very essence of this phenomenon is about changing places, or travelling to a specific place. As was famously noted by Lefevre (1991), tourism transforms the circulation of commodities among people into the circulation of people among commodified spaces. Focusing on the space where the tourism activities happen (the approach adopted in Paper

II), has a number of theoretical and empirical advantages. Although space and place in general have been discussed by multiple disciplines, in the commercial context the importance of spatial properties, where the commercial encounter happens, has received the most attention in service and marketing literature. The role of place in service and marketing literature has been conceptualized as a *servicescape*, or '*a contextual landscape for service*' (Nilsson & Ballantyne, 2014:374).

The servicescape framework to conceptualize commercial setting has been proposed by Bitner (1992), which has been quite visible in the service and marketing literature in the last two decades (e.g., Arnould et al., 1998; Clarke & Schmidt, 1995; Ezeh & Harris, 2007; Newman, 2002; Rosenbaum & Wong, 2007; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994; 2016). In her seminal article, Bitner (1992), drawing mostly on environmental psychology, consumer behavior and marketing literature, asserts that the physical environment influences satisfaction of a customer with a service, affects motivation, productivity and satisfaction of employees as well as the quality of interaction between both sides. Three dimensions through which Bitner proposed to understand service environment were: ambient conditions; spatial layout and functionality; symbols and artifacts. The service setting or servicescape itself was defined as '*the man-made, physical surroundings as opposed to the natural or social environment*' (Bitner, 1992). Even though the importance of a physical setting for the process of consumption and production had already been identified in the 70s (e.g., Kotler, 1972) and reaffirmed in the 90s, the research in this area has not been abundant. Bitner (1992:57) notes a '*surprising lack of empirical research or theoretically based frameworks addressing the role of physical surroundings in consumption settings*'. Following literature reviews on servicescape also acknowledged the persisting paucity in this research area (Ezeh & Harris, 2007; Mossberg, 2007).

Bitner (1992) primarily focused on the physical man-made environment and left other aspects for further research, which indeed followed. As the concept matured, its limits started to be pushed further. Researchers from different disciplinary backgrounds tried to expand the concept, approaching it from different perspectives and adapting it to various contexts (e.g., Clarke & Schmidt, 1995; Ezeh & Harris, 2007; Rosenbaum & Wong, 2007; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994). Thus, Clarke and Schmidt (1995:149) point out Bitner's limiting definition of servicescape as 'built environment' only, and define it more broadly as '*environment influencing response to the service encounter*', which includes both natural and artificial dimensions. Hightower (2010:77),

for example, defines servicescape as a broader construct, suggesting that it is basically *'everything that is physically present to the consumer during the service encounter'*. Arnould et al. (1998) point out the communicative aspect of servicescape, which they call *'communicative staging'*, where servicescape is created not only by physical components, but also through information provided and stories told. Tombs and McCool-Kennedy (2003) stress the neglected social component of the servicescape (such as the interactions among customers and service providers). Rosenbaum (2005) expands the concept further, adding the symbolic aspect of the service consumption setting, exploring the *'symbolic servicescape'*. Rosenbaum and Wong (2007) also stress the limits of focusing on the physical environment only and point out the lack of attention towards moral dimension of a commercially successful servicescape, which they call *'the darker side of the servicescape'*. Following this development, Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011) attempted to add social, socially-symbolic and natural dimensions. Hale et al. (2001) criticize the rigidity of this concept, stating that *'[b]asically, the concept of servicescape fails to allow explanation of the changing contents of the experience'*. In addition, Mossberg (2007) brings tourists into the picture as the active co-creators of experiences within the tourist servicescapes.

Thus, it can be assumed that the servicescape framework has also penetrated tourism research field and its borders are expanding as it is being enriched with new dimensions, depending on the contextual demands. It becomes clear that Bitner's initial definition was incapable of accommodating new contributions from the field of service research and broader definitions followed. The need to expand the servicescape framework and make it more flexible has been visible in the literature almost immediately after Bitner's publication. More flexible and non-exclusive definitions followed. Arnould et al. (1998:90) loosely define servicescape(s) as *'a commercial place'*, *'a site of commercial exchange'*, and *'more or less consciously designed places, calculated to produce commercially significant actions'*; Mossberg (2007:63) sees it as *'a complex mix of environmental features around a service that influences internal responses and behaviour'*; Ballantyne, Christopher, and Payne (1995) talk about service interaction zones, Nilsson and Ballantyne (2014) stress *service contexts*, whereas Ramaswamy (2011) suggests *engagement platforms*.

A few words need to be said here about similar approaches to conceptualize the commercial spaces with regard to the recent experiential turn in service and marketing literature. In the context where tourism businesses are aiming at creating favorable environment for tourists to co-create their own experiences (Mossberg, 2007; Prebensen, et al., 2014; Vespstad & Lindberg,

2011), the operational setting, where it all happens, is of particular importance. With the advance of experience economy and experience co-creation paradigm, experiences became central to understanding tourism and its setting. Mossberg (2007), for example, suggests that in the context of leisure and tourism, where services are to a large extent comprised of experiences, servicescape becomes experiencescape, and merging both concepts should be considered. Bertella (2016) in this regard argues that experiencescape stems from servicescape and is more preferable in the context where tourist experiences are in focus. Experiencescape has gained some popularity in tourism literature (Ardley et al., 2012; Chui et al., 2010; Bertella, 2016; Hultman & Andersson Cederholm, 2006; O'Dell & Billing, 2005). Furthermore, tourism literature, especially stemming from human geography domain, is replete with multiple '-scapes', emphasizing certain features of experiential settings in tourism, ranging from the general tourism-scape (van der Duim, 2007), hospitalityscape (Carmichael & McClinchey (2009) or consumptionscape (Ger & Belk, 1996) to more specific festivalscape (Mason and Paggiaro, 2012), foodscape and winescape (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2014; Hall et al., 2003), nostalgiascape (Gyimóthy, 2005), or soundscape (Kim & Shelby, 2011). Amidst this plethora of '-scapes', servicescape is among the most widely encountered, which departed from its initial limiting definition of a purely manmade, built environment (which, however, is also still in use, e.g., in Namasivayam & Mattila, 2007; Kim & Moon, 2008), and transformed into a more complex multidimensional concept, which is adopted in this thesis. In general, development of this concept created opportunities for its application in a wide variety of service consumption contexts. Prebensen, et al. (2014:4), state on this:

Whatever name we use – the experience environment, servicescape, experiencescape, spheres or setting – on-site value creation processes are core foundations that the tourism industry must acknowledge in order to plan, develop involve and accommodate tourists so that they are able to actively partake in such practices.

An important issue to be addressed here is the relevance of the servicescape framework in light of the recent progress in service and marketing literature, especially in the context of service-dominant (S-D) logic and the value co-creation. According to Nelsson and Ballantyne (2014) the servicescape has not been acknowledged explicitly within the S-D logic, whereas there is no doubt that the servicescape properties become associated with the value propositions, thus influencing the service expectations. The servicescape actively *'supports or constraints resource integration between the customers and the*

firm, and influences the value-creation outcomes' (Nilsson & Ballantyne, 2014:377). More specifically, servicescape within the S-D can be conceptualized based on the following assumptions. The S-D logic recognizes two types of resources, needed to create value, *operant* (resources that are capable to of acting upon other resources to create value, such as knowledge, skills) and *operand* (resources that need action to be taken upon them in order to become valuable) (Vargo & Lusch, 2004; Maglio & Spohrer, 2008). This classification can be compared to many similar ideas, such as *intangible* and *tangible* assets (Barney & Arikand, 2000), *capabilities* and *resources* (Hitt, Ireland & Hoskisson, 1997), or *competitive* and *comparative* advantages (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). In the perspective of NBT, it can be argued that the servicescape, or the operational setting, is *both* operand and operant resource, since it is actively co-created by tourism producers and consumers but also, due to the high levels of uncertainty inherent in the NBT setting (discussed in Section 2.4.2), it is not a passive recipient of action but has an agency of its own (i.e. has the property of the environment, discussed in Sections 2.2 and 2.3). Although there have been multiple attempts to adapt servicescape framework to various contexts, NBT adaptation has been definitely lacking. A closer look is needed at the environment where NBT experiences emerge, and the dimensions which NBT firms have to negotiate to ensure the success of their businesses. As mentioned by Nilsson and Ballantyne (2014:375) '*[i]n tourism studies, there is emerging interest in interpreting a given natural environment as a tourism place or space, which gains a measure of meaning because tourists play a role defining it'*.

2.4.1 Operational setting in nature-based tourism

According to Prebensen and Chen (2017:208) '*[f]rom the tourist's point of view, nature is a setting, a venue or a location providing health, wellness, hedonic and eudaimonic experiences demanding a variety of mental and physical exertions'*. But what can be said about NBT firms, for whom nature is a commercial operational setting? There have been rather few attempts to directly engage with the NBT setting from the supply perspective (Arnould et al., 1998; Chui et al., 2010; Fredman et al., 2012; Hale, et al. 2001). The popular servicescape framework has been insufficient to immediately accommodate the context of NBT (Arnould et al., 1998; Chui et al. 2010; Hale et al., 2001), since it did not account for the specifics of either tourism in general or NBT in particular, while being largely rooted in simplistic behaviorist (stimulus-response) ontology to begin with. The experiencescape framework was, in its turn, primarily wired towards cultural experiences (e.g., Mossberg, 2007; O'Dell &

Billing, 2005). In this regard, a few notable applications deserve closer attention.

Arnauld et al. (1998) introduce a less straightforward approach to the concept of servicescape, where it is produced (or staged) through substantive and communicative components, the latter becoming particularly important (though less researched) in the context of NBT. The central role in this process is played by the NBT guides who create tourist wilderness experiences (i.e. stage wilderness) through their stories. Arnauld et al. (ibid.) argue that conceptualizing nature and wilderness as servicescape challenges the borders of existing servicescape theory and provides opportunities for its further broadening and development. Hale et al. (2001:1) also point out the challenges servicescape poses for the nature context, stating that 'ecotourism experience involves a complex interaction with nature, which implies an extension of the concept of servicescape'. Chui et al. (2010), analyzing tourist experiences in a national park, briefly refer to the servicescape as a range of properties of settings and facilities that can be encountered within the park, such as friendliness of the local people, quality of natural scenery and landscape, convenience and access to transportation, cleanliness and hygiene. They conclude that tourists' evaluation of an NBT servicescape depends on the tourist, the environment and interaction between the two (Chui et al., 2010). Fredman et al. (2012) investigating the NTB supply in the context of Sweden, apply a two-dimensional model of servicescape, constructed of the intersection of two continuums, representing the level of naturalness and the level of access to nature. In the context of the Swedish NBT supply, the research documented simultaneous importance of both high level of naturalness and high level of comfort and facilities (a trend observed in previous studies, e.g., Wall-Reinius, 2012), in combination with an open access to nature.

Despite the limited literature regarding nature as a tourism servicescape, interesting differences can be found among the existing examples. On the one hand, there is the servicescape framework application to the NBT context, implying that the nature becomes 'the servicescape', i.e. setting where the tourist service production and consumption occurs (e.g., Fredman et al., 2012); on the other hand, it is acknowledged that nature is not only a setting or a backdrop to other services, but is also an important object of consumption in its own right (Hultman & Andersson Cederholm, 2006). In other cases, nature can be one of the components, comprising a servicescape (e.g., Clarke & Schmidt, 1995; Rosenbaum, 2009; Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011). In other

words nature here is not only a primary object of tourist consumption but simultaneously a setting where this consumption happens.

This setting has a vast range of characteristics, the importance of which varies depending on the tourist activity (Bostedt & Mattson, 1995; Buckley & Coghlan, 2012). Lundmark and Stjernström (2009), for example, stress that NBT is as dependent on facilities and infrastructure as any other types of tourism, contrary to a persistent belief in the opposite (discussed in Paper III). When analyzing the natural aspect of the expanded servicescape framework, Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011) describe the whole spectrum of representations, i.e. nature as a small component, as a whole setting as well as the primary object of service consumption. They also note that '*[m]arketing researchers are only beginning to empirically explore a servicescape's natural stimuli in physical settings and its influence on outcomes ...*' (ibid., 479). Thus, it became clear that the borders of servicescape approach should be broadened to accommodate the context of NBT (Arnauld et al., 1998; Hale, et al., 2001; Chui et al. 2010). Suggested modifications include, for example, Fredman et al. (2012), who apply a two-dimensional model, discussed earlier.

Apart from a rather limited number of examples, natural dimension and NBT are underresearched in the context of servicescape. This can probably be explained by the absence of nature in the classic definition of servicescape by Bitner (1992), which made it an initially unattractive concept for NBT researchers. It is interesting to note that in her later work Bitner (1999) also acknowledges the importance of expanding the initial concept and adapting it to various contexts, as e.g., 'wilderness servicescape' by Arnauld et al. (1998), but this did not gain much further development. What is particularly telling, is that in their recent article, Wakefield and Blodgett (2016), reviewing leisure servicescape literature, do mention 'wilderness feeling' as one servicescape dimension, but refer to one single analysis, which is the well-discussed article by Arnauld et al. (1998). Further, a meta-analysis on servicescape literature by Mari and Pogessi (2013), including 188 articles across 49 main journals in the field of service and marketing, does not find any notable contribution from the NBT context. This indicates that not much has been done to understand natural tourism settings from this perspective. Some attention towards the recreational setting could also be found in the literature on outdoor recreation, especially in earlier decades (e.g., Driver et al., 1987; Manfredi, Driver & Brown, 1983; Manning, 1998; 2010; Virden & Knopf, 1989; Whisman, & Hollenhorst, 1998). However, it was rarely the primary research object, limited to the perspective of recreational area management, rather than provision of tourist services. All in all, apart from a

rather limited number of examples, it can be claimed that the NBT setting is a rather under-researched topic.

In order to empirically approach the NBT setting from the supply perspective (as done in Paper II), and based on the aforementioned interdisciplinary body of literature the following propositions could be made. First of all, due to the centrality of nature experience for the NBT setting, it is important to explicitly disentangle and emphasize the natural from other physical dimensions, with its endless multiplicity of attributes (dependent on the focus of the desired NBT experience). Depending on the specifics of NBT, the desired setting may require the absence of obtrusive infrastructure, in order to create a specific experience (e.g., 'pristine' or 'untouched' nature). Therefore, NBT tends to happen in areas, where the degree of human agency is relatively low and invisible (e.g., forests, mountains). Further, the importance of built environment, visible in the servicescape literature, has been rather neglected within the NBT literature, which traditionally stressed 'nature' as the NBT setting. This has to be emphasized, due to the growing importance of infrastructure and accessibility in NBT (Wall-Reinius & Bäck, 2011). Wilderness setting, undoubtedly, demands less 'substantive staging' comparing to other, more controlled environments (Arnould et al., 1998), but facilities and infrastructure are still necessary to provide support on site, affect tourists' experiences and facilitate their behavior in nature (Chui, et al., 2010; Ham, 1992; O'Neill, Riscinto-Kozub & van Hyfte, 2010; Pearce, 1989; Priskin, 2001).

Finally, referring to the environmental economics literature and the dependence of NBT on common pool resources and public goods, due to the limited level of control of NBT firms over their operational setting and the resources in it, both of the aforementioned dimensions are largely influenced by a broader socio-political context. It defines relations with other resource users, presence or absence of certain artifacts and regulates the access to desired natural areas (here it is emphasized that this dimension is beyond purely managerial techniques and design). The aforementioned 'wilderness' experience often requires cooperation with other stakeholders, since too many simultaneous users can easily deteriorate tourists' satisfaction, being incompatible with high levels of crowding (Kim et al., 2014; Lin & Pearce, 2011; Manning, Valliere, & Wang, 1999; Manning, 2003; Sæþórsdóttir, 2004, 2013), and artifacts of civilization, such as mines, wind power turbines, telecommunications or forest clear-cuts, often perceived to be 'polluting' the visual and auditory landscapes (Bostedt & Mattson, 1995; 2006; Frantal &

Kunc, 2011; Kim & Shelby, 2011; Park et al., 2008). The NBT setting can, therefore, be conceptualized as a complex environment where the NBT commercial encounter happens, bringing together tourism firms and tourists, natural resources, infrastructure and the general socio-political context.

2.4.2 Uncertainty in the nature-based tourism setting

In general, the conditions under which businesses have to operate and make decisions lack certainty, regardless of business specifics (Alvarez & Barney, 2005). This may include such factors as changes in the consumer behavior, unexpected events in the environment, lack of clear understanding of cause and effect links, lack of information and information-processing capacity (*ibid.*). The way uncertainty affects decision-making of firms and how firms navigate around such context is far from being fully understood (König, 2009). This 'less than certain' context has been understood under the terms of risk and uncertainty, which are used both interchangeably and independently.

Close research attention towards uncertainty and risk started to develop in the 1960s. The economic and social science literature treats uncertainty and risk as independent concepts, whereas the literature in strategic management and entrepreneurship does not differentiate between them (Alvarez, & Barney, 2005; Quintal, Lee, & Soutar, 2010). Risk requires a concrete event, the probability of which can be estimated. In case of uncertainty, however, the probabilities cannot be calculated because the event itself is unknown (Hofstede, 2001). In this thesis, the focus is on uncertainty, inherent in the process of commercializing the natural resources for tourism, and it is assumed that, strictly speaking, the cases of risk according to the aforementioned definition are rarer comparing to those of uncertainty.

An emphasis on this unique attribute in comparison to man-made environments, i.e. its relative uncontrollability, emerges from the literature, aiming to conceptualize nature as a servicescape in the context of tourism. Servicescape literature is primarily based on the assumption that a manager has the power to fully control various setting attributes in order to affect consumer behavior, which is not the case with NBT due to the nature of resources it relies on (as discussed in the previous sections). Further, Lundberg, Fredman and Wall-Reinius (2014:377) in their analysis of NBT entrepreneurs explicitly argue that NBT firms have limited control over their resources:

[*the NBT*] has high degree of dependence on landscape traits with public good characteristics. While basically all travel involves consumption of market goods and services (e.g., gas, food, lodging, etc.) associated with out-of-pocket expenditures, most nature-based tourism is heavily dependent on the consumption of non-market features such as sceneries, weather, wilderness, public access and facilities – all of which are more or less beyond the control of the firm.

Fredman, et al. (2012) suggest that the degree of control can be measured by the presence (or absence) of built facilities in the area. They demonstrate that nature-based tourists demand both high level of ‘wilderness’ and high level of facilities, a paradox also observed by other researchers (e.g., Haulekand, Grue, & Veisten 2010; Wall-Reinius, 2012; Wall-Reinius & Bäck, 2011). Lundmark and Stjernström (2009), for example, also stress that NBT is dependent on facilities and infrastructure investments as any other form of tourism. In other words, successful NBT is possible only where nature has already been turned into a functioning servicescape, i.e. a certain level of control is established, even if the main object of consumption is ‘wilderness’. In other words, NBT requires a certain level of control (even if a weaker one, comparing to other forms of tourism). As Lundmark and Stjernström (2009:393) put it:

The environment is more and more created as a place to consume ... This development has consequences for the way in which the landscape can be experienced, bought and sold. In order for tourism businesses to generate local employment and income, the consumer must come to the product. This raises issues of marketing, place making and other concepts connected to the commodification of places, landscapes, cultures and peoples.

There are, however, several reasons why establishing control is challenging in the case of NBT. First of all, tourism destinations themselves are often conceptualized as complex dynamic systems, which imply complex non-linear relationships among the system actors, and, consequently, high levels of uncertainty (Baggio 2007; 2008; Baggio & Cooper, 2011). Second, NBT is highly dependent on natural resources, the access to, quantity, quality and availability of which is characterized by a high degree of uncertainty, and which is expected to only exacerbate with time. This relates to socio-political framing of the resources as well as naturogenic and anthropogenic sources of change. As discussed in Section 2.1, natural resources often fall under the category of public or quasi-public goods, which means that their provision, utilization and management are highly complex, influenced by multiple

actors and factors, beyond the reach of individual firms. Reliance on natural resources with such properties creates a business environment, characterized by not only the uncontrollable natural elements but also the presence of multiple competing interests of other users which may reduce the quality of natural resources for tourism. Furthermore, uncertainty factor becomes more important in light of the current environmental challenges linked to unsustainable resource use, such as climate change, biodiversity decline or depletion of non-renewable energy sources (Anderson, 2010; Barbier, 2011; Becken, 2015; Gren & Huijbens, 2016; Gössling, & Hall, 2006; Helm, 2015; Markwell, 2015). All this creates an inherently uncertain operational context for the NBT firms, explored in Paper IV of this thesis.

2.5 Environmental sustainability concerns in nature-based tourism

Tourism, as any form of human activity, inevitably uses natural resources and is deeply embedded in natural processes and the contextual specifics where it operates. In order for tourist activities to happen, countless natural resources need to be mobilized and incorporated at every stage, directly or indirectly. Even though some authors suggest that tourism's relationships to natural resources can be roughly understood as positive, negative or neutral (Wall & Mathieson, 2007; Holden, 2009), making this rather simplistic differentiation is rarely easy in practice. Tourism, functioning within the current economic logic, is subject to its flaws as any other form of economic activity, including the tendency to exploit common pool resources. For example, given the centrality of mobility in tourism, one of the most urgent issues in tourism-related resource use is the overwhelming dependence of tourism on fossil fuel-powered transportation and, consequently, its contribution to the climate change through the emissions of greenhouse gases. In addition, the ever-increasing depletion of non-renewable fossil fuel resources makes tourism a rather vulnerable industry. The linkages between tourism and climate change have been gaining more scientific attention in the recent years, even if lagging behind, compared to other economic sectors (Becken, 2015; Gössling & Hall, 2006; Gössling et al., 2012). According to current estimations, tourism uses up to ten percent of global energy in oil equivalents, making it an 'energy-thirsty' sector (Becken, 2015:6). Becken (2015) gives a highly detailed analysis of tourism's profound dependence on oil and exposes unreadiness and even

unwillingness of tourism decision-makers to engage in any discussions on post peak-oil tourism. This creates a precarious situation when tourism contributes to climate change which in its turn threatens the existence of multiple important tourism resources, especially alpine and island destinations (Becken, 2015; Eigelaar, Amelung, & Peeters, 2016). This tendency to destroy the resources upon which tourism itself depends, is neither new nor unique and, one could argue, is, in fact, inherent in any business activity as long as it functions in the context of an unmitigated capitalist system, especially if it relies upon resources with open access characteristics, as has been discussed previously. This problem has been widely known as 'the second contradiction of capitalism' (e.g., Kovel, 2007; O'Connor, 2009) and additionally demonstrates that tourism is deeply entangled in the larger economic processes.

There is no doubt that tourism has become one of the major avenues through which humans actively transform nature, contributing to what some have called the Anthropocene, or a geological time in the history of the Earth, when humanity became a geo-force on a planetary scale (Gren & Huijbens, 2016). As a result, the current state of the global nature is characterized by high degrees of uncertainty, facing such human-induced threats as climate change or mass species extinction, among many others, at an unprecedented scale. The true scale as well as the effects of these transformations on human and non-human life forms, however, is very poorly understood. Deeply entangled in natural processes and embedded in the economic system we have today, tourism is not immune to the main systemic flaws resulting in unsustainable resource utilization, including the very resources it depends on. There are multiple indications, suggesting that the continuation of 'tourism as usual' growth-oriented model in light of the current environmental trends is risky and undesirable in the long run (Becken, 2015; Gren & Huijbens, 2016).

As of today, tourism becomes an important tool of nature commercialization, through which nature experiences, or rather, experience promises, becomes a tradable products on the global markets. This property of tourism, nevertheless, holds potential for symbiotic relationships with nature conservation at least on the local level. It would, therefore, be rather simplifying and misleading to portray tourism as purely an agent of destruction. While tourism's relationships with and impacts on various natural resources is a highly complex topic outside the scope of this thesis, one resource that is highly relevant and important to pay attention to in the context of tourism is biodiversity. Biodiversity degradation and extinction of

species has been one of the particularly appalling environmental problems of our times (Dowson, 2016; Kolbert, 2014; Kovel, 2007). Hall (2016) identifies the following main cases when tourism is considered to be positively influencing biodiversity conservation: a) tourism as an economic justification for conservation and establishment of protected areas; b) as a source of financial and political support for conservation; c) as an economic alternative to other, more destructive forms of development; d) as a tool for education about conservation and e) a way to involve the local communities in conservation. In addition, the cases where tourism has been suggested as a viable tool for conservation quite often involves charismatic species. The number of unequivocally positive examples, especially in the long-term perspective are however, rather limited, while also being hard to untangle from other, less positive impacts (Hall, 2016).

Although the need for sustainability integration and bridging the nature-culture divide has been arguably, largely met on the theoretical level, this has not yet been fully reflected when it comes to practice. Global environmental challenges are, in fact, as formidable as ever. Hart and Dowell (2011) stated that since the development of NRBV in 1995 all the challenges have only multiplied, while Helm (2015:5), blatantly states:

In the twentieth century, despite the occasional hard-won successes, the situation has gone overwhelmingly downhill. In the meantime, the damage to our natural environment has been proceeding apace. If anything it has been accelerating. We continue to pollute our atmosphere and our oceans, and to denude the planet of its global biodiversity.

From the economic perspective, all current major environmental problems in one way or another have their roots in three main interrelated challenges: market failure, tragedy of the commons and underprovision of public goods (Scorse, 2010). These will be briefly addressed due to their particular importance for tourism and, especially, nature-based tourism. Market failure refers to a situation where the market is not able to account for the true cost of a product. Multiple natural resources which are vital for the production process are not included in the product price, classical examples being air, water or insect pollination. The costs, however, are real and are borne by the society in general, rather than individual producers. These costs have become known as externalities. As a result of the unaccounted resource use, the products are supplied at a significantly lower price than if the environmental costs would have been included (Scorse, 2010). This is very vividly reflected,

for example, in the current air travel prices. Economists call this situation a form of a passive subsidy, implying that low prices are subsidized by the people who involuntarily take the burden of these costs, e.g., in the form of dealing with negative healthcare impacts, degraded environment or climate change effects. Market failures are also related to the lack of information and the whole context of uncertainty surrounding the environmental issues. The actors, therefore, cannot rely on the market to make informed decisions about the consequences of their choices and reflect it in the price (Scorse, 2010). Finally, market failures are commonly associated with incomplete, unclear or absent property rights, which may have many forms.

Property rights over natural resources can be understood along the axes of excludability and divisibility (Harris & Roach, 2013; Tietenberg & Lewis, 2016). Excludability refers to whether some users of a resource can prevent the access of others to it. Divisibility (rivalry) describes whether the usage of a resource by one user reduces the availability or quality of this resource to others. Tourism, and NBT in particular, usually depend on open access and/or common pool resources, which also often have the properties of public goods. Open access or *res nullius* resources are characterized by non-excludability and rivalry, where the resources may be exploited on a 'first-come, first-served' basis, since no users have legal power to limit the access of others. In this case usage of resources by one user diminishes the resource availability for the others. The most popular example of these circumstances has become known as 'the tragedy of the commons', described by Hardin (1968), and is currently vividly exemplified by the challenges associated with regulating industrial fisheries in the global ocean. It is important to notice that Hardin's commons are now understood as open access resources, whereas the 'real' commons, or common pool resources, may be governed by communal organizations and institutions, thus having some form of restriction (Scorse, 2010). In this regard, the work by Ostrom (e.g., 2000) is particularly noteworthy, who developed a very comprehensive 'socio-economic systems' framework, which contains much of what is currently known about common pool resources, collective self-governance and necessary factors for sustainable common pool resource use.

In the case of NBT, much of the vital resources, both natural and man-made, have the properties of public goods. Public goods are characterized by non-excludability and indivisibility, meaning that the resources are available for all and the usage of the resources by one person does not reduce their availability for others (Harris & Roach, 2013; Tietenberg & Lewis, 2016; Field

& Field, 2017). In fact, if a public good is provided for one it is automatically provided for all. Typical examples would be clean air, a beautiful landscape, silence, biodiversity, infrastructure to access nature areas. Most of the resources, however, have certain elements of rivalry and excludability under different circumstances and can be considered quasi-public goods. In the case of NBT, the indivisibility property of public goods might be compromised in cases of e.g., crowding or accumulation of negative environmental impacts, when the usage of the resources by some individuals would eventually threaten the quality or access to these resources for the others, i.e. elements of rivalry appear. Furthermore, as a result of the inherent properties of public goods, individuals may benefit equally from them regardless of whether they pay or not, which gives incentives for 'free-riding' behavior and discourages private investments into conservation and provision of this type of resources (Harris & Roach, 2013; Tietenberg & Lewis, 2016; Field & Field, 2017).

It has long since been argued that public goods would unlikely be provided by the market if left purely to its own mechanisms (e.g., Olson, 1965). One common solution to this problem has been to let the state take care of the public goods and finance them through taxation, which is e.g., the case with many specially protected nature areas and NBT infrastructure today (Anderson, 2010). This approach, however, it not always efficient since the value of multiple public goods is not explicitly articulated or even unknown, which leads to the lack of public support in decision making. Environmental economics sub-discipline, for example, has been focusing since the 1960s on finding ways to account for market failures and integrating the 'true' value of public goods into the price of the products, dependent upon them. Throughout the second half of the last century, landmark work in this field, by e.g., Krutilla (1967) and Constanza et al. (1997) have solidified economic valuation approaches to nature resource management. From this perspective, the solution to the deterioration of public goods would be in the proper economic valuation of the so-called positive externalities, which became known as ecosystem services, thus incorporating them into economic decision-making (Gómez-Baggethun et al., 2010). Generally speaking, the term ecosystem services usually means nature's contribution to different goods (e.g., raw materials), services (e.g., opportunities for recreation and tourism, water purification, pollination) and cultural benefits (religious beliefs, heritage values) (Barbier, 2011; Grunewald & Bastian, 2015; Milcu et al., 2013; Plieninger et al., 2013).

Starting from the 1990s, with the development of research on valuation and monetization of various natural properties, there has been a growth of interest towards various market-based solutions to stimulate sustainability. Although many market-based solutions exist within this line of thought, one example, examined in details in Paper V, is the performance of eco-labeling and eco-certification due to the particular relevance of this approach to promoting sustainable nature resource use on a commercial scale. Propelled by the growing demand for integration of sustainability principles into all forms of production, eco-certification was welcomed as a promising market-based tool. Since the demand for sustainable products was assumed to be growing, eco-certification was developed as a mechanism through which providers could voluntarily integrate the cost of environmental externalities into the price of their product, communicate it to the consumers and gain a competitive edge on the market (Jamal, Borges, & Stronza, 2006; Spencely & Bien, 2013). This is an exemplary environmental economics solution within the neoclassical economics paradigm, since ecology and economy are 'married' through internalizing (some) externalities and creating 'green markets', where the responsible consumers would pay premium prices for more sustainable options. The eco-labeling and certification approach has also received recognition in tourism, especially in the context of Northern Europe (Björk, 1998; 2004; Gössling, 2006; Haaland & Aas, 2010), which is well-known for being in the frontline of sustainability (e.g., SDG, 2016). However, it remains highly debatable whether market-based solutions such as eco-labeling are reliable sustainability tools in tourism and in general.

Overall, from all the aforementioned, several key aspects should be emphasized in relation to NBT. First of all, although it is obvious that as any other economic activity tourism relies on natural resources for an 'energy input', NBT firms have high reliance on multiple natural resources with public good or quasi-public good properties of non-excludability and indivisibility, or, speaking in the terms of RBT, hardly correspond to the criteria of heterogeneity and immobility. This means that the natural resources used have to be commercialized in the conditions of incomplete commodification. Furthermore, in the current economic system public goods are known to be quite vulnerable, due to the economic tradition of treating them as externalities, i.e. making them prone to exploitation and degradation. This creates a context of high uncertainty, as discussed above (and Paper IV).

3. The context of Sweden

From the mountains of the mighty north, to the white sandy beaches of the temperate south, we have space for everyone
(www.visitsweden.com).

This chapter gives an overview of the Swedish contextual specifics, which is important to keep in mind before generalizing the research results to other cases. Sweden is a country in Northern Europe, located on the Scandinavian peninsula, with a territory of 450,295km², and the population reaching 10 million in 2017. It is the largest in Northern Europe by its territory and population. There are around 100 thousand lakes, about 70% of the territory is covered by forest, the landscapes vary from fertile agricultural lands, deciduous forests and beaches in the south to subarctic nature in the north. The urban areas comprise only 1.3% of the total territory, where, however, 85% of the population is concentrated (Statistics Sweden, 2014a). Sweden is known as one of the global leaders when it comes to living standards, human rights, clean environment and sustainability performance (SDG, 2016; UNDP, 2016). Often referred to as 'Europe's last wilderness' or 'Europe's Alaska', Sweden has some of the best conditions for NBT development in the world.

3.1 Nature-based tourism specifics: *Friluftsliv*, *Allemansrätt* and beyond

Sweden has a number of interesting contextual specifics that require attention when talking about NBT. First, it is necessary to explain the local tradition of outdoor recreation. The local version of outdoor recreation, in its Scandinavian understanding of *friluftsliv* (open-air life), is usually characterized by simplicity, focusing on being outside in the natural landscape, with the intention of general well-being and nature experience, without the need for competition (Aasetre, & Gundersen, 2012; Fredman, et al., 2014). *Friluftsliv* in Scandinavia has been described as more than simply outdoor recreation, but rather a whole philosophy of being in nature and connecting with it. Gelter (2000: 78) states, that it is '*a philosophical lifestyle based on experiences of the freedom in nature and the spiritual connectedness with the*

landscape. The reward of this connectedness with the landscape is this strong sensation of a new level of consciousness and a spiritual wholeness'.

The popularity of outdoor recreation in Sweden is related to various historical reasons. Urbanization occurred relatively recently in the Scandinavian countries, compared to other areas of Europe, and the traditions of hunting, fishing, using forest products and directly depending on nature for survival have stayed quite strong. *Friluftsliv* has been related to the Romanticism movement starting from the late 18th century, the development of a national identity and the self-image of Swedes as nature-loving people (Gelter, 2008; Sandell & Sörlin, 2008). Social transformations of the 19th -20th centuries placed outdoor recreation in a new perspective, related to a growing public attention to the issues of labour regulation, health and productivity of workers, and division of work and leisure. This time was marked by the creation and strengthening of the predominantly bourgeois myth and national ideology of the love of nature and simple life, radically departing from the cultural narratives of the farming societies (Hörnsten, 2000). Many of the major Swedish NGOs related to outdoor recreation were established during this time, e.g., the Swedish Tourist Association (1885) and the Association for Promotion of Skiing (1892). These organizations played an important role in socializing younger generations into a healthy lifestyle in the outdoors, often supported by national authorities. This is also the time when the first infrastructure for outdoor recreation started to appear, e.g., birdwatching towers, marked trails, mountain huts and guide books, with the Swedish Tourist Association as a major service provider under the slogan 'Know your country' (Sandell & Sörlin, 2008; Wall-Reinius, 2009). The development of outdoor recreation as something 'good' for everyone continued throughout much of the 20th century (Sandell & Sörlin, 2008). In 1938 the Swedish parliament passed a law which promulgated at least 12 days of vacation, while national politics increasingly focused on leisure and public health, nature protection, and the accessibility of the landscape for recreation. Hence, participation in outdoor recreation became one of the key issues in the emerging welfare state and was significantly supported by the authorities (ibid.).

Following the end of the WWII, Sweden experienced a strong economic growth, and leisure patterns started to change, moving into a more commercialized context. The number of recreation vehicles or campervans, for example, increased from around 20 000 in 1965 to more than 325 000 forty years later (Sandell & Sörlin, 2008). This development was boosted by technical development, such as the introduction of new materials into the

outdoor recreation equipment (e.g., plastic, fiberglass, synthetic textiles), which pushed the limits of existing activities (e.g., skiing, running, climbing) and popularized new ones (e.g., snowmobiling, water scooters, kiting). A longitudinal study between 1977 and 1997 showed that while outdoor recreation remained popular in Sweden, the modes of recreation moved away from consumptive (mushroom and berry picking) to predominantly non-consumptive (walking, hiking) (Hörnsten, 2000). Changes in the demographic composition and lifestyle, increased mobility, urbanization, economic growth and technical development have all contributed to the transformation of what used to be simple low-budget outdoor leisure into commercialized tourism and outdoor industries. There have been concerns that increasing commercialization erodes the 'true' spirit of *friluftsliv*, Gelter (2000: 80), for example, states:

Today, a strong commercialization creates a never-ending flow of new consumption-lifestyles for outdoor recreation. Activities and equipment now overshadow the original goal of *friluftsliv* to be close to nature. For many people nature is becoming an arena to test oneself and the equipment. This commercialization excludes many from the *friluftsliv* today because of high prices of gear, the long journeys to the 'right places', and expertise needed for many activities is too high.

Similarly, Varley and Semple (2015:81) point out:

There is a forceful commercialization current in outdoor activities, such that new equipment and activity sub-cultures are reified, fetishized and promoted. This may suggest the practice of *friluftsliv* as exclusive, expensive and hard to access, yet the basic philosophy is about simple, basic outdoor life, living comfortably in and with nature.

Judgments on the purity of *friluftsliv* aside, it can be concluded that outdoor recreation definitely remains an important leisure activity in Sweden. During the last decade, surveys revealed the most popular outdoor recreation activities in Sweden are walking and hiking, more than 90% of the Swedish population reported taking a forest hike at least once a year (Fredman et al., 2012a; Hörnsten, 2000). Other popular activities include fishing (40%), skiing (23%), mountain hiking (16%), snowmobiling (11%) or hunting (9%) (*ibid.*). In their review of the economic value of the Swedish outdoor recreation sector, Fredman et al. (2012a) find that the market for outdoor recreation equipment has almost doubled from 1.3 billion SEK in 2001 to 2.3 billion SEK 2006. A survey of economic values in outdoor recreation in Sweden shows that total expenditure in 2009 was close to SEK 100 billion, whereof 26% represents transport, 22% clothing and equipment, 21% food and restaurants, 20%

lodging and 7% come from the purchase of ski passes, guiding or entrance fees (Fredman et al., 2010). Interestingly, 55% of the expenditure is done outside the home region (up to 100 km away from the respondents' permanent residence), which by definition already implies expenditure related to tourism. Hence, these numbers not only illustrate the commercial significance of outdoor recreation, but also show that a large share of the economic impact is channelled through NBT. In fact, if we look at the estimations of tourism consumption in Sweden overall, we can see that 60% of the total consumption is done by the Swedish citizens, as opposed to 40% of foreign tourists (Tillväxtverket, 2017).

Today, both domestic and international recreation patterns reflect and are affected by certain global trends and challenges of our times, among which are changes in leisure and employment (Fredman & Heberlein, 2003; Glover & Prideaux, 2008; Hall, 2005; Odden, 2008; Vorkinn, 2011; Wall-Reinius & Bäck, 2011), changes in demographic composition (Fredman et al., 2012; Wall-Reinius & Bäck, 2011), or advance of the 'experience economy' and change in consumption patterns (Mossberg, 2007; O'Dell & Billing, 2005; Pine & Gilmore, 1999; Prebensen, et al., 2014). The changing leisure patterns are reflected in the proliferation of the new ways nature is commercialized for recreation as well as spawned businesses which supply outdoor recreation activities commercially. Increased professionalization of the NBT and the outdoor recreation industry has called for tourism policies with less emphasis on social recreation issues, and looking more at organizational challenges of destination development, marketing and business sustainability. Overall, the long tradition and popularity of outdoor recreation creates a strong basis for development of NBT, which gives Sweden a unique advantage over many other countries, where the local demand for outdoor recreation is low.

Sweden offers another uniquely favourable condition for outdoor recreation, due to the Right of Public Access (*Allemansrätt* or every man's right, which also exists in some other countries, primarily, Nordic). Formulated in the 1970s and included in the Swedish Constitution in 1994, the Right of Public Access promulgates that recreationists have unlimited access to nature and are not confined to designated natural areas or charged any entrance fees (Sandell & Fredman, 2010). This makes the case of Sweden particularly interesting, since the commodification of nature occurs in a relatively 'open access' context. The access to nature areas is one of the key prerequisites for outdoor recreation and NBT (Manning, 1999; Fredman et al., 2012; Sandell & Fredman, 2010). In order for NBT destinations to function, they have to ensure access to natural resources such as mountains, lakes, rivers, forests and

beaches, which are 'consumed' by tourists in the form of various tourist experiences. Both access to and attractiveness of such resources are often supported by stakeholders outside the core tourism sector and beyond the control of the NBT service providers, making the commercialization process rather challenging. According to Sandell and Fredman (2011), the access to nature in the aforementioned context can be provided in three ways: (i) access to areas of personal ownership, which can be used relatively freely; (ii) access to publicly-owned areas, such as specially protected nature areas, and (iii) access to private and/or publicly-owned areas that can be utilized for public activities (even though not primarily designated for this), as long as appropriate behavior rules are respected. The latter is the case with the Right of Public Access.

The history of the Right of Public Access is more linked to social rather than commercial aspects of outdoor recreation, and has also been seen as an obstacle to business opportunities in tourism (Sandell & Sörlin, 2008). This is related to the risk of overexploitation of a 'free' utility, and promotion of a perception that recreation in the natural landscape is of no economic value (Hultkrantz, 1995). Therefore, in parallel to the contemporary developments of NBT as a commercial activity, it is essential to better understand the public access as a basis for NBT. This gains additional importance for this thesis, given that the majority of international research is embedded in regions, dominated by the second principle of access discussed above and, therefore, not always applicable to the context of Sweden. The study by Sandell and Fredman (2010) shows that among the general public the Right of Public Access has a strong support, and among the NBT entrepreneurs it is considered a success factor, to a much greater extent than an obstacle. Important challenges, nevertheless, remain related to making private profits under the public access regime, and balancing public opportunities for outdoor recreation participation with the opportunities for local economic development.

3.2 Current state and trends in nature-based tourism

It is known that NBT in Sweden as a more or less regular and noteworthy business activity has existed at least since the mid-19th century, when British gentlemen travelled to Sweden and Norway with the aim of hunting and fishing leisure pastime, known as the Scandinavian Sporting Tour (Sillanpää,

2007). Commercialization of hunting and fishing resulted in the emergence of professional tour agents and local entrepreneurs. NBT packages started to appear, combining hunting and fishing with the opportunities to experience local exotics, e.g. encounter the Sami people (ibid.). Later on, hunters and fishermen were followed by other tourists, e.g. hikers, seekers of 'good air' or naturalists. It was not until recently, however, that tourism became a notable contributor to the Swedish economy. Sweden has been dominated by extractive industries, such as forestry, agriculture, fisheries and mining throughout much of the 20th century, and experienced a shift to service economy in the recent decades (Figure 2.). In 1960, eight percent of the gross national product came from production in forestry, agriculture and fisheries, 46 % - from industry and merchandise, and 36 % - from private services. Fifty years later these numbers changed to 2 %, 29 %, and 52 % respectively (Statistics Sweden, 2014). What we can observe, similar to many other post-industrial countries, is a shift in the economy from extraction and manufacturing to service production.

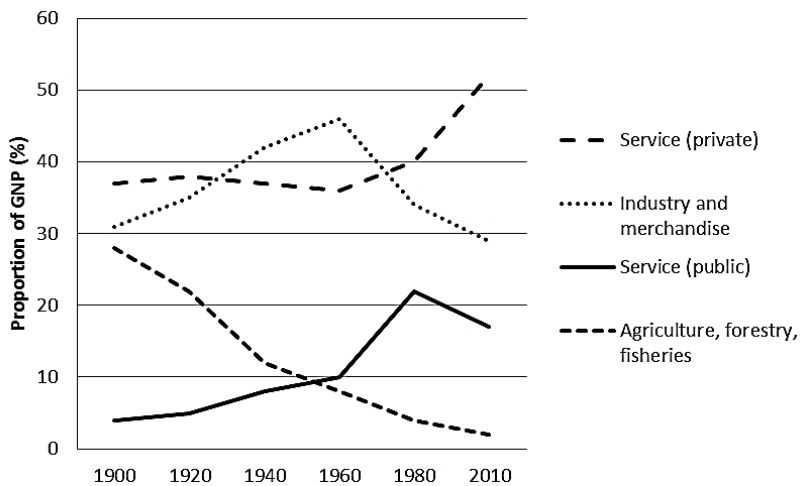


Figure 2. Recent growth of the service sector (Source: Statistics Sweden, 2014)

One of the most commonly discussed avenues to stimulate regional development and diversify local economies in Sweden, as elsewhere in the Nordic region, has been tourism. Tourism emerged as an alternative source

of income in areas where the traditional industries have declined. With the shift towards 'post-productivism' in the 1990s, rural areas become multifunctional landscapes, called to serve multiple interests apart from agriculture, including tourism (Lundmark & Sandström, 2013). This has especially been visible in the peripheral rural areas, which are associated with vastness of natural resources and wilderness experiences, and thus, suitable for NBT.

Tourism in Sweden continues to grow in line with the global trends (Tillväxtverket, 2017). In 2013 the total tourism consumption was SEK 284 billion (a 90 % increase since year 2000), and 173 000 citizens were employed in the sector, accounting for approximately 3 % of the GNP (Tillväxtverket, 2014). Even through the share of tourism in Swedish GDP is not that high, its growth rates are faster than other industries (Tillväxtverket, 2017). A recently published national strategy by the Swedish tourism industry envisions doubling of the sector from year 2010 to 2020, with most of the growth coming from an increased international visitation (www.strategi2020.se). Specific attention should be paid to the non-European tourists, whose numbers continue to grow especially fast (e.g. visits from China have increased by 25% in 2016 (Tillväxtverket, 2017).

The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (Tillväxtverket), which has systematically collected information on tourist visitations in Sweden since 1989, provides valuable but rather general information regarding NBT. For example, among the foreign multi-day visitors to Sweden in 2011, 20% stated *walking in the forest and mountains*, and 15% stated *enjoying sun and sea* among the activities they engaged in during their stay (Tillväxtverket, 2012). In addition, the most popular attractions of the total tourist visits (during the decade between 1998 and 2008), include activities (17%), parks (12%), and nature (7%), among other attractions, mostly related to culture (Tillväxtverket, 2012). These numbers have remained relatively stable in the recent years (Tillväxtverket, 2015; 2017). Some statistical estimations exist regarding specific NBT activities, such as fishing or hiking. It is known, for example, that around 800 000 tourists arrive annually with the purpose of fishing, originating primarily from Germany, followed by Denmark and Norway (Tillväxtverket, 2015). When looking at the foreign hikers in the Swedish mountains of Jämtland province in 2013, for example, we see that Germany again is in the lead by far, followed by Norway, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Denmark and some other European countries (Wall-Reinius, et al., 2015).

An overview of Swedish statistics on tourism suggests the following trends, providing a background for understanding NBT (Tillväxtverket, 2014; 2015; 2017). Tourism in Sweden is growing and the tourist product is of high quality, resulting in very high levels of overall tourist satisfaction; Sweden's tourism product is diverse, catering to two groups of tourists, almost equal in size: a) day-trippers from neighboring countries, interested in large urban centers, b) overnight stayers with a vast range of interests; the main markets are the Nordics plus Germany, Russia, Poland and UK, but other markets are growing fast; preference towards shorter but more frequent holidays is a general tourism trend observed in Sweden and globally (Tillväxtverket, 2014; 2015; 2017; Wall-Reinius & Bäck, 2011). A comprehensive statistics on NBT, however, is lacking.

Absence of a well-established definition of NBT, discussed in the precious sections, is resulting in its weak representation in the statistical data on both national and regional levels (Fredman et al, 2012a). The existing data on tourism in the country provides some overview of the popularity of nature as a tourist attraction but further details remain unclear, e.g., what share of these tourists can be attributed to the NBT, or to what extent the Swedish NBT firms are involved in these visits. In addition, the information on the number of visitors in the nature areas is based on self-reports of the regional tourist authorities, who, in many cases, provide their best estimations rather than systematically collect data (Fredman, Gössling, & Hultman, 2006). In addition, despite the growing popularity of NBT, academic research in this area has primarily focused on the demand side of the industry (Fredman & Tyrväinen, 2010; Lundberg & Fredman, 2011). Within the existing research related to the supply, the main attention has been paid to the tourists and the activities they engage in rather than businesses (e.g., Lundmark & Müller, 2010), usually based on case studies (e.g., Gössling & Hultman, 2006; Mehmetoglu, 2007) or convenience sampling (e.g., Lundberg & Fredman, 2012).

There have been several studies, aiming to provide a comprehensive analysis of NBT supply characteristics in Sweden. According to Ahlström (as cited in Fredman, Gössling, & Hultman, 2006), while in the beginning of the 1990s there were around 150 tourist firms engaged in various forms of NBT, in the late 1990s this number already reached 500. In 2003, an inventory by Rural Economy and Agricultural Society of Västerbotten country identified 260 companies, offering hunting tourism services, of which more than half were located in the north of the country (Sillenpää, 2007). Lundmark and Müller (2010), in their analysis of the supply of outdoor recreation activities in

Sweden based on an internet survey of the websites of Swedish regional tourism organizations, detected 4862 registered tourist products. This development can be attributed to various processes, among which is the global shift towards 'experience economy' in general, as well as growing commercialization of NBT in Sweden in particular (Lundmark & Müller, 2010). Among the identified patterns there is a predominance of land-based nature experiences (43%), followed by water-based activities (34%), hunting and fishing (21%) as well as Sami-related tourism (2%) (ibid.:386). In addition, the proximity to a protected natural area was not a decisive factor for the concentration of the NBT firms. The authors conclude that although NBT is available throughout the whole country, there is a higher concentration of NBT opportunities offered in the northern areas. In their analysis of 131 interviews with NBT firm managers, Fredman et al. (2012) identified that the majority of firms offer 'enginized' activities (dogsledding, snowmobiling and horse riding, n=57), followed by 'self-propelled' activities (hiking, guiding, climbing and skiing, n= 48), extractive activities (hunting and fishing n= 45) and water-based activities (canoeing kayaking, sailing and rafting n=38). However, it can be claimed that no comprehensive overview of NBT tourism supply in Sweden exists up to this day.

Apart from the geographical distribution and activities provided, there are other characteristics which might set NBT apart from other businesses. International research points out that tourism in general, and NBT and rural tourism in particular, is dominated by lifestyle entrepreneurship (as discussed in Section 2.3.1). This trend is also visible in Sweden. Interviews with the Swedish NBT firms conducted by Lundberg and Fredman (2011) demonstrate that non-monetary gain, lifestyle and guest satisfaction are the main categories by which the entrepreneurs define the success of their business. This supports the general belief that NBT business cannot be defined purely by growth and profit-making priorities, something that has been pointed out in the previous tourism research (Anderson Cederholm & Hultman, 2010; Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Lundberg & Fredman, 2012; Lundberg, Fredman, & Wall-Reinius, 2014; Sampaio et al., 2012; Thomas et al., 2011; Tzschentke et al., 2008).

It is suggested that there are noticeable trends in Sweden and beyond in increasing demand for higher levels of comfort even in a 'wild' natural setting, and growing interest towards 'niche' activities, requiring specific equipment (Wall-Reinius, 2009; Fredman et al., 2012b). Sandel (in Fredman, Gössling, & Hultman, 2006), for example, notices that there is an evident shift,

characterized by increasing importance of experiences, achievement, adventure and activity rather than social interaction; male-orientedness, professionalization of leisure time and globalization in general. Many studies of contemporary global leisure patterns indicate that NBT is increasingly becoming specialized, diversified, motorized, sportified, adventurized and even 'indoorized' (e.g., Fredman & Heberlein, 2003; Cordell, 2008; Odden, 2008; Bottenburg & Salome, 2010; Sandell, Arnegård, & Backman, 2011; Öhman, Öhman, & Sandell, 2016). Buckley (2000) argues that the commercialization of outdoor recreation and increasing urbanization are the two major factors for economic growth in the NBT sector.

Based on the aforementioned, several assumptions can be made about the state of NBT and its research in Sweden. The natural environment is often seen as providing an unrealized potential for tourism in the country, but there is limited knowledge of how and under what circumstances such potential can be reached. The natural environment as the basis for tourism involves many challenges related to business performance, visitor management, natural resource use and local communities (Newsome et al., 2002; Fredman & Tyrväinen, 2010). It becomes clear, that there is a need for comprehensive and systematic data collection on NBT, hindered by the elusive 'nature' of NBT, making it difficult to define and capture. There is evidence, that NBT in Sweden is changing, which is not necessarily congruent with the long-standing tradition of *friluftsliv*. It is suggested that NBT becomes more commercialized, the number of firms offering NBT services is growing and the NBT products become more diversified. There is also a trend towards popularity of nature-based adventure activities and wilderness experiences, however, often in combination with high service and comfort levels (Wall-Reinius, 2012; Fredman et al., 2012ba). In this light, there is a lack of statistical data and general understanding of the specifics of the NBT sector, following from the inadequate design of the industry classification systems in most countries, including Sweden, to capture NBT businesses.

4. Methods

This chapter provides a description of the research design and methodological approaches followed in this thesis. In this thesis both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods are used, but the emphasis, is on quantitative data, upon which Paper II, II, III and V are based. A presentation of the quantitative data gathering process was published earlier in Fredman and Margaryan (2014), in a format of a technical report.

4.1 Interdisciplinarity, pragmatic approach and mixed methods research design

Tourism is an inherently interdisciplinary area of research. The phenomenon of tourism nowadays comes in different shapes and forms, and so do the research methods and approaches to understand it. If tourism research was initially dominated by the economic framing, the later decades of the 20th century were already characterized by maturation of this field, enriched with multiple disciplinary perspectives. In a comprehensive overview by Jamal and Robertson (2009), for example, one can already find up to fifteen distinct approaches to study tourism, each of which reflects a certain prominent research discipline in social sciences (such as sociology, economics, anthropology, history, geography, political sciences). Furthermore, the tourism research field includes contributions from the research streams, which are already interdisciplinary to begin with, such as environmental studies, environmental economics or political ecology. As stated by Szostak (2015:129) *'[i]nterdisciplinary integrates the best elements of disciplinary insights in order to generate a more comprehensive (and often more nuanced) appreciation of the issue at hand'*, which is also aimed at in this dissertation.

The disciplinary diversity also reflected in the variety of paradigmatic stances and methodological approaches employed in tourism research. Jennings (2009), for example, illustrates that within the tourism studies literature the whole paradigmatic continuum is represented, i.e. ranging from (post)positivism, critical realism and pragmatism to critical theory, constructivism, postmodernism, and participatory paradigms. Although

tourism studies were not immune to heated philosophical debates about the advantages and disadvantages of different paradigms (especially realism (positivism) vs. relativism (constructivism)), there has recently been a growing acceptance of paradigmatic diversity (which is also tied to the discussion in section 2.1 on the 'nature' of nature). The need to overcome the counter-productive dualistic debates and policing of the paradigmatic and methodological borders in approaching inherently interdisciplinary study areas has been particularly strongly advocated by the proponents of the pragmatic approach, viewed as a golden middle and a constructive way out of scholastic traps (Jenings, 2009).

The pragmatic philosophical approach, having its roots in the works of American philosophers of the late 19th century (with e.g., Charles S. Peirce and William James as the 'founding fathers'), has gained a new wave of popularity in the second half of the 20th century. From the ontological perspective, if positivists emphasize objective reality independent of an observation and constructivists/interpretivists emphasize the role of participants' subjectivities, each producing their own 'truths', pragmatists reject both of these positions (Pansiri, 2005). Powell (2001:884) summarizes that *'[p]ragmatism... rejects positivism on grounds that no theory can satisfy its demands (objectivity, falsify-ability, the crucial experiment, etc.); and rejects anti-positivism, because virtually any theory would satisfy them'*. According to pragmatists, the way to overcome this stalemate and avoid the 'paradigm wars', is to focus on the third criterion, which is a theory's ability to facilitate a problem solution (Powell, 2001; Pansiri, 2005). Although there are many understandings of pragmatism, it is quite safe to claim that within social sciences research this worldview is understood as a concern with practical applications ('what works'), rather than with antecedent conditions (Creswell, 2014; Patton, 2015). As a result, epistemologically pragmatists do not reject neither quantitative nor qualitative modes of inquiry (which would be considered incommensurable among some purists within the two aforementioned paradigms), rather prioritizing the assessment of their usefulness in light of an existing problem and the need to compensate for the bias and weaknesses of each method. Thus, instead of being committed to one disciplinary methodological 'lens' a researcher has a 'phoropter', having an ability to switch between different lenses if it is required so by the needs of a project. It is, therefore, not surprising that the pragmatic research paradigm is generally acknowledged as the foundation of the mixed methods research design and its relevance to tourism research is gaining more recognition (Pansiri, 2005; 2006; Jennings, 2009).

Mixed methods design is a relatively new research approach (getting firm academic ground in the 1990s) and is based on a belief that each method has its advantages and disadvantages, thus a collection of both quantitative and qualitative data may help mitigating the flaws of each method (Creswell, 2014). As stated by Hesse-Bieber (2010:3) '*in other words, what we generally consider qualitative data—'words, pictures, and narrative'—can be combined with quantitative, numerical data from a larger-scale study on the same issue, allowing our research results to be generalized for future studies and examinations*'. In this thesis, mixed methods are used as the most appropriate since it enables to make generalizations and understand the nature-based tourism sector while also not losing touch with the real people making this sector happen on the ground, especially since the unit of analysis in the survey, technically speaking, was not individuals but rather firms.

It has to be emphasized that both interdisciplinarity and mixed method research design are not free from criticism. Commonly raised concerns regarding interdisciplinarity pertain to superficiality and inability of the practicing researchers to properly engage with one discipline. Mixed methods design has been suspected of inability to deliver any real integration or deterioration into a go-to term to cover up any sloppy and poorly conceived research (Szostak, 2015). Maturation of mixed method research design, however, resulted in the expanding academic literature base and growing legitimation of this approach, having its own criteria for validity and reliability, following which will ensure the academic quality of the research (e.g., Creswell, 2014; Hesse-Biber, 2010; Hesse-Biber & Johnson, 2015; Patton, 2015).

Keeping the aforementioned in mind, the methodological framework of enquiry within this dissertation is designed as *embedded mixed methods* (Creswell, 2014). In this research design both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods are used, but the emphasis, in this case, is on quantitative. The qualitative data, therefore, are nested within a larger quantitative design (usually notated as *QUANT(qual)*). Qualitative data in this thesis were used on two occasions, in both cases to follow up on the findings from the quantitative data. Thus, Paper IV was designed to provide additional qualitative insights to the findings of Paper II on the topic that was hard to capture through quantitative data (i.e. uncertainty). Further, a similar logic is followed in Paper V, where qualitative data from the open-ended comment section in the survey are used to enrich the knowledge gained from the statistical results. In both instances the rationale behind gathering qualitative

data rests on the need for supplementing and following up on the quantitative results and going into the details of some specific issues. To be more specific, Paper II and IV together can be viewed, speaking in the words of Creswell (2014) as a *sequential explanatory mixed methods* design, while Paper V within itself contains elements of *convergent parallel mixed methods* design. Findings from all the five papers are eventually synthesized in the discussion section (see Table 2 for the general overview).

Table 2. Summary of methods and data sources

Data	Paper I	Paper II	Paper III	Paper IV	Paper V
Quantitative	x	x	x		x
Qualitative				x	x
Secondary data (qualitative/quantitative)			x		x

4.2 Quantitative data

A detailed description of the quantitative data gathering process was published earlier in Fredman and Margaryan (2014), the concise version of which is presented here. The quantitative data for this thesis were collected through an online survey administered to a sample of NBT firms, distributed all over Sweden. Two different data collection methods were tested to maximize the representativeness of the sample. The first method tested the usefulness of the data available from the Statistics Sweden's Business Register, based on the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes. The second method tested the possibility of collecting the sample in cooperation with the regional tourist bureaus (i.e. 'geographical distribution' approach). The latter approach was eventually selected for the data collection in this thesis. Both of these tested approaches, questionnaire development and survey administration are discussed below in further detail.

4.2.1 Testing Standard Industrial Classification sampling approach

Utilizing data from national business registries is a wide-spread sampling practice (Debbage & Ioannides, 2003; Rasmussen & Thimm, 2009). All legal

businesses in Sweden are registered with a governmental agency Statistics Sweden (*Statistiska Centralbyrån*). The information about businesses is included in the Statistics Sweden's Business Register, where they are classified into different categories with different codes. For example, a farm would typically get assigned a SIC-code of 01500 (*mixed farming*), and a hotel can be coded as 55101 (*hotel operations with a restaurant*). If a firm combines several types of businesses, it can receive two or more codes simultaneously. Due to its weak conceptualization, NBT, unsurprisingly, is not recognized as a separate business category and, therefore, should be searched under other codes.

In order to find out what are the most common codes related to NBT, three organizations involved in promoting NBT (farmers' union (*Lantbrukarnas Riksförbund*), Sweden's biggest forestry company (*Sveaskog*) and ecotourism association (*Ekoturismföreningen*), were contacted. The organizations agreed to share their databases of NBT firms, and it was possible to identify the most common SIC-codes under which they were registered. In total, 1072 firms were identified, which fit the definition of NBT. Further, out of these 1072, a subset of 107 was generated by selecting every tenth firm in the list. As a result, the most common SIC-codes associated with NBT firms were identified.

As it could be expected, the majority of the NBT firms had several different codes simultaneously. The most common codes (11 in total) were the following: *mixed farming* (01500), *forestry* (02101), *other outdoor- and recreation activities* (79900), *booking services* (93290), *animal husbandry* (01420), *travel arrangements* (79120), *milk production and breeding of dairy cattle* (01410), *forest management* (soil preparation, fertilizing, planting, forest clear-up), (02102) *growing of other non-perennial crops* (01199), *restaurants, cafés, kiosks* (56100), *renting and operating of own or leased accommodation* (68201). Of these, five most common codes for the NBT firms were selected for the telephone survey (Table 3). In addition, *other sport activities* (93199) was also added to the list of selected codes, since multiple firms, offering NBT-related activities, were detected under this SIC-code. These selected codes and the total number of NBT firms can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. SIC code distribution in existing databases

SIC code	Title	LRF	Ekoturism föreningen	Sveaskog	Total
01420	Animal husbandry	5	0	0	5
93290	Booking services	3	5	1	9
02101	Forestry	16	1	0	17
01500	Mixed farming	20	1	0	21
79900	Other outdoor- and recreation activities	1	9	3	13
93199	Other sport activities	1	1	1	3

Source: Fredman and Margaryan (2014).

In order to test the validity of the SIC-based approach, a telephone survey was conducted on the following sample. Out of 160 229 firms found in the Statistics Sweden's Business Register under the aforementioned six codes, a sample of 300 was randomly selected (50 per each SIC code). These 300 firms were contacted by phone and asked if the activities they provide fit into the definition of NBT. The definition of NBT chosen for this study was based on the one suggested by Fredman et al. (2009), i.e. activities occurring when visiting nature areas outside the person's ordinary neighborhood. The result of this survey (with a response rate of 48%) was rather surprising: only 21 (or 7% of the 300) indeed provided services fitting into the NBT definition (Table 4). The most common SIC-codes among the firms which did provide NBT services were *booking services* (79900), *other outdoor and recreation activities* (93290) and *other sport activities* (93199).

Table 4. Percentage of firms providing NBT tourism per SIC code

SIC code	Title	Total N of firms	Sample	Proportion of NBT firms
01420	Animal husbandry	8 386	50	2%
93290	Booking services	1 301	50	20%
02101	Forestry	94 626	50	0
01500	Mixed farming	49 152	50	2%
79900	Other outdoor and recreation activities	4362	50	12%
93199	Other sport activities	2402	50	6%
	Total	160 229	300	7%

Source: Fredman and Margaryan (2014).

Based on these results, it became clear that the SIC-based method has low potential in generating a valid nationwide NBT sample, and therefore, cannot be adopted for the purposes of this thesis. There are several possible explanations to the weakness of this method. Thus, since NBT firms are registered under multiple different codes without any obvious pattern, it makes it very challenging to collect a representative sample through a short list of codes (even if they are semantically close to NBT). This is aggravated by the fact that a firm is not obliged to re-register if it modifies its business operations. For example, if a farm decides to add tourism as a side business or switch to NBT completely, it can still maintain its SIC-code of e.g., *animal husbandry* (01420) *mixed farming* (01500). Furthermore, the contact details in the Statistics Sweden's Business Register is often outdated and incomplete. In addition, gathering information through this method was rather time-consuming. In conclusion, the SIC-based method was rejected.

4.2.2 Testing Geographic Distribution sampling approach

Another sampling method tested implied collecting a valid sample of NBT firms relying on the support from the regional tourist information centers (*turistbyrå*). As of 2012, Sweden had 308 regional tourist information centers (authorized by the Swedish association of tourism organizations *FörTur*), located all over the country. Since the information centers collect data about tourist businesses in their region, it was assumed that they can provide valid and reliable information on the NBT sub-sector as well.

For the testing purposes of this method, ten information centers were selected. The centers were contacted by phone, and asked to provide information about the NBT firms operating in their region (firm name, contact person, website, email and phone number). Follow up emails were sent out, which contained a more detailed description of the project and the operationalized definition of an NBT firm (an organization with commercial services targeted at people, who visit natural areas outside their usual neighborhood). Examples of the NBT activities were provided, including not only the traditional (e.g., hiking, camping, skiing, fishing) but also the more niche ones, such as windsurfing, diving or mountain biking. It was emphasized that transportation and accommodation services should be excluded, unless they are closely linked to the NBT experience (e.g., horse-back riding, canoeing, renting of summer cottages or camping areas). Activities, which are done outdoors but are heavily dependent on built infrastructure, such as swimming pools, golf

courses, enclosed tourist resorts, have not been included in the primary scope of the enquiry.

The emails to the tourist information centers were followed by three reminders. Six out of ten information centers agreed to cooperate and sent a list of NBT firms active in their respective regions. In order to ensure the validity of the database, the website of each firm was visited and the information double-checked. As a result, 87 NBT firms were identified from the six regions. This was considered a satisfactory result, comparing to the SIC-based approach. It was, therefore, decided to adopt the geographic distribution method for collecting a valid sample of NBT firms for the purposes of this thesis.

4.2.3 Sample collection

Testing the SIC-based and Geographic Distribution approaches suggested the latter to be more valid and reliable. The advantage of this method also lay in the fact that the tourist information centers were geographically spread all over Sweden, which enabled capturing a large and representative sample of the entire NBT sector. The successful pre-test, was followed by the main data collection. Thus, all the 308 tourist information centers were contacted by phone, followed by an email explaining the purpose of the study, i.e. the same tested procedure was replicated. The websites of tourist information centers (which varied in their quality) were also reviewed. Additionally, websites of 17 regional tourist organizations (*länsturismorganisation*) and three regional development foundations (*Skärgårdsstiftelsen*, *Västkoststiftelsen* and *Upplandsstiftelsen*) were also visited to check for relevant data. As a result, the database of 2046 NBT firms was collected from all over Sweden, and each county was sufficiently represented (Table 5).

Table 5. Number of NBT firms reported per county

County (län)	Number of NBT firms	County (län)	Number of NBT firms
Västra Götaland	290	Gävleborg	81
Jämtland	165	Västernorrland	79
Norrbotten	157	Kronoberg	61
Skåne	143	Västmanland	60
Värmland	138	Blekinge	59
Dalarna	121	Örebro	56
Västerbotten	121	Halland	42
Stockholm	115	Södermanland	40
Östergötland	100	Uppsala	29
Jönköping	87	Gotland	20
Kalmar	82		
TOTAL			2046

Source: Fredman and Margaryan (2014).

Since there was a significant variation in the quality of the information centers' websites, it was assumed that the quality of the information provided might also vary. In order to improve the validity of the database, the following quality control measures were undertaken. Firstly, the websites of each firm in the database were visited. Based on the information available on the website, a judgement was made regarding: (a) whether the firm is active; (b) whether the firm provides NBT services. Overall, there was a satisfactory match between the information in the database and the information on the websites. Of these, there were only 156 firms with non-functioning websites, which was considered a strong indicator that a firm went out of business. These 156 'red-flagged' firms were contacted by email, inquiring about their status and business profile. Out of these firms with non-functioning websites, 65 confirmed that they are still in the tourist business (but have changed or updated their website address); 34 firms responded negatively, stating that they went out of business; the remaining 57 were impossible to reach via email or telephone (Table 6). These non-responding firms were further contacted by phone during December 2012-January 2013. Thus, 65 of the functioning firms were kept in the database whereas the remaining 91 were removed, so the number of firms in the sample was reduced to 1955.

Table 6. Results of the telephone check on firms with non-functioning websites

Category	Number	Percent
In business	65	42%
Out of business	34	22%
Impossible to reach	57	36%
Total	156	100

Source: adapted from Fredman and Margaryan (2014).

Furthermore, it was assumed that there might be a number of firms which are not registered with their local tourist information center for various reasons. These could be large firms who rely on their own marketing networks, or new firms who have not yet gained sufficient local visibility. To account for this shortcoming, an Internet search via Google search engine was conducted. The keywords were based on the categorization of the main Swedish NBT activities previously identified by Fredman et al. (2012), i.e. hiking, climbing, skiing (so-called 'self-propelled' activities); dogsledding, snowmobiling, horse riding ('enginized' activities); hunting and fishing (extractive activities); canoeing, kayaking, sailing and rafting (water-based activities). Each of these activities in combination with 'Sweden' was used as a keyword (e.g., fishing + Sweden). Google search was implemented in the English language, based on the assumption that the majority of the firms (especially the large ones) are looking for foreign markets and are likely to have an English translation of their websites. As a result of this search, additional 105 NBT firms were identified and added to the final sample. The updated final sample of the NBT firms, therefore, resulted in 2060 firms (see Table 7 for summary of all the aforementioned procedures).

Table 7. Sample quality control

Category	Number
Firms in the initial sample	2046
Firms removed after internet and telephone check	- 91
Firms added after the internet keyword search	+ 105
Final sample	2060

Source: adapted from Fredman and Margaryan (2014).

4.2.4 Questionnaire development

The survey questionnaire was developed keeping two goals in mind. First and foremost, the questionnaire was primarily designed to obtain the data, serving the purposes of this thesis. However, given the first-of-its-kind nature of this survey in Sweden, some additional questions were included to strengthen the knowledge base about the NBT sector in general (the detailed results of this survey were later included in a comprehensive technical report (Fredman and Margaryan, 2014).

The questionnaire for the NBT survey was developed with respect to the primary research questions, outlined in this thesis, as well a number of supplementary questions, based on the knowledge gaps and research directions visible in the literature (e.g., pointed out by Fredman et al., 2008; Fredman et al., 2009; Lundmark & Müller, 2009; Fredman & Tyrväinen, 2010; Lundberg & Fredman, 2012; Wall-Reinius, 2012).

The survey questionnaire consisted of seven interrelated sections, covering various aspects of NBT, based on the research questions in this thesis and beyond. The survey started with a screening question, where the firms had a chance to familiarize themselves with the definition of NBT and decide whether they would fit into this definition or not.

Section 1 started with opening questions regarding the general profile of the firm, such as its location, size, years in operation, services provided or organizational characteristics. Section 2 covered the issues of land use and access to nature, such as the type ownership of the land where a firm operates, opinions about the impact of other land users, the role of the Right of Public Access, nature protection regimes, and the business importance of various types of landscapes and natural phenomena. Section 3 focused on the aspects of environmental sustainability and whether they are integrated in the business operations of a firm. Section 4 aimed at the economic characteristics, such as the annual sales and costs, number of full-time and part-time employees and seasonality. Section 5 contained questions on the foreign and domestic markets. Section 6 was comprised of questions about the formal and informal networks (stemming out of general knowledge gap and not included in the analysis within this thesis). Section 7 concluded the questions about the demographics and position and the previous experience of the respondent.

In addition, if relevant, the questions contained open comment spaces, where the respondents could add qualitative data. The questions, corresponding to the research objectives of this thesis and some of the most important literary

sources which helped identifying and formulating these questions are presented in Table 8. The final questionnaire contained 49 major questions in total (most of which contained several sub-questions) in the Swedish language (for the full original survey see Annex²).

² Annex is an automatic output from NETIGATE software, which, however, differs from the actual online formatting, presented to the respondents.

Table 8. List of survey themes and questions

THEME	QUESTION	MAIN REFERENCES
General Information	Does your firm provide NBT services?	Ateljevic & Doorne (2000)
	How important are the following business activities for the annual sales in your firm?	Andersson Cederholm & Hultman (2010)
	What NBT activities are the most important (economically) for your firm?	Domeji (2007)
	What year did your NBT operations start?	Fredman, Stenseke & Sandell (2014)*
	Think of all the NBT activities your firm provided during year 2012. How important were the following months for the sales?	Gössling & Hultman (2006)
	How are your NBT operations organized?	Lundberg & Fredman (2012)
	In what county is your firm registered?	Lundmark & Müller (2010)
	How often do you organize your NBT operations in the following counties?	Storstad & Bjørkhaug (2003)
	How important are following motivations for establishing your NBT firm?	Sampaio et al. (2012)
	What are the primary motivations for deciding on the location of your NBT business?	Thomas, Shaw & Page (2011)
Which of the following development phases characterizes your NBT operations best?	New measurements	
Natural resources and operational setting	How important is the access to the following land categories for your NBT operations?	Arnould, Price & Tierney (1998)
	How would you evaluate the effects of the following land use activities on your NBT operations?	Barney (1991)
	Does your firm have operations within or nearby (5 km range) a national park?	Bernes & Lundgren (2009)
	Please specify what national park(s) your firm has operations within or nearby.	Bitner (1992)
	What effect do the national park regulations (e.g., legal rules, management plan) have on your NBT operations?	Bostedt & Mattsson (2006)
	How often do you use national park brands in your marketing activities?	Frantál & Kunc (2011)
	How important are the following kinds of nature for your NBT operations?	Fredman, Gössling & Hultman (2006)
	How important are the following kinds of wildlife for your NBT operations?	Fredman, Stenseke & Sandell (2014)*
How important are the following opportunities in nature for your NBT operations?		

Natural resources and operational setting	<p>How important are the following types of infrastructure for your NBT operations? How important are the following open access opportunities for your NBT operations? How important are the following restricted access opportunities for your NBT operations? Please mark to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements: (Nature is a nice setting for providing tourist services to our customers and nature experience is the main service we provide to our customers) What is the role of the Right of Public Access for your NBT operations?</p>	<p>Fredman & Tyrväinen (2010) Fredman, Wall-Reinius, & Grundén (2012) Lundberg and Fredman (2012) Lundmark & Stjernström (2009) Lundmark & Müller (2010) Manning (2010) Sandell & Fredman (2010) Sandell & Sörlin (2008) Selby, Petäjistö & Huhtala (2011) Vaske, Needham & Cline Jr. (2007) Wall-Reinius (2012) New measurements</p>
Environmental sustainability	<p>Does your firm implement any of the following sustainability policies? In your opinion, what effect formalized sustainability policies may have on your NBT operations?</p>	<p>Björk (1998; 2004) Domeji (2007) Haaland & Aas (2010) Hart (1995) Liljenstolpe & Elofsson (2009) Storstad & Bjørkhaug (2003)</p>
	<p>Considering all your commercial activities, approximately how big were the total sales of your firm in 2012? Of all business operations of your firm, approximately what percentage of the annual sales comes from NBT?</p>	<p>Barney (1995) Barney & Arakan (2001) Lundberg & Fredman (2012)</p>

Economic and organizational characteristics	<p>How many people were employed during 2012 within the NBT operations of your firm?</p> <p>How many employees of your NBT operations fall in the following categories?</p> <p>How many man-years did your NBT operations produce in 2012?</p> <p>Please indicate approximate total costs related to NBT operations in your firm during 2012.</p> <p>Please try to allocate the total expenditures related to NBT operations during 2012 to the following categories.</p>	<p>Hodur, Bangsund & Leistriz (2004)</p> <p>Page & Ateljevic (2009)</p> <p>Thomas (2004)</p> <p>Thomas, Shaw & Page (2011)</p>
Market characteristics	<p>Considering the total sales of NBT operations in 2012, what was the proportion for the following market segments?</p> <p>What is the approximate proportion of your NBT customers by their place of origin?</p> <p>Please specify the most important foreign markets for your NBT operations based on sales.</p>	<p>Lundberg & Fredman (2012)</p> <p>Page & Ateljevic (2009)</p> <p>Thomas (2004)</p>
Background information of the respondent	<p>What position do you currently hold within this firm?</p> <p>Which of the following best describes your residential status in the 5 years before starting this firm?</p> <p>What was your employment status immediately prior to starting/getting employed by this firm?</p> <p>10 years prior to starting this firm, how many years of work experience did you have in the following sectors?</p> <p>Of your own working time, approximately what percent do you work in NBT?</p> <p>What is your education?</p> <p>Which year were you born?</p> <p>Where did you grow up?</p> <p>Are you male/female?</p>	<p>Lundberg & Fredman (2012)</p> <p>Hodur, Bangsund & Leistriz (2004)</p> <p>Page & Ateljevic (2009)</p> <p>Thomas (2004)</p>

* Parts of this book were earlier published as technical reports

4.2.5 Survey distribution, non-response bias and response rate

Based on the pre-test results, the dataset for the survey (N=2060) was gathered with the aid of Swedish regional tourism bureaus, followed up by quality checks via telephone and Internet. After a successful pilot survey (N=50), it was decided to distribute the questionnaire to the whole sample. The survey was distributed online to the NBT firms' email addresses via NETIGATE online survey software. The survey was administered in two rounds: spring (May-June) and autumn (November-December) of 2013. The strategy with the timing of the survey was to avoid the high tourist seasons, when the NBT firms are too busy to respond.

The first round of the survey was conducted during May-June 2013, followed by three reminders. After the second reminder, a non-response bias check was conducted on the non-responding firms by phone. It was inquired if the firms had received the survey, and whether they would be willing to complete it. In a case of a negative response, the main reasons for rejection were asked. In total, attempts were made to contact (566 non-responding firms were attempted to contact) by phone. Of these, 275 were unreachable; 177 responded positively and promised to fill out the survey; 56 were undecided; 32 were no longer involved in NBT business; 26 refused to participate. Among these 26, the most common reason for not participating was time constraints. Other less common reasons were disbelief in the usefulness of surveys; unwillingness to answer free of charge; or considering the survey questions irrelevant for their business. In total, 573 valid responses were collected after the first round. A number of firms had to be removed from the database, since 207 emails proved to be dysfunctional and 32 firms stated that they went out of NBT business. As a result, the final working sample was reduced to 1821 firms, on which the second round of survey was run.

The second round of survey was distributed in October-December 2013. Similar to the first round, it was followed by three reminders. After the second reminder, the non-respondents were contacted again for the non-response bias check and an additional reminder by phone. In total, 696 respondents were attempted to be contacted this time. The non-response bias check has generated the following results: 482 were unreachable; 94 promised to fill out the survey later; 120 refused to participate or went out of NBT business. The most common reasons for non-participation were: lack of time; distrust towards surveys; irrelevance of the survey due to size or type of activities involved. For the detailed results of the second non-response bias check see Table 9.

Table 9. Results of the second non-response bias check

Category	Number	Percent
No answer or disconnected number	482	69%
Agreed to respond later	94	14%
Non-NBT organizations	49	7%
NBT business liquidated or in liquidation process	21	3%
Do not have time	17	2.5%
Horse-riding schools	17	2.5%
Too small to respond	7	1%
Do not participate in surveys	9	1%
TOTAL	696	100%

Source: *Fredman and Margaryan (2014)*.

The results of the survey can be summarized as follows. After the first survey round, the initial sample of 2060 respondents had to be reduced to 1821, since 207 emails were non-functioning and 32 firms were there by error. From the working sample of 1821, 994 did not access the survey at all; 74 accessed but decided not to participate, while the rest 753 participated to various extent. Out of these 753 participants 105 did not move beyond the first screening question, stating that their business does not fit into the NBT definition and, hence, automatically ended the survey. After the final scrutiny of the database additional 47 invalid cases were removed. This resulted in 601 valid responses out of the working sample of 1821, which constitutes 33% response rate³. The distribution of the respondents is visible in Figure 3 (41 did not state the place of their registration).

³ If the 105 non-eligible firms are not considered to be part of the sample, the response rate would comprise 38%.

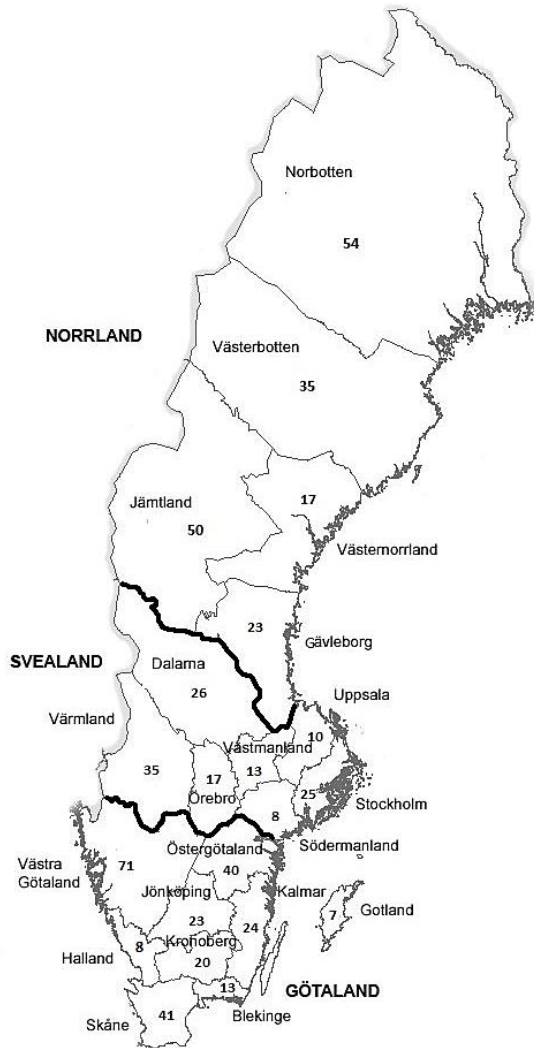


Figure 3. Distribution of responding NBT firms across Sweden

Different variables from the collected comprehensive statistical data were used for the purposes of Paper I, II, III and V. Data analysis includes standard statistical procedures (e.g., correlation, chi-square, multiple regression, analysis of variance, factor analysis, clustering techniques, as well as a decision tree classification model). The analytical procedures were implemented with the help of IBM SPSS and Rapid Miner data analysis

software packages. In addition, open comment spaces of certain questions proved to contain rich and highly insightful qualitative data, which were also integrated in the subsequent analyses.

4.2.6 Validity, reliability and data analysis

Although perfect validity and reliability are impossible to achieve, especially in social sciences, some measures can, nevertheless, be undertaken to improve the research quality as much as possible. In this thesis, the following validity- and reliability-maximizing steps have been taken in the quantitative research stage.

Generally speaking, validity in quantitative research is close to the concepts of 'truthfulness' or 'correctness' of a measurement (Hesse-Biber & Johnson, 2015; Newman, 2014). A typical validity question is: *Do we really measure what we want to measure?* While there are different ways validity could be understood, it can be thought of as consisting of the following facets: *face*, *content*, *criterion* and *construct* validity (Newman, 2014). According to Newman (ibid.), face validity is rather basic and relatively easy to achieve – it presupposes appealing to the scientific community to check if, 'on the face of it', scientists believe that there is a fit between a definition and its measurement. Content validity is concerned with a full and holistic representation of a definitions 'content', i.e. its all aspects, in the measurement. Criterion validity deals with verifying one measure by comparing it to another one within the same construct. Finally, construct validity is concerned with the level of convergence and divergence of indicators within constructs. Based on these criteria, the following steps have been undertaken to maximize validity of this thesis. Thus, face validity was ensured by submitting individual papers, based on quantitative data analysis (i.e. Papers I, II, III and V) to international journals with a blind peer-review process. In addition, parts of the survey results were presented at various conferences, seminars and academic events during the period of 2013-2017. The scrutiny of independent scientific community members, therefore, helped verifying validity of the used measurements. Content validity was supported through consulting best practice and state-of-art scientific literature on the topic (see Table 8) as well as comparing with the results of the similar study used in Norway (raw output published in Stensland, et al. (2014) (Paper V). Criterion validity was checked through closely inspecting and cross-checking measurements that are expected to generate related results, e.g. through factor

analysis (Papers I, II). Finally, construct validity was checked through statistical measures, such as discriminant analysis (Paper I, II).

Reliability of measurements in quantitative research, in its turn, is understood as consistency or the ability of the measure to yield the same results under the same conditions. The question associated with reliability is: *If we would do the same measurement again, would we get the same results?* Reliability is easier to achieve than validity, and in fact, reliability is a necessary but insufficient property for achieving validity (Newman, 2014). It is suggested, that reliability can be understood in terms of *stability* (reliability across time) and *representativeness* (reliability across the sample) (Newman, 2014). In this thesis, the following steps were taken to keep the measurement error at minimum with regard to reliability. First of all, to increase reliability, a pilot study was conducted on the smaller sample, so the measurements were tested before running the full study. Then, in order to check stability, the subsamples from the spring and autumn rounds of data collection were compared. Furthermore, in order to check representativeness, the split-half validation method was applied on random subsamples. The results of these procedures did not suggest any statistically significant violation of measurement reliability.

4.3 Qualitative data

Qualitative data in this dissertation were collected to serve the goals of Paper VI and Paper V. For Paper IV, qualitative research methods were the most relevant due to their ability to provide rich, in-depth knowledge. In both cases, the qualitative data follows up the quantitative, in accordance to the sequential explanatory research design, adopted in this thesis. A detailed description of the data collection and analysis process is presented below.

4.3.1 Qualitative data collection

Qualitative data were gathered through interviews and participant observations (for Paper VI) and through open ended questions in the main questionnaire (Paper V, which is discussed in Section 7.3.4). For Paper IV, the data were collected in July-August 2016 by means of interviews and participant observations with NBT firms, who focused on organizing wildlife

watching tours. Summer is the peak tourist season in Sweden and it is also the time of the year when the most popular wildlife species (such as moose, brown bear, various types of birds) are visible and active. The firms were chosen through purposive sampling.

The list of the NBT firms collected previously for the quantitative analysis was used as a point of departure. According to the quantitative results, there are at least at least 60 firms in Sweden for whom bird and wildlife watching is a very important tourist product (ranked 5 on the 5-point Likert scale), but this did not guarantee that all of these firms are explicitly specialized in wildlife watching (and a social desirability bias could potentially have had an some effect there), so some refining was needed. Further information was collected from two regional tourist information offices, who were asked to provide contact information of wildlife watching tourism companies in their area. Additionally, wildlife watching tourism firms were searched through the Google search engine, using relevant key words in English and Swedish (e.g., wildlife watching/specific animal + Sweden/specific region). The selection criteria included such parameters as localization in Sweden and an explicit focus on animals, i.e. offering specialized wildlife tours. The importance of animals for a given firm was assessed based on the information presented on the website (i.e. text, photos). As a result, 22 NBT firms with an explicit focus on wildlife were selected and contacted by e-mail. Of these, eight were eventually recruited for the study. The firms, who failed to be recruited, either did not respond at all or stated the lack of time as the main reason for rejection. The firms in the sample featured a whole range of the most typical Swedish wildlife and were located in various parts of the country from north to south (Table 10).

Table 10. Description of NBT firm foci and data collection methods

NBT firm	Primary wildlife focus	Secondary wildlife focus	Data collection method
1.	Moose	Roe deer, wild boar	Interview
2.	Beaver	---	Interview
3.	Gray seal, white-tailed eagle	Various aquatic birds	Interview
4.	Brown bear	Golden eagle	Interview
5.	Brown bear	Red fox, various birds	Interview, observation
6.	Moose	Roe deer, wild boar	Interview, observation
7.	Moose, brown bear	Roe deer, red deer, beaver	Interview, observation
8.	Gray wolf, moose, red deer, lynx, birds	Beaver, red fox, roe deer	Interview, observation

4.3.2 Interviews

In this thesis, two types of interviews were conducted: semi-structured and unstructured. Semi-structured interviews are considered a gold standard of qualitative research and can be described as follows: *'[t]his type of interview involves the implementation of a number of predetermined questions and special topics. These questions are typically asked of each interviewee in a systematic and consistent order, but the interviewers are allowed freedom to digress; that is, the interviewers are permitted (in fact, expected) to probe far beyond the answers to their prepared standardized questions'* (Lune & Berg, 2017: 69). Unstructured (or informal) interviews also maintain a pre-planned topic, but the flow of the conversation is allowed to develop freely and spontaneously. Unstructured interviews are especially suitable and useful when it is necessary to augment field observations (Lune & Berg, 2017). Both of these interview types enabled gathering in-depth data for Paper IV of this thesis.

All the interviews were conducted with the owners or partial owners of NBT businesses, some of whom also often work as guides. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with NBT firms 1-5 (Table 10). All semi-structured interviews, which lasted 35-40 minutes, were recorded on a voice recorder and transcribed. Since in the case of NBT firms 6-8, the company managers were also guides and it was impossible to separate these two roles, it was decided to use unstructured interviews to support participant observations,

and the questions from the interview guide (Table 11) were discussed ad hoc during the course of observations. The concern here was that formal interviews would significantly alter the guides' routine behavior in the field and, vice versa, the events in the field would influence the following interview responses. The unstructured interviews were not recorded since the questions were asked discretely and during the course of naturally-occurring conversations, but extensive field notes were taken during the field work. All the interviews were conducted and recorded respecting the principles of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality. Figure 4 and Figure 5 show glimpses of data collection process.

An interview guide was developed to ensure quality of data gathering procedure (Table 11). The interview questions corresponded to the aim and questions of this thesis (see Section 1.3), covering the following topics: general information (details about the firm and wildlife tours in particular); object of commodification and related uncertainty (importance of various animals, if/how animal behavior is influenced); operational setting (importance of infrastructure; relations with other resource users; perceived power to influence the operational setting).



Figure 4. Interview with an NBT entrepreneur



Figure 5. Inside a wildlife-watching hide

Table 11. Interview guide

Themes	Interview Questions	Keywords, cues
Introduction	Introduction of the research, ethical considerations, informed consent Could you please tell us about your company?	Informed consent, using voice recorder Size, age, history, general profile, types of tours
Natural dimension and uncertainty	What is the main tourist experience you want to create on your wildlife tours? What are the most important animals for your business? Why? Are there any ways you influence animal behavior to ensure sighting? What happens if animals cannot be spotted? What are other important types of nature for your business?	Experience wildlife, nature learning Big mammals, birds, insects Baits, minimizing human presence Managing disappointment Other animals, vegetation, landscape, weather
Physical objects	What are the most important types of infrastructure for your business? Is there something you would like to add or remove?	Roads, watchtowers, hides, trails, cabins Obstacles
Socio-political context	What is the influence of other resource users on your business? Cooperation, conflict. What is the influence of nature conservation policies on your business? Other policies and regulations?	Industry, local residents, hunters, other tourist companies and tourists, berry/mushroom pickers Protection regimes, conservation status
Conclusion	Overall, what are the most important factors influencing your business? Positive and negative. Overall, how would you evaluate your ability to influence these factors? Would you like to add something that we did not discuss? Would you be interested to read the final paper?	email

4.3.3 Participant observations

Participant observations or *fieldwork* have been described as a type of data collection, when the researchers leave their offices and computers and go 'into

the field', i.e. to a certain setting, where they get an immediate contact with people in their environment (Tracy, 2013). Silverman (2013) has defined observations as establishing contact with social actors in their natural environment with the purpose of observing and describing their social actions. For the purposes of Paper IV, it was considered necessary to participate in and observe an NBT tour (focused on wildlife watching) to further enrich and supplement the existing quantitative and qualitative insights. Participant observations included one-day and two-day wildlife watching trips with the selected firms (Table 10). During the participant observations there was an opportunity to observe the work of the guides, closely interact with them over a prolonged period of time as well as experience a typical NBT tour package focused on wildlife in its wholeness. During the tours it was possible to observe e.g., the routines of the guides, the way they navigate uncertainty during the trip, what they emphasize/de-emphasize. The observation foci were corresponding to the existing research questions and were based on the pre-developed observation guide (Table 12). The participant observations were accompanied by informal interviews discussed above in Section 4.3.2.

The tours were attended either by no other, or with a maximum two other tourists at a time, which facilitated rapport and close interaction with the guides over a prolonged period of time (up to 20 hours), which enabled informal interviews to be conducted during the course of the tour. Extensive field notes were taken during and after each trip. The observations were implemented in the overt format, i.e. the guides were aware of the researcher's identity (a PhD student doing a thesis) and the overarching idea of the research. Since the researcher was a foreigner in Sweden, it could be assumed that she was rather easily identified as a regular tourist by the guides and treated accordingly. Some visual impressions of these wildlife watching trips can be seen in Figures 6-9.

Table 12. Participant observation guide

Themes	Categories	Cues
Role of the guides in creating NBT setting or 'stage'	Ways to prepare tourists for the experience, add value to the experience, create anticipation, certain mood.	Words used, objects pointed out, non/verbal communication
Role of the guides in generating/reproducing discourses	Stories and images they want to convey about the nature, animals, place, themselves.	Words used, stories
Role of the guides in navigating uncertainty	Managing attention, managing disappointment and overall experience	Words used, objects pointed out, de/emphasizing

4.3.4 Open-ended questions

Together with quantitative data, it has become common to include open-ended questions in surveys to invite the respondents to share, in a qualitative format, their ideas and concerns, not reflected in the quantitative format. According to O’Cathain and Thomas (2004), the open-ended questions fall into one of the four categories: *extension* (used to ensure that all options are covered, i.e. ‘other, please specify’); *substitution* (in some cases it is advised to substitute a closed question with an open one, e.g. in sensitive topics); *expansion* (the respondents are invited to elaborate on the closed question, i.e. answer the ‘how’ and ‘why’); and *general* (respondents are asked to state their general experience, i.e. ‘any other comments’).

O’Cathain and Thomas (2004) argue that even though the open comment section has become standard, the majority of researchers fail to analyze and present this information, especially in peer-reviewed publications. This may be explained by the very nature of these data, which fall ‘in between’ qualitative and quantitative research, while, arguably, capitalizing on the weaknesses, rather than strengths of each. These types of data, therefore, can better be described as ‘quasi-qualitative’, which discourages researchers from engaging in its analysis (Murphy, et al., 1998). Another limitation of this method is its representativeness, since the open comments might have an overrepresentation of respondents with extreme and polarized opinions, not typical of the general population. However, the most important factor here is transferability of the beliefs and attitudes stated, and, if positive, then these

data are still valuable, because it represents a certain subset of the population (O’Cathain & Thomas, 2004), which is believed to be the case here.

The whole survey in the frames of this project included 14 open-ended questions, following extension, expansion and general open formats. The complete outputs of these questions, more specifically 977 individual statements, were published as an annex in Fredman & Margaryan (2014). The data serving the purposes of Paper V comes from the two open-ended questions in the survey described above as well as supplementary secondary data source (similar survey conducted in Norway, see Stensland, et al., 2014). The questions pertained to NBT entrepreneurs’ opinions regarding the formalized sustainability schemes (labelling and certification). About one hundred comments and statements were gathered (in both the Swedish and Norwegian languages), translated and analyzed with a focus on possible barriers for adoption of an eco-certification scheme. The comments were treated as qualitative data and thematically analyzed using coding technique, discussed in the next section in further detail. It is assumed that this information is valuable for the purposes of Paper V, since it gave additional insights into the existing barriers eco-certification faces in Scandinavia.

4.3.5 Validity, reliability and data analysis

In qualitative research, validity and reliability obtain a different meaning compared to the quantitative one, but the ethos of these concepts is maintained to various degrees, depending on the ‘stream’ or paradigm, within which the qualitative enquiry is nested. Thus, while validity in quantitative research means *truthfulness*, as discussed in Section 7.2.6, in qualitative research the idea of a single truth is usually rejected. Instead, qualitative researchers might speak of *authenticity* in research, as ‘*offering a fair, honest, and balanced account of social life from the viewpoint of the people who live it every day*’ (Newman, 2014:218), *trustworthiness* and *credibility*, as indicators of the qualitative research quality (Creswell: 2014). Reliability, in its turn, implies the consistency of research methods and approaches (ibid.).

In this thesis, the following steps were taken to increase the level of trustworthiness, credibility and authenticity (used primarily in Paper IV and partially in Paper V), based on suggestions by Creswell (2014: 190). First, the classical triangulation technique was utilized, i.e. the data were gathered through both interviews and participant observations, the results of which

were used to build a coherent justification for the emerging themes. Combining these qualitative methods enabled strengthening research insights through triangulation, i.e. the practice of using various methods to elucidate as much of study phenomena as possible. Second, rich and 'thick' description was generated, extensive and detailed field notes were taken during the participant observations. Third, the researcher's bias was clarified and discussed. The way the researcher's identity (e.g., a foreigner, a tourist, a researcher, a student) might have affected the results of the data gathering and analyses was reflected upon and explicitly discussed. Additionally, peer debriefing (discussions with the co-authors) and external audition (presentation of the results to the larger scientific community) were used to enhance trustworthiness and credibility of this work.

Furthermore, in order to ensure methodological reliability, the interview guide was developed, discussed and tested; the interviews were transcribed verbatim and checked for possible mistakes; during the coding stage the principle of constant comparison was applied in order to prevent the 'drift' in the meaning of the codes; regular meetings with the co-authors were held to discuss the work progress, the analysis process and emergence of themes from the codes. The data were accumulated, simultaneously interpreted and (re)constructed until 'informational isomorph' or 'theoretical saturation' (Jennings, 2012: 316) was reached. At this stage, further collection of empirical materials did not yield any additional insights. The interviews were treated as narratives through which the interviewees described their reality, while participant observations gave first-hand insights into the realities the participants wanted to actively construct through performances, routines and conversations (Silverman, 2013). Both interview transcripts and participant observation field notes were organized, systematized and coded with the help of Dedoose software tool. The coding approach followed a three-step analytical procedure recommended by Boeije (2010), i.e. open coding, axial coding and selective coding. The principles of analytic induction (concepts and ideas are generated through similarities among cases, i.e. a bottom-up process); constant comparison (comparing the data from each new case with the previous cases); comprehensive data treatment (treating the data holistically, avoiding cherry picking) and theoretical sensitivity (viewing the data through a theoretical lens), suggested by Silverman (2013), were adopted while collecting and analyzing the empirical materials.



Figure 6. Wolf tracks



Figure 7. Female moose



Figure 8. Brown bear attracted to bait



Figure 9. Beaver dam

5. Paper summaries

In this chapter, the five papers comprising this thesis are concisely presented. Each overview contains the main idea, data collection process and key findings. For the summary table of all papers see Table 1.

5.1 Paper I. Bridging outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism in the commercial context: Insights from the Swedish service providers.

Authors: Lusine Margaryan and Peter Fredman

Journal: Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism

Status: Published

Paper I sets the foundation for understanding the nature-based tourism as a subsector of tourism in its own right through finding out the main avenues of commercialization of natural resources from the supply perspective. For this initial stage, a well-established conventional approach of understanding tourism supply through activities offered was employed here. However, since no comprehensive studies existed on NBT businesses in Sweden, the challenge was to come up with a maximally exhaustive list of commercially offered tourist activities, which would be representative of the whole country. This was solved through building on the rich knowledge of outdoor recreation in Sweden. By bringing these two perspectives together, this study investigated how outdoor recreation demand is reflected in the commercial tourism supply, or in other words, which nature-based tourism activities had commercial importance. Thus, demand and supply as well as domestic and international dimensions were brought together, i.e. linking outdoor recreation with nature-based tourism – largely overlapping but independent areas of academic inquiry. The quantitative data were collected through a nation-wide survey among nature-based tourism providers, catering to both domestic and international markets in Sweden. Thus, Paper I contributes to understanding several major issues, discussed in this thesis: main activity-based routes of turning natural resources into commercial tourist products on the market; understanding the supply perspective through segmentation of NBT firms based on activities provided; understanding the links between the

non-commercial and commercial, as well as domestic and international tourism in the natural areas.

As a result of this study, four major data-driven avenues of commercialization avenues were discussed (*Winter/Nordic*, *Summer/Active*, *Summer/Relaxing* and *Extractive* clusters of activities) and further profiled against external variables, such as the types of business operations, international markets or seasonality. The findings offer a new insight into the patterns of the commercial supply of nature-based tourism in Sweden, while also building on the previous research and a rich history of outdoor recreation among the local population. Evident commercial importance and domestic popularity of such ordinary outdoor activities as cycling on roads, swimming, jogging, picnicking or hiking outside mountain areas are linked to changes in leisure and lifestyles noticed previously. Commercialization of outdoor recreation, a snapshot of which was presented in this study, was discussed as an ever-expanding and diversifying process, observed both in Sweden and globally.

5.2 Paper II. Nature as a commercial setting: The case of nature-based tourism providers in Sweden.

Authors: Lusine Margaryan

Journal: Current Issues in Tourism

Status: Published

Paper II continues on the task of understanding how tourism commercializes natural resources but doing it through a more heterodox approach: rather than looking at the activities (as was done in Paper I) in this paper the focus is on the setting where these activities happen. This study, therefore, looks at the structure of NBT if judged by the variations in the operational settings of the NBT firms. It also draws much needed attention to the structure of supply side of this sector by segmenting the NBT service providers based on their setting preferences, i.e. the importance of various resources in the places of their operation, regardless of the activities they offer. The approach taken here is to conceptualize the NBT setting as a space where human actors and their interrelations, natural resources and material man-made artefacts come together for the purposes of tourism experience co-creation. Three main

dimensions within the operational setting are discussed: natural, man-made and socio-political.

As a result of this study it becomes possible to outline the main variations as well as the 'backbone' natural resources for the commercial NBT setting in Sweden, containing certain features that are vital for the businesses regardless of their specifics. This includes such landscape attributes as forests, lakes, rivers and waterfalls as well as presence of animals such as various species of fish, birds and mammals – all ranked very highly by almost all the NBT firms. Similarly, regarding the built environment, there is almost no difference in the perceived importance of infrastructure, rated highly overall (especially hiking trails and cabins). Paper II, therefore, distills the main 'blueprint' for the NBT setting which can be used to bring diverse interests together. While high demands for the quality of wilderness and infrastructure are common, variations in the preferred operational setting do exist, related to the socio-political issues of access to nature and relations with other resource users (*General, Extractive, Non-extractive* and *Water-based* clusters). Additionally, it becomes clear that the access to nature, or, more specifically, to natural resources with public good characteristics, remains of paramount importance for the NBT businesses, who almost unanimously ranked the Right of Public Access very highly. This study, therefore, helps in understanding the role of a commercial setting in the NBT supply, which has a potential to not only contribute to developing the research of this sector further but also help in avoiding possible conflicts among natural resource users.

In the context of nature conceptualization on a continuum from relatively untransformed nature to heavily transformed urban environment, it can be argued that NBT is positioned somewhere midway, i.e. where wilderness meets infrastructure. Paper II empirically demonstrated that while wilderness qualities are ranked highly overall, so is the presence of infrastructure and a certain optimal combination of both these dimensions create a desired NBT setting.

5.3 Paper III. Natural amenities and the regional distribution of nature-based tourism supply in Sweden

Authors: Lusine Margaryan and Peter Fredman

Journal: Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism

Status: Published

In Paper III the discussion pertains to the importance of natural resources for the localization of NBT firms or, in other words, whether the abundance of certain resources in the operational setting can explain the presence of NBT businesses in the area. The paper is linked to the discussion of using NBT as a regional development and conservation strategy, often being perceived as one of the easiest and readily-available tools for income diversification in rural economies. The scope of the analysis includes three administrative levels: country, region (*landsdel*) and county (*län*). The data sources for this paper include the primary data collected for this thesis as well as secondary publicly available data from the national statistical service.

Significant variation in the importance of a number of natural resources and the associated properties (also discussed previously in Paper II) was already observed on the level of three Swedish lands. The main variations between north and south in NBT were characterized by the higher importance in the north of such natural amenities as forests, mountains, lakes, rivers, waterfalls and wetlands; and presence of wildlife, in particular, moose, reindeer, and fish. The ability to experience wilderness with no people in sight, encounter wildlife and operate in specially protected nature areas was also of great importance. In general, with the progression from north to south a certain trend of decreasing magnitude of importance of many resources was observed, which suggests a higher dependence of northern NBT firms on natural resources compared to their southern counterparts.

Results of the statistical analysis demonstrate that natural resources are, in fact, comparable to the human-made ones in their power to predict the distribution of NBT operations. This suggests the importance of infrastructure and services necessary to 'convert' natural resources into tourist experiences, which also hints that the border between NBT and other forms of tourism is not as clear as is often imagined. This, in its turn, cautions against perceiving NBT as an easy tool for regional development, which does not require

significant capital investments. This is linked to the findings discussed in Paper II, which demonstrated that an NBT setting is a combination of natural and anthropogenic resources, and there are no reasons to believe that the former is more important than the latter in the processes of nature commercialization through tourism even if experiencing certain type of nature might be the main tourism product.

5.4 Paper IV. Commercializing the unpredictable: Perspectives from wildlife watching tourism service providers in Sweden.

Authors: Lusine Margaryan and Sandra Wall-Reinius

Journal: Human Dimensions of Wildlife

Status: Published

Building on the knowledge gained through the statistical methods in Papers I, II and III, the aim of Paper IV was to enrich these quantitative findings with qualitative insights regarding the importance of various resources in the operational settings of NBT firms for the processes of nature commercialization through tourism. Additionally, one of the important tasks included in Paper IV was to focus on the role of NBT guides in turning natural resources into tourist experiences, which was acknowledged theoretically but not addressed empirically in the previous papers. The focus in this paper was on the firms offering wildlife watching, a form of non-extractive nature-based tourism. Wildlife watching was chosen for a number of reasons, arising out of the interests of this thesis: wildlife-watching firms heavily rely on natural resources which have properties of public goods, i.e. wildlife and the related habitats. Furthermore, availability of wildlife for tourism (especially predators) depends heavily on other resource users, which might have interests incompatible with tourism. Thus, wildlife watching tourism was selected as a suitable case for understanding the challenges associated with the commercialization of relatively uncontrollable natural phenomena (wild animals) in a similarly uncertain natural setting (wilderness).

In this study, participant wildlife watching firms, located all over Sweden, focused on working with such animals as free ranging brown bear, moose,

gray wolf, roe-deer, beaver and seal. Through a series of interviews and participant observations with the tourism entrepreneurs (owner-managers and guides) the following major themes emerged: lack of control over the operational setting as an inherent property of this type of tourism; agency and continuous negotiation of the uncertainties, related to natural resources, infrastructure and socio-political context; importance of the guide performances and 'secondary' experiences; importance of uncertainty for the authenticity of the wilderness experience.

Overall, the results demonstrate that, although maintaining a standard tourism business structure (i.e. requires transportation, accommodation, catering, guides), NBT (and in this case wildlife watching tourism) has a uniquely high dependence on operational setting features with public good characteristics, i.e. a context with high degree of uncertainty, demanding creativity and agency on behalf of the entrepreneurs. What is especially notable, is that uncertainty regarding the socio-political context is perceived more challenging than the uncertainty of animal behavior or other natural features within the setting. From the supply perspective, therefore, nature is not a place to 'visit' but rather a place to live and work in, while continuously balancing it out with other resource users, their interests and values.

5.5 Paper V. Sustainable by nature? The case of (non)adoption of eco-certification among the nature-based tourism service providers in Scandinavia.

Authors: Lusine Margaryan and Stian Stensland

Journal: Journal of Cleaner Production

Status: Published

Paper V engages with the sustainability aspect of nature resource use through nature-based tourism. Specifically, the adoption of tourism eco-certification and the associated factors are examined. Since the end of the last century and the advance of sustainable development on the global intellectual arena, market-based solutions, such as eco-certification, have emerged as a promise to 'marry' economy and ecology. However, despite a considerable time frame of the tourism certification approach, there has been no agreement in the academic research on whether or not this practice provides the supplier with

a reliable competitive advantage on the market and enhances sustainability as promised. This discussion becomes particularly interesting in the context of the Scandinavian region, home to some of the most affluent and also allegedly the most sustainable economies in the world. Previous research suggested that the popularity of tourism eco-certification schemes remained limited in the Scandinavian region due to socio-cultural, historical and other specifics. This insight is revisited and statistically tested a decade later with the support of nation-wide data from two Scandinavian countries - Sweden and Norway.

Attention in the study is paid to the characteristics of the NBT firms and whether there is an association with being eco-certified. Specifically, such parameters as motivations to operate an NBT business, the number of full-time and part-time employees or income of a firm were tested. Furthermore, qualitative data from the open comment sections were analyzed with the aim of gaining a deeper insight into the possible barriers for the eco-certification adoption. The results suggest that the firms with strong beliefs in the positive context (such as beliefs that eco-certification is linked to a higher income, larger customer flows and marketing advantage), lifestyle and sustainability-oriented business goals together with favorable business specifics (larger size, higher income and female leadership) are more likely to invest in an eco-certification scheme. Finally, the qualitative data largely suggests that adapting the global narrative of eco-certification to the local context is an issue in Scandinavia. Dominated by small lifestyle entrepreneurs, rooted in the rich local traditions of outdoor recreation, this sector seems to be a strong supporter of sustainability overall but lacks trust in formalized eco-certification schemes.

The results from this study, therefore, expose weaknesses of the eco-certification approach as a market-based solution for sustainable natural resource use, demonstrating that, as of today, these schemes appeal to a relatively narrow profile of NBT entrepreneurs. This becomes especially interesting in light of the comparatively high sustainability performance and the worldwide reputation of the Scandinavian countries as sustainable economies.

6. Discussion

Tourism studies are an interdisciplinary field of research where an in-depth focus on NBT sub-sector tourism is possible, and to which this thesis aims to contribute through gaining more knowledge about this form of natural resource use. To achieve this, it was necessary to generate comprehensive data about the sector, which would go beyond individual case studies, typical for tourism research field. The five papers aimed to contribute to the analysis of commercialization of natural resources through tourism by primarily obtaining data from the supply side, i.e. the NBT firms. The thesis invited the reader to look at tourism as an agent of nature commercialization and approached the topic from two main angles: an analysis of both this process and firms engaged in it (RQ1); and the commercial operational setting in the NBT context (RQ2).

6.1 Commercialization of natural resources in nature-based tourism

Acknowledging the ontological debates on nature, and imagining nature as both an independent material reality and a product of human imagination with large cultural variations, this thesis aimed to explicitly bring in 'the natural' into the tourism research focus. Tourism in this case is thought of as an agent of commercialization, i.e. a force that integrates natural resources into the commercial domain. Natural resources in this thesis are not discussed as abstract and disposable 'inputs' or 'factors of production', but rather as a complex combination of concrete biotic and abiotic phenomena, which are finite, irreplaceable and beyond immediate control. NBT, in its turn, is an economic sector, which actively engages with these fuzzy resources in a commercial context. A literature review of some comprehensive volumes within the main sub-discipline dealing with commercialization of natural resources, i.e. environmental economics, suggests that tourism is still mentioned rather marginally and often is featured as primarily an example of non-market value of natural resources (e.g., Anderson, 2010; Barbier, 2011; Endres & Radke, 2012; Field & Field, 2017; Gritzner, 2010; Harris & Roach, 2013; Scourse, 2010; Tietenberg & Lewis, 2016). The literature on NBT sector as a user of natural resources is rather scarce, if compared to more traditional

and historically established economic sectors, such as forestry, mining, agriculture or fisheries. Positioning in the interdisciplinary field of tourism studies, it was possible to focus explicitly on the NBT, a sub-sector, which is a growing global phenomenon, and understand its key distinctive features. NBT is recognized as a form of economic activity that, as many others, depends on natural resources, but unlike many others, has the ability to integrate these resources into commercial domain in a relatively non-extractive manner.

The following theoretical assumptions helped position this thesis. First, insights from the fields of environmental economics and tourism studies suggest a number of specific properties of natural resources used for tourism, important to keep in mind when talking about NBT. Based on the literature, it could be assumed that the natural resources used for tourism could be described as having common pool-, public good- or quasi-public good properties or, in most cases, being indivisible and non-excludable; being part of both the supply-side input and the environment; free and incidental; having properties of 'land' and having non-elastic supply; not qualifying to the criteria of heterogeneity and immobility; and subject to incomplete and contested commodification (e.g., Barney & Clark, 2007; Cousins et al., 2003; Castree, 2003; 2013; Harris & Roach, 2013; Gómez Baggethun & Ruiz-Pérez, 2011; Leiper 1979; 1990; Scorse, 2010; Tietenberg & Lewis, 2016). The question arises, how, then, these natural resources are commercialized in NBT, despite their challenging nature?

Starting with defining and demarcating the NBT sector, which has been a challenging task in itself, rich information was gathered through a comprehensive survey. NBT firms, as resource-using entities and key agents of nature commercialization through tourism, were chosen as the main analytical units. Through a series of methodological procedures it was made possible to talk about NBT as a more or less specific tourism sub-sector, having its own unique features and characteristics. For the initial step of understanding the structure of the NBT sector, as well as the main ways through which natural resources are commercialized, it was decided to use the existing knowledge on outdoor recreation, which happens in a commercial as well as non-commercial context, as a baseline for NBT (Beery, 2011; Hörnsten, 2000; Fredman et al., 2012a, Fredman & Tyrväinen, 2010; Lundmark & Müller, 2010; Sandell et al., 2011; Sandell & Sörlin, 2008). The results (Paper I) demonstrate that outdoor recreation and NBT are overlapping but non-identical sectors in terms of their structure, but the

knowledge from the former is a good spring board to conceptualize the latter. In other words, it is feasible to suggest, that while interesting points of divergence exist, many of the activities are represented in both commercial and non-commercial domains, enjoyed with or without the help of intermediaries, i.e. the NBT firms.

Furthermore, this thesis highlighted the complexities of commercializing resources with pronounced common pool- or public goods characteristics. This is an interesting property of NBT: the natural resources it primarily depends on could be enjoyed by everyone without much restriction. This is further enhanced by the local specifics of the Right of Public Access, wired towards social rather than commercial aspects of outdoor recreation. As a result, public goods might be prone to depletion while problems related to common pool resources might become more acute (e.g., crowding, congestion, deterioration of landscape quality). Therefore, it is especially interesting to look at the ways through which these firms commercialize nature, making money off public goods. In Paper II it is demonstrated that the Right of Public Access enjoys a strong and almost unanimous support from the NBT service providers. This could have several explanations, among which is another finding, showing that the majority of these micro-firms operate on land they do not own. This is in line with the official Swedish policy of combining natural resource conservation with ensuring the Right of Public Access (Fredman & Sandquist, 2013). Concerns, however, have been raised whether increasing commercialization of nature and a growing tourism sector are compatible with maintaining this tradition, from the environmental, ethical and overall long-term sustainability perspective (Kaltenborn, et al., 2001; Sandell & Fredman, 2010). As shown in Paper V, NBT companies may demonstrate resistance towards formalized sustainability schemes (discussed in below in more detail).

Paper II demonstrates that NBT not only depends on traditional natural resources similar to those used in any other forms of tourism and economic activities in general (e.g., fossil fuels, air, water, fibers), but also on natural resources, which are not commercialized through any other industry, i.e. have little or no market value outside tourism. These are, for example, a wide variety of non-game animals, plants, and various types of non-agricultural landscapes. The data in this thesis show, for example, that there are NBT firms who actively integrate small mammals, non-game birds and even insects as important focal points of their tours. The resources involved have the widest scope, ranging from a whole landscape, a forest, a river, a star-lit sky, down

to an individual animal, a plant or a rock formation (this diversity is showcased in Paper II). NBT, therefore, becomes the main force integrating these resources into the commercial domain and diversifying their value creation, which is its rather unique feature.

Although commercialization of nature through service bundling (as shown in Paper I) is hardly surprising, more interesting are the ways through which nature becomes a tourist experience with the help of these services. The data demonstrates that the NBT firms could be grouped based on the type of activities they specialize on. From the previous literature, it could have been expected that the main ways for the NBT to succeed in the commercial domain would have been through offering new, highly specialized, niche, knowledge-intensive, skill- and equipment-dependent, diversified, motorized, sport- and adventure-oriented activities (e.g., Bottenburg & Salome, 2010; Cordell, 2008; Fredman & Heberlein, 2003; Odden, 2008; Sandell et al., 2011). In other words, offering activities which the average tourists are less likely to engage in on their own and, therefore, are more willing to pay for. However, this is not exactly the case according to the data here. Although the activities fitting to these criteria are also represented in the data, the NBT supply is, in fact, dominated by relatively simple and traditional outdoor activities, and the domestic tourism remains a very important market (Paper I).

From the aforementioned, it can be assumed that natural resources are commercialized not only through diversification of NBT activities but also due to the growing willingness to pay for rather traditional (and previously non-commercialized) activities. This could be connected to the observations previously made regarding the growing preference for shorter, more intense, high quality, safe and more organized holidays, as well as a growing demand and acceptance of higher accessibility and facility density (Fredman & Heberlein, 2003; Wall-Reinius & Bäck, 2011; Vorkinn, 2011; Fredman et al., 2012). In addition, 'deskilling' or the growing inability of the general population to engage independently with nature might also have its role here, noticed among other types of leisure, and related to the changing lifestyle, growing urbanization and disconnection from nature (Öhman et al., 2016; Sandell & Sörlin, 2008; Wall-Reinius & Bäck, 2011). If this trend is ongoing, then the NBT sector could be expected to grow, with new opportunities for nature commercialization emerging not only on foreign markets (which could be expected based on the growing number of overseas tourists, especially from China (Tillväxtverket, 2017), but also on domestic ones, involving both

niche and generic leisure pastimes. This raises larger questions about our changing relationships with nature and related sustainability issues.

Within the current economic system one popular way to ensure sustainable resource use has been through market-based solutions, such as eco-certification and labeling of service providers. The issue of environmental sustainability is closely related to the whole contemporary discussion of nature commercialization in general, and uncertainty in particular, and which becomes especially relevant to the case of Sweden, the global leader in this field (e.g., Gössling, 2006; Becken, 2015; Gren & Huijbens, 2016; Scorse, 2010). In Paper V it is demonstrated that market-based solutions for stimulating sustainable resource use might not be the most efficient approach due to a number of local specifics and the characteristics of the NBT firms, guided by principles beyond rationality and profit maximization. Nevertheless, it is clearly demonstrated that the NBT sector is dominated by small and often micro entrepreneurs, who perceive their environmental impact to be small. Increasing commercialization of natural resources through NBT, and, consequently, growing number of NBT firms might result in significant cumulative impacts driven by what has long since been known as the 'tyranny of small decisions' (Kahn, 1966). The rising threat of cumulative impacts of small actors in NBT has been pointed out by e.g., Newsome et al. (2013).

6.2. Operational setting in nature-based tourism

A distinct contribution of this thesis lies in examining natural resources not only as a direct object of commercialization but also from the perspective of a setting where the commercial encounter happens, which did not receive explicit attention in previous literature. This thesis viewed the NBT operational setting as simultaneously both part of the 'supply' and the 'environment' within which the tourism system is located, bringing together perspectives from various disciplines (e.g., Arnould et al., 1998; Bitner, 1999; Hale et al., 2001; Lundmark & Stjernström, 2009; Leiper, 1979; Mossberg, 2007; O'Dell & Billing, 2005; Prebensen & Chen, 2017; Wakefield & Blodgett, 2016). Given the inherent properties of many natural resources necessary for NBT (e.g., climate, wildlife, water bodies), it becomes impossible to separate them from their environment, the location or the 'setting' of the system. The resources available in this area, as a rule, defy the classic 'commercialization-friendly' criteria, defined in the theories of commodification and resource-

based competitiveness. The commercial setting, nevertheless, is an important resource for NBT firms, created through interactions with multiplicity of other actors. In this thesis, an attempt has been made to conceptualize and draw attention to the commercial operational setting in the context of NBT and demonstrate its unique characteristics, such as similarities to common pool resources, (quasi) public goods and the related lack of control and uncertainty. This approach also demonstrated that the NBT supply could be understood not only from the perspectives of tourist activities offered but also from the perspective of operational setting preferences (e.g., the axes of high-low NBT specialization and high-low dependence on specific setting features), providing a new insight on the ways of nature commercialization through tourism. One way of approaching this topic, coming from the field of services and marketing, and tourism studies literature, is to investigate the commercial setting of NBT, where the commercialization process happens, and which itself becomes a resource for NBT firms (e.g., Arnould et al., 1998; Fredman, et al., 2012; Hultman & Andersson Cederholm, 2006; Mossberg, 2007; 2008; O'Dell & Billing, 2005; Prebensen, et al., 2014). This brings in not only natural, but also other type of resources into picture, which influences the creation of NBT experiences, and exposes the hybridity and openness of this space for multiplicity of actors and interests. The literature review suggests that the commercial setting in the context of NBT has not received sufficient attention and is in need of a stronger conceptualization and understanding. This approach also enables getting away from the strict nature-culture divide, while maintaining some necessary practical delimitation (Castree, 2003; 2013; Franklin, 2002; Hall, & Boyd, 2005; Macnaghten, & Urry, 1995; 1998). In the analysis of the NBT setting, uncertainty and the lack of control emerge as its important properties, which need further investigation (e.g., Arnould, et al., 1998; Fredman et al., 2012; Lundberg et al., 2014).

Conceptualization of the operational setting, specifically refined towards the realities of the NBT service providers was developed, building on progress in service and marketing literature. The operational setting was approached through the dimensions of natural, man-made and socio-political context, each with a number of key attributes. Although the importance of operational setting for the commercial context has received significant attention over the last quarter of a century (e.g., Arnould et al., 1998; Bitner, 1992; Clarke & Schmidt, 1995; Ezeh & Harris, 2007; Newman, 2002; Nilsson & Ballantyne, 2014; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994; 2016), the dimension of the natural has been largely ignored. The importance of infrastructure or an anthropogenic, material dimension has, in its turn, received little attention in NBT literature,

which emphasized the importance of natural resources. Finally, the context of access to natural resources, influence of other resource users, protection regime, power to influence the decision-making process regarding their resources are highlighted through the socio-political dimension. The relevance of this approach was empirically tested by asking the NBT firms to what extent they agree or disagree that: (a) nature is a background/setting for providing tourist services, and (b) nature experience is the main service they provide to the tourists. Interestingly enough, 90% agreed or fully agreed with the first statement, comparing to the 68% for the second, which suggests that NBT firms need to add other services to their NBT tourist product in order to succeed and which was demonstrated in Papers II, III and especially IV.

While 'the natural' had to be explicitly emphasized as a fundamental part of the NBT setting, its disentanglement from other dimensions during the commercialization process is hardly possible. Even if NBT is usually defined as some variation of tourism happening in natural areas, i.e. places 'out there', or places with a lack of human impact, thus perpetuating the nature-culture divide, a look from the supply side gives a different picture. It becomes visible, grounded in empirical data, that for the NBT firms their operational space is never simply a 'natural area' or 'naturescape' (Gration & Raciti, 2014). Even if this might seem so from the perspective of a tourist, for an NBT service provider this is rather a complex context, bringing together natural and non-natural, material, and intangible socio-political attributes, necessary to create the experience of nature. The preferred settings are constellations of certain features that transgress human-nature borders, as demonstrated in Paper II. Furthermore, even though natural resources had sufficient regional variation and correlation with the NBT distribution, they did not have overwhelming explanatory power on their own (Paper III). The density of NBT operations tended to gravitate towards tourist and infrastructure-rich areas in general, where the NBT businesses benefit from the existing anthropogenic features, even if not directly including them into their product. This demonstrates that from the resource consumption perspective, NBT, as with other forms of tourism, is heavily dependent on infrastructure even if the main object of consumption is nature. It can be concluded that NBT in many ways follows the distribution patterns of the tourism industry as a whole, despite the centrality of natural resources for this type of tourism. From the supply perspective, nature is, therefore, not an isolated place to visit but rather a place to live and work with nature and other people. Focusing on commercial space as a way to bring natural and human/cultural resources together opens up

new possibilities for more holistic, integrated, and pragmatic way of thinking, inviting for cross-disciplinary insights.

Through the adapted servicescape logic, it is also demonstrated that the NBT sector can be understood not only through the demand side of the business, that is, the types of tourists they attract and what the tourists do (as it has been done most of the time), but also through the supplier's perspective on the type of settings where they facilitate NBT experiences. It became visible through the segmentation that such axes as *consumptive/non-consumptive*, *exclusive/non-exclusive* as well as *general/specialized* are crucial for understanding the NBT sector. From this, it could be assumed that although some firms are very specific towards their operational setting requirements, others are more 'generalists' and are, most likely, combining NBT with other types of services and tourist activities (this also becomes visible later on in the findings from Paper IV). Despite these differences, however, it was possible to distill the key characteristics within the NBT setting, which are of high importance to all NBT firms regardless of their specifics. This common ground brings together natural (forests, lakes, rivers and waterfalls, birds, fish, moose), man-made (cabins, trails) and socio-political (Right of Public Access) dimensions into a holistic 'blueprint' of the NBT operational setting in Sweden. Understanding commercial setting or servicescape as a resource is relatively new and has not been extended to the context of nature or NBT, primarily oriented towards man-made, controlled environments.

This thesis suggests that in the case of NBT, the servicescape cannot be simply imagined as purely an *operand* resource (as suggested by e.g. Nilsson & Ballantyne, 2014), since this resource is a complex environment where various different interests play out, and which is beyond the immediate control of NBT firms. Being smaller in size leaves NBT firms with limited power of direct influence, rather stimulating continuous creative and adaptive solutions, while working with tourists, natural resources and other resource users. NBT firms have to operate in a complex setting, where the uncertainty is related not only to the inherent nature of the natural resources (e.g., wildlife movement, weather conditions), but also to a whole network of other, often competing interests (e.g., hunting, forestry, nature protection regimes). The uncertainty factor becomes more important in light of the current environmental challenges linked to unsustainable resource use, such as climate change, biodiversity decline or depletion of non-renewable energy sources (Anderson, 2010; Barbier, 2011; Becken, 2015; Gren & Huijbens, 2016; Gössling, & Hall, 2006; Helm, 2015; Markwell, 2015). All this creates an

inherently uncertain operational context for NBT firms, deserving closer attention. This aspect of uncertainty and lack of control within one's operational setting is what has not received much attention within service and marketing literature, where the attributes in focus are usually subject to manipulation by the service providers. In fact, the literature review by Mari and Pogessi (2013) shows that the strongest attention within the servicescape literature has been biased towards the attributes, which not only are the easiest, but also the cheapest to manipulate. Within the NBT context, however, very few of the servicescape attributes would comply with these criteria, which make it a highly challenging field, requiring creativity, agency as well as a high degree of flexibility and stress-resistance on behalf of the NBT guides. Approaching NBT through the servicescape perspective sheds new light on the processes of nature commercialization through tourism and the necessary conditions for it to happen. The case of Sweden, while having its specifics, shows an example of a fast developing NBT market, thus offering valuable insights to other aspiring destinations.

6.3 Practical implications

This thesis presents rich empirical data about NBT in Sweden. Since no comprehensive data existed on NBT previously, a detailed multi-themed survey employed here created a foundation on which future research and data could be accumulated as well as a baseline for detecting future changes and trends in this sector. The data mitigated the existing knowledge imbalance by focusing on the supply side of NBT, rather than the demand, pointed out by previous research (Fredman & Tyrväinen, 2010).

6.3.1 Methodological contribution

Methodological contribution of this thesis lies primarily within testing two sampling methods for gathering a representative sample of NBT service providers. NBT as a more or less distinct tourism sub-sector has been rather elusive and hard to capture due to its heterogeneous characteristics varying across geographical locations. The tested sampling approach using SIC-codes exposed the shortcomings of the business registers for tracking down NBT firms. Geographical distribution sampling with the help of regional tourist

bureaus provided hints for future refinement of sampling methods in this sector. The survey results also demonstrated the challenges of existing classification approaches, since the vast majority of the firms are engaged simultaneously in multiple business activities. By developing a way to circumvent the shortcomings of the standard industrial classification, unable to capture NBT as a distinct sub-sector, it became possible to gather a representative sample of NBT firms, which gives the most comprehensive nation-level overview about this sector up to this day. The growth of firms adding NBT services to their business profiles calls for development of better identification and registration approaches to ensure opportunities for longitudinal research in this field.

6.3.2 Implications for policy and management

Improved understanding of the structure and key characteristics of the NBT sector overall, provided in this thesis, could help designing more efficient and effective management approaches related to natural resource use, NBT and regional development. A few key points are of particular importance here. It could be suggested that the NBT has much in common with local outdoor recreation traditions, management of which has a long history in Sweden. These activities, however, happening in the commercial context, imply higher density of surrounding services. Growing demand for services in nature will create the need for finding ways to combine expanding diversity of interests, such as the demand for high levels of access and comfort with the demand for wilderness experience, consumptive and non-consumptive nature use, as well as multiple, potentially conflicting activities. Based on the findings in Paper II it is possible to have a solid discussion starting point, by looking at the factors which unites interests of different NBT firms.

It is reasonable to suggest that the demand for nature-related experiences will continue to grow, and that NBT will integrate a growing diversity of natural resources into the commercial domain. This, however, comes with a message of caution. Several previous case studies have argued that the creation of protected natural areas in the hope of automatically generating economic benefits from tourism has not been successful (e.g., Lundmark & Stjernström, 2009; Byström & Müller, 2014). The same could be claimed for NBT development in general. This is important to emphasize since NBT development was often noticed to lack a deeper analysis, and perceived as a regional development tool, especially in peripheral areas (Hall & Boyd, 2005;

Hall, Müller, & Saarinen, 2009; Lundmark & Stjernström, 2009; Mollard & Vollet, 2015). According to the policy objectives included in the Swedish government bill *The Future of Outdoor Recreation* (Prop. 2009/ 10:238), outdoor recreation, cultural and natural tourism are expected to generate '*successful regional growth*' (Fredman & Sandquist, 2013: 117). Paper III empirically demonstrates with the data from the supply perspective that the abundance of natural resources is not sufficient to for NBT businesses to thrive, and this sector rather exists at the interface of nature and infrastructure, accompanied by a favourable socio-political context. This underlines the relevance of diverse social science methods in gaining deeper insights into the complexity of the conditions necessary to commodify nature through tourism. In addition, this thesis demonstrates that the public expectations from tourism to generate economic growth, while also maintaining sustainability principles cannot be uncritically cultivated due to the specifics of natural resources, NBT firms, tourism industry in general (especially long-haul travels) and the recent trends in tourism demand (as discussed in Sections 2 and 3, and examined in Papers III and V).

The aforementioned also refers to the discussion of NBT as a catalyst of sustainable resource use creating win-win market-based solutions. NBT firms are expected to employ holistic business strategies, taking into account ecological and social values (Fredman & Sandquist, 2013). In this regard, eco-certification remains among the key tools to promote sustainability in NBT (Sievänen, et al., 2013). As demonstrated in Paper V, however, the rhetoric of ecotourism in the Scandinavian context has enjoyed a rather modest success. Although the sustainability-related values might be high among NBT firms in general, the trust towards formalized sustainability schemes has been very limited. Heavily dominated by micro firms, the NBT sector is also largely comprised of lifestyle entrepreneurs, who prioritize independence, their own judgments and values (including those regarding sustainability). It has to be kept in mind that Scandinavia already enjoys a strong international reputation (and a self-image) of a region with high sustainability standards, so it is possible that the 'eco' brand does not have as much differentiation potential as it does in other parts of the world. This, however, does not remove the need for quality control, or make this sector immune to negative cumulative impacts on natural resources, as well as common problems related to the commercialization of public goods on a local and a global levels. Therefore, the sustainability policy-making should be better geared towards the specifics of this sector, while adapting to the local cultural context.

6.4 Limitations and further research

The sampling of NBT firms is limited by the willingness to help and information quality of the regional tourist bureaus. It is quite possible that some tourist bureaus kept better track of the firms in their region than others, or were simply more willing to cooperate, which might have affected the geographic representativeness of the sample. The operationalized definition of NBT adopted for this thesis, while being broad and aiming to cover all the main types of NBT, nevertheless mostly excluded some infrastructure-reliant and resort-based businesses, which are, technically, part of NBT (e.g., ski resorts, golf courses). The employees of the tourist bureaus were left to judge if a company fits into the NBT definition or not, which, despite extensive explanation via phone, might have resulted in misinterpretation and the subsequent sampling errors.

The tourism sector is generally known to be quite vulnerable, having high 'mortality rates' of firms (Brouder & Eriksson, 2013), which could have affected the response rate and reliability of the findings. The response rate of 33% itself might be an issue of concern. Here it has to be, however, kept in mind that business surveys are, in general, known to generate unsatisfying response rates (Rasmussen & Thimm, 2009). For example, meta-analyses of survey response rates among business firms in published research averaged around 21% (Dillman, 2007). Baruch (1999:421) states that '*it is also recommended that a distinction is made between surveys directed at individual participants and those targeting organizational representatives*'. Furthermore, the response rates among SMEs are usually lower than among big businesses (Rasmussen & Thimm, 2009). Surveys among SMEs have reported response rates of 10.5% (Daniel, Wilson, & Myers, 2003), 12.6% (Rasmussen & Thimm, 2009), 26% (Jones, Beynon-Davies, & Greaves, 2003), 40% (Thong, 1999), or 42% (Goode & Stevens, 2000). Overall, Rasmussen & Thimm (2009) argue that if in the 1960s even a response rate of 80% would be suggested for further improvement, nowadays the response rate of around 40% could be considered acceptable. Overall, the average online survey response rates are currently not very high in general (e.g., the leading online survey platforms report average response rates of 10-15% (surveygizmo.com), 24% (fluidsurveys.com), 10-30% (genroe.com). Declining response rates, are, therefore an ongoing challenge of academic research today.

Some limitations have to be pointed out pertaining to the individual papers. Thus, Papers I-III are fully reliant on the survey results, and consequently, are affected by its shortcomings, related to the sampling, response rate, employed definitions or availability of pre-existing knowledge. The literature review and the findings of Paper IV indicated the importance of socio-communicative and socio-political factors in navigating uncertain environments (Moscardo, 2010; Mossberg, 2007; Vespestad & Lindberg, 2011; Weiler & Black, 2015; Weiler & Davis, 1993; Wong & Wang, 2009). The sample in Paper IV, however, was rather limited and focused only on very niche firms. More in-depth studies of NBT guides, their narratives, themes, stories and other ways presenting and interpreting nature have a power to significantly contribute to the tourist experience, and show an additional direction of further research to gain a deeper understanding of an NBT setting. Regarding paper V, it has to be mentioned that due to the comprehensive nature of the surveys, the number of questions pertaining to eco-certification and the motivations for adoption were limited. A specially developed survey targeting eco-certification issues in an in-depth manner would yield richer results. The available qualitative data in the survey hint that there are a number of underlying beliefs and attitudes, which should be better addressed with in-depth interviews among both certified and non-certified entrepreneurs. These, for example, pertain to the Nordic interpretations of sustainability and ecotourism, lifestyle priorities or the influence of gender on attitudes towards sustainability.

In general, the data in this thesis is by design limited to the supply perspective, which, by definition, does not provide an exhaustive outlook on the NBT sector. In light of the tourism experience co-creation paradigm, it becomes highly interesting to enrich these findings with the demand perspective. A further research with a comprehensive survey among the NBT tourists in Sweden would provide a more holistic overview. Sweden has a long history of gathering comprehensive and in-depth information about local outdoor recreationists, but data on foreign tourists in nature has been lacking. As of today, the data among the NBT tourists in Sweden come from geographically-bounded case studies or very general border surveys of the Statistics Sweden, which provides only highly limited insight into the development of tourists' preferences towards nature experiences. Contribution of tourists to the creation of nature experiences in the operational setting, especially tourists' perspectives on coping with the uncertainty factor presents an interesting area of future inquiry. Further, the sustainability issues in tourism remain challenging and are likely to keep

exacerbating in the nearest future. The potential of NBT as a win-win market-based solution has not yet fully come to its fruition. In light of the insights from Paper V, it would be highly interesting to investigate the demand perspective on this issue, i.e. the perceptions of the eco-labels among the nature-based tourists who arrive to Scandinavia (comparing various segments) to better understand the image of Scandinavia overall and the added value of eco-certification schemes. Overall, more longitudinal research is needed to detect the changing patterns within NBT, as well as more comparative analysis of domestic and foreign recreationists to better understand the changing ways and trends of nature commercialization through tourism.

Finally, this thesis is limited to NBT organized by tourist firms. However, a large number of foreign tourists arrive to Sweden independently and spend their time in nature without using guiding services, following their own routes and destinations. Recent trends suggest that user-generated content plays an increasingly important role in tourist decision-making and on-site behavior patterns, when choosing a type of activity, experience, or place of visitation, resulting in the emergence of demand-driven destinations (Evers, 2016; Hudson & Thal, 2013; Munar & Steen Jacobsen, 2014). Researching the influence of social media and mobile applications on tourists' preferences and behavior in nature will, therefore, become crucial for understanding the further development of NBT.

7. References

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VÄLKOMMEN TILL EN UNDERSÖKNING OM SVENSK NATURTURISM

Tack för att du tar dig tid att besvara enkäten. Det är möjligt att göra uppehåll och återvända vid ett senare tillfälle, men bäst är om du besvarar alla frågor vid ett tillfälle.

Vissa frågor är svåra att besvara exakt, men vi ber dig svara så uppriktigt som möjligt. Alla svar behandlas konfidentiellt och resultaten kommer endast redovisas som medelvärden för grupper av företag. Uppgifter om enskilda företag redovisas aldrig.

DEL 1. INLEDANDE FRÅGOR OM NATURTURISM

I detta avsnitt ställer vi några inledande frågor kring ditt företag och verksamheten inom naturturism.

Med naturturism menar vi företag och organisationer med verksamhet som riktas till människor när de vistas i naturområden utanför sin vanliga omgivning.

Naturturism innefattar både mer traditionella friluftaktiviteter som vandring, skidåkning och paddling, men även aktiviteter som exempelvis naturguidning, uthyrning av småbåtar, jakt, fiske, ridning, vindsurfing och cykling. Men naturturism kan vara mycket annat också. Transport och boende omfattas endast då verksamheten erbjuder ett uttalat naturnära boende (t.ex. eremithyddor, naturcamping) eller då transporten i sig är en del i naturupplevelsen (t.ex. cykelsemester, skoteruthyrning). Anläggningsbundna verksamheter, t.ex. utförsåkning, golf och badanläggningar, omfattas inte.

Tillhandahåller ditt företag tjänster inom naturturism?

- JA
 NEJ

Hur viktiga är följande affärsverksamheter för ditt företags omsättning?

Vänligen markera hur viktig respektive verksamhet är för ditt företag på skalan 1-5.

	Ingen betydelse (1)	2	3	4	Mycket stor betydelse (5)
Guidade aktiviteter i naturen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Uthyrning och försäljning av utrustning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Festivaler och event i naturen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Boende	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Persontransporter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restaurang/café/kiosk/catering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organisering av resor/turer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Förmedling av information (t.ex. turistbyrå, besöksmål)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Utbildning och grupparrangemang	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fiskeriverksamhet (industriellt)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jord- eller skogsbruk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Ange här om företaget bedriver andra verksamheter av betydelse för omsättningen: _____

Hur viktiga är följande naturbaserade aktiviteter för den ekonomiska omsättningen i ditt företag?

	Ingen betydelse (1)	2	3	4	Mycket stor betydelse (5)
Fjällvandring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vandring utanför fjällområdet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jogging/löpning i naturen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stavgång	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Camping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hästridning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flygskärm, fallskärms hoppning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fågel- eller djurskådning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Picknick i naturen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fiske	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jakt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cykling på vägar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Terrängcykling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Motorcykel, terrängkörning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bad i sjö/hav	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dyka, snorkling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kajak, kanot, flottfärder	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Segling, vindsurfing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vattenskidor, wakeboard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Motorbåt, vattenskoter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Löparskidor, turskidåkning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Utförsåkning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Snowboard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Snöskoteråkning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hundspann	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skridskoåkning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Snöskor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paintball, friluftsteater	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Geocaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Orientering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Klättring, bergsbestigning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grottkrypning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meditation, yoga i naturen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Om ditt företag erbjuder andra aktiviteter i naturen som inte finns med i listan ovan, vänligen ange dem här: _____

Vilket år startade ditt företag med naturturism?

- 2012
- 2011
- 2010
- 2009
- 2008
- 2007
- 2006
- 2005
- 2004
- 2003
- 2002
- 2001
- 2000
- 1999
- 1998
- 1997
- 1996
- 1995
- 1994
- 1993
- 1992
- 1991
- 1990
- Före år 1990

Tänk nu på alla aktiviteter inom naturturism som ditt företag erbjöd under år 2012. Hur viktiga är årets olika månader för verksamhetens ekonomiska omsättning?

	Inte alls viktig (1)	2	3	4	Mycket viktig (5)	Vet ej
Januari	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Februari	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mars	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
April	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maj	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Juni	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Juli	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Augusti	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
September	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oktober	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
November	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
December	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Hur är verksamheten inom naturturism organiserad?

- Aktiefbolag
- Handelsbolag
- Ekonomisk förening
- Enskild firma
- Hobbyverksamhet

Annat, vänligen ange: _____

I vilket län är företaget/verksamheten registrerat?

- Blekinge
- Dalarna
- Gotland
- Gävleborg
- Halland
- Jämtland
- Jönköping
- Kalmar
- Kronoberg
- Norrbotten
- Skåne
- Stockholm
- Sörmland
- Uppsala
- Värmland
- Västerbotten
- Västernorrland
- Västmanland
- Västra Götaland
- Örebro
- Östergötland

I annat land än Sverige, vänligen ange vilket: _____

Ungefär hur ofta bedriver ditt företag verksamhet inom naturturism i olika län?

	Aldrig	Mycket sällan (1)	2	3	4	Mycket ofta (5)
Blekinge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dalarna	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gotland	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gävleborg	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Halland	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jämtland	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jönköping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kalmar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kronoberg	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Norrbottn	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skåne	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stockholm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sörmland	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Uppsala	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Värmland	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Västerbotten	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Västernorrland	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Västmanland	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Västra Götaland	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Örebro	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Östergötland	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Hur viktiga är följande faktorer för beslutet att bedriva verksamhet inom naturturism?

	Inte alls viktigt (1)	2	3	4	Mycket viktigt (5)	Vet ej
Att maximera den ekonomiska vinsten	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Att få en säker och stabil ekonomisk intäkt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Att få arbeta självständigt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Att få ett intressant arbete	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Att kunna bo på en särskild ort	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Att kunna arbeta utomhus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Att kunna nyttja lokala naturresurser	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Att kunna arbeta med människor med liknande intressen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Att kunna erbjuda bra naturupplevelser	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Att utbilda människor om naturen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Att bidra till en hållbar utveckling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Annan betydelsefull faktor, vänligen ange: _____

Hur viktiga är följande faktorer för lokaliseringen av den naturturistiska verksamheten?

	Inte alls viktigt (1)	2	3	4	Mycket viktigt (5)	Vet ej
Närhet till naturen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tillgänglighet för marknaden/kunder	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personliga kopplingar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Annan betydelsefull faktor, vänligen ange: _____

Vilken av följande faser stämmer bäst in på din verksamhet inom naturturism?

- Uppstartfas
- Tillväxtfas
- Mogen, stabil fas
- Nedtrappningsfas
- Avvecklingsfas
- Vet ej

DEL 2. ANVÄNDNING AV MARK OCH NATURENS TILLGÄNGLIGHET

Nu följer några frågor om ditt företags användning av mark och vatten samt betydelsen av naturens tillgänglighet

Hur viktig är tillgången till följande markslag för din verksamhet inom naturturism?

	Inte alls viktigt (1)	2	3	4	Mycket viktigt (5)	Vet ej
Privat mark som ägs av företaget	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Privat mark som ägs av annan juridisk person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Offentligt ägd mark	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Hur bedömer du att följande aktiviteter påverkar din verksamhet inom naturturism?

	Mycket negativt (-2)	-1	0	1	Mycket positivt (2)	Vet ej
Skogsbruk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skogsbilvägar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kraftledningar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vattenkraft/reglerat vatten	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gruvdrift	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vindkraft	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fritidshusbebyggelse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Renskötsel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jordbruk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Turism (utöver din egen verksamhet)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bär- eller svamplockning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yrkesfiske	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Bedriver ditt företag verksamhet i, eller i närheten av (inom 5 km), en nationalpark i Sverige?

- Ja, företaget bedriver verksamhet i en nationalpark i Sverige
- Ja, företaget bedriver verksamhet i närheten av (inom 5 km) en nationalpark i Sverige
- Nej, företaget bedriver inte verksamhet i, eller i närheten av (inom 5 km) en nationalpark i Sverige

Vänligen ange vilken eller vilka nationalparker som företaget har verksamhet inom eller i närheten av (inom 5 km).

- Abisko
- Ängsö
- Björnlandet
- Blå Jungfrun
- Dalby Söderskog
- Djurö
- Färnebofjärden
- Fulufjället
- Garphyttan
- Gotska Sandön
- Hamra
- Haparanda
- Kosterhavet
- Muddus
- Norra Kvill
- Padjelanta
- Pieljekaise
- Sånfjället
- Sarek
- Skuleskogen
- Söderåsen
- Stenshuvud
- Stora Sjöfallet
- Store Mosse
- Tiveden
- Töfsingdalen
- Tresticklan
- Tyresta
- Vadvetjåkka

På vilket sätt påverkar föreskrifter och regler kring nationalparker ditt företags verksamhet inom naturturism?

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Mycket negativt (-2) | -1 | 0 | 1 | Mycket positivt (2) | Vet ej |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Hur ofta använder ditt företag begreppet nationalpark i marknadsföringen?

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Alldrig (1) | 2 | 3 | 4 | Alltid (5) | Vet ej |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Har du ytterligare synpunkter vad gäller Sveriges nationalparker och hur de nyttjas för utvecklingen av turism, vänligen lämna dem i fältet nedan. Skriv kortfattat.

Hur viktiga är följande naturtyper för ditt företags naturturistiska verksamhet?

	Inte alls viktigt (1)	2	3	4	Mycket viktigt (5)	Vet ej
Skogar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Berg	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glaciärer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sjöar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Älvar, åar, vattenfall	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kust och skärgårdar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Våtmarker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jordbruksmark	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skyddad natur (nationalparker, naturreservat, naturminnen etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tätortsnära natur	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Hur viktiga är följande djurarter för ditt företags naturturistiska verksamhet?

	Inte alls viktigt (1)	2	3	4	Mycket viktigt (5)	Vet ej
Älg	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ren	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rådjur	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Björn	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Varg	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bäver	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Säl	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fåglar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fiskar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Andra djurarter av betydelse, vänligen ange: _____

Hur viktiga är följande faktorer för ditt företags naturturistiska verksamhet?

	Inte alls viktigt (1)	2	3	4	Mycket viktigt (5)	Vet ej
Möjligheter att besöka vildmarksliknande områden utan spår av andra människor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Möjligheter att uppleva naturens storslagenhet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Möjligheter att se vilda djur	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Möjligheter att besöka bullerfria områden	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Hur viktiga är följande typer av infrastruktur för ditt företags naturturistiska verksamhet?

	Inte alls viktigt (1)	2	3	4	Mycket viktigt (5)	Vet ej
Vandringsleder	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Övernattingsstugor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Campingplatser	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hamnar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Anlagda badplatser	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restauranger/caféer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Besökscentra/naturum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Annan infrastruktur, vänligen ange: _____

Hur viktig är naturens tillgänglighet för ditt företags naturturistiska verksamhet?

	Inte alls viktigt (1)	2	3	4	Mycket viktigt (5)	Vet ej
Möjligheten att fritt färdas i naturen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Möjligheten att fritt fiska längs kusterna och i de stora sjöarna	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Möjligheten att fritt jaga småvilt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Möjligheten att fritt plocka bär och svamp	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Hur viktiga är följande rättigheter för ditt företags naturturistiska verksamhet?

	Inte alls viktigt (1)	2	3	4	Mycket viktigt (5)	Vet ej
Exklusiv rätt till jakt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exklusiv rätt till fiske	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Avtal med markägare att nyttja naturen för särskilda ändamål	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tillstånd att bedriva verksamhet i skyddad natur	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Vänligen ange i vilken utsträckning du instämmer i följande påståenden.

	Instämmer inte alls (1)	2	3	4	Instämmer helt (5)	Vet ej
Naturen är en bra arena för att erbjuda våra kunder de tjänster de efterfrågar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Naturupplevelser är den huvudsakliga tjänst vi erbjuder våra kunder	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Vilken betydelse har allemansrätten för ditt företags naturturistiska verksamhet?

Mycket negativt (-2)	-1	0	1	Mycket positivt (2)	Vet ej
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

DEL 3. HÅLLBAR UTECKLING INOM NATURTURISM

Nu följer ett par frågor som handlar om insatser för en mer hållbar utveckling och effekterna av detta på ditt företag.

Använder ditt företag något av följande i sitt miljöarbete?

	Ja	Nej	Vet ej
Hållbarhetsredovisning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social hållbarhetsredovisning (CSR)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kompensation för utsläpp av koldioxid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Miljöcertifiering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Annat miljöarbete, vänligen ange: _____

Enligt din åsikt, hur viktiga är följande faktorer för miljöarbetet i ditt företag?

	Inte alls viktigt (1)	2	3	4	Mycket viktigt (5)	Vet ej
Ökad lönsamhet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fler kunder	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marknadsfördelar (nä nya kunder)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Förbättrad image och PR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ökad lojalitet hos kunder	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ökad motivation hos anställda	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ökad kompetens hos anställda	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Andra effekter, vänligen ange: _____

DEL 4. EKONOMISKA FÖRHÅLLANDEN

Nu ställer vi några frågor kring ditt företags ekonomiska förhållanden. Vi ber dig svara så uppriktigt som möjligt. Alla svar behandlas konfidentiellt och resultaten kommer endast redovisas som medelvärden för grupper av företag. Uppgifter om enskilda företag redovisas aldrig. Vi ber dig lämna uppgifter för verksamhetsåret 2012.

Många företag kombinerar naturturism med annan kommersiell verksamhet. Tänk nu på alla verksamheter som ditt företag bedriver, ungefär hur stor total omsättning hade företaget år 2012?

Företaget hade en omsättning på cirka _____
kronor

Av den totala omsättningen i företaget, hur stor andel kom från naturturism år 2012?

- 1-10%
- 10-20%
- 20-30%
- 30-40%
- 40-50%
- 50-60%
- 60-70%
- 70-80%
- 80-90%
- 90-99%
- 100%

Hur många personer var sysselsatta inom den naturturistiska verksamheten i ditt företag år 2012?

	0	1	2-3	4-5	6-10	11-20	Mer än 20
Heltidstjänster (helårsanställning)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Heltidstjänster (säsongsanställning)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deltidstjänster (helårsanställning)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deltidstjänster (säsongsanställning)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Hur många personer var sysselsatta inom den naturturistiska verksamheten i ditt företag från följande kategorier under år 2012?

	0	1	2-3	4-5	6-10	11-20	Mer än 20
Personer från det län där företaget är registrerat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personer från andra län i Sverige (utöver det län där företaget är registrerat)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personer från andra länder än Sverige	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Ungefär hur många årsarbetskrafter motsvarade den naturturistiska verksamheten i ditt företag totalt sett under 2012?

Med årsarbetskrafter avses antal sysselsatta personer omräknat till heltidsarbetande

- Mindre än 3 månader
- 3-6 månader
- 7-12 månader
- 1-2 år
- 3-4 år
- 5-10 år
- 10-20 år
- Mer än 20 år

Ungefär hur stora kostnader hade ditt företag för den naturturistiska verksamheten totalt sett under år 2012?

kronor _____

Försök att ungefärligen fördela kostnaderna för den naturturistiska verksamheten under år 2012 på följande kategorier (ange svaret i kronor).

Kostnader från utgifter i det län där företaget är registrerat _____

Kostnader från utgifter i andra län i Sverige (utöver det län där företaget är registrerat) _____

Kostnader från utgifter i andra länder än Sverige _____

DEL 5. MARKNADEN FÖR NATURTURISM

Nu ställer vi några frågor om kunder och marknader. Alla svar behandlas konfidentiellt och resultaten kommer endast redovisas som medelvärden för grupper av företag.

Tänk nu på den totala omsättningen ditt företag hade för den naturturistiska verksamheten år 2012. Ungefär hur stor andel kom från följande marknader?

Ange svaret i procent. Svaren ska tillsammans bli 100 %

Privata kunder _____

Företagskunder _____

= 100%

Tänk nu på de kunder ditt företag har inom naturturism. Ungefär hur fördelar de sig på följande kategorier?

Ange svaret i procent. Svaren ska tillsammans bli 100 %

Kunder från i det län där företaget är registrerat _____

Kunder från andra län i Sverige (utöver det län där företaget är registrerat) _____

Kunder från andra länder än Sverige _____
= 100%

Ange de två viktigaste utlandsmarknaderna för ditt företags naturturistiska verksamhet.

Den viktigaste utländska marknaden är _____

Den näst viktigaste utländska marknaden är _____

DEL 6. FÖRETAGETS NÄTVERK

Nu följer några frågor om de nätverk och externa kontakter ditt företag har.

Hur viktiga är följande relationer för ditt företag?

	Inte alls viktigt (1)	2	3	4	Mycket viktigt (5)	Ej relevant
Relationer med turoperatörer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relationer med underleverantörer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Hur viktiga är relationerna med följande aktörer för ditt företag?

	Inte alls viktigt (1)	2	3	4	Mycket viktigt (5)	Ej relevant
Andra naturturismföretag	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Andra turismföretag generellt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Andra företag utanför turistnäringen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lokala och regionala destinationsutvecklingsprojekt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representanter för lokalsamhällen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Annat, vänligen ange: _____

Tänk nu på alla aktörer ditt företag har formella och informella kontakter med, ungefär hur stor andel (i procent) återfinns i följande områden/kategorier.

Den kommun där företaget huvudsakligen är verksamt _____

Den region/län där företaget huvudsakligen är verksamt _____

Naturturismsektorn _____

Turismsektorn generellt _____

Vilka av följande organisationer samarbetar ditt företag med?

- Svenska ekoturismföreningen
- Svenska turistföreningen
- Visita
- Lantbrukarnas riksförbund, LRF
- Skogsägareförening
- Sveaskog (www.inatur.se)

Annat, vänligen ange: _____

BAKGRUNDSINFORMATION

Nu följer till sist några frågor om din bakgrund. Det är viktigt för oss att få en uppfattning om den person som lämnat svaren på undersökningen, särskilt då många företag inom svensk naturturism är små företag.

Vilken befattning har du inom företaget?

- Ägare av företaget (helt eller delvis)
- Anställd (chefsposition)
- Anställd (ej chefsposition)

Annat, vänligen ange: _____

Vilket av följande alternativ beskriver bäst din situation under femårsperioden innan du startade företaget eller blev anställd i företaget?

- Jag bodde i samma kommun som idag större delen av denna period
- Jag flyttade till min nuvarande kommun under denna period
- Jag flyttade till min nuvarande kommun mindre än ett år innan företaget startade eller jag blev anställd

Vad hade du för slags sysselsättning innan du startade företaget eller blev anställd i företaget?

- Arbete i annat turistföretag
- Arbete i annat serviceföretag
- Arbete i annat företag (ej service)
- Arbetslöshet
- Studier

Annat, vänligen ange: _____

Ungefär hur många års erfarenhet hade du från följande branscher innan du startade företaget eller blev anställd i företaget?

Ange antal år i respektive bransch. Svara med "0" för de branscher du inte har någon erfarenhet.

Naturturismbranschen _____

Övriga turismbranschen _____

Andra servicebranscher _____

Branscher utanför turism och service _____

Vilken är din högsta utbildning?

- Grundskola
- Gymnasium (eller motsvarande)
- Yrkesutbildning (eftergymnasial)
- Universitet eller högskola

Vilket år är du född?

- 1995
- 1994
- 1993
- 1992
- 1991

- 1990
- 1989
- 1988
- 1987
- 1986
- 1985
- 1984
- 1983
- 1982
- 1981
- 1980
- 1979
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- 1948
- 1947

- 1946
- 1945
- 1944
- 1943
- 1940
- 1939
- 1938
- 1937
- 1936
- 1935
- Före 1935

I vilket län växte du upp?

Ange det län där du huvudsakligen växte upp. Om du växte upp utanför Sverige, ange vilket land.

- Blekinge
- Dalarna
- Gotland
- Gävleborg
- Halland
- Jämtland
- Jönköping
- Kalmar
- Kronoberg
- Norrbotten
- Skåne
- Stockholm
- Sörmland
- Uppsala
- Värmland
- Västerbotten
- Västernorrland
- Västmanland
- Västra Götaland
- Örebro
- Östergötland

I annat land än Sverige, vänligen ange vilket:

Jag är...

- Man
- Kvinna

STORT TACK FÖR DIN MEDVERKAN I UNDERSÖKNINGEN!

Du är välkommen att lämna ytterligare synpunkter eller förslag i fältet nedan. Skriv in din e-post adress om du vill att vi kontaktar dig när resultaten finns tillgängliga. Stort tack för att du tog dig tid att svara på våra frågor. Hälsningar Peter Fredman (peter.fredman@miun.se) och Lusine Margaryan (lusine.margaryan@miun.se).

TACK FÖR DIN MEDVERKAN!

Enkäten är nu avslutad. Du blir snart länkad till Mittuniversitetets hemsida där du kan läsa mer om vår forskning.

