

An overhead photograph of two hikers at a stone well in a park. The hiker on the left is wearing a red backpack and a floral shirt, reaching towards the well. The hiker on the right is wearing a grey patterned shirt and is holding a white cup to collect water. The well is made of stone and has a metal spout. The surrounding area is lush green grass and trees.

**WHAT KIND OF TOURISM IN THE SWISS PARKS  
COULD REGENERATIVE TOURISM BE A VIABLE APPROACH  
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT?**

**6th Swiss Park Research Conference - October 30, 2025**

# Getting to know each other

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***Is the current approach to sustainability sufficient to address environmental and societal challenges?***



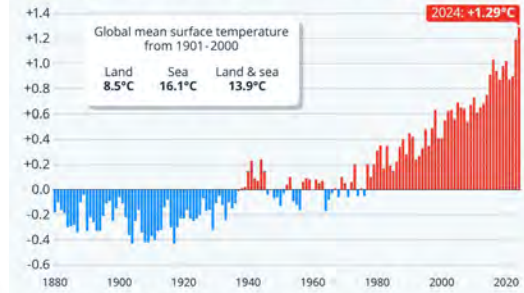
### Where Water Stress Will Be Highest by 2050

Projected ratio of human water demand to water availability (water stress level) in 2050\*



### 2024 Was the Planet's Warmest Year in Recorded History

Global land and ocean surface temperature anomalies (in degrees Celsius compared to the 1901-2000 average)



Source: NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information

Press release >

## Imminent risk of a global water crisis, warns the UN World Water Development Report 2023

Between two and three billion people worldwide face water shortages. These shortages will worsen in the future, especially in cities, if international cooperation is not boosted, warn UNESCO and UN-Water in the World Water Development Report.

Global temperatures set to reach new records in next five years

Tags: [Climate](#)

17 Published 17 May 2023

Press Release Number: 17052023

## WILDLIFE POPULATIONS PLUMMET BY 69%

The WWF World Biodiversity Report 2022 is a comprehensive study of global biodiversity and the health of the planet. The report reveals an average 69% decline in species populations since 1970. While conservation efforts are helping, urgent action is needed to reverse nature loss.



“

Climate change is a primary driver of biodiversity loss. And climate change depends on biodiversity as part of the solution. So clearly the two are linked, and cannot be separated.”

Elizabeth Mrema, Executive Secretary, United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity

GEORGAPHIC

RESOURCE | ARTICLE

## Carbon Dioxide Levels Are at a Record High; Here's What You Need To Know

Carbon dioxide, a key greenhouse gas that drives global climate change, continues to rise every month. Find out the dangerous role it and other gases play.

Topics > Travel > Sustainable Travel

## Tourists go home!

Many popular destinations in Europe are launching 'come-to-us' tourism campaigns and re-evaluating their tourism strategies

LOGIERNÄCHTEBILANZ

## Schweizer Hotellerie befindet sich auf Rekordkurs

Die Schweizer Hotellerie ist weiter im Aufschwung und wird, laut einer Prognose vom Bundesamt für Statistik, den Übernachtungsrekord aus dem Jahr 2019 übertreffen.



ACCUEIL > ÉCONOMIE

### 2023 devrait être une année record pour le tourisme suisse

Martin Nydegger, directeur de Suisse Tourisme, est en joie: si les chiffres définitifs ne tomberont qu'en février, il prévoit qu'ils seront plus élevés que jamais, grâce à un bon travail du marketing et à un véritable boom de la montagne



Vacances en Suisse

### Le tourisme pourrait battre un nouveau record cette année

L'hôtellerie suisse pourrait voir le nombre de nuitées dépasser 42 millions en 2024. À moins que les intempéries estivales ne freinent l'essor prévu.



Patrick Monay  
Publié: 04.08.2024, 07h59



D'immenses bateaux de croisière mouillent dans le port de Palma, à Majorque, le 3 mai 2016. [Enrique Calvo - Reuters]



# Tourism continues to grow

“If you think of sustainable travel, you are sustaining something. But what about the cases where resources of the community or the ecosystem are already impacted?”

Jake Kheel, Vice President of Grupo Puntacana Foundation, Dominican Republic



# An industrial approach to tourism

“Sustainable tourism development guidelines and management practices are applicable to all forms of tourism in all types of destinations, including mass tourism and the various niche tourism segments.” (UNWTO, 2024)

Current sustainable tourism practices **do not question the industrial or mechanistic paradigm** they are based on (Bellato et al. 2022; Bellato and Pollock 2023; Hussain & Haley 2022):

1. Tourism is perceived as growing indefinitely
2. Practices focus primarily on minimizing damage to the environment and human health and using resources more efficiently
3. Tourism models prioritize tourism development
4. Dominant industrial paradigm separates humans from the rest of nature
5. Living systems, including those involving humans, have developed relationships where they extract resources or benefits from one another.

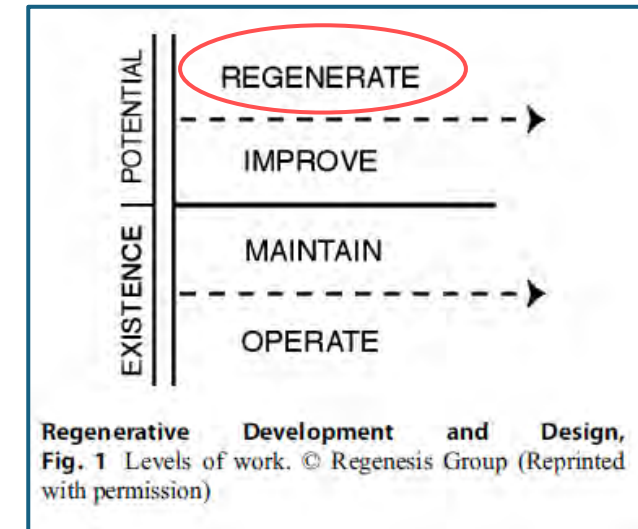
We must change the role we imagine for ourselves from architects of a system we can control and manage to gardeners in a living, shifting ecosystem.

Joshua Ramo, cited in Reed (2007)



# Regenerative paradigm

- Shift from a mechanistic to an ecological/living systems worldview
- To build the capacity of **humans to align and co-evolve with life's systems** (Mang and Reed, 2019) and sustaining life-enhancing conditions (Du Plessis and Brandon, 2014).
- To go beyond current notions of “increased resource efficiency and reduced impact while meeting basic needs” **to strengthen the ecosystem** and create conditions for a **thriving future for all life** (Bellato and Pollock, 2023)
- **Growth** is not an objective in itself but a **relational concept**: it helps the various interconnected systems to build their capacity, mutually benefit and co-evolve (Bellato and Pollock, 2023)



Retrieved from Mang and Reed (2019)

# Regenerative tourism

- Regenerative tourism views tourism businesses as agents of change at the destination level (Inversini et al., 2023)
- Constituent elements of the destination system to stimulate a net positive impact for visitors, local communities, and local nature (Inversini et al., 2023)

Two concepts are inherent to regenerative tourism (Dredge, 2022; Bellato et al., 2022; Bellato and Pollock, 2023 ):

- The regenerative mindset shift
- The ecosystemic approach

# Regenerative tourism: a proposition of a definition

“Regenerative tourism positions tourism activities as **interventions that develop the capacities** of places, communities and the wider stakeholder group **in harmony with interconnected social-ecological systems.**”

Bellato et al. (2022).

A man and a woman are sitting on a rustic wooden bridge that spans a small stream. The man is on the left, wearing a dark t-shirt and shorts, and the woman is on the right, wearing a red shirt and blue pants. They are both looking towards each other. The stream flows over mossy rocks in the foreground. In the background, there are lush green hills, a dense forest of evergreen trees, and a prominent mountain peak under a clear blue sky with a few clouds. The overall scene is a beautiful, natural mountain landscape.

**DO YOU AGREE ON THE NEED TO RETHINK  
OUR CURRENT TOURISM MODEL?**

# Parks are model regions for sustainable development...



TOURISMUSVISION DER SCHWEIZER PÄRKE 2030

## DIE SCHWEIZER PÄRKE SIND VORREITER FÜR ECHTE NACHHALTIGKEIT IN TOURISMUS UND FREIZEIT

Wir, die Schweizer Pärke, engagieren uns dafür, dass Tourismus- und Freizeitaktivitäten in den Pärken eine positive Wirkung auf die Bewohner:innen und die Gäste, die Kultur und die lokale Wirtschaft haben bei gleichzeitiger Erhaltung und Aufwertung von Natur und Landschaft.

- Wir wollen negative Auswirkungen der Tourismus- und Freizeitaktivitäten auf unsere Lebensgrundlage, d.h. die Biodiversität, sowie unsere Natur- und Kulturlandschaften reduzieren und uns proaktiv an den Klimawandel anpassen.
- Wir wollen, dass die touristische Entwicklung zum Wohlbefinden der Menschen beiträgt, sowohl heute als auch in Zukunft. Wir binden die lokale Bevölkerung und die Gäste ein, fördern das gegenseitige Verständnis und sensibilisieren für die Werte der Pärke, die zum nachhaltigen Handeln animieren.
- Wir wollen mit den Tourismus- und Freizeitaktivitäten die Wirtschaft in den Parkregionen stärken. Dabei sind Regionalität, lokale Wertschöpfung und regenerative Kreislaufwirtschaft besonders wichtig. Wir fördern den stetigen Lernprozess hin zu einer nachhaltigeren Wirtschaft.

Als Leuchttürme für eine enkeltaugliche Tourismusentwicklung engagieren wir uns zusammen mit unseren Partnern in einem kontinuierlichen und ganzheitlichen Verbesserungsprozess, um diese Vision zu erreichen.

Netzwerk Schweizer Pärke – Réseau des parcs suisses – Rete del parch svizzer1 – Rait dals parcs svizzers



VISION TOURISME DES PARCS SUISSES 2030

## LES PARCS SUISSES SONT DES PIONNIERS EN MATIÈRE DE DURABILITÉ FORTE DANS LE TOURISME ET LES LOISIRS

Nous, les Parcs suisses, nous engageons à ce que les activités touristiques et de loisirs dans les parcs aient des effets positifs sur les habitant·e·s, les visiteur·euse·s, la culture et l'économie de proximité tout en préservant et valorisant la nature et le paysage.

- Nous voulons réduire les impacts négatifs des activités touristiques et de loisirs sur la nature (biodiversité, paysages naturels et culturels) et nous adapter de manière proactive au changement climatique.
- Nous voulons que le développement du tourisme contribue aujourd'hui comme demain au bien-être des gens. Nous mettons en relation la population locale avec les visiteur·euse·s, encourageons la compréhension mutuelle tout en sensibilisant aux valeurs des parcs, ce qui les stimule pour agir en faveur de la durabilité.
- Nous voulons renforcer l'économie dans les régions des parcs grâce aux activités touristiques et de loisir. La régionalité, la valeur ajoutée locale et l'économie circulaire régénérative sont ainsi particulièrement importantes. Nous soutenons le processus d'apprentissage continu vers une économie plus durable.

En tant que régions phares en matière de développement touristique orienté vers les générations futures, nous nous engageons, avec nos partenaires, dans une démarche d'amélioration globale et continue qui permette d'atteindre cette présente vision.

Réseau des parcs suisses – Netzwerk Schweizer Pärke – Rete del parch svizzer1 – Rait dals parcs svizzers

# ...continuous forward thinking with industry..



**Synergy Day 2025 -  
Joining x Forces**

*Swiss Parks & Tourism  
organisations*




*with focus on regenerative tourism*



# What does regenerative tourism mean?



What are the *driving* and *blocking forces* for the implementation of the regenerative tourism approach?



Treibende Kräfte		Blockierende Faktoren	
			
<b>+++</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Glaubwürdige Redner:innen + Storytelling</li> <li>Konzept: Bottom-up: Transparenz, echte Bedürfnisse der Akteure:innen</li> <li>Branchenübergreifend: gemeinsames Ziel, Zusammenarbeit, Synergie</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leader und Medien sind gegen Regenerativer Tourismus</li> <li>Wahrnehmung: «Alles ist gut» =&gt; kein Handlungsbedarf</li> <li>Unterschiedliche Meinungen und Interessen (zwischen Park und Tourismusorganisation)</li> <li>Angst vor Veränderungen/ hartnäckige Mentalität und Gewohnheiten</li> </ul>	---
<b>++</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impact Hub / Early adopters</li> <li>Sensibilisierung und konkrete Praxisbeispiele</li> <li>Finanzielle Unterstützung (Innotour, Politik)</li> <li>Wissenstransfer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zeitaufwendige und komplexe Prozesse</li> <li>Unsicherheit hinsichtlich der Ergebnisse</li> <li>Angst vor Rentabilitätsverlust und vor Einschränkungen der Unabhängigkeit</li> </ul>	--
<b>+</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential (Angebote, Werte,...) bei den Pärke</li> <li>Umweltbewusstsein</li> <li>Gemeinsame Vision</li> <li>Stolz auf die eigene Region</li> <li>Digitalisierung (Kommunikation, Zugang zu Informationen)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schwierigkeit in der Zusammenarbeit</li> </ul>	-
<b>Ansätze zur Überwindung blockierender Faktoren</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rentabilität nachweisen (KPI, qualitative Kennzahlen)</li> <li>Quick wins und langfristige Ziele formulieren</li> <li>Positive Kommunikation: Nudge-Marketing, charismatische Wegbereiter:innen, Nutzung von Geschichten und Bildern (Storytelling)</li> <li>Territoriale Vision</li> <li>Gegner:innen mit gemeinsamer Vision einbeziehen</li> <li>Sensibilisierung mit guten Partnerbeispielen</li> <li>Schaffung von Rahmenbedingungen</li> </ul>			

Driving forces		Restraining forces	
			
<b>+++</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Orateur-trice-s crédible + storytelling</li> <li>Approche bottom-up : transparence, besoins réels des acteurs</li> <li>Intersectorialité : objectif commun, collaboration, synergie</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders et médias hostiles au concept</li> <li>Perception : « Tout va bien » =&gt; pas besoin d'intervenir</li> <li>Opinions et intérêts divergents (entre parc et organisation touristique)</li> <li>Peur du changement</li> <li>Mentalités et habitudes persistantes</li> </ul>	---
<b>++</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impact Hub / early adopters</li> <li>Sensibilisation et actions concrètes</li> <li>Soutien financier (Innotour, politique)</li> <li>Transfère de connaissances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Processus chronophage et complexe</li> <li>Incertitude face aux résultats</li> <li>Craintes : baisse de gains + perte d'indépendance</li> </ul>	--
<b>+</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potentiel (offres, valeurs, ...) chez les parcs</li> <li>Prise de conscience environnementale</li> <li>Vision commune</li> <li>Fierté régionale</li> <li>Digitalisation (communication, accès à l'information)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Difficulté de coopération</li> </ul>	-
<b>Comment surmonter les facteurs de blocage?</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prouver la rentabilité (KPI, indicateurs qualitatifs)</li> <li>Quick wins et objectifs à long terme</li> <li>Communication positive : nudge marketing, leaders charismatiques, fresques des imaginaires</li> <li>Vision territoriale</li> <li>Bonnes pratiques des partenaires + sensibilisation</li> <li>Acteurs non alignés → besoin d'une vision commune</li> <li>Créer des conditions-cadres</li> </ul>			

# 7 dimensions regenerative tourism

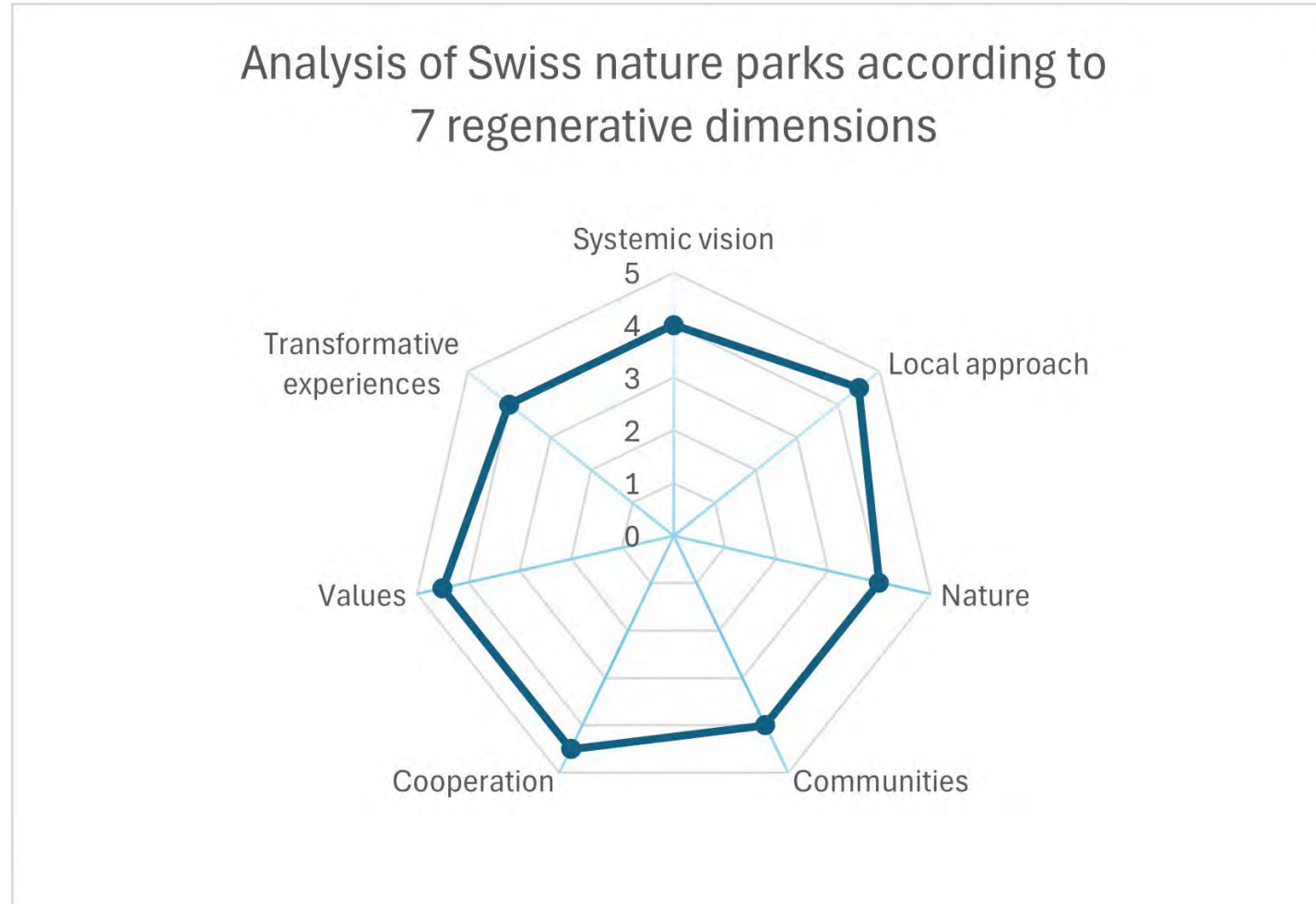


Figure: Evaluation de la vision touristique 2030 du réseau des parcs suisses sous l'angle régénératif selon Balet, S. (ITO, 2025).

# 7 dimensions of regenerative tourism

- **Systemic vision:** based on a holistic and systemic view of tourism; it considers the destination as a whole, taking into account the interactions between stakeholders that influence the overall balance and resilience of the place.
- **Local approach:** specific to a location; it adapts to meet the needs and characteristics of the ecosystem in which it is found; it relies on and promotes local natural, cultural, and human resources and favors short supply chains.
- **Nature:** proactively contributes to the preservation and regeneration of local natural resources; it conducts awareness-raising activities, participates in the protection of local flora and fauna, develops nature-friendly offerings, and applies sustainable environmental practices.
- **Communities:** helps to strengthen the resilience of local communities by supporting and strengthening the skills of local stakeholders and investing in the local economy.

# 7 dimensions of regenerative tourism

- **Cooperation:** transparent and inclusive approach where relationships with stakeholders are balanced and equitable. Governance is shared with key stakeholders, who are able to express their views and influence strategic decision-making; the company raises awareness among its partners and promotes responsible behavior.
- **Values:** values-driven approach; quality takes precedence over quantity; profit is necessary but not an end in itself; the concept of responsibility is anchored in the mission of the company: it is committed to the long-term well-being of all stakeholders and contributes to this proactively.
- **Transformative experiences:** the approach offers transformative experience for guests, allowing them to reconnect with themselves and their environment; it provides meaning and enables personal and collective well-being through authentic experiences based on nature and human relationships.

# Discussion in small groups (20')

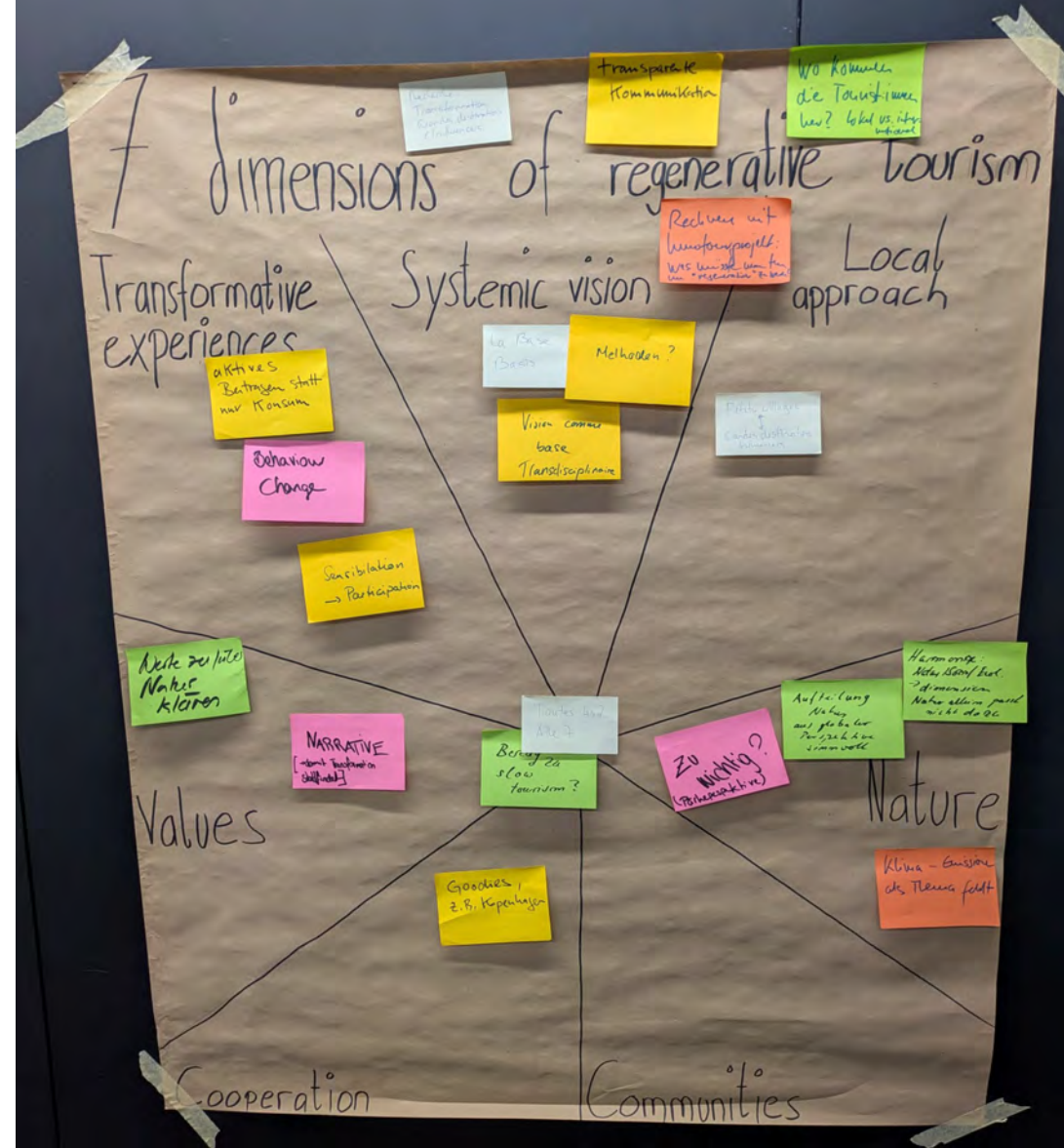
- In which dimension have you already done research? Do you have any examples ?
- Are all dimensions as important ?
- In what dimension can research be applied to support the approach of regenerative tourism and turn it into practice ?
- What obstacles do you see with the concept of regenerative tourism ?

## Instructions

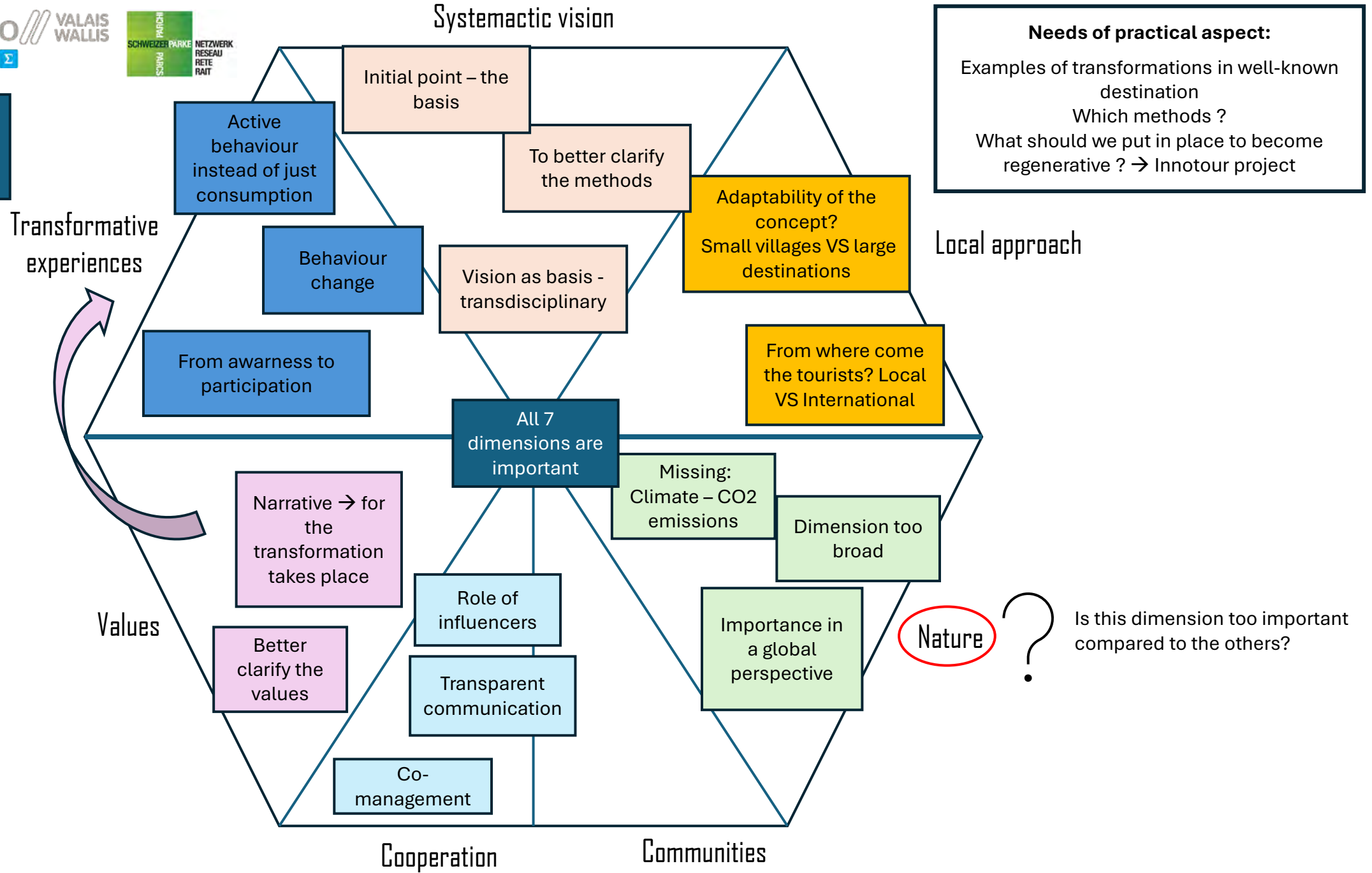
- Discussion of 15 minutes in small groups
- Write the ideas on Post-it and stick them on your poster
- 5 minutes before the end: wrap up your ideas for presenting them briefly (2' per group) at the rest of the audience

# Discussion - Outcomes

- Need more practice → concrete methods, examples, best practices, measures, etc.
- Importance of the communication + role of influencers or leaders (well-known destinations)
- Dimension of nature too broad and too important → to be refined
- Link between dimensions:
  - values influencing transformative experiences
  - systematic vision = the basis for all
- Clarifying the role of tourists: active participation in the destination



Link with slow tourism  
Time = a new dimension?



“COMING TOGETHER IS A  
BEGINNING. KEEPING  
TOGETHER IS PROGRESS.  
WORKING TOGETHER IS  
SUCCESS.”

*- Henry Ford*

A hand is holding a glass jar filled with a colorful salad. The salad contains quinoa, cherry tomatoes, cucumber, and various herbs. It is garnished with a slice of apple, a slice of kiwi, and a purple edible flower. A long, golden-brown cracker is placed on top. The jar sits on a light green plate with a silver spoon and a dark blue napkin. In the background, there is a wooden bowl of bread and a glass of red juice. The scene is set on a rustic wooden table.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!  
ENJOY YOUR LUNCH!**

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