Science and tourism: towards co-production?

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Societal Relevance of Polar Research, 27 November 2018

Environmental Policy Group
Wageningen University & Research
Societal relevance

Science handles research questions

Problem framing

Bringing results to fruition

Problem analysis

Society handles sustainability challenges
Need for co-production

- Global, sustainability problems: Wicked problems
  - Crucial engagement of users, policy-makers, companies
- Wide range of contexts: science-policy interface, design, technology, experience, etc.
- Protagonists:
  - Mutual learning, trust, time and resources invested are returned in implementation
- Critics:
  - Domains of science and policy loose credibility
## Polar tourism

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<th>Country</th>
<th>Kayaking or rafting (river and sea)</th>
<th>Wildlife viewing</th>
<th>Cultural heritage tours</th>
<th>Diving and snorkeling</th>
<th>Zodiac and sailing tours</th>
<th>Hunting and fishing</th>
<th>Fjord cruises</th>
<th>Aurora australis/borealis</th>
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Polar science and tourism

- Tourism is a direct audience of Polar science
- Science concerns: disturbance, costs
- Tourism concerns: wilderness experience
- Mutual interests: legitimacy, transport, cost-efficiency and outreach
- Boundaries managed
- BUT blurring as well
The 2015 Scientific Expedition to Edgeøya Spitsbergen - SEES
SEES.NL

- Idea 2010
- Website 2010
- Academische Jaarprijs 2012
- Crowd funding 2013
- Realisation 2015

Dromen van Spitsbergen

Toffe ijsbeer - Felle strijd Groningse

So you think you can science

Join Flintwave
Crowdfunding, crowdsourcing & social platform for science
The Scientific Expedition to Edgeøya Spitsbergen - realisation

- Goals
  - Public attention for Dutch polar research
  - Looking for new research cooperation
  - Follow up Dutch Edgeøya research

- Participants
  - 50 SEES scientists (funded by NWO)
  - 10 SEES special guests and media (funded by NWO)
  - 40 Arctic Academy tourists (self-funded)
The Scientific Expedition to Edgeøya Spitsbergen - preparation

- Providing information on the goals, itinerary, safety
- Organising equipment
- Aligning scientific objectives
- Aligning science, media and tourism objectives
Combining science and tourism practices?

- Diversification of polar tourism
- Trends in science: citizen science, transdisciplinarity
- Changes in activities, materials, goals, rules, skills, meanings
- Impacts and governance implications
Challenge: material arrangement
Challenge: rules

- Insurance
- Guides/permits
Challenge: identity
Challenges: Meeting objectives
Challenge: Flexibility
Challenges: Focus
Challenge: Skills and understanding
Insight: Some practices overrule others!
Results

- Tourists: very satisfied, some slightly disappointed with level of participation
- Scientists: some real good work done, used to compromising on expeditions, networking
- Organisers: impact has been great, high organizational hurdles

- 2020: next SEES expedition planned
Conclusion

- Societal relevance can be enhanced in multiple ways, including co-production approach, citizen science, eventification
- Science and tourism are two neighbouring sectors with opportunities for mutual benefits
- Co-production also entails compromising
- Learning for best practices: How to obtain mutual benefits?