Responsibility for sustainability within tourism – an emerging discourse

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List of abbreviations

COP21 The 21st Conference of the Parties
CSR Corporate Social Responsibility
GBR Great Barrier Reef
GHG Greenhouse Gas Emissions
GDP Gross Domestic Product
IPCC Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IYSTD The International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development
IY2017 The International Year 2017
PSR Personal Social Responsibility
SMEs Small and Medium Enterprises
SDGs Sustainable Development Goals
TBL Triple Bottom Line
UNEP United Nations Environment Programme
UNDP United Nations Development Programme
UNWTO United Nations World Tourism Organization
UU Uppsala University
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Abstract: The tourism industry is at a pivotal point in time, where the potential and threats associated with the industry have gained global attention. While the field provides numerous development opportunities by being one of the largest global industries, the tourism industry’s contribution to universal threats such as global warming and climate change has been acknowledged. As a response, the industry and academia have experienced a shift towards discourses of sustainable tourism, or more recently responsible tourism, where stakeholders aim to embark on a path of holistic sustainability. The global significance of tourism’s potential to foster sustainable development has further been recognized by the assignment of 2017 as the International year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. At the core of the sustainable tourism debate lies the notion of responsibility, particularly the notion of various stakeholders’ responsibility for sustainability within tourism. Within this paradigm, consumers play a central role, as consumers can guide industry action with their travel related choices. Yet, there is a notable discrepancy between consumer attitudes about sustainability and their travel related behaviour and the disparity begs the question of how consumers perceive their own responsibility for sustainability in a tourism context.

This study set out to explore the emerging discourse of responsibility for sustainability within tourism by examining how the notion has been addressed, constructed and framed within academia and the industry, with a particular interest in the framing of consumer responsibility for sustainability. Seven themes with additional subthemes of notions about responsibility for sustainability were identified through a literature review consisting of 132 peer-reviewed journal articles and two book chapters. Furthermore, an interpretive content analysis of the recently launched UNWTO Responsible Traveller campaign was carried out. The findings suggest that responsibility for sustainability within tourism has emerged as its own, distinct discourse characterized by an ambiguous and complex nature where the notion of responsibility is influenced by the surrounding context, prevailing social norms and individual identity. While responsibility for sustainability is recognized as the responsibility of all tourism stakeholders, the results suggest that consumers in particular abrogate themselves from a responsibility for sustainability in a tourism context and consequently, the industry is seen to lie in a state of lock-in. The findings indicate that there is a need to re-establish how and by whom responsibility for sustainability is constructed and framed within tourism, while notions of sustainable lifestyles and global citizenship should be fostered together with new social norms that challenge the prevailing status quo.

Keywords: Sustainable development, sustainable tourism, responsible tourism, responsibility, sustainable lifestyle, discourse

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Responsibility for sustainability within tourism – an emerging discourse

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Summary: The tourism industry is at a significant point in time where the potential and threats associated with the industry have reached global attention. While the field provides numerous development opportunities by being one of the largest and fastest growing global industries, the tourism industry’s contribution to universal threats such as global warming and climate change has been acknowledged by academics, the industry, media and the public alike. As a response, the industry and academic scholars have started to discuss topics such as sustainable tourism, or more recently responsible tourism, where various actors within tourism aim to embrace the concept of sustainable development, i.e. social-, economic- and environmental sustainability. The significance of sustainable tourism and its ability to promote overall sustainable development has further been globally recognized and celebrated by dedicating the year 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. While sustainable tourism has the primary goal of turning the industry towards a path of heightened sustainability, the one(s) responsible for this increased sustainability is a heavily debated topic. The concept of responsibility consequently lies at the heart of the sustainable tourism debate, and in particular the views about various actors’ responsibility for sustainability within tourism. Within this discussion, the consumer plays an important role as the consumer as the end user can guide industry action with his or her travel related consumption choices, thus directly influencing the sustainability of the industry. However, consumers consistently demonstrate and inconsistency in their attitudes about sustainability and their travel related behaviour, which begs the question of how consumers perceive their own, personal responsibility for sustainability in a tourism context.

This research set out to explore the discussion of responsibility for sustainability within tourism by examining how the notion has been addressed, constructed and framed by academic scholars and the tourism industry, with a specific interest in the framing of consumer responsibility for sustainability. By conducting a literature review consisting of 132 journal articles and two book chapters, the study identified seven major themes with additional subthemes that incorporate views about responsibility for sustainability within tourism. In addition, the recently launched United Nations World Tourism Organization’s promotional campaign of how to be a Responsible Traveller was analysed through the method of interpretive content analysis in order to determine how responsibility is communicated and addressed towards a global audience. The findings suggest that responsibility for sustainability within tourism has emerged as its own, distinct topic of discussion, which is characterized by a controversial and complex nature where the surrounding context, dominant social norms and individual identity influence how responsibility is perceived. While responsibility for sustainability is recognized as the responsibility of all tourism actors, the results suggest that consumers in particular reject a personal responsibility for sustainability in a tourism context and as a result, the industry is seen to lie in a state of lock-in where no one assumes responsibility for increased sustainability within the industry. The findings further indicate that there is a need to re-establish how and by whom responsibility for sustainability is constructed and framed within tourism, while ideas of sustainable lifestyles and global citizenship should be promoted together with new social norms that challenge the dominant societal system we live in.

Keywords: Sustainable development, sustainable tourism, responsible tourism, responsibility, sustainable lifestyle, discourse

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1. Introduction

The slogan for the recently launched United Nations World Tourism Organization’s (UNWTO) Responsible Traveller campaign captures the essential parts of the prevailing discussion on tourism. Sustainable tourism, or the more recent term responsible tourism, favoured by several academics and industry representatives (Caruana et al., 2014), has been in the centre of research, policies and debates during the past decade and rightly so, considering the global significance of the industry. Tourism is one of the largest global industries with 1,235 million tourist arrivals in 2016, making up 10% of the world’s GDP and creating one in ten jobs across the globe (UNWTO, 2017). While being one of the world’s fastest growing industries (ibid.), the industry is also in the midst of one of the world’s most discussed and imminent challenges: climate change (Scott et al., 2012). According to UNWTO and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the industry contributes to around 5% of global CO₂ emissions, with the transport- and accommodation sectors, 75 and 20% respectively, causing the main share of emissions (Penz et al., 2017). To date, there has been two International Conferences on Climate Change and Tourism (Scott et al., 2012), where the interrelations between tourism and climate change have been recognized and appraised and climate change has further been termed “the greatest challenge to the sustainability of tourism in the 21st century” (UNWTO & UNEP, 2008). An important characteristic of climate change is that it can encompass both opportunities and threats to tourism, even if the associated risks are continuously perceived to be higher (Scott et al., 2012). While climate change continues to burgeon in the tourism literature (Fang et al., 2018), the notion penetrated popular discourse already a decade ago and has since become a mainstream topic (Kellstedt et al., 2008). Issues such as human induced climate change, the plastification of oceans, soaring temperatures coupled with devastating floods and habitat loss are daily occurrences in media across the world. Even the renowned environmental documentary Planet Earth II narrated by naturalist Sir David Attenborough indirectly addresses climate change in its portrayal of the natural world that surrounds us. In light of the tourism industry’s role in human induced climate change, it is unsurprising that news headlines concerned with environmental degradation and tourism are notable, with pieces ranging from reports on the Great Barrier Reef (Robertson, 2017), the closing and plastic pollution of beaches (Chandran, 2018; Oliphant, 2017) and to impacts on cultural heritage sites and vanishing destinations due to submersion (Leach, 2018). Similarly, the recent decision to introduce airline taxation in Sweden has received notable attention in media (e.g. Bjerström, 2018; Uosukainen & Pilke, 2018). However, while climate change poses an extensive environmental threat, social and economic factors form an equally important aspect of tourism (Hall, 2013).

The quest for a more sustainable form of tourism began in the 1970s, when the tourism-environment relationship became a new focus for research in response to the negative environmental effects associated with tourism (Mihalic, 2016). The past nearly four decades have generated numerous debates on the topic and the discourse on sustainable or responsible tourism remains a key notion in academia and stakeholder involvement (Bramwell et al., 2008; Buckley, 2012b; Zyzak, 2015; Mihalic, 2016). Sustainable tourism builds on the concept of sustainable development (Mihalic, 2016), which forms a holistic three pillar approach to development encompassing social, economic and environmental dimensions. Undoubtedly the most recognized definition of sustainable development was formed by the Brundtland Commission in 1987, and this definition has also been widely used within tourism (Zyzak, 2015). The global significance of sustainable tourism is evident; sustainable tourism has been identified as one of the thematic areas of the UN resolution The Future We Want (United Nations, 2012), the concept is present in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and three of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have specific targets for tourism (United Nations, 2015). These three SDGs include Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth; Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production and Goal 14: Life below water, but despite these three goals being singled out, tourism has the potential to contribute to all seventeen goals, whether directly or indirectly (UNWTO, 2015). In addition, UNWTO and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) outline that “[t]ourism’s role in achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals ... can be significantly strengthened when sustainable development becomes a shared responsibility and moves to the core of policies and business decision-making within the tourism sector” (World Tourism Organization & United Nations Development
Tourism businesses are key stakeholders in sustainable tourism as their business operations can lead the industry on a path of sustainability (World Tourism Organization & United Nations Development Programme, 2017). Consequently, businesses can embrace a holistic approach to their operation by integrating sustainability in their activities, and this integration commonly manifests in the form of corporate social responsibility (CSR) (ibid.). It has also been noted that aligning business goals with the SDGs can enhance a company’s performance through increased efficiency, enhanced competitiveness and cost savings whilst simultaneously enriching their public image (World Tourism Organization & United Nations Development Programme, 2017). Ecolabels, on the other hand, are widely used indicators for sustainable tourism, and these gained prominence in the 1990s (Font, 2001, p 1). The rising environmental concerns of the public and a shift towards producing and consuming greener products were acknowledged as major possibilities for gaining competitive advantage and seen as measures to ‘green’ the industry (ibid.). Today, the hospitality industry in particular is facing growing pressure to operate in a more sustainable manner (Martínez García de Leaniz et al., 2017), and a sustainability shift in this sector would be an important step in light of the overall sustainability of the industry. As such, consumers’ perceptions, awareness and knowledge of ecolabels become relevant, since tourists as the end consumers assign the overall significance to these labels with their purchasing choices (D.A. Tasci, 2017). Consumers’ perceptions associated with the role of CSR practices and ecolabels can therefore be considered noteworthy topics within the sustainable tourism paradigm, as they form a bridge between the industry and the consumers, thus facilitating the process of making informed choices. However, while CSR and certification indicate steps taken towards sustainable tourism, the vast number of ecolabels on the market can cause confusion on what they actually represent and the trustworthiness of the green jargon used within the industry can be questioned (Font, 2001, pp 1–2, 2002; Penz et al., 2017).

1.1. Problematization

As tourism is a service industry involving numerous stakeholders and long supply chains on a global scale, the complexity of responsibility for sustainability within the industry becomes apparent. Since responsibility inevitably also embodies diverse meanings and connotations across borders and cultures, the meaning of the term itself poses a challenge for sustainable tourism, since responsibility for sustainability may not be perceived in the same way across varying contexts. Hence, the concept of responsibility lies at the heart of the sustainable- and responsible tourism discourse. Responsibility is defined as:

1) the quality or state of being responsible: such as
   a: moral, legal or mental accountability
   b: reliability, trustworthiness
2) something for which one is responsible: burden

(Merriam-Webster.com, 2018).

Numerous theorists like Hart (1968) and Cane (2002) have categorized the term further, with Cane’s classification into retrospective and prospective responsibility being one of the more recent ones (Glanville, 2011; Lagnado et al., 2014). In addition, Glanville (2011) adds a third significant dimension of the direction of responsibility into the discussion.

It is acknowledged that responsibility for sustainability involves all stakeholders, from governments and planners, to the providers of tourism, destinations, people serving as hosts and to tourists themselves (Cooper et al., 2008, p 236). While the industry, destination and policy perspectives of responsible tourism have been well-researched, studies targeting consumers have largely only addressed the attitude-behaviour gap of tourists (Juvan & Dolnicar, 2014; Pulido-Fernández & López-Sánchez, 2016). This gap identifies attitudes that are attributed to a sustainable consumer but behaviours that do not form a logical continuance of these attitudes
The attitude-behaviour gap is, in addition, intimately connected with ecolabels, since these usually constitute the difference between a recognized sustainable or an unsustainable tourism product. Similarly, CSR practices can be viewed as examples of heightened sustainability of a business and these practices can thus help consumers in making informed choices in the tourism context.

As the term responsible tourism suggests, the concept of responsibility has never been as palpable as today. Yet, the varying perspectives of responsibility for sustainability within the sustainable tourism paradigm creates challenges, since a discrepancy between perceptions of the one(s) responsible for sustainability within the paradigm is notable. As a result, the emergence of a new discourse on responsibility for sustainability within tourism can be discerned. However, even if attitudes and intended behaviours of consumers have been explored, consumers’ perceptions of this responsibility (Caruana et al., 2014; Luchs et al., 2015) and the underlying construction of the notion has largely been neglected, calling for further research in the field.

1.2. Research questions and aim

As the introductory chapter suggests, further research on how responsibility, and consumer responsibility in particular, is framed together with increased understanding of tourists’ perceptions of this responsibility is required. Deeper insights in how varying factors affect perceptions of responsibility are also necessary in order to create better strategies for overall tourism management, as this can be viewed to have the potential to minimize the identified attitude-behaviour gap in tourism. This study aims to address these voids in research by providing an overview of the emergent discourse of responsibility for sustainability and the role that various actors play within the paradigm.

Consequently, the following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

- How is responsibility for sustainability constructed within tourism?
- How do consumers perceive their responsibility for sustainability in a tourism context?

The overall aim of this study is therefore to investigate the discourse of responsibility for sustainability within tourism from an academic perspective with the support of empirical data from a case study. To achieve this, the sustainable tourism paradigm will be defined, the concept of responsibility will subsequently be explored, and the findings will be considered in the context of sustainable tourism. Due to the negligible amount of research placed on consumer responsibility for sustainability, the study will aim to address the topic from a consumer perspective while still acknowledging the multitude of actors inevitably present in any discussion on tourism. In support of this aim, the study will further explore how and if perceptions of responsibility for sustainability change in varying contexts in order to identify the underlying reasons for the notorious attitude-behaviour gap of consumers in regard to sustainable behaviour.

2. Background

The following section provides relevant background information to the study and simultaneously outlines the main theoretical concepts applied in the research.

2.1. Sustainable- and responsible tourism

Sustainability has emerged as a buzzword that has been adopted across industries, policies, newspapers, and the public, basically penetrating all markets, including tourism (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2010). Within the travel industry, sustainability is generally referred to when discussing sustainable tourism, which builds upon the concept of sustainable development that encompasses the three pillars of social-, economic- and environmental sustainability (Liu, 2003; Mihalic, 2016). Sustainable tourism has been defined as “[t]ourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities” (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005, p. 12), thus embracing the concept of sustainable development by aspiring for a ‘better future’. However, the concept of sustainable
tourism has been criticized for its ambiguity and for being too theoretical to be applied within the tourism industry (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2010; Mihalic, 2016). The criticism extends to include the evident resource-paradox of the tourism industry (Williams & Ponsford, 2009), which consequently leaves large parts of the industry “... alarmingly unsustainable” (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2010, p 117).

Parallel to the discussion on sustainable tourism, another term, responsible tourism, has started to gain precedence in literature (Caruana et al., 2014; Mihalic, 2016). Jost Krippendorf was among the first to coin the term in his book The Holiday Makers in 1987, where he called for the emergence of a new form of tourism as opposed to the one with adverse impacts on the natural environment and host destinations (Goodwin, 2013, p 4; Mihalic, 2016). The Cape Town Declaration (2002) asserted that all stakeholders have a responsibility for sustainability in tourism and it simultaneously outlined a set of principles of Responsible Tourism in order to guide the industry towards heightened sustainability. Furthermore, recent research argue that responsible tourism relates to concrete behaviour and action taken towards sustainability in contrast to sustainable tourism, which is regarded as the end goal (Goodwin, 2013, pp 4–6; Mihalic, 2016). Similarly to the concept of sustainable tourism, responsible tourism has also experienced much debate within academia (Bramwell et al., 2008; Goodwin, 2013; Caruana et al., 2014; Mihalic, 2016). Nevertheless, a consensus that all forms of tourism can be responsible together with a call for multi-stakeholder involvement can be discerned (ibid.). Another fundamental difference with the two notions is that responsible tourism is striving towards mainstreaming the sustainability agenda among all stakeholders within tourism, whereas sustainable tourism has been claimed to be the responsibility of governments and niche-markets, such as ecotourism (Goodwin, 2013, p 9).

Primarily, both sustainable tourism and responsible tourism build upon the notion of sustainable development, but the concepts have their own distinct characteristics. Somewhat confusingly, terms like green tourism, ecotourism, slow tourism, ethical tourism and alternative tourism, abundant in the tourism literature, are used as synonyms for the two concepts (see e.g. Kasim, 2004; Fennell, 2008; Chettiparamb & Kokkranikal, 2012). Using these terms synonymously add to the confusion of their true meaning and representation (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2010) and thus calls for a distinction of the terms. For the purpose of this paper, sustainable tourism will be used to describe the concept of making tourism more sustainable. It can be seen as an umbrella term for the end goal and as a notion encompassing all forms of green, responsible or sustainable tourism. Responsible tourism, on the other hand, will be used to describe behaviour and action to reach that higher aspiration of sustainability. Hence, sustainable tourism is the overarching concept while responsible tourism constitutes the application of the concept itself (Mihalic, 2016).

2.1.1. CSR and Ecolabels

Certification schemes, CSR activities and transparent reporting are intimately linked with the sustainable tourism paradigm, as these form identifiable symbols of recognized efforts towards environmental responsibility and sustainability (Goodwin, 2013). However, these do not come without challenges (ibid.). The proliferation of green and sustainability messages across industries has caused confusion and scepticism within consumers, as self-proclaimed sustainability messages can hardly be regulated (Font, 2002), which calls to question the trustworthiness of these schemes (Font, 2002; Penz et al., 2017). Yet, the rising environmental awareness of the public increasingly places pressure on the industry to adopt environmentally responsible and sustainable operations (Font, 2001, p 1; Sharpley, 2001, pp 41–42; Martínez García de Leaniz et al., 2017).

The nature of tourism and its global dispersal makes governmental regulation of green claims more difficult (Font, 2002) and concurrently, industries lobby for reduced regulation (Buckley, 2012a). In the tourism industry, this lack of regulation has consequently led to abundant self-regulation in the form of voluntary environmental certification and sustainability reporting (Font, 2002; Buckley, 2012a; Penz et al., 2017). The myriad of ecolabels on the market encompass national, regional and international alternatives all with differing criteria and deliverables (Font, 2001, p 8, 2002; Margaryan & Stensland, 2017), which, in turn, has been noted to lead even environmentally conscious consumers to discard green messages of the industry due to the confusion that the multitude of labels cause (Font, 2002; Penz et al., 2017). Despite the critique, a voluntary ecolabel based on third-party verification indicates that the business is committed to environmental responsibility and sustainable operation, and the label can be used as a marketing tool to gain competitive
advantage in an industry where greenwashing is abundant (Font, 2001, pp 1–4; Karlsson & Dolnicar, 2016; Martínez García de Leaniz et al., 2017). An ecolabel can subsequently be regarded as a bridge between the industry and consumers, as the label displays an identifiable sustainability symbol for the product or service in relation to the business’s CSR activities and can thus help to facilitate consumers in making informed choices. Within the scope of this paper, the terms ecocertification and ecolabel will be used interchangeably without a distinction between the two terms.

2.2. The concept of responsibility

At the core of the sustainable tourism paradigm lies the concept of responsibility. The goal of sustainable tourism is to make the industry holistically and inherently sustainable (Mihalic, 2016), and responsible tourism asserts that all forms of tourism can be responsible (Goodwin, 2013). How responsibility is defined, perceived and framed as well as the question of agency for responsibility can therefore be perceived as key points in the discussion.

The definition of responsibility (Merriam-Webster.com, 2018) presented earlier identifies responsibility as something one is responsible for, including a moral or legal accountability and trustworthiness, while simultaneously recognizing that one’s responsibility for something can also be viewed as a burden. The dictionary meaning of the word further builds upon a long tradition of philosophical and academic debate.

2.2.1. Different notions of the concept

The nature of responsibility has puzzled philosophers since the time of Aristotle (Wolf, 2015) and the notion has been extensively studied in psychology, ethics and law alike (Hamilton, 1978; Lagnado et al., 2014; Wolf, 2015). One of the most well-known categorisations of responsibility was offered by Hart in 1968 in the discipline of law and more recently, Cane (2002) built upon this classification when he identified a temporal element in regards to responsibility (Glanville, 2011). This temporal element is divided into retrospective and prospective responsibility, with retrospective responsibility referring to accountability of what already happened and prospective responsibility referring to obligations for coming events (Cane, 2002). Despite these definitions being formulated within law, Lagnado et al. (2014) argue that it is natural to extend this reasoning also into daily, non-legal contexts. Glanville (2011) makes a noteworthy addition to the debate when he introduces a third element, the direction of responsibility, i.e. who we are responsible to, into the discussion.

Moral responsibility is intimately connected with ethics and the principles of right and wrong behaviour. Ethics entered tourism research around three decades ago and since then it has come to gain a central part in tourism literature (Hall & Brown, 2006, p 6). Ethics place a set of moral reference points as a base for behaviour and emphasises social responsibility when considering perceptions and decision-making (ibid.). Social responsibility in turn, can be regarded as a responsibility of acting for the benefit of society at large (Caruana & Crane, 2008; D.A. Tasci, 2017). This social responsibility can be placed upon individuals, i.e. having an individual responsibility for making decisions that benefit society, or on corporations and organisations, which sequentially has largely taken the form of corporate social responsibility (Caruana & Crane, 2008; Sandve et al., 2014). Within the tourism industry, CSR often manifests in various policies and codes of practice and these often include acquiring an ecolabel for the organisation, service or product (Font, 2002; Martínez García de Leaniz et al., 2017). The consumers can thereby act upon their individual social responsibility by choosing products, services or organisations that demonstrate environmental responsibility and a commitment to sustainable operation (Sharpley, 2001, p 54). Such an environmentally conscious consumer has received a multitude of denominations across literature, but the use of the terms green- or sustainable consumers is prevalent (López-Sánchez & Pulido-Fernández, 2016).

2.3. The role of the tourist: addressing the attitude – behaviour gap

The notion of green or sustainable consumption is a trending topic in not only the tourism literature (López-Sánchez & Pulido-Fernández, 2016), but across disciplines, industries and in the global environmental
A general understanding of the industry-consumer relationship is that consumer demand drives supply, i.e. if consumers demonstrate a demand for sustainable products or services, the industry will consequently provide these products or services (D.A. Tasci, 2017; Martínez García de Leaniz et al., 2017; Penz et al., 2017). The food industry in particular constitutes a prime example of how organic, ecolabelled or fair-trade labelled products have entered the market in abundance as a response to consumer demand (Becchetti & Rosati, 2007; Hughner et al., 2007). Yet, the tourism industry cannot be said to have had a similar response (Font, 2002).

Consumer awareness and knowledge about ecolabels are generally attributed to sustainable consumption choices (Penz et al., 2017) and within the food industry, these labels are well-known and trusted (Sirieix et al., 2013). Ecolabels within the tourism industry, on the other hand, are relatively unknown and consequently suffer from a lack of awareness and trustworthiness (Penz et al., 2017), which can be attributed to the proliferation and variation of these labels (Font, 2002; Penz et al., 2017). Another notable revelation connected to sustainability within tourism has received vast attention in the tourism literature over the past decades; namely the attitude-behaviour gap of tourists (Juvan & Dolnicar, 2014; López-Sánchez & Pulido-Fernández, 2016; D.A. Tasci, 2017; Penz et al., 2017). Numerous theories, like the theory of reasoned action and the theory of planned behaviour (Barr et al., 2011b; Sandve et al., 2014), suggest that green values and environmental consciousness lead to sustainable consumption patterns and that this pattern should have a ‘spill-over effect’ to include all aspects of life (Barr et al., 2011b). Yet, studies indicate that this is not the case when it comes to tourism (Sharpley, 2001, p 42; Barr et al., 2011b). Extensive research shows that tourists may make sustainable and environmentally friendly choices in everyday situations, such as when buying groceries, but then choose to ignore these qualities when purchasing tourism services or while on holiday (Sharpley, 2001; D.A. Tasci, 2017; Penz et al., 2017). Studies show that consumers’ short term, individual and tangible benefits prevail over long-term, environmental (i.e. social) benefits, and elements like quality and price consistently rank higher when questioned about the highest motivations for choosing a holiday (D.A. Tasci, 2017; Penz et al., 2017). Research has also shown that some consumers regard ecolabelled tourism products as expensive and of bad quality, even if the ecolabel might indeed increase the quality of the product or service while concurrently being equally priced to the non-certified alternative (Font, 2002; D.A. Tasci, 2017). This misconception has led to a curious new phenomenon within literature, so called greenwashing, where the green credentials of an organisation, a product or a service is intentionally omitted even if these do indeed extensively incorporate environmental responsibility and sustainability (Font et al., 2017).

The combination of these aspects subsequently calls to question consumers’ own perceptions of their responsibility to act in a sustainable manner in the context of tourism. Conversely, Mihalic (2016) suggests that enhanced consumer responsibility starts to manifest when the legacy of Krippendorf is mentioned or when action and behaviour is discussed in relation to ethics and morals, consequently consolidating the notion of responsible tourism.
3. Methods

As this study is of exploratory character, secondary data in the form of a literature review served as the starting point for the research. The exploratory nature further called for a flexible design approach (Robson & McCartan, 2016, p 148) where the findings of the literature review guided the empirical part of the study. The combination of these two methods enabled gaining a comprehensive overview of how responsibility for sustainability is framed within tourism and how the consumer and other relevant stakeholders are positioned within the discourse.

3.1. Literature Review

A literature review is a useful method when one wants to get an overview of what has been published on a certain subject (Robson & McCartan, 2016, p 52). A review of the existing literature allows one to identify general patterns from a variety of research (ibid.), which will enable ascertaining how the concept of responsibility has been addressed throughout the sustainable tourism paradigm. Furthermore, a review of the existing literature can facilitate identifying possible turning points in the discourse of responsibility for sustainability within tourism. The results of the literature review are presented as a narrative review (Bryman, 2012, p 102), where the findings are grouped in emergent themes (Bryman, 2012, p 580).

A literature search was carried out using the Uppsala University (UU) Library online search tool on 12 February 2018. The UU search tool was chosen for the literature search because it provides a comprehensive access point to a variety of databases and academic journals, including high impact journals in tourism studies such as Journal of Travel Research, Tourism Management, Annals of Tourism Research and Journal of Sustainable Tourism. However, the platform also includes smaller tourism journals and an array of periodicals from other disciplines. Not limiting the study strictly to the largest tourism journals was deemed necessary, as smaller journals and other disciplines were seen to have the potential of providing useful insights on the researched topic due to the interdisciplinary character of tourism and the intricate nature of the concept of responsibility. The exploratory character of the study further necessitated the use of an extensive search platform and keywords, as anything might prove important in a flexible design approach (Robson & McCartan, 2016, p 152). Using the UU online search tool to find literature thus facilitated gaining a holistic overview on the topic. An outline of the range of journals included in this study can be found in Table 1.

In order to gain a thorough overview of the literature published, a broad search was done using the following search terms in abstract: tourism AND sustainability OR responsibility AND consumer responsibility OR sustainable consumption OR responsible consumption OR social responsibility OR consumer behaviour* OR sustainable lifestyle OR ecolabel OR ecocertification OR greenhushing. The search was restricted to peer reviewed, English articles and resulted in an initial pool of 373 articles. Relevant pieces were screened by looking at the title, abstract and keywords based on a set of criteria, which comprised:

1. A focus on sustainable or responsible tourism
2. Indicating perceptions on responsibility
3. Mentioning sustainable or responsible consumption, sustainable lifestyles
4. Showing a clear relevance to the overall aim of the study

By applying these criteria to the literature, 123 articles were identified in the initial screening. These articles were subsequently examined in more detail and in the process, additionally 19 articles were discarded as irrelevant to the study. If articles found in the early stages of the writing process were not included in the search results, a subjective choice was made to add these to the literature pool as they were deemed highly relevant for the analysis. In addition, if the identified articles from the literature search referred to other interesting pieces, an independent choice was made to include these in the pool. Consequently, 30 articles were added, which resulted in a final literature pool of 132 articles and two book chapters. These were read in their entirety with the findings presented in section 4.1.
The international organisation UNWTO was identified as a major stakeholder in how responsibility for sustainability is perceived, enacted and framed in the tourism discourse and consequently, the study took the character of a case study. A case study is a research strategy that focuses on a particular case and its context, and it generally involves collecting qualitative data (Robson & McCartan, 2016, pp 149–150). Content analysis is an indirect, un-obtrusive measure, which allows the researcher to analyse documents as they are and in the context that they were produced (Robson & McCartan, 2016, p 350). The document in turn, can comprise both written text, images and sound (ibid.). This approach is particularly useful in a context where text, visuals and audio interact, as the analysis can encompass the interrelations of the various pieces. Correspondingly, interpretive content analysis is widely used within marketing and communication, and it allows the researcher to analyse both manifest and latent content in the material (Drisko & Maschi, 2015). Drisko & Maschi (2015) further note that interpretive content analysis draws on researcher interpretations and insights that aim to describe content and meanings, usually in a descriptive manner. Moreover, interpretive content analysis allows the researcher to utilize connotative codes that relate to the symbolic or overall meaning of the text in addition to examining explicit and manifest content (Drisko & Maschi, 2015). Interpretive content analysis therefore provides an opportunity to gain a comprehensive overview of the selected material, where the researcher is

### Table 1 The number of referenced work and their origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journal name</th>
<th>Number of articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journal of Sustainable Tourism</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annals of Tourism Research</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, <em>Tourism Management</em></td>
<td>5 respectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal of Cleaner Production, <em>Tourism and Hospitality Research</em></td>
<td>4 respectively</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.2. Case Study and Interpretive Content Analysis

The international organisation UNWTO was identified as a major stakeholder in how responsibility for sustainability is perceived, enacted and framed in the tourism discourse and consequently, the study took the character of a case study. A case study is a research strategy that focuses on a particular case and its context, and it generally involves collecting qualitative data (Robson & McCartan, 2016, pp 149–150). Content analysis is an indirect, un-obtrusive measure, which allows the researcher to analyse documents as they are and in the context that they were produced (Robson & McCartan, 2016, p 350). The document in turn, can comprise both written text, images and sound (ibid.). This approach is particularly useful in a context where text, visuals and audio interact, as the analysis can encompass the interrelations of the various pieces. Correspondingly, interpretive content analysis is widely used within marketing and communication, and it allows the researcher to analyse both manifest and latent content in the material (Drisko & Maschi, 2015). Drisko & Maschi (2015) further note that interpretive content analysis draws on researcher interpretations and insights that aim to describe content and meanings, usually in a descriptive manner. Moreover, interpretive content analysis allows the researcher to utilize connotative codes that relate to the symbolic or overall meaning of the text in addition to examining explicit and manifest content (Drisko & Maschi, 2015). Interpretive content analysis therefore provides an opportunity to gain a comprehensive overview of the selected material, where the researcher is
able to study the data in its broader socio-cultural context and to further interpret explicit content as well as implicit meanings and symbols.

In order to gain an understanding of how the UNWTO addresses responsibility for sustainability, the organisation’s webpage unwto.org was examined. Across the webpage, responsibility is addressed both implicitly and explicitly. Most of the content addresses industry and business responsibility for sustainability with a few notable exceptions focusing on consumer responsibility. The highlights of the webpage content with a focus on responsibility is outlined in Table 2.

Table 2 Mentions of responsibility on unwto.org

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explicit mention of responsibility</th>
<th>Main target group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World Tourism Day</td>
<td>Industry, Business, Tourists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Planet</td>
<td>Industry, Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Code of Ethics for Tourism</td>
<td>Industry, Business, Policy, Tourists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of Children in Tourism</td>
<td>Industry, Business, Policy, Tourists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IY2017</td>
<td>Industry, Business, Tourists</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implicit mention of responsibility</th>
<th>Main target group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tourism and 2030 Agenda</td>
<td>Industry, Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism and Climate Change</td>
<td>Industry, Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel Energy Solutions</td>
<td>Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessible Tourism</td>
<td>Industry, Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender and Tourism</td>
<td>Industry, Business, Policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responsibility addressed explicitly from a tourist perspective

| Campaigns                                  | World Tourism Day, Travel. Enjoy. Respect., Your actions count, One Billion Tourists One Billion Opportunities |

The Global Code of Ethics for Tourism was identified as the most relevant explicit mention of responsibility on the UNWTO webpage, with the Code targeting all relevant stakeholders in tourism. In celebration of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development celebrated last year, the UNWTO launched an international campaign based on the Code targeting tourists and the way in which tourists can engage in responsible behaviour on their travels. The Responsible Tourist campaign centres around the brochure Tips for a Responsible Traveller and a promotional video, here termed Travel. Enjoy. Respect. The campaign was identified to provide core insights into the discourse of responsibility for sustainability within tourism, especially from a consumer perspective, and the campaign material consequently served as the foundation for the empirical section.

3.3. Limitations

There are a number of limitations to this study, in particular related to the selected material. The literature review might not cover all relevant publications related to responsibility for sustainability within tourism, and therefore important additions to the discourse may unknowingly have been omitted. This limitation was to a certain extent addressed by using the UU online search tool as the search platform, as this provided a literature pool ranging from a variety of journals from several diverse disciplines. However, it must be acknowledged that a literature search in specific databases could have yielded varying results. Another limitation relates to the Responsible Traveller material as the two analysed documents only represent the viewpoint of UNWTO. However, as the organization is a major stakeholder in the sustainable tourism paradigm, the limitation can to a certain extent be seen as necessary in order to understand how consumer responsibility in tourism is addressed in a wider, global context. An obvious limitation also relates to the possible bias of the researcher, as the literature review has been carried out by a single researcher with subjective choices to exclude or include articles. The Responsible Traveller material was also analysed by the same researcher, which might have led to a certain bias of the phrases, visuals and symbols found meaningful. This possible bias has, however, been addressed by aiming for an objective analysis by providing verification in the empirical data and by being self-
reflexive throughout the analysis process while simultaneously acknowledging the personal background and viewpoints a researcher brings to any undertaken research.

4. Results

The results are divided into two main sections. The first section outlines the findings of the literature review and presents a model based on the findings of how responsibility for sustainability is constructed and framed. The second section describes the results of the case study of the UNWTO Responsible Traveller campaign through interpretive content analysis.

4.1. Literature review

The majority of the articles in the literature review were published during the latest decade, with the highest amount published during the past two years. Figure 1 indicates the number of articles published per year.

![Figure 1 Number and publishing year of referenced work.](image)

While conducting the literature review, seven main themes with additional subthemes addressing notions of responsibility were identified. These themes are outlined in Table 3 and examined in more detail in the following sections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main theme</th>
<th>Subtheme(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morals and Ethics</td>
<td>Individual and collective responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narratives of Responsibility</td>
<td>Responsibility in a globalised world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Lifestyles</td>
<td>Dissonance and rationalisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate Change</td>
<td>Behavioural change and policy measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Social Responsibility</td>
<td>The persistent gap, Ecocertification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication and Marketing</td>
<td>Communication platforms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1.1. Morals and Ethics

The studied literature revealed that there is a general consensus among academia that the tourism literature is experiencing a moral turn (Su et al., 2013; Kyllönen, 2016; Gao et al., 2017). This turn has been attributed to the amount of philosophical questions, such as questions of ethics, morality and responsibility, that have entered the tourism discourse during the past decade (Gao et al., 2017). A notable feature within this research is the discussion of people having a moral responsibility to act in a sustainable manner (Kyllönen, 2016). Fennell (2008) was among the first to address ethics in tourism when he used an approach based on Kierkegaard’s ethic of responsibility to address the underlying philosophical questions in the industry. Fennell highlights the importance of sacrifice when moving towards responsibility and challenges the notion of ‘tourism as freedom’ by arguing that any chance of freedom is taken away if travellers deny responsibility (Fennell, 2008). For Fennell (2008), an underlying understanding of one’s self-consciousness of being or becoming responsible is essential for carrying out responsible individual actions. Grimwood & Doubleday (2013) drew upon Fennell’s (2008) notion of positioning the individual consumer at the core of responsible tourism but utilised the teachings of philosopher Levinas in their study on nature-based tourism. Levinas’ asserts that humans are always responsible and that this responsibility is inherently to and for others while embracing both past and future spatial scales (Grimwood & Doubleday, 2013). In their study, Grimwood & Doubleday (2013) found that this responsibility is embedded within a personal and social-cultural identity, where nature, responsibility and identity interweave to construct ethically concerned communities. Similarly, education has been noted to play an important role in shaping perceptions, emotions and intuitions that act as guiding threads for ethical behaviour (Gössling, 2018) while Ruhi Yaman & Gurel (2006) further recognize the cultural differences at play, rendering ethical decision-making a problematic and elusive phenomenon.

4.1.1.1. Individual and collective responsibility

A notable distinction between individual and collective responsibility for sustainability was also evident in the literature and the notion of climate change was often used as a descriptive example. Namely, climate change has emerged as a key issue among climate ethicists and Kyllönen (2016) extensively addresses the moral nature of the problem through the so called no-harm principle. In his article, Kyllönen examines the individualist and collectivist perspectives of responsibility for climate change, where the former asserts that each individual emitter bears a personal responsibility for their induced harms and consequently a correlative personal duty to avert the harm (2016). In contrast, the latter asserts that emitters can only be held responsible as a collective and therefore the damage can also only be averted by acting as a collective entity (Kyllönen, 2016). Kyllönen (2016) terms the collectivist approaches the retrospective no-individual-responsibility and the prospective primacy-of-collective-prevention. In his article, he accepts the prospective premise by arguing that only by acting as a collective whole can enough change be made to have a difference (Kyllönen, 2016). But, in contrast, Kyllönen (2016) argues that individual emitters can be held morally responsible for their actions if they deliberately sustain and foster carbon intensive actions. Kyllönen (2016) continues by claiming that acceptance of personal moral responsibility might even provide emitters with motivation to fulfil their obligations while also placing social pressure on each individual. He concludes by stating that individual responsibility for sustainable actions are more vital than ever due to the absence of effective action by collective and political institutions (Kyllönen, 2016). A contrasting view to personal moral obligation is presented by Sinnott-Armstrong (2010), who exemplifies his stance by contemplating leisure driving through a set of moral principles. According to him, no moral principle can adequately support the claim that an individual has a moral obligation to not drive for leisure, even if this action causes harm in the form of carbon emissions that lead to global warming (Sinnott-Armstrong, 2010). Instead, he argues that it is the moral obligation of governments to address the issue because they have the power to make a real difference, while simultaneously urging individuals to act upon their real moral obligation, which is to get governments to do their jobs in order to prevent the current climate crisis (Sinnott-Armstrong, 2010). Schinkel (2011) heavily criticizes the approach of Sinnott-Armstrong (2010) by stating that the society we are a part of makes avoiding harmful behaviour largely beyond the control of an individual, but that this fact does not exonerate an individual of her moral responsibility. As individual actions constitute parts of a collective whole, these unilateral actions inevitably both constitute part of the problem and the solution, and thus individuals have a moral responsibility to change
their behaviour while also promoting the collective actions needed to deal with the issue of climate change (Schinkel, 2011). Echoing a similar stance, Jamieson (2010) took on the notion of climate change, which he termed “... the world’s biggest collective-action problem” (p 317). He discusses the moral problem from a utilitarian point of view and highlights that both individuals and nations seem to reason in ways that abrogate responsibility by waiting for others to act first (Jamieson, 2010). In contrast to this inaction, Jamieson (2010) puts forth the notion of green virtues that utilitarians should personally exhibit while trying to draw out the same characteristics in others.

When investigating Australian tourism strategies, Moyle et al. (2014) found a noteworthy shift in how sustainability has been addressed in the tourism discourse, with the discourse changing from having a focus on nature, the triple bottom line and social concepts to a discourse emphasising climate, adaptation, transformation and responsibility. This shift is also palpable in the literature, with a discernible subtheme focusing on individuals’ personal responsibility for sustainable behaviour. Even if individual emitters, consumers or travellers are reasoned to have a personal moral responsibility for sustainability, it does not imply that these individuals will act accordingly or perceive that they do have personal responsibility as indicated by the notion of personal and collective responsibility (Passafaro et al., 2015). Individuals’ felt personal responsibility can vary, and individuals can for instance feel less personally responsible for the current environmental state when comparing themselves to others who drive bigger cars (Luchs et al., 2015). In their study on consumer responsibility for sustainable consumption, Luchs et al. (2015) identified four perspectives of responsibility: responsibility as cognition, as emotion, as moral imperative and responsibility as socio-culturally shaped. The authors consequently asserted that responsibility is characterized by a dynamic and fluent nature (Luchs et al., 2015).

Adjacent to felt personal responsibility, personal social responsibility (PSR) has emerged as a new concept in tourism literature that also places the individual at the centre of the behavioural debate, but studies on the concept remain scarce (McKercher et al., 2014; Foller-Carroll & Charlebois, 2016). By ascribing PSR, individuals acknowledge that their actions can have global effects that affect others, which gives them a personal responsibility for these actions (McKercher et al., 2014). McKercher et al. (2014) looked at PSR from an educational perspective in order to ascertain how students having taken courses featuring social responsibility, ethics and sustainability related these concepts to themselves. Their findings were surprising, as these students exhibited lower levels of self-consciousness and were less likely to prescribe to a personal or even national sense of responsibility for climate change and instead, they blamed an ethereal other for the problems (McKercher et al., 2014). These findings relate to an earlier study by Blamey & Braithwaite (1997), who found that the most committed green consumers were the least likely to take on personal responsibility for entrance fees to national parks, instead insisting that the costs should be shared between all tax payers. However, when studying students’ and young professionals’ attitudes towards volunteer tourism, so called voluntourism, Foller-Carroll & Charlebois (2016) found that these individuals had a desire to fulfil their sense of PSR by meaningfully contribute to global issues while striving towards becoming so called global citizens. This sense of ‘giving back’ to society at large has also been noted by other scholars (Olsen et al., 2018). Similarly, the personal responsibility of travellers to keep travel both environmentally and socially responsible has already been recognized in early studies of ecotourism (Holland et al., 1998).

4.1.2. Narratives of Responsibility

While the moral and ethical dimensions of responsibility were prominent in the researched literature, various ways of talking about responsibility, so called narratives of responsibility, could also be discerned. Stanford (2008) notes that there are three aspects that characterize responsible tourism: it is inclusive and covers both mass and alternative forms of tourism; it encompasses a philosophy of the quadruple bottom line embracing economic, environmental, social and cultural aspects; and, it benefits everyone involved. She further asserts that there needs to be an understanding of what responsible tourism behaviour entails in order for travellers to be able to act in a responsible manner (Stanford, 2008). Similarly, Fennell (2008) notes that "a failure to have knowledge of what responsibility means is in itself a lack of responsibility” (p 4). However, Butcher (2015) highlights that what is deemed to be responsible is generally discussed and ascertained by academics, campaigners and NGOs. Grimwood et al. (2015) echo this view by noting that such bodies decide what is true
and normal, while arguing that varying power relations, values and interests are embodied when considering responsibility in tourism. Similarly, Sin (2017) emphasises that most constructions of ethical and moral responsibility in tourism are developed from a Global North perspective and their responsibilities towards the Global South, highlighting the problematic postulation of a group with responsibilities and one deprived of responsibilities. In addition, Caruana & Crane (2008) further note that all stakeholders, from governments to media and tourists themselves, construct a meaning of consumer responsibility either knowingly or involuntarily, which emphasises the different characteristics responsibility can take on.

Stanford (2008) found that industry representatives associate responsible tourism behaviour with dimensions of respect, awareness, reciprocity, engagement and economic aspects in the sense of leaving revenue to the visited destination. She further highlights that responsible behaviour is characterized by complexity, that it is context-based and that individuals can simultaneously represent multiple dimensions and have varying degrees of responsibility within each of these dimensions (Stanford, 2008). Grimwood et al. (2015) also note the contextually bound notions of responsibility and highlight that time, space and the surrounding social norms influence what is considered to be responsible. In Stanford’s (2008) view, consumers should therefore be matched with the right context, i.e. destinations should attract visitors that represent the right dimensions or degrees of responsibility for the destination in question, and the hosts should subsequently guide and support the visitor in the destination itself. However, Caruana et al. (2014) caution against such an approach by indicating that consumers’ own constructions of responsibility might be different from the industries’ perspectives and these constructions are further illustrated by distinct heterogeneity, which can pose problems when carrying out market segmentation. The authors found that consumers create unique and distinctive narratives of responsibility that at times might coincide with industry narratives, while at others these industry narratives might be overlooked or refuted (Caruana et al., 2014).

4.1.2.1. Responsibility in a globalised world

A growing number of literature highlight that globalisation has decreased the distance between worlds, i.e. that the care and responsibility previously showcased to those in our immediate surrounding now can be extended to distant others (Butcher, 2015). This concept named geographies of care and responsibility, is regarded as an indication of a moral turn in human geography (Butcher, 2015) similar to the moral turn indicated in the tourism literature (see e.g. Su et al., 2013; Kyllönen, 2016; Gao et al., 2017). Geographies of responsibility in tourism is seen to embrace a broader perspective on tourism by incorporating the concepts of ethical consumption, CSR, fair trade and sustainability into the discourse (Luh Sin et al., 2015). Luh Sin et al. (2015) assert that this moral turn is, however, contextually bound and thus there is a need to view the accompanying questions of morality, responsibility and ethics as equally context-bound and dependent. Similarly, Walker & Moscardo (2016) assert that a sense of place should be accompanied by a care of place, a notion that forms an essential part of sustainable tourism. Luh Sin et al. (2015, p 124) further termed responsibility as a “place-based idea”, where responsibility has taken on “... seemingly universal ethical connotations”, where what it means to be responsible is ruled by pre-defined ways of being and behaving. The notion of geographies of care and responsibility is prominent in especially the volunteer tourism literature, where individuals are seen to embrace both hedonistic, self-serving motives as well as a rooted sense of giving back and being responsible human beings (Luh Sin et al., 2015). Such a combination of motives is viewed as problematic, as volunteer tourism thus can enhance the existing global inequalities and power structures instead of alleviating them (Germann Molz, 2016). Still, Germann Molz (2016) notes that voluntourism fosters notions of citizenship and individual responsibility rather than a continuation of capitalist hedonism.

The prevailing system of global capitalism and its ideology of consumerism is seen to programme individuals into thinking that holidays are a right, that they are deserved and that they are an unequivocal necessity (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2010). Unsustainable behaviour is further linked with the prevalent laissez-faire capitalist market approach (Mihalic, 2016), which necessitates viewing behavioural change from a broader societal, political and institutional context (Hall, 2013). At the same time, there is growing evidence from the last decade that responsibility for various social and environmental problems is placed in the hands of so-called citizen-consumers, who are faced with the notion of making informed and responsible consumption and behavioural choices in their everyday lives (Barr et al., 2011a; b). However, such an approach is challenging as consumption can be regarded as inconspicuous, habitual and something engaged in by routine (Hall, 2013).
Through the viewpoint of sustainability as the responsibility of citizen-consumers, responsibility has effectively been depoliticised from a matter of the state or business to a notion of global citizenship (Luh Sin et al., 2015; Font et al., 2017). In contrast, individuals seem unwilling to assume personal responsibility and Barr et al. (2011a; b) question whether this might be because global issues such as climate change challenge the prevailing neoliberal consumption society and its established social norms.

Some scholars note that people seem to be in a state of climate denial, where knowledge about climate change is suppressed to avoid negative emotions and to maintain notions of identity, which further strengthens the prevalent status quo (Norgaard, 2011). Consequently, Melissen et al. (2016) imply that the tourism industry is in a state of lock-in, a so called social dilemma, where various stakeholders and their conflicting interests and ways of behaving prevent a move towards enhanced sustainability. Hall (2013) notes that in order to solve wicked problems such as climate change and consumption, the whole system of provision needs to change so that more apt tourism behaviours can be fostered. Similarly, Higgins-Desbiolles (2010) concludes that alternative sustainable value systems and ideologies, which take into account the inherent nature of living in a finite world, are needed and in these, notions of global citizenship ought to prevail. For a shift towards sustainability to be possible, the inconsistency between stated attitudes and behaviour should, according to Mika (2015), be considered as an inescapable feature of tourism consumption while Melissen et al. (2016) argue that the context of unsustainable behaviour needs to change in order to change the behaviour of both individual consumers and businesses. On a similar note, Weaver (2014) argues for a solution he coins ‘enlightened mass tourism’, where characteristics of alternative tourism are combined with that of mass tourism through a paradigm nudge. In his view, this nudge is essential to create synthesis between two paradigms characterized by major, inherent inner contradictions in order to form an improved and more sustainable whole (Weaver, 2014). Industry representatives therefore need to endeavour to “... become sustaining rather than just sustainable” (Moscardo & Murphy, 2014) while both the industry and consumers need regulative frameworks in order to create a broader sense of responsibility for sustainable practices (Saarinen, 2013). Saarinen (2013) further notes that equally important to whose responsibility we are referring to in the sustainable tourism discourse, is the question of who we are responsible to.

Miller et al. (2010) suggest that responsibility should be addressed through a notion of reciprocity, as travellers often state that they have a right and entitlement to travel (Miller et al., 2010; Mika, 2015). In Miller et al.’s view, this would consequently imply that travellers have a corresponding responsibility combined with that right (2010). When studying how the public talks about climate change, Hanna et al. (2016) identified three prominent themes and noted that these constitute major barriers to acting more sustainably, which consequently diminished the felt individual responsibility to act. In these themes, the public questioned the scientific evidence of climate change, they prescribed responsibility to an ethereal other and viewed heightened CO₂ levels as being beneficial to nature (Hanna et al., 2016). The authors asserted that these public narratives of talking about climate issues continue to absolve individual responsibility and as a result, the authors call for enhanced policy measures in order to achieve sustainability in the industry (Hanna et al., 2016). Providing consumers with a sense of personal responsibility for the impact of their holidays is consequently vital (Miller et al., 2010).

4.1.3. Sustainable Lifestyles

Notably, the past decade has seen a growing focus on the role that individual citizens play in environmental challenges such as climate change (Barr et al., 2010). Studies in this field have largely focused on the everyday home context and Barr et al. (2010) were among the first to address the perceived link between home-based and tourism-based contexts. In their study, the authors coined the term sustainable lifestyles, which “... implies that individuals would demonstrate a series of commitments across lifestyle practices” (Barr et al., 2010, p 475). Sustainable lifestyles can be seen as a central concept in the global environmental discourse, as many of the imminent environmental problems relate to the unsustainable lifestyles of people (Gössling, 2018). A need to move away from the home context to include a context encompassing travel and climate change is considered essential to fully comprehend the notion of sustainable lifestyles (Barr et al., 2011a). Barr et al. (2011b) additionally note that segmenting consumers based on such sustainable lifestyles and promoting behavioural change through social marketing strategies have entered the tourism discourse. However, the
authors note that such marketing segmentation is overly simplistic and that social and spatial contexts in which the consumption takes place demands increased attention (Barr et al., 2011b).

The term spill-over effect is closely related to the concept of sustainable lifestyles, as it is assumed that sustainable practices in one area of life could spill-over to another (Barr et al., 2010, 2011b). Contrary to this assumption, Barr et al. (2010) found that individuals who indicated a high commitment to a pro-environmental lifestyle in both the home and away contexts were the same individuals who flew the farthest and took more frequent as well as longer international holidays while stating that higher taxes on flying would simply be paid without any intents to reduce air travel. Instead, the respondents argued that innovative solutions in aviation encompassing technological advancement, improved off-setting schemes and meaningful taxes were necessary (Barr et al., 2010). Consequently, one of the most harmful parts of the holiday was deemed insignificant by the consumer, a reasoning echoed by Boluk (2011), which further demonstrates the complexities of the assumption that spill-over effects could take place across various lifestyle domains (Barr et al., 2010). Barr et al. (2011b) later concluded that governments cannot rely on individuals’ giving up flying even if the individuals do demonstrate strong environmental commitments in other settings, such as the home context. In regard to air travel, Higgins-Desbiolles (2010) further argues that purchasing carbon offsets on a voluntary basis is far from enough to result in meaningful change and consequently calls for compulsory regulation of the industry. On a similar note, Gössling & Buckley (2016) assert that carbon labels have largely been ineffective to date.

Higham et al. (2016) and Barr et al. (2011b) affirm that the notion of spill-over effects from the home context to a tourism context is profoundly flawed and argue that the concept needs additional consideration. Conversely, Miller et al. (2015) report contrasting results; their study on urban tourism found that most sustainable practices were indeed reduced when moving from a domestic to a tourism context, but contrary, the use of sustainable transport options increased while in the urban tourism setting. In his study on backpackers, Iaquinto (2015) likewise found that contextual surroundings can encourage more environmentally friendly behaviour, which was evidenced by the inherent low-budget nature of backpacker tourism. The study indicated that certain tourism contexts can indeed foster sustainable lifestyles, even if this sustainability is practised unknowingly (Iaquinto, 2015). Yet, Barr et al. determine that “... it is only when individuals are able to transfer their behaviours between contexts, as part of an embedded set of lifestyle practices, that it will be possible to argue that ‘sustainable lifestyles’ can and do exist” (2010, p 475). An added complexity is encountered by study results that indicate that consumers demonstrate a sense of entitlement by resisting to change unless other individuals and developing countries change their behaviour correspondingly (Miller et al., 2010). In addition, consumers seem, to a large extent, be less willing to alter their behaviour when a personal sacrifice is involved, and are therefore keener to address emergent issues collectively and equitably, e.g. through higher taxation on aviation (Higham et al., 2016). Consequently, Gössling (2018) argues that tourism should provide individuals with a platform for transformative learning where new moral and social norms embracing sustainability would lead to a lifestyle change. Still, tourism is found to endorse unsustainability by feeding into notions of indulgence, entitlement to consumption and unsustainable travel behaviours where individuals’ responsibility for the effects of their consumption is diminished (Gössling, 2018).

4.1.3.1. Dissonance and rationalisation

It has been noted that consumers construct an image of an ethical self through their consumption choices, which mirror their moral and political concerns (Boluk, 2011). This consumption, in turn, is rooted in a macro discourse of global consumer capitalism, where ethical characteristics are formed (Boluk, 2011). In her study, Boluk (2011) found that respondents indicated that their personal beliefs united with their lifestyle choices, but these statements did not correlate with their engagement in long-haul travel and their low tendencies to assume personal responsibility to offset the emergent emissions. Indeed, Boluk (2011) questions whether some individuals choose ethical holiday alternatives with the purpose of portraying an ethical image of themselves to others. She concludes her study by stating that responsible travel is complex due to its nature of combining self-perception and prevalent social norms, i.e. micro- and macro discourses respectively (Boluk, 2011). Hall (2013) continues on a similar note when he questions the point of engaging in various governance mechanisms if these do not lead to tangible sustainability effects on tourism and consumption. He concludes with a question;
“If the ethical value of ‘individual choice’ leads to increased emissions from lifestyle and travel actions and worsening environmental change then how ethical is it?” (Hall, 2013, p 1104). Furthermore, travellers have been noted to readily rationalise environmental issues that emerge as consequences of their actions in order to overcome feelings of unease and personal accountability (Higham et al., 2016).

For example, Juvan & Dolnicar (2014) identified six belief categories through which consumers rationalise their behaviour in regard to the prevalent attitude-behaviour gap in sustainable tourism. These beliefs were applied to cope with a sense of cognitive dissonance that emerged when respondents contemplated their attitudes towards the environment and their travel behaviour (Juvan & Dolnicar, 2014). The categories include: denial of consequences (it’s not that bad); downward comparison (it could be worse); denial of responsibility (not my responsibility, feelings of powerlessness); denial of control (I would like to but…); exception handling (holidays are an exception) and compensation through benefits (I am doing more good than bad) (ibid.). The authors assert that targeting these beliefs is essential to reach enhanced sustainability through behavioural change, as beliefs are believed to transform throughout a person’s life contrary to values that are assumed to remain generally unaltered (Juvan & Dolnicar, 2014). A subsequent study identified consumer segments of government blamers, struggling seekers and impact neglecters to which the authors suggested specific approaches to intentionally create cognitive dissonance (Juvan et al., 2016). By using such targeted approaches to cognitive dissonance, consumers are seen to no longer have the same rationalising excuses for their behaviour, which in turn could generate real behavioural change (Juvan et al., 2016). These approaches included providing information about efforts made by other stakeholders like the government; indications that sustainable alternatives can have the same qualities as other holidays in regard to convenience and price; highlighting the benefits of social platforms or traditional forms of communication to educate and create awareness; as well as demonstrating real environmental damage caused by tourism (Juvan et al., 2016).

However, Sin (2017) cautions against the assumption that creating consumer awareness in itself will be enough for individuals to adopt responsibility and further emphasises that being responsible in a tourism context is far from simple. Earlier studies have, for instance, determined that consumers seem to be much less inclined to adopt sustainable lifestyles or prescribe to responsible tourism compared to the efforts made by the corporate and government world (Budeanu, 2007) and some scholars find it unlikely that consumers would adopt sustainable lifestyles while on vacation (Kasim, 2006). Intrinsic motivations such as habits, convenience and personal benefits are seen as underlying reasons for irresponsible behaviour (Budeanu, 2007). In addition, pro-environmental behaviour has been noted to comprise several behavioural dimensions while being influenced by a range of mediating and moderating mechanisms (Huang & Liu, 2017). Budeanu (2007) consequently asserts that there is a need to address the barriers that repress environmentally responsible behaviour in order to create behavioural change, and that these barriers can only be addressed quickly enough in the form of stronger mechanisms and incentives by governments and the tourism industry. According to Brodthag (2010), policies directed at unsustainable consumption and production patterns need to address everyday life, market economy and global capitalism through differentiated political tools in order to be successful.

In similarity with Barr et al. (2010), Miller et al. (2010) found that consumers are aware of how they are supposed to act as citizens in relation to typical pro-environmental behaviour but at the same time, the consumers are seemingly unaware of the harmful impacts of tourism and were thus confused as to what to do in a tourism context. Furthermore, the respondents indicated a feeling of anxiety for environmental issues and the impact that these can have on their descendants (Miller et al., 2010). Relatedly, Grimwood et al. (2015) indicated that their study allowed respondents to identify incoherence between their own understandings and practices of responsibility while noting that an individual’s sense of responsibility could be swayed towards irresponsibility by the reassurance of a tour guide. Conversely, Walker & Moscardo (2016) found that indigenous interpretation of a destination’s cultural and natural heritage could inspire behavioural change and increase a sense of responsibility. A more recent study however, suggests that traveling is still not associated with sustainability (Penz et al., 2017) and the results of Cohen et al. (2013) might provide an explanation to the lack of associating tourism with sustainability. They found that consumers regard tourism activities outside the context of day-to-day social norms, which provides an opportunity to justify unsustainable practices in a holiday context (Cohen et al., 2013). Individuals were also identified to possess several environmental identities that are dependent on the surrounding context (Cohen et al., 2013), a conclusion also echoed by Hibbert et al. (2013). Creating new social norms, e.g. by implementing priority lanes for passengers who have ascribed to an offsetting scheme, inserting environmental resource metres in hotel rooms or allocating
individual carbon allowances, can therefore be deemed a possible solution to increased responsibility for sustainable practices (Miller et al., 2010). Hibbert et al. (2013) propose a similar approach and suggest the introduction of an alternative identity that presents those who travel sustainably with a positive status while suggesting that the prevailing forms of unsustainable travel should be stigmatized.

4.1.4. Food and Events

The topics of food and events can be seen as parts of the notion of sustainable lifestyles, but as sustainable events and sustainable food are two slowly emerging topics within the tourism literature that are recognized to have a potential to foster behavioural change among tourists (Mair & Laing, 2013; Moskwa et al., 2015), these topics were divided into their own heading in this study. Events with a focus on sustainability have been acknowledged to provide platforms for raising awareness among consumers, provide information on the forms of behavioural change that can be carried out on an individual level as well as encourage change in order to positively impact an individual’s lifestyle and to show that sustainable behaviour is within the reach of everyone (Mair & Laing, 2013). However, when studying a large sustainability event, Mair & Laing (2013) found that the event mainly drew attendees that were already committed to sustainable lifestyles and that the event served as a validation and positive feedback tool for the attendees’ lifestyle choices. To a larger extent, the event did not succeed in attracting individuals without pro-environmental lifestyles and thus failed to reach the aim of promoting large scale behavioural change (Mair & Laing, 2013). The inclusion of the term ‘eco’ in the event name was seen as a potential barrier for a wider attendance, and renaming the event was suggested as a possible measure to attract individuals with a more general view of the environment (Mair & Laing, 2013). A more recent study on events was carried out by Hitchings et al. (2017) when they studied showering habits among festival goers. The authors found that the festival context allowed participants to embrace what can be deemed more sustainable behaviour by reducing their showering habits (ibid.). The festival was seen as an opportunity to escape everyday life and its prevailing social norms, but because of these norms, the normal, more water-intensive habits would continue when returning to the home context (Hitchings et al., 2017).

Consumers are increasingly seeking out environmentally and socially sustainable food in their everyday lives and while on holiday, and they also tend to view locally produced products as a sign of quality (Sidali et al., 2015; Dodds & Holmes, 2017). An inherent aspect of locally produced food is the notion of reconnecting with the consumer by offering food that is less anonymous and by personalizing the vending channel (Sidali et al., 2015) e.g. through farmers’ markets that are progressively becoming travel attractions in themselves (Dodds & Holmes, 2017). Additionally, consumers have been recognized to alter their consumption patterns in search of ethically superior alternatives that simultaneously offer higher personal gratification (Moskwa et al., 2015). These views are echoed by Dodds & Holmes (2017), who assert that both locals and visitors place high value on the local produce at farmers’ markets. Locals frequented the markets more often and their visits were also motivated by the feeling of supporting the local farms and community, of talking to the vendors and of purchasing high quality products (Dodds & Holmes, 2017). By studying a sustainable café, Moskwa et al. (2015) also showed that it is easy for any tourism business to act sustainably, and the authors emphasised the promotional role such sustainable businesses have in fostering sustainable consumer behaviour. Moskwa et al. (2015) further stress that a shift towards more sustainable practices within the industry is essential in regard to future generations, as these changes are prerequisites for “... surviving into the future” (p 141). Encouragingly, small-scale food tourism businesses demonstrate a potential to act as catalysts for local change and the common good of society, as they are perceived to be intrinsically motivated by personal ethical considerations and strong relationships with stakeholders (Carrigan et al., 2017). Therefore it is essential for policy-makers and academics to recognize that smaller businesses can play vital roles as facilitators for sustainable tourism (Carrigan et al. 2017).

4.1.5. Climate Change

A major theme discernible in itself in the literature was that of climate change. Scholars have ascertained that global warming and climate change have become mainstream, as the issues have penetrated popular culture (Kellstedt et al., 2008). The urgency of these matters is evident, as “[t]here is a sense that global politics and the world itself is at a precipitous moment in history, that decisions made in 2017 will significantly influence
the direction of travel of businesses, consumer thinking and demand, and global governance for decades to come” (Font & McCabe, 2017, p 869). Individuals’ perceptions of climate change are highly influenced by media, with uncontrolled communication originating from social media, newspapers and word-of-mouth recognized as influencing consumers to a greater extent (Gössling et al., 2012). At the same time, the tourism industry’s role in increased greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions has been recognized and consequently, tourists have been challenged to alter their travel behaviours (Hares et al., 2010; McKercher et al., 2010). It is assumed that as individuals become more aware of issues such as climate change, their sense of personal efficacy and responsibility in relation to the problems should increase, as should the sense of the risk accompanying these issues (Kellstedt et al., 2008; Han et al., 2016). In accordance with this assumption, Kellstedt et al. (2008) found that individuals who feel personally responsible for climate change are more concerned of the future effects of these issues. The study showed that older respondents were found to have a slightly higher sense of personal responsibility for global warming than younger respondents (Kellstedt et al., 2008). In contrast to the initial assumption, however, Kellstedt et al. (2008) found that individuals who are better informed about global warming feel less responsible and also less concerned by it. McKercher et al. (2010) report similar findings, indicating that despite high consumer awareness, individuals are unwilling to voluntarily change their consumption patterns, with the emergent dissonance manifesting itself in an attitude-behaviour gap vis-à-vis discretionary air travel and tourism at large (Cohen et al., 2013; Higham et al., 2016). At the same time, individuals are travelling farther and more frequently than previously while accommodation choices increasingly feature luxury elements (Gössling & Buckley, 2016). Such results can possibly be explained by a confidence in scientific solutions to mitigate the negative effects of global warming (Kellstedt et al., 2008), by an inability to comprehend what climate change essentially entails due to the amorphous nature of the phenomenon (McKercher et al., 2010) or by a sense of not feeling morally responsible when engaging in international travel (Han et al., 2016).

Another strand of research notes that the mere framing of climate change as a global problem poses a challenge, as it is then identified as a problem that everyone is responsible for, and this notion in itself results in a bystander effect where no-one assumes responsibility (Miller et al., 2010). A problem framed as a collective responsibility consequently reduces the felt individual responsibility and the enticement to act upon the problem (Passafaro et al., 2015). Norgaard (2011) also notes that the privileged Global North can afford a sense of climate denial because distant others are more likely to be affected first, which notably underlines the inequalities of the global problem. Hall (2013) adds that an abstract environmental awareness is not readily translated into personally motivating attitudes or pertinent perceptions while Gössling et al. (2012) note that several factors can influence individuals’ perceptions in the context of climate change, i.e. perceptions can vary depending on e.g. holiday type, socio-demographic features, context and specific events. But regardless of how climate change is perceived, the root cause of unsustainable consumption needs to be addressed in order to mitigate the effects and successively, a necessary shift towards more sustainable lifestyles is implied (Gössling, 2018).

4.1.5.1. Behavioural change and policy measures

The whole tourism industry, and air transport in particular, is facing increasing scrutiny due to its high GHG emissions (Cadurso et al., 2015) and because travel is considered a “... discretionary activity pursued for narrow personal benefits” (McKercher et al., 2010, p 298). Rattan (2015) noted that tourism, be it mass or alternative, is unable to be entirely sustainable because unsustainable methods of transport is almost always included in the travels. In addition, consumers do not seem to link their flying behaviour with climate change and they further abrogate personal responsibility for the matter by indicating that it is the responsibility of the tourism industry to offer sustainable holidays (McKercher et al., 2010). Several neutralisation techniques in which consumers minimise their personal responsibility have also been identified and these include justifications of everyone else behaving in the same way and a feeling of acting responsibly or green on balance, so called moral licensing (Barr et al., 2010; McKercher et al., 2010; Miller et al., 2010; Font & McCabe, 2017). Hares et al. (2010) reached similar conclusions and identified three barriers for behavioural change comprising rejection of other transport modes than air transport, prescribing such high value to holidays that changing travel behaviour was inconceivable and third, that responsibility for climate change is not the responsibility of the individual. The reluctance of changing travel behaviour suggests that flying is rooted in contemporary lifestyles and that individuals are reluctant to alter this lifestyle even if they are conscious about
climate change (Barr et al., 2010; Hares et al., 2010). In addition, price, convenience and other personal benefits prevail in the context of air travel (Higham et al., 2016).

A call for legally binding global regulations in regard to tourism activities was made already around two decades ago and this call necessitated a global convention that would embrace a regional approach, thus catering to both the worldwide characteristic of tourism and its regional differences (Perez-Salom, 2000). States were concurrently identified as the principal barriers for such a convention owing to their economic interests associated with tourism development (Perez-Salom, 2000) and consequently, Perez-Salom (2000) designated the responsibility for achieving a global consensus on the matter of sustainable tourism to the United Nations. McKercher et al. (2010) found that while the tourism industry and international policy bodies have started to move towards more sustainable practices, consumers, especially ones with considerable travels, seem the most reluctant to voluntarily change their travel behaviour. The authors noted that this is the biggest challenge in the attempts to reduce the carbon footprint of the industry (McKercher et al., 2010) and the conspicuous notion of rendering sole responsibility of the harm caused by air travel to the consumer has consequently been questioned across the tourism literature (Higham et al., 2016). Education, raising awareness and convincing consumers that individual actions can have meaningful impact are recognized as necessary measures to bring about behavioural change, but the behavioural tipping point of awareness turning into mass action is in all likelihood seen to require both voluntary and involuntary measures, such as government intervention (McKercher et al., 2010). This view is echoed by Higham et al. (2016), who note that behaviour change without policy and industry measures will be insufficient in the aspirations for sustainable tourism. Cohen et al. (2013) further stress the urgency in government intervention and argue that focusing on behavioural change through education, media or nudging is far from enough to create durable change as environmental attitudes or -identities cannot be trusted to result in consistent behaviour. Some suggested policy measures include higher taxes on jet fuel and providing travellers with incentives to use alternative transport methods to air travel, while tour operators’ focus should be on offering environmentally responsible tourism packages (Cadarso et al., 2015).

While much research on climate change and tourism has focused on air travel, Jamal & Smith (2017) approached the issue from a perspective of natural areas with their case study on the world heritage site the Great Barrier Reef (GBR). Through a survey, the authors found that visitors held national and state governments, the tourism industry and local coastal communities most responsible for addressing threats to the GBR, but over half of the respondents simultaneously recognized their own responsibility towards the reef (Jamal & Smith, 2017). Visitors expressed high levels of willingness to personally assume responsibility for contacting the national government about their concerns of the harmful effects of climate change on the reef (Jamal & Smith, 2017). The results indicate that tourism, in a context of cultural heritage sites that encompass immeasurable value to civilization, has a large potential to foster global sustainability practices that address environmental threats such as climate change (Jamal & Smith, 2017).

4.1.6. Corporate Social Responsibility

Tourism has largely been considered a smokeless industry (Kasim, 2004, 2007; Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007), but increased environmental scrutiny, changing ethical values of consumers and pressure from various stakeholders has resulted in many corporations embracing environmentally-, socially- and economically conscious operations in the form of CSR (Chettiparamb & Kokkranikal, 2012; Camilleri, 2014; Fatma et al., 2016; Hughes & Scheyvens, 2016). CSR has been identified as an ambiguous and “… notoriously difficult term to pin down” (Coles et al., 2013, p 123) but generally, the concept is seen to embrace the holistic, three-pillar approach familiar from the concept of sustainable development (Coles et al., 2013) and Fatma et al. (2016) note that consumers share the same multidimensional perception of CSR. In the corporate world, sustainable development is also referred to as the triple bottom line (TBL) (Font et al., 2012; Manente et al., 2012; Fatma et al., 2016; Zanfardini et al., 2016), as the term sustainable is noted to lack resonance with industry representatives (Mihalic, 2016). The CSR concept is often used as an umbrella term for alternative forms of tourism such as sustainable tourism, responsible tourism and ethical tourism (Zanfardini et al., 2016), but Manente et al. (2012) question this approach by arguing that responsible tourism and CSR represent disparate concepts in a business context albeit having the same holistic focus. CSR is a voluntary industry
action of self-regulation and the practices can further be divided into corporate ethical- and philanthropic responsibility, i.e. societal expectations and that which exceeds societal expectations respectively (Inoue & Lee, 2011). However, some scholars assert that neoliberal capitalism has resulted in the loss of overall moral sentiments from economic activities (Su et al., 2013). Varying national and cultural contexts have been acknowledged to play a part in how the concept of CSR is understood and practiced (Fenclova & Coles, 2011; Sheldon & Park, 2011; Ferus-Comelo, 2014; Hughes & Scheyvens, 2016) and some scholars note that western, European-centric definitions of responsibility in the sustainability discourse seem to prevail (Coles et al., 2013). Environmental degradation and climate change issues still seem to constitute main drivers for many nations (Sheldon & Park, 2011) and in a global context, the concept of responsibility is seen to challenge various actors and stakeholders to question their role in fostering sustainable development in tourism (Coles et al., 2011). Despite the burgeoning in other industries, CSR studies in tourism remain rather limited (Fenclova & Coles, 2011), which is somewhat surprising as CSR and sustainability are seen to possibly be future requirements in the industry (Sheldon & Park, 2011; de los M. Santos-Corrada & Figueroa, 2012).

Most of the studies on tourism CSR have focused on the hospitality sector (e.g. Kasim, 2004, 2007; Font et al., 2012), while a smaller number have looked at the concept from a tour operator (Dodd & Kuehnel, 2010; Marchoo et al., 2014) and airline (Coles et al., 2011; Fenclova & Coles, 2011) perspective. Studies have also noted that CSR practices related to the environment are more prevalent than those focused on socio-cultural activities (Sheldon & Park, 2011; Font et al., 2012). CSR can enhance a firm’s performance in several ways, and this can range from being a source for competitive advantage to firm reputation and consumer satisfaction (Inoue & Lee, 2011), but the benefits of engaging in CSR have concurrently been questioned by critics (Mitrokoktas & Apostolakis, 2013). Businesses have also been known to engage in CSR practices strictly because of possible cost savings or PR-potential (Rogerson & Sims, 2012; Hughes & Scheyvens, 2016), while other firms have been noted to freeride on other business’s CSR practices (Mitrokoktas & Apostolakis, 2013). Yet, studies have noted that engaging in CSR and thus demonstrating a commitment of being a good corporate citizen does not preclude economic profit (Nicolaou, 2008; Tamajón & Font, 2013) and that failing to be a good corporate citizen might even have negative consequences for the business (Su et al., 2015). Research has shown that large, international hospitality chains have actively embraced environmental responsibility and CSR practices in their operation (Kasim, 2007) while studies focusing on small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have been scant (Alonso & Ogle, 2010; Tamajón & Font, 2013), even if these constitute the majority of tourism companies and together have a large collective influence (Kasim, 2004; Margaryan & Stensland, 2017). However, Tamajón & Font (2013) found that SMEs in general have taken leaps towards enhanced responsibility. In addition, SMEs appear to engage in CSR activities beyond the scope of financial and economic profits and they associate these activities more frequently with societal legitimation, ethical and moral sentiments, pride, altruism and lifestyle choices (Tamajón & Font, 2013; Font et al., 2016b). Assuming responsibility to act in a more sustainable manner is further seen to hinge on the level of empathy with and connection to notions of sustainability (Font et al., 2016a). In addition, SMEs have been noted to be less likely to communicate their sustainability undertakings to customers in an effort to attract visitors (Font et al., 2016b).

4.1.6.1. The persistent gap

It is widely acknowledged that consumer demand acts as a driver for enhanced sustainable operation (Kasim, 2006; de los M. Santos-Corrada & Figueroa, 2012; Saarinen, 2013) even if there is little empirical evidence that such a consumer demand exists (Sharpley, 2000; Kasim, 2004; Dodd & Kuehnel, 2010; Slabbert & Du Preez, 2017). In fact, there is abundant indication of a dissonance between consumers’ stated green attitudes and their actual behaviour, and this discrepancy is commonly referred to in academia as an attitude-behaviour gap (Kasim, 2004, 2006; Yan et al., 2008; Hares et al., 2010; Juvan & Dolnicar, 2014; Hall et al., 2016). Most consumers continue to rank other aspects such as price and quality above environmental and social attributes when making travel-related decisions (Kasim, 2004; Miller et al., 2010; D.A. Tasci, 2017) and consumers show a reluctance to pay more for sustainability attributes (Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007; Yan et al., 2008; Chen, 2011). This discord has consequently led scholars to question the assumption that consumers are the drivers for sustainable tourism (Kasim, 2004). However, some scholars still assert that sustainability attributes are consistently influencing consumers to a higher extent and that the responsibility for sustainable tourism products and services lies with the industry (Pereira et al., 2012). Conversely, others ascertain that it is the responsibility of consumers to create the demand for sustainable industry operation (D.A. Tasci, 2017). Yet,
studies have also implied that consumers might regard sustainability as an inherent part of any tourism product or service and consequently not something one should pay a higher price for (Lebe & Vrečko, 2015). A typical problem with these consumer studies is that they often rely on subjective statements rather than observed behaviour and consequently, Gao et al. (2017) call for research to focus on the actual behaviour of consumers in order to gain a better understanding of them rather than focus on the dissonance between stated attitudes and behaviour.

In light of the complexities of consumer behaviour, several studies have called on governments to take greater responsibility for ensuring sustainable practices by setting up and enforcing stringent regulations for the tourism industry (Kasim, 2007; Rogerson & Sims, 2012). According to Hughes & Scheyvens (2016), the call has been heeded to even if other scholars have reached contrary conclusions (Ferus-Comelo, 2014). Some scholars, on the other hand, reject the need for government intervention altogether by indicating that self-regulation is enough to ensure sustainability within the industry (de los M. Santos-Corrala & Figueroa, 2012). Yet, Buckley (2012b) argues that regulation is necessary if sustainable practices are to become mainstream, as industry self-regulation and certification schemes are seen to provide feeble results. Pejic Bach et al. (2014) advised that system archetypes could be used to increase communities and authorities’ understanding of social responsibility, which would pressure the tourism industry to increasingly incorporate social responsibility standards in their operation. The need for collective, conscious and comprehensive efforts by all stakeholders to further the sustainability agenda and CSR in tourism is highlighted by academia (Kasim, 2006; Dodds & Kuehnel, 2010) and involving consumers in the implemented sustainability programs is seen as important for the overall success of the efforts (Bradić et al., 2017). Responsible tourism has even been suggested to be the bridging concept linking CSR to the broader sustainability paradigm (Chettiparamb & Kokkranikal, 2012). Indeed, because of the global nature of tourism, the industry “... has the potential to become an agent for profound social change” provided that the social responsibility debate is advanced (Tepelus, 2008, p 111) and by “... instilling a tradition of responsibility” (Bickford et al., 2017). Buckley (2012b) however, provides a bleaker outlook on such a change by stating that tourism and sustainability both change faster than the industry can implement corresponding developments in sustainability.

Research has shown that consumers are inclined to trust responsible companies and CSR activities are further seen to be able to create such trust (Nicolau, 2008; Marchho et al., 2014). CSR practices are also known to lead to increased loyalty (Su et al., 2017), especially if these are combined with transparent reporting of the activities (Font et al., 2012). Furthermore, Su et al. (2015) found that CSR activities and a company’s reputation had a substantial impact on customer satisfaction, thus influencing repurchase and word-of-mouth intents, while Marchho et al. (2014) discovered that customers’ perceptions of value is enhanced if accreditation and codes of ethics are promoted as symbols for ethically responsible business behaviour. Consequently, ecocertification can be viewed as a form of CSR (Buckley, 2013).

4.1.6.2. Ecocertification

Environmental certifications are commonly applied to showcase an organisation’s voluntary commitments to sustainability (Anderson et al., 2013; Rattan, 2015; Martínez García de Leaniz et al., 2017) and the tourism industry currently has 128 documented ecolabels (Gössling & Buckley, 2016). Ecolabels are seen to be the most convenient way for businesses to promote environmental efforts (Bradić et al., 2017) while at the same time ideally making organisations publicly responsible for their operations (Rattan, 2015). Third-party labels thus act as credible symbols for a company’s environmentally responsible and sustainable practices (Martínez García de Leaniz et al., 2017). Nevertheless, Coles et al. (2013) stress that participating in an accreditation scheme is not a criterion, nor a prerequisite, for a business to adopt responsible practices. In contrast, ecolabels can help consumers make more sustainable purchasing choices (Anderson et al., 2013) and scholars have asserted that some consumers view them as signs of quality and trustworthiness (Slabbert & Du Preez, 2017). It is assumed that when consumers become more aware of environmental issues, they will pay higher attention to sustainability attributes in their decision-making (Constantin et al., 2014) and growing awareness on sustainability matters has concurrently been recognized in the global North (Strambach & Surmeier, 2013). Similarly, high environmental consciousness among consumers has been reported to indicate positive views about certified hotels (Martínez García de Leaniz et al., 2017). When seen and processed, ecolabels are considered to have a valuable empowering impact on consumers, indicating that ecolabels should be
noticeable, clear and prominent in business communication (Penz et al., 2017). However, when studying a promotional ecolabel campaign, Reiser & Simmons (2005) noted that positive attitudes towards ecolabels are an unreliable predictor of responsible visitor behaviour as none of the observed consumers payed attention to the campaign. In contrast, Slabbert & Du Preez (2017) pointed at an existing link between accreditation, consumer decision-making and buying behaviour in their study on the effect of ecolabels on hiking trails. Conversely, Karlsson & Dölnicar (2016) found that ecolabels do not influence the demand of most consumers, but they did take note of a niche segment that greatly values ecolabels and considers them when making decisions. The segment was found to be both older and better educated than other consumers and it was characterized by a trust in ecolabels, a wish to immerse oneself in nature and by altruistic tendencies driving travel decisions (Karlsson & Dölnicar, 2016). The discussion on niche markets can be complex however, and Lebe & Vrećko (2015) make a noteworthy contribution to the discussion by stating that there should be a reconsideration of how the term is used, as a niche market nowadays can refer to millions of consumers.

Similarly to CSR, ecolabels are seen to provide businesses with a varying range of opportunities although they too lack academic consensus on their ability to create consumer demand or market advantage (Chen, 2011; Constantin et al., 2014; Karlsson & Dölnicar, 2016; Martínez García de Leaniz et al., 2017). Several reasons for participating in certification schemes have been identified ranging from marketing potential, cost savings and altruistic tendencies (Jarvis et al., 2010) to building "... an image of responsibility” (Chen, 2011, p 15). For instance, Strambach & Surmeier (2013) found that common values of taking responsibility for society where evident in the motivations for adopting a certification scheme in South Africa while Margaryan & Stensland (2017) asserted that certified companies in Scandinavia were more prone to be lifestyle entrepreneurs. Across literature however, a tension between the sense of a personal moral responsibility to operate a sustainable business combined with the desire of running a successful organisation has been identified (Jarvis et al., 2010). From a consumer perspective, consumption of ethical or certified products and services has been noted to generate psychological benefits in the form of promotion of personal moral values, which can lead to an enhanced self-image as a responsible tourist (Boluk, 2011; Marchoo et al., 2014; Martínez García de Leaniz et al., 2017). Hanna (2013) consequently suggests that consumers can epitomise sustainable or ethical identities through their consumption choices, but such consumption can likewise be displays of individuals’ social status. In addition, scholars have ascertained that if a product is known to be sustainable, the consumption of the particular product might actually increase due to a sense of sustainable hedonism, which in turn will lead to a rebound effect where the positive impacts of the sustainable product are counteracted by the increased use of the product (Budeanu, 2007; Font & McCabe, 2017). Similarly to certain business owners, consumers too seem conflicted when their hedonistic interests to travel are faced with the knowledge of the wider problems that travel can lead to (Boluk, 2011). Consequently, Bergin-Seers & Mair (2009) note that “... the very green tourist may not exist, as the very green consumer is unlikely to be a tourist” (p 118).

Scholars have noted that both the industry and consumers indicate some degree of scepticism over the relevance of certification within tourism (Jarvis et al., 2010). Consumers also seem to associate certification with a higher price even if this would not be the case, which might deter them from choosing the more sustainable option (Constantin et al., 2014). In addition, sceptical consumer attitudes have been predicted to decrease the probability of selecting a more sustainable holiday alternative even if the price would be the same as the alternative (Yan et al., 2008). However, Chen (2011) reported contrasting results and indicated that if all features of a holiday were equal, consumers would choose the ecolabelled alternative if they were familiar with the certification scheme. Therefore, scholars stress the importance of showing consumers the real impact certified businesses can have on society in order to demonstrate that ecolabels are not just marketing gimmicks, thus avoiding making consumers sceptical about certification (Martínez García de Leaniz et al., 2017). Improving the credibility of ecolabels through e.g. universal assessment methods can therefore be regarded as an important aspect of wider market adoption of labels (Gössling & Buckley, 2016). Raising awareness and educating consumers about ecolabels, the importance of conservation and of saving resources are further regarded as essential in fostering sustainable behaviour among travellers (Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007; Chen, 2011) as consumers’ trust in ecocertifications influence their purchasing choices (Penz et al., 2017). Kasim (2004) further stresses that raising consumer awareness should not be limited to an ecotourism context and that targeting mass tourism is equally, if not even more, important in order to shift towards increased industry sustainability. A clear disclosure of the implemented certification scheme as well as targeted marketing
strategies focusing on nations where information about ecolabels is high are seen as important considerations for a business to be successful (Constantin et al., 2014).

Budeanu (2007) also notes that in order to sway consumer choice, ecolabels need to demonstrate convenience and personal benefits to the consumer in regard to its environmental qualities. Gössling & Buckley (2016) further emphasise that marketing carbon labels as quality labels is advisable, since this approach would equate products with lower carbon footprints as products of higher quality, which in turn could resonate better with consumers. Yet, consumers seem likewise unaware of the fact that high quality products can simultaneously provide auspicious benefits to the environment (Pereira et al., 2012). Studies have identified international ecolabels to have more potential to succeed in fostering behavioural change than national ones because of the global context of tourism (Reiser & Simmons, 2005; Constantin et al., 2014). Furthermore, scholars argue that ecocertification ought to be the norm in established destinations rather than the exception (Font & McCabe, 2017). Buckley (2013) however, indicates that certification schemes focusing on wider societal goals will not act as reliable indicators for consumers or civic-advocates unless they are morphed into enforceable government-controlled standards and regulations. In addition, Margaryan & Stensland (2017) conclude that nature based tourism companies are demotivated to participate in certification schemes, as their efforts are seen to be mitigated by the harms of other industries, such as the transport sector.

4.1.7. Communication and Marketing

A significant number of the studied literature had a clear focus on the role of communication and marketing within the sustainable tourism paradigm. The role of marketing in sustainable tourism is a highly debated issue, with some scholars denoting the combination as antithetical and fostering irresponsible consumption and materialism (Font & McCabe, 2017) while others debate about the tangible effects of sustainability marketing (Margaryan & Stensland, 2017). Despite the critical views, Font & McCabe (2017) argue that it is essential to market sustainable tourism so that the concept and its positive attributes can advance. The authors accordingly identify two approaches to sustainability marketing: the market development- and product development approach (Font & McCabe, 2017). The former is engaged with selling sustainable products to a niche market while targeting behavioural change through sustainable consumerism, while the latter involves designing products that are incrementally sustainable to the entire market, i.e. normalising the consumption of sustainable products (Font & McCabe, 2017). The product development approach can be seen as vital, since an increasing number of consumers feel that tour operators and destinations have the responsibility of ensuring sustainability in their products and services (Font & McCabe, 2017). Furthermore, the approach denounces the concept of segmenting as sustainable products are marketed to everyone in an effort to mainstream sustainability by highlighting the personal benefits of the product and downplaying its sustainability attributes (ibid.). Font & McCabe (2017) note that such normalisation of sustainability products has worked in other contexts such as the burgeoning fair-trade market, and argue that the tourism industry must follow suite.

Contrarily, segmenting is a widely used marketing approach in which consumers are divided into groups according to specific characteristics (Dinan & Sargeant, 2000). Social marketing in sustainable tourism is built upon such segmenting, where organisations try to attract consumers that are susceptible to messages of sustainability and that are likely to engage in sustainable behaviour once in the destination (Dinan & Sargeant, 2000). Social marketing has successively increased as a research topic in the tourism literature in the past decades (Truong & Hall, 2017). Scholars have asserted that individuals are disinclined to change their habitualised behaviour while noting that tangible individual benefits result in greater involvement (Dinan & Sargeant, 2000). A social marketing approach thus tries to foster sustainable tourism behaviour by acknowledging that consumers are more likely to change their behaviour if personal benefits can be discerned and by altering the communication to correspond to the consumers’ needs and motivations (Dinan & Sargeant, 2000). In addition to fostering individual responsible behaviour, social marketing additionally targets wider societal and environmental well-being (Hall, 2013). Another approach related to social marketing is that of demarketing, which aims to discourage consumers from visiting a specific destination (Beeton & Benfield, 2002; Truong & Hall, 2017). Demarketing can consequently involve e.g. shifting the marketing focus to promote shoulder seasons, limiting the amount of visitors at the destination or to deliberately shift the marketing strategy in order to focus only on desirable visitor segments (Beeton & Benfield, 2002; Truong &
Hall, 2017). Such an approach would allow for organisations and destinations to manage potential visitors before a conscious choice to visit has even been made (Beeton & Benfield, 2002).

In contrast to other views on segmenting, Caruana & Crane (2008) argue that sustainable consumer segments are created by market discourses as opposed to sustainable consumers being pre-existing clusters waiting to be discovered by marketers. The authors accentuate that it is the industry that thus creates a meaningful social identity that is based on consumer responsibility (Caruana & Crane, 2008). The authors argue that such industry discourses transform passive, anxious citizens into active and responsible consumers by encouraging them to consume in a responsible way (Caruana & Crane, 2008). Consequently, the moral predicament underlying the notion of responsibility shifts from the consumer to the organisation and thus emancipates the consumer from the moral implications inherent to travel (Caruana & Crane, 2008). Ultimately, Caruana & Crane (2008) argue that “... citizenship and consumption are enabled to precariously co-exist, and [...] responsibility is mythologized into a coherent consumer narrative” (p 1515), thus exhibiting the power corporate communication has in the paradigm of sustainable tourism. Hanna (2013) more recently studied corporate discourses and noted how the use of language can promote messages in sustainable tourism. Namely, he noted a dichotomy between how the words tourist and traveller were used in corporate messages, with the former representing irresponsible others, i.e. common consumers, and the latter epitomising informed and responsible citizens (Hanna, 2013). The author likewise discovered that similar attributes were given to the notions of hosts and guests (ibid.). Subsequently, Hanna (2013) argued that such rhetoric provide individuals with the possibility to ethically engage with the individual self through the per contra notion of the other.

Despite the different marketing approaches aimed at fostering sustainable consumption patterns, Hall (2013) argues that the approaches need to be considered in conjunction with a change in the prevailing socio-technical system in order to generate change that is fast enough to address imminent problems like climate change, emissions and tourism mobility. Truong & Hall (2017) second this view by arguing that social marketing is a critical complement to the regulatory and technological changes necessary for addressing climate change, rather than being an alternative to these. Gao et al. (2017) further note that providing consumers with information about the negative impacts of tourism is not enough to nurture a sense of individual responsibility.

4.1.7.1. Communication Platforms

The emergence of social media has created increasing opportunities and challenges for businesses as these platforms stimulate new forms of sharing information with the public (Sparks et al., 2013) and as consumers are increasingly influenced by online content shared on social media (Batat & Prentovic, 2014). These platforms vary from booking- and evaluation sites to platforms designed for searching travel-related information and to sites that allow sharing and exchanging information (Gössling, 2017). Batat & Prentovic (2014) highlight that social media and technology are fundamental features of both the tourism industry and visitor behaviour and Gössling (2017) further emphasizes the point by arguing that information technologies “... has become perhaps the single most important new determinant in tourism’s demand and supply structures” (p 1025). But despite the increasingly growing role of various social media platforms, research on their implications for tourism sustainability is scarce (Gössling, 2017). Scholars have noted that how sustainable tourism is promoted in social media can be contextually and characteristically influenced by the target market (Batat & Prentovic, 2014). How this information is perceived by consumers is further dependent on the credibility and integrity of the information at hand, and this information can subsequently result in consumer trust if the communication is regarded as trustworthy (Sparks et al., 2013). Sparks et al. (2013) further note that trust is an important element in individuals’ development of attitudes and purchase intentions, which highlights the importance of creating reliable social media content. A combination of visitor- and industry generated specific and informative content is found to form essential parts of effective online content strategies (Sparks et al., 2013) as is designing promotional campaigns that touch an emotional chord in consumers, since these are seen to potentially have great impact (Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007). Ecolabels can additionally enhance consumer purchase intentions and consumer beliefs, especially in the context of creating consumer trust and in validating CSR activities (Sparks et al., 2013). Social media platforms can consequently help to promote sustainability in a multitude of ways, which can encompass social-, environmental and economic dimensions, and they are simultaneously seen as possible platforms for raising awareness and educating consumers (Gössling, 2017). In addition, their potential of promoting green trends in tourism has
been recognized, as they can underscore greener alternatives as alternatives of higher quality (Gössling, 2017). D.A. Tasci (2017) also highlights the importance of emphasising that sustainable products can improve quality and even price, as consumers are known to prefer choices that provide short-term personal benefits as opposed to ones that contribute to what is good to society in the long term. He subsequently notes that sustainability might require reimagining since consumers might associate sustainability with a higher price, and adds that consumers should be sensitised through communication in order for them to see how sustainability can contribute to provide individual, tangible benefits (D.A. Tasci, 2017).

Websites are commonly used by businesses to communicate their sustainability practises with the hope of constructing a positive impression that would influence consumer behaviour (Font et al., 2017). Font et al. (2017) recognize four types of messages that can affect consumer behaviour; explicit or implicit messages, messages using affective or rational language, messages targeting experiences and active or passive messages. These messages, in turn, construct the business’ rhetoric (Font et al., 2017). However, in order to decrease the possible dissonance between business and consumer values of sustainability, the authors note that companies can result to so called greenhushing or moral muteness, which means that they would intentionally communicate their sustainability practices to a lesser extent (Font et al., 2017). Similarly, even businesses considered green might not be inclined to disclose all their sustainability activities in the fear of being accused for greenwashing (Font et al., 2012). A successive study supported this assumption with the results clearly indicating that businesses were under-communicating many of their sustainability practices on their websites and instead preferred to use strategies like nudging and choice architecture to influence consumers (Font et al., 2017). The authors noted that greenhushing was a way for businesses to adapt to dominant social norms and that this behaviour simultaneously sustains the conspicuous consumption perpetuated by the advertising industry (Font et al., 2017). In addition, the study found that the business owners felt disappointment due to several factors, as prevailing norms prevented them from communicating more about their sustainability efforts and as sustainability is often seen as only serving a marketing function (Font et al., 2017). The owners also felt downhearted because they recognized that consumers do not care as much about the surrounding environment as they do and they consequently acknowledge that there is little they can do to alter consumer behaviour (Font et al., 2017).

Despite the positive effects of social media, the ease of disseminating sustainability communication also has its downsides (Font et al., 2017). For instance, when studying how volunteer tourism operators communicate responsibility, Smith & Font (2014) found that the operators often communicated that which was easy and attractive as opposed to that which could be deemed most important. In addition, the operators provided insufficient evidence for their responsibility claims, which suggests greenwashing and susceptibility to commodifying communication messages (Smith & Font, 2014). Consequently, if businesses are communicating higher sustainability practices than they can attest for, suspicions of greenwashing can come into play (Font et al., 2017). Recent studies have also recognized social media as platforms where highly mobile lifestyles, consumption and travel are glamourized, which is problematic as this glamourization in turn can foster unsustainable lifestyles and behaviour that feeds into the prevalent status quo (Gössling, 2017, 2018).

Although much of the sustainability communication of businesses revolve around various social media platforms, other platforms such as guidebooks still act as mediators of sustainability (Sin, 2017). Sin (2017) asserts that guidebooks can play a significant role in how notions of responsibility and irresponsibility are perceived in a tourism context and note that guidebooks are increasingly incorporating how-to-guides for being a responsible or ethical traveller. In contrast, the same guidebooks can promote essentially unsustainable practices by encouraging consumers to go off the beaten track in search for pristine and authentic travel experiences with the consequence of not addressing the fundamental problem of overdevelopment and instead feed into the circle of turning ‘green’ into ‘mass’ (Sin, 2017). Consequently, Sin (2017) concludes that responsibility for sustainable practices within tourism is in need of a more nuanced discussion of the notion itself and a realisation that the concept of responsibility cannot be addressed by employing a universal set of codes.
4.1.8. Summarizing the literature review

The literature review resulted in the emergence of seven themes, which address responsibility for sustainability from diverging viewpoints and to varying extent. The emergent themes were questions of morals and ethics, narratives of responsibility, sustainable lifestyles, food and events, climate change, corporate social responsibility and marketing and communication. The vast majority of articles identified in the literature review addressed the topic through the concept of CSR, which suggests that corporate discourses take precedence over policy- and consumer discourses. The topic of climate change appeared as a theme in its own right, but the notion was additionally extensively used in the discussions within the other themes to support made arguments.

How the concept of responsibility for sustainability is addressed in the studied literature is illustrated with the model in Figure 2. The literature identifies various relations and structures of power, values and interest at play that influence how the notion of responsibility is constructed (Grimwood et al., 2015). Furthermore, a recognized group of stakeholders are seen to be the ones defining responsibility, and these stakeholders are seen to represent the views of the Global North (Caruana & Crane, 2008; Butcher, 2015; Sin, 2017). Consequently, a pre-defined set of rules and guides to what it entails to be responsible is communicated through various media platforms to form a universal notion of responsibility (Luh Sin et al., 2015; Sin, 2017). This notion can subsequently be divided into individual-, collective- or a denial of responsibility, and these different ways of sensing responsibility can be felt separately, simultaneously and to varying degrees (see e.g. Sinnott-Armstrong, 2010; Norgaard, 2011; Luchs et al., 2015; Passafaro et al., 2015; Kyllönen, 2016). Prevailing social norms, context and identity further interrelate with the concept and how it is enacted (e.g. Fennell, 2008; Stanford, 2008; Barr et al., 2011b; Grimwood et al., 2015). If a felt sense of responsibility for sustainability turns into tangible behaviour, the ensuing behavioural change is correspondingly hoped to foster a shift towards sustainable lifestyles and to a notion of global citizenship (Fennell, 2008; Luh Sin et al., 2015; Foller-Carroll & Charlebois, 2016; Germann Molz, 2016; Font et al., 2017; Olsen et al., 2018). Ultimately, the direction of responsibility is identified as a responsibility towards the Global South, future generations and the natural environment (see e.g. Miller et al., 2010; Grimwood & Doubleday, 2013; Jamal & Smith, 2017; Sin, 2017).
Responsibility for sustainability as identified by the studied literature consequently suggests that responsibility is a universal concept defined by stakeholders in the Global North and their responsibilities towards stakeholders that lack responsibility or their own voice in the discussion. The underlying notion of the responsibility discourse is to create sustainable lifestyles and to foster a sense of global citizenship, but the intricate relationship between the notion of responsibility and its various manifestations accentuate the complexities at play.

4.2. The Responsible Traveller – campaign

Launched in 2017 as a major component of the IY2017 celebrations and initiative, the UNWTO Responsible Tourist campaign targets tourists by providing information, tips and encouragement to be a Responsible Traveller before and while being on holiday. The Tips for a Responsible Traveller brochure is based on the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism and serves as a more user-friendly guide to travellers with the aim of increasing tourists’ responsible holiday behaviours. In addition to the brochure, the campaign consists of a promotional video that embraces the overall message of the brochure while providing a more visual manifestation of the message. The Tips for a Responsible Traveller brochure and the Travel. Enjoy. Respect. – video will be analysed in the following sections. The brochure can be found on the UNWTO webpage (WCTE, 2017) and the video on the IYSTD 2017 YouTube channel (IYSTD2017 & UNWTO, 2017).

4.2.1. Tips for a Responsible Traveller

The Tips for a Responsible Traveller brochure is a nine-page leaflet, consisting of a front page, an introduction page, five pages of tips for more responsible travel behaviour, a page outlining the background of and the entities behind the brochure as well as an end-page with the logos of the authors. All pages consist of both text and image, with all but the last page including relevant material to be analysed. The brochure pages with the tips for responsible travellers are divided by themes, with the heading of the page serving as the main piece of advice with further guidance in the text below.
The title page outlines the heading of the brochure, Tips for a Responsible Traveller, and is accompanied by the slogan #TravelEnjoyRespect. The cover image depicts an arctic landscape at sunset, with the stars and moon becoming visible in the night sky and the last rays of the sun spreading a purple light over the landscape. A lone tent with a shining light inside is mounted on a small island of ice, indicating the presence of man in this otherwise pristine landscape. As the headline states, the brochure outlines a set of universal tips for being a responsible traveller, a set of guidelines that can be followed by every traveller and on all travels that are taking place. The heading implies that it is easy to be a responsible traveller and that everyone can be one by following the advice of the brochure. The front page also encourages travellers to promote the campaign and their subsequent travels as well as to follow the responsible travels of others by posting with and following the hashtag ($) of the campaign. Consequently, the encouragements concurrently make the campaign a campaign for everyone and by everyone. This connects the brochure to a wider social phenomenon that can be experienced, shared and talked about across borders and cultures and beyond physical presence. Thus, the campaign can be seen as creating a social movement built upon a discourse of responsibility when travelling. Concomitantly, the brochure promotes travel, urges travellers to enjoy themselves on their travels and to respect all they encounter and experience during their travels. In essence, the text and image both instil a sense of wonder and a desire to explore the unknown by going off the beaten track. In a broader context of the world’s prevailing social norms of consumption and in light of issues like climate change, the moral implications of this front page are controversial. The page does not question the act of travel, it encourages it, and gives an impression of a right to travel and to enjoy the unexplored places of Earth.

4.2.1.1. Introduction to responsible tourism

The intro-page is depicted by a dense, broadleaf forest with rays of sun making their way down towards the forest floor. The quote “[w]e live in a wonderful world that is full of beauty, charm and adventure. There is no end to the adventures we can have if only we seek them with our eyes open” paints a picture of a pristine world full of wonders, waiting to be discovered. The quote frames the world as a place for exploration and the choice of words have a positive connotation, which instils a sense of longing and desire to travel in the mind of the reader. At the same time, these wonders can only be discovered by those who allow themselves to truly see and appreciate that around them. The implicit statements of the quote indicate that people can explore as much as they want, that travels are opportunities to open our consciousness, to educate ourselves and to truly experience the travels that can take place both near and far. The sense of awe for our world carries on to the next paragraph mentioning three destinations, where the choice of words such as navigating, savouring, authentic and reflecting on life’s mysteries give an air of tangible, transformational experiences. None of the destinations mentioned (Mekong River, Morocco and Angkor) are situated in areas of the so-called Global North, which is the first suggestion that the travellers referred to are Western, international travellers. The intro further asserts that “the diversity of our world unites us” and that this is a precondition to “explore, engage and experience” the best aspects of the destinations visited. Implicitly, it is the differences of both environments, cultures and people that makes us long for and motivated to travel. The following sentences state that by showing respect, both to the world and that which makes something or someone different, you enhance the travel experience for yourself and simultaneously allow yourself to learn and develop yourself. The campaign thus explicitly highlights the personal, tangible benefits to oneself by the medium of respect while implicitly implying that the respect is extended to keep our world diverse. By showing respect, the traveller will also gain respect, which implies a reciprocal relationship for the benefit of both the traveller and host. The intro page ends by stating that the practical tips in this guide will make the travels “as rewarding and gratifying as possible for you, for the people you meet, and for the places you visit”. This sentence implies that the tips are easy to carry out, i.e. that it is simple to be responsible and to do the right thing, and that the tips can be applied to any context. In addition, it implies at a holistic sense of sustainable development.

4.2.1.2. Heritage and the natural environment

Honour your hosts and our common heritage is the first advice on how to be a responsible traveller. The image on the page shows the back of a Western woman, walking alone amongst stone pillars that seem to be covered with ancient, Egyptian carvings. The carved pillars are a direct reference to the common heritage of man, a heritage that should be honoured. The verb honour indicates something that we should respect, but it also
implies an obligation that should be fulfilled. Thus, honour in this context can be seen as showing respect to the destination hosts, human, environmental and animal ones, and our heritage while simultaneously having an obligation towards these, i.e. a responsibility to respect and safeguard them. In addition, there’s an explicit mention of heritage belonging to us all, implying that it is ours to share and to learn from. However, the image and additional text on the page only refer to aspects that make up the cultural heritage of our society, thus omitting any reference to the natural heritage of our world. Travellers are encouraged to do research on the destination that they are going to visit in order to gain a better cultural understanding of the place visited in addition to increasing the sense of anticipation for the trip. Learning to speak a few words in the local language is also encouraged as this is seen to enable a more meaningful connection between the traveller and the locals. This advice consequently primarily highlights the personal benefits of researching the destination and of learning a few words in the local language, as these are seen as measures that will enhance the individual holiday experience. However, speaking a few words of the local language can simultaneously be regarded as a sign of respect. Respect is explicitly mentioned in the following paragraph, where travellers are encouraged to “experience and respect all that makes an international destination different and unique”, which is a clear reference to fostering cultural sensitivity and understanding. The choice of adding international to the sentence can, however, be questioned, as it implies that national destinations cannot provide as unique experiences as international ones, and that the same sense of experiencing and respecting a destination does not necessarily have to be extended to national destinations. The moral innuendo of the tip is consequently problematic, because the same respect should surely be applied to any tourism destination, whether local, national, regional or international. By explicitly mentioning an international destination, the brochure further alludes that international travel is superior to domestic travel, which serves to promote more mobile lifestyles. The final advice for a responsible traveller on this page urges travellers to ask before taking a picture of another person, as that individual’s privacy is as important as the traveller’s. This guideline is an explicit statement of people being equal, thus discouraging objectifying or ‘othering’ hosts or other people.

The natural environment is addressed in the second page of advice for a responsible traveller in a section named Protect our planet. A man-made, wooden set of stairs is nestled in a lush forest, where moss is starting to overtake the rails and crevices of the staircase, with rays of sun giving the image a golden glow. The picture has an air of harmony and coexistence, and it seems that the stairs are built so one can experience nature as closely and intimately as possible without disturbing the forest floor. The title of the page hints at a similar reasoning, that our planet needs to be safeguarded, and this includes protection from harms induced by man. Consequently, it is our duty and responsibility to preserve our planet. The choice of the word planet is curious, as this word resonates with a wider spatial impression that might render the advice more general, distant and amorphous as opposed to the word ‘Earth’, which would connote more closely with the notion of Mother Earth, our nurturer, and possibly make the advice more personal and relatable. The brochure follows by travellers being encouraged to reduce their “environmental impact by being a guardian of natural resources, especially forests and wetlands”. Guardian refers to a carer, a defender of something, but how one is supposed to care or defend natural resources, especially forests and wetlands, is ambiguous. A city or beach destination, for instance, is usually far removed from thoughts of forests and wetlands and it is probably unclear how one could protect these while undertaking such holidays. Implicitly, this could be interpreted as an encouragement to reduce travel that includes the use of carbon intensive transport or services, but such an implicit statement might be far removed from the thoughts of the travelling public. Travellers are further advised to respect both wildlife and their natural habitat, which indicates that the same kind of respect we have for people should also be extended to flora and fauna. In addition, buying products made of endangered species is deterred while following the accessibility rules in protected areas is prompted. Thus, people have a responsibility that goes beyond having a responsibility towards other people and society to include a responsibility for the natural environment. Water and energy use is specifically mentioned as something that should be reduced “whenever possible”. The advice sounds easy to follow, and some destinations have even facilitated such a change by e.g. installing key card systems and water saving devices in hotel rooms. However, in reality travellers are most likely unaware of how much energy and water they consume, which in turn can make it hard to reduce consumption. The page ends by advising travellers to “leave only a minimum footprint and a good impression behind”. This advice is particularly interesting as it closely resembles the advice found by the entrances to many natural areas; take only pictures (or memories), leave only footprints. By this statement, The Responsible Traveller brochure acknowledges that any type of tourism leaves a footprint, whether a carbon-, water- or natural footprint, and that this footprint should be minimized. In its context, the advice seems to refer to the
footprint at the destination itself as opposed to the global footprint of tourism, while leaving a good impression refers to the community and people the travellers meet at the destination. The notion of leaving a good impression is somewhat diffuse in this environmental context, as a good impression refers back to the identity and self-image of the traveller.

4.2.1.3. Economy and being informed

Support the local economy constitutes the third theme of guidelines for a responsible traveller. An image of hands engaged in what looks like traditional, artisanal, small-scale pottery production covers the page. The overall message of the set of advice is simple: support the local community and the local livelihood by purchasing locally produced handicrafts and products and by paying a fair price for them. What is deemed a fair price can be problematic though, as travellers are probably unaware of what a fair price for the handcraft or product in question might be, which can lead to the traveller not buying the product because of the price seeming high or paying a higher or lower price than the product is worth. In addition, travellers are discouraged to buy counterfeit products and products that are banned under national or international regulations. This statement too places the traveller in a situation where s(he) should know what is counterfeit while also being familiarized with the applicable regulations. However, it can be seen as the responsibility of any traveller to be aware of such matters and consequently not purchase dubious products. Support for the local economy is also extended past physical products to include services, with the last advice encouraging hiring local guides with in-depth knowledge of the surroundings. The explicit statement of supporting the livelihoods of guides is accompanied by the clear statement that locals might possess more information than foreign guides and that this knowledge will be educational for the traveller, thus providing the traveller with a personal benefit. Hiring local guides is the only explicit or implicit mention of services travellers can support, which raises some questions, as surely service providers such as locally run, owned and managed restaurants, hairdressers and the like should receive equal support from visiting travellers.

The next section, Be an informed traveller, suggests that travellers have the responsibility to be informed about certain aspects and topics before commencing their travels. An older, Asian male dressed in clothes resembling monk-clothing, is engaged in conversation with a younger, Western male dressed in what can be termed ‘explorer-clothing’. They are sitting on a rocky surface, evidently in a mountain landscape with another mountain and blue skies in the background. The image is significant, as it implies several things; first, that the travellers referred to in the brochure are Western travellers; second, that it is valuable to engage with the local culture and people; and third, that the relationship between host and visitor can be reciprocal. That said, the image seems to be disconnected from the overall advice to be an informed traveller, as the guidelines relate to health, safety and emergency situations, to voluntourism as well as to operators that engage in safeguarding the environment and supporting community projects. In most cases, the tips consequently relate to being informed about risks and threats that travel can entail and being informed about these is essentially an advice to take responsibility for and ensure the wellbeing of oneself. Voluntourism is the only form of tourism mentioned in the brochure, which implies that voluntourism has a special status in being a responsible traveller and in the responsible tourism discourse overall. It also implies that voluntourism can both have positive and negative effects, and that it is the responsibility of the traveller to ascertain that the projects one engages in have a positive effect. Implicitly, the mention of voluntourism also builds upon the notion of giving back and doing the right thing, which alludes at some type of othering and the inequalities between the Global North and South. Finally, the section emphasises that travellers should make informed decisions by choosing operators that showcase demonstrable environmental and social responsibility, which in turn implies that operators should readily communicate these efforts so that travellers can take these acts into consideration in their decision-making. The underlying implicit message is a promotion of business’ CSR and eco-label undertakings.

4.2.1.4. Responsibility through respect

The last of the five pages providing guidelines for responsible travellers is titled Be a respectful traveller, and thus the brochure completes addressing the three pillars of sustainable development. The image on the page depicts three women dressed in traditional colourful clothing and bead jewellery, and they are evidently
members of a nomad culture in Africa. In the background, traditional huts can be discerned. The choice of picture to go with the headline is a further implication to Western travellers doing the travels. In addition, being respectful is once again associated with being responsible, which is a repetition from the first page of advice. The following advice is equally repetitive, as it guides travellers to “observe national laws and regulations”. The placing of this statement here rather than in the section covering informed travellers is also perplexing, as one needs to be aware and follow laws and regulations, i.e. be informed, rather than just showing respect for them. A third repetition connected to heritage and our planet is given by encouraging travellers to only take pictures rather than protected cultural artefacts as memories of their travels. The slightly differing wordings and contexts of these repetitions can indicate that being respectful can encompass a variety of situations and perspectives, that these notions are important enough to be mentioned several times or that something needed to be added in this part of the brochure.

Prominently, the first message framed in a severer tone can also be found on this page, in the message “[r]espect human rights and protect children from exploitation. Abusing children is a crime”. This is the first instance where the advice indicates that something is a crime, that not following this advice can lead to punishment. Consequently, the traveller has a legal responsibility of not abusing children. The stricter tone can be seen as justified, as children form a particularly vulnerable group. It could be questioned if a more severe tone would enhance the impact of the other messages as well, as emotionally charged messages can be regarded as providing greater incentive for acting in a certain way. In contrast, the other tips in the brochure are written in a more peaceful and docile tone. The message also implies at another relationship, where humans have intrinsic value and rights while nature does not. Simultaneously, the message extends the intrinsic values and rights to all humans regardless of nationality, religion, age or social status. The brochure continues by further guiding travellers not to give money to begging children, and instead direct the money towards community projects. Begging is thus connected with broader societal problems, where supporting community capacity development projects are seen as possible solutions and are therefore endorsed. Travellers are consequently encouraged to direct their responsibility toward the greater good of the community rather than provide what might seem as the instant gratification of ‘doing good’ by providing money to a begging child. The last tip for responsible travellers concerns that which happens after the travels. Providing honest travel reviews and promoting one’s positive experiences endorses and acknowledges the power of word-of-mouth and user generated information and recommendations. Consequently, there is an implicit reference that personal travel accounts can serve as better indications for responsible travel, simultaneously encouraging travellers to inform of any wrongs or irresponsible behaviour they encounter during their travels.

The last page of the Tips for a Responsible Traveller brochure wears the same title and provides background information on the brochure. The image portrays a close-up of two smiling youths, one male of Asian descent and the other a Western female. They have evidently just participated in the traditional Holi – festival, the festival of colour, as they are both covered in various tints. Why this picture was chosen to represent the background information for the brochure can be debated. The individuals can be seen to represent the two wider groups of people that travel the most and consequently, they have been chosen to represent the image of responsible travellers. The brochure presents the entities behind the guidebook, compiled by the World Committee on Tourism Ethics and based on the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. The Code is further mentioned as being a “fundamental frame of reference for responsible and sustainable tourism” and presented as a voluntary implementation mechanism for stakeholders within tourism. The Code and the Responsible Traveller brochure are consequently not legally binding but serve as guidelines and best practice examples for responsible behaviour and operation within the whole tourism industry.

The brochure has some important general inferences: it is meant for global distribution, which is highlighted by the brochure being available in five of the six official UN languages (Arabic, English, French, Russian, Spanish); it suggests that it is easy to be a responsible traveller by following the tips provided; it outlines a discourse of what it means to be responsible in the tourism context; it closely combines ethics and morals into the tourism discourse; it builds upon the holistic three pillar approach of sustainable development; and, it alludes at the inequalities of the world while simultaneously trying to foster a sense of global citizenship and personal responsibility for a sustainable development of tourism. Why the sixth official UN language, Chinese, is left without its own translation poses an interesting question however, since the Chinese have been seen to be a rapidly growing market of travellers.
4.2.2. Travel. Enjoy. Respect.

The Travel. Enjoy. Respect. promotional piece is a one-minute video, consisting of images, text, audio and moving picture. The minute-long video can be broken down into 34 still frames containing text and image with analysable material, and these will serve as the main material for the analysis. The audio of the video is, however, equally important, as it sets the overall ambiance for the message. An orchestra with string instruments and drums play a sequence of music that gives an air of hope, adventure and anticipation, with the sequence almost stopping at still frame 22 and changing character at frame 30 by morphing into a crescendo of alluded dreams towards the end. The video forms a visually appealing, more social display of the Responsible Tourist campaign, with the slogan #TravelEnjoyRespect at its core. Like the Tips for a Responsible Traveller brochure, the Travel. Enjoy. Respect. video is aimed at a global audience with the video being available in the same five languages as the brochure. Having a visual, online, in-motion component as part of the overall material of the campaign encourages social sharing and participation and the whole campaign can be seen as a stepping stone for creating a wider, social phenomenon or movement that embraces the differences, uniqueness and adventure travels can provide, while concurrently embracing the identity of a responsible traveller. Curiously, the pressing problem of climate change is only alluded at while consumption in the form of travel is encouraged, which can be regarded as a problematic neglect of the major issues facing the tourism industry and the world at large.

4.2.2.1. Prelude

The video commences with the same first image as the brochure; the arctic landscape glowing in a tint of red and purple in the setting sun and a lone tent mounted on an island of ice. The accompanying text reads “I have seen the sunrise at the end of the world”. This image is evidently the face of the campaign, as it is portrayed as the opening visual of both the brochure and the video. It openly represents the beauty of the world and its pristine environments of natural wilderness and tranquillity. With the portrayal of such naturalness it can therefore be deemed noteworthy that a man-made tent is discernible, as it clearly does not belong there. Coupled with the words at the end of the world, it has the effect of indicating that man can and should explore even the most remote corners of the world, efficiently building a sense of longing and dreams in the mind of the viewer while simultaneously inducing a sense of privilege, as the end of the world is an unattainable destination for most. Additionally, it promotes a sense of exploring the unknown and going off the beaten track by seeking destinations that are far removed from the average mass tourism destination. The next frame is a close-up of an older Asian woman with facial tattoos or -paintings with the text “I have spoken with invisible people”. This combination of image and text is thought-provoking, since the woman can be seen as representing indigenous communities that the text denotes as invisible, i.e. they can be considered marginalized, as not having their own voice or as being outside the sphere of public knowledge. This, in turn, suggests that the traveller represents an individual from what can be termed the popular culture, for example a Westerner. The combination of image and text in the frame also suggests a form of othering, where a clear difference between us and them can be discerned. On the other hand, there are also indications of curiosity and exploration, as speaking with invisible people connotes with an accomplishment, even a social status by seeking these communities out. The next frames continue on a similar note, as the text “I have seen impossible creatures” is depicted with a heavily bejewelled, colourfully clothed and face-painted individual with metal tusk. The use of the word creature implies something that man cannot recognize, with the image associating with some kind of God or unworldly being. Again, the image does not represent or imply a creature from a Western culture, which suggests that the traveller is a Westerner exploring various cultures.

Frame six shows an orangutan in a lush, green forest, and is accompanied by the text. “I have fought for the weak”. This combination equals nature and wildlife as being weak, as something we as people or travellers should fight for and protect. It also indicates that the speaker has already fought for the weak, that (s)he has done something virtuous by taking specific actions to defend those who cannot defend themselves. The next frame depicts the red gates of the Fushimi Inari-taisha Shrine in Kyoto, Japan, with the sentence “I am everywhere”. The text could indicate that travellers can be found everywhere and that there is no place left on Earth untouched by human presence, but it could also imply that the speaker is representing multiple speakers,
a collective group of individuals. It could indeed refer to the belief that travellers can be found everywhere and that anyone can be a traveller regardless of their origin or physical presence. The following frame depicts a *Holi*-festival, an Indian/Nepalese festival of colour celebrating the arrival of spring, with blue colour being thrown over a crowd of people already covered in red tint. The text “And everytime I move” discursively connects with the previous frame, as it does to the following one depicting four Asian children standing between red, wooden door frames in red monk robes with the text “I help millions”. These frames normalize mobile lifestyles and implies that moving, or travelling, should be done and is desirable, as the speaker, simply through this mobility, helps millions. Travel is effectively equated with helping a vast number of people and this vast number represents those who are unprivileged or leading less material lifestyles than the traveller, as implied by the image of the frame. These frames implicitly build upon the notion of othering, as the speaker, who obviously is privileged, should travel to help those who are less privileged, which highlights the inequalities of different societies. The frames simultaneously highlight the difference between the Global North and the Global South and has an underlying reference to voluntourism, as the concept is strongly connected to a sense of travelling for a cause, to help or give back to those in need. Consequently, an implicit promotion of the privileged caring for the poor or marginalised can be discerned, and this care can only be realised through travel.

4.2.2.2. Interlude

The video continues with an image of the ancient city of Bagan, Myanmar, at sunrise with the sentence “I belong to a thousand year old tribe”, which indicates that the speaker relates to a collective or entity of people that are thousands of years old. The pagodas in the image can be seen as representatives of this ancient culture that have survived into modern time, and the speaker is actively relating him- or herself as part of this cultural heritage. Frames 11-17 represent a flowing succession of text and image, which aim to unite and mobilize the speaker and people at large for a collective purpose. The five first frames portrait young individuals of different ethnic backgrounds; an African female with a pink hijab and nose ring with what seems to be plains in the background; an Asian male with glasses, Western clothes and trees in the background; a Western female sitting in a car evidently moving forwards on a road with bushes on the flank; an African male in traditional clothing, apparently representing the nomad cultures of Africa, with a blue sky and bush in the background; and a dancing Asian female in traditional clothing and jewellery. The frames show the texts “I am like you”, “You”, “Are”, “Like” and “Me” respectively. The sixth frame is a portrait of a young Asian male and Western female, both smiling and covered in colour due to seemingly having participated in the previously mentioned *Holi*-festival with the text “And together”. The seventh and last frame of the succession forms a stark contrast to the previous ones, as it depicts an Arctic landscape devoid of any physical human presence. An archway of ice extends from brown, rugged rocks over to the turquoise water, with mountains visible in the background and blue skies forming above the scene. The text reads “We can change the world”. This last frame strongly suggests that we, the people, need to change the world in order to safeguard the natural environment and it is a clear reference to the anthropocentric harms of global warming and climate change. The succession of frames with the text *I am like you, you are like me* suggests that everyone is equal, that people, despite differences, have similarities and a connection to each other. In light of this message of unity, it is therefore curious to note that the Western female is sitting in a car, when all other portrayed individuals have natural or cultural elements in the background. This fact highlights an image of Westerners as highly mobile explorers, portraying an implicit message of Westerners as more inclined to travel and adventure. It is also notable that the *and together* frame includes a Westerner, because the image suggest that the Westerner has travelled to experience the *Holi*-festival, while the male in the image is likely a local or engaging in domestic travel. The palpable reference to climate change indicates that the campaign acknowledges the imminent challenges and that we as a united people have the power to *change the world* but paradoxically, the campaign hints at the opposite, as it builds an image of international travel as desirable and wanted. The succession of frames further forms a palpable shift in the video, as the speaker moves from an *I* perspective to a *We* perspective that carries on throughout the rest of the visual.

The following two frames continue on a streak of unity, with the first frame depicting two older, Asian men with colourful, traditional clothing and facial paintings and the text “There is no barrier strong enough”, with the consequent frame showing a bustling, pedestrian-filled street crossing from above and the text “to divide us”. The latter frame poses a notable exception in the video, as it is the only frame that explicitly depicts a
Western or developed society, a reference to the Global North. It is simultaneously the only frame that represents a city view. The combination of the two frames thus indicate a difference between two societies; those that can be seen to represent the old, traditional ways of life and those that represent developed, bustling and industrialised ones. This differentiation effectively denotes people into two groups, us and them, with the noteworthy explicit message that there is no barrier strong enough to divide us. The next frame depicts a lone, Asian child wearing a monk-like robe kneeling in front of a statue that could represent Buddha, with rays of sunshine lighting up the scene and the text “We are believers of a faith”. Magnificent, deep and lush canyon lands and blue skies are depicted in the next frame, with the sentence “Seeking nothing but a better future”. As with the previous frame of the archway of ice, the frame of a better future is a clear reference to a future where nature is thriving, suggesting that the problems of global warming and climate change no longer exist, or that the effects have been mitigated. Changing the world and the future is consequently equated to environmental wellbeing as opposed to social or economic development, implying that the environmental pillar takes precedence over the other two. This, in turn, indicates that people have a responsibility towards the environment and this responsibility is consequently equated with being a believer of a faith, suggesting that such a faith can be as strong as a religious faith. Frames 22-25 show a sunrise or sunset over a vast, green forest in a mountain landscape, with a lone woman standing on a mountain top with her back against the camera, both legs on either side of a narrow crevice in the rock and looking over the spectacular landscape. The words “There”, “Is”, “No” and “Impossible” cover the frames. The succession explicitly states that what might seem impossible might not be; that if we set our minds on a goal, even a large one as changing the world, we can achieve it. Consequently, the succession aims to instil a sense of hope and determination in the eyes of the viewer, implicitly building a sense of motivation and responsibility of ones’ actions. The message is further enhanced by the audio in the video, as the music effectively fades out and almost stops by the end of this succession, building a sense of anticipation and urgency which carries on to the following, latter part of the video.

4.2.2.3. The shift

A significant change can be discerned in the subsequent four frames as these are the only frames without any text and they flash by in quick succession. Despite having no text, the frames can be viewed as delivering a strong implicit message. The frames are close-ups of individuals of varying ethnic backgrounds; the first represents an older, Western male with long hair and beard; the second a younger, Middle Eastern woman with her hair covered; the third a young, African-American male; and the last frame an older, Asian male with a long beard and colourful facial painting. Most notably, the three first individuals have their eyes closed while the last individual has his eyes open. One can readily view this as an implicit reference to the hymn Amazing Grace, namely to the phrase “was blind but now I see”. The hymn portrays a feeling of hope and redemption and the same feeling can be attributed to this sequence in the video. Consequently, the frames can be seen as representing people as being blind to their detrimental actions that have caused immense environmental harm, but now, their eyes are opened, and now they see. On a deeper level, the choice of individuals depicted in the frames is intriguing, as the Westerner, Middle-Eastern and African-American individuals with their eyes closed can be seen as representing developed, industrialised nations with high use of natural resources such as fossil fuels, and the Asian individual with his eyes open can be regarded as representing a more modest, traditional way of life devoid of excessive consumption. These four frames serve as a bridge of anticipation, enhanced by the change and crescendo in the audio, which carries through throughout the remainder of the video.

A further transformation in the ambiance of the video is discerned in the last parts of the material, as these last frames are represented by moving pictures instead of still images. The text “We are adventurers” is combined with a sequence of a car moving forward on a straight dirt road with harsh, dry landscape on either side. In the next sequence, a camera moves forward in the level of the ocean, depicting an ocean view in a sunset or sunrise with a sailing boat and hot air balloon moving in the direction of the sun, showing the text “We are dreamers”. This sequence is followed by a sequence showing a car driving on an asphalt road towards the ocean and the sunset or sunrise, with green bushes flanking both sides of the straight road. The camera moves from almost a parallel level of the road upward to show the wider landscape and scene from above, with the noteworthy sentence “We are travellers” covering the scene. The same scene is depicted in the last sequence of the video with the camera zooming out while the slogan “Travel. Enjoy. Respect.” emerges on the screen. While the
image fades out, the social hashtag #TravelEnjoyRespect is added under the slogan. These last sequences effectively equates adventure and dreams to travelling, implicitly indicating that travelling is an essential part of being an adventurer and dreamer. The objects visible in these frames (a car, hot air balloon and sailing boat) suggest that being an adventurer, dreamer and traveller requires some form of transport, and these objects in turn portray a sense of privilege as the vast majority of the world’s population do not have access to these transport modes. Consequently, the video implies that the privileged are the travellers, adventurers and dreamers of society. The use of the word adventurer further implies a sense of exploration, of seeing the world, which instils a sense that going on a ‘normal’ holiday is no longer enough and instead, more unique and transformational experiences should be sought out. We therefore dream of new destinations to explore, to go off the beaten track and see what the world has to offer, and, in the process, we transform into travellers who seek authentic, unique, cultural and natural immersion from our travels. Thus, we are not tourists engaged in conventional mass tourism, which is often irresponsible and unsustainable. Rather, we are travellers that lead mobile lifestyles and travel, and on our travels, we enjoy ourselves and show overall respect to our hosts, destination and the environment and therefore, we embody the essence of what it entails to be a responsible traveller. In addition, we should promote our travels and share our responsible actions on social media platforms by using the hashtag #TravelEnjoyRespect and this way further inspire others and show that travelling responsibly is attainable by everyone.

These conclusions undoubtedly represent the overall message of the campaign, but they can simultaneously be regarded as overly simplistic and naïve. While building a strong message of unity, of the need and responsibility to change the world and travel with respect, the campaign does little to challenge travel and mobile lifestyles in itself. Rather, it promotes highly mobile lifestyles and encourages the audience to explore unexplored places which in turn counteracts the implicit message of responding to the issues of climate change as the promoted travels would most likely require carbon intensive modes of transport. Additionally, the video instils a strong sense of going off the beaten track and visibly promotes nature-based tourism over urban tourism, with the underlying notion of placing more strain on the planet’s natural resources. Throughout the video a sense of equality is instilled by the use of text, but the accompanying images often give the opposite effect, as the images feed into the notion of othering. Similarly, it alludes that travelling is the only means of helping others, which further feeds into the prominent inequalities of the world.

5. Discussion

The preceding section outlining the findings from the studied literature as well as the analysis of the Responsible Traveller campaign is a prime example of the intricate, multidimensional and heterogeneous nature of the notion of responsibility for sustainability within tourism. This section will discuss these findings in connection to each other and the presented background information as well as in relation to the research questions and aim of the study. The discussion is organized in three parts with section 5.1 defining the character and palpable turning points in the emergent discourse of responsibility for sustainability and with sections 5.2 and 5.3 discussing the findings in relation to the first and second research question respectively.

5.1. Turning points in the discourse

For over two decades, there has been a steady number of scholarly articles addressing various aspects of responsibility and sustainability in the context of tourism, with the number of published articles receiving a first increase in 2008 and another in 2010. These first increases in the literature came in the aftermath of the publication of the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report in 2007, which outlined the unequivocal warming of our globe. The next rise can be identified in 2013, with the years 2016 and 2017 having the highest number of published articles. The soaring number of articles in the two past years can be seen as significant as they come in the wake of the historic Paris Agreement of COP21, where the first global consensus to curb climate change through reduced carbon emissions was agreed upon. The rise in articles published during the past two years also indicates that the topic of responsibility for sustainability has fully started to emerge as its own, defined discourse in tourism. When considering the seven emergent themes in the literature review, a clear majority of the literature (67 articles) was identified to mostly incorporate notions falling under the theme of CSR and Ecolabels. This number provides an interesting point in itself, as many of the identified studies stated that
research incorporating CSR in a tourism context is scant (Fenclova & Coles, 2011; Zanfardini et al., 2016). However, it should be noted that the themes in this study are not entirely consistent, and therefore some articles were identified to belong to, and were consequently also referenced, under several categories. The high number of articles in the CSR and ecolabel category further suggests a continued burgeoning focus on the business side of responsibility for sustainability, thus clearly demonstrating the acknowledged emphasis on corporate discourses as opposed to consumer discourses in the literature (see e.g. Caruana et al., 2014; Luchs et al., 2015). CSR practices have further been recognized to have a clear focus on economic benefits and mostly encompass environmental aspects of sustainability, leaving the social pillar of sustainability rather obscure (Hughes & Scheyvens, 2016). The second largest theme in the form of referenced articles was Narratives of Responsibility closely followed by Sustainable Lifestyles. The themes of Climate Change and Communication and Marketing had an equal number of referenced pieces with Morals and Ethics one short of the same number. The smallest theme by far was the category of Food and Events, but even so, all of the themes portray their own, noteworthy characteristics.

Most of the articles outlining narratives of responsibility were published in 2016, with globalisation and the world’s prevailing social norms emerging as critically addressed topics. Similarly, the lifestyle category was dominated by articles published in 2010 and 2016, with three works highlighting the same main author (Barr et al., 2010, 2011a; b) that can be viewed as ground-breaking in relation to the overall literature pool and discourse. The title ‘A holiday is a holiday’ (Barr et al., 2010) effectively captures the essence of the consumer perspective of responsibility for sustainability, which is addressed in more detail in section 5.3. The climate change category was at its highest in 2010, with the unsurprising portrayal of the environment as its main topic. A notable amount of the articles specifically targeted air transport, which correlates with the fact that air transport is noted to cause the main share of the industry’s CO₂ emissions (Penz et al., 2017). These recent rises in published work in the themes intimately related to the environment and our globalised world clearly indicate that academia is concerned with the general unsustainability of the industry and the recent rise of studies addressing these topics can be viewed as an urgent call to create change. Similarly, the marketing and communication theme forms an interesting group, as the referenced articles indicated a steady flow of published work up until a surge in 2017, with eight of the 19 articles published during one single year. Correspondingly, one can readily assign the previous year as the year of communication which is apt, since the UNWTO Responsible Traveller campaign was launched in the same year. In contrast, a theme that did demonstrate a constant number of articles being published was morals and ethics, as no more than two articles were published during any given year. The works of Fennell (2008) and Kyllönen (2016) emerged as demonstrating a particular prominence towards the aim of this study in their conclusions. On the other hand, the smallest theme in the literature, food and events, only consisted of six referenced articles all published within the past five years, which suggests that these are nascent areas of interest.

While all of the studied articles address responsibility in relation to sustainability in some manner, either through environmental-, social-, or economic factors, only one article (Luchs et al., 2015) was found to explicitly state the sequence ‘responsibility for sustainability’, and thus the phrase can be considered to be coined in 2015. The authors further address the topic with rigour and note that in the context of climate change, “… the opportunity for individuals to defer, postpone or deny responsibility for sustainability issues is much greater…” than in other contexts with high self-serving benefits, such as health or finance, due to the other-oriented benefits of sustainability as well as the longer time frame and lack of immediate visible signs of the climate change phenomenon (Luchs et al., 2015, p 1462). Luchs et al. (2015) further assert that personal responsibility might not be the result of positive attitudes towards a certain matter, and consequently note that “… companies must be careful to avoid the perception of placing all responsibility on the consumer and should instead consider how to approach responsibility for sustainability as a shared challenge and commitment” while the policy perspective should endeavour to “co-create responsibility” (p 1463). Individual consumer responsibility for sustainability and consequent possible behavioural change is both supported (e.g. Barr et al., 2011a; c; Schinkel, 2011; Kyllönen, 2016; D.A. Tasci, 2017; Jamal & Smith, 2017) and opposed (e.g. McKercher et al., 2010; Sinnott-Armstrong, 2010; Cohen et al., 2013; Higham et al., 2016) by scholars, but whether individuals are willing to assume such responsibility is a matter in itself (e.g. Kellstedt et al., 2008; Norgaard, 2011; Hanna, 2013; Juvan & Dolnicar, 2014; McKercher et al., 2014; Passafaro et al., 2015; Han et al., 2016). Consequently, the debate on consumer responsibility for sustainability reigns supreme.

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Another notable turning point in the discourse can be discerned by the aptly prompted notion offered by Font & McCabe (2017) who noted that “[t]here is a sense that global politics and the world itself is at a precipitous moment in history, that decisions made in 2017 will significantly influence the direction of travel of businesses, consumer thinking and demand, and global governance for decades to come” (p 869). The authors clearly indicate that we live in a precarious time, where decisions made in the past year will notably affect the future tourism industry. Therefore, it can be considered promising that 2017 was dedicated as the IIYSTD and that UNWTO had a clear focus on responsible consumers in their Responsible Traveller campaign, which indicates that the tourism industry’s role in supporting overall sustainable development has been acknowledged and heeded to together with the role individual consumers have to create such change. This acknowledgement is further supported by the three SDGs incorporating tourism in their targets. SDG 12, Responsible consumption and production, can be regarded as highly relevant for the tourism industry and particularly in respect to this study, as the studied literature suggests that the industry itself is undergoing a moral turn (Su et al., 2013; Kyllönen, 2016; Gao et al., 2017), placing more emphasis on sustainability in the everyday operation and business goals of the corporations while the consumers, i.e. the tourists, are increasingly challenged to consume in a responsible manner (e.g. Barr et al., 2011a; b; Luh Sin et al., 2015; Font et al., 2017). However, how the IIY2017, UNWTO’s campaign and the SDGs have impacted the tourism industry and the notions of responsible consumers remains to be seen.

5.2. The construction of responsibility within tourism

The literature distinctly outlines the construction of and the players present in the emergent discourse of responsibility for sustainability and thus helps to addresses the first research question of How is responsibility for sustainability constructed within tourism?. The model in Figure 2 (see page 27) presents the interrelations and interconnectedness of the notion of responsibility and how the concept and consumer responsibility is constructed and framed. Notably, the model demonstrates the dynamic and fluent nature of responsibility (Luchs et al., 2015). The literature highlights that responsibility seems to be constructed as a universal, pre-defined code of being and behaving (Butcher, 2015; Grimwood et al., 2015; Luh Sin et al., 2015; Sin, 2017), which is further notably perpetuated by the Responsible Traveller campaign. The Tips for a Responsible Traveller brochure in particular portrays a pre-defined set of tips that are marketed as universal truths of what it means to be responsible without mentioning the complexities and context-based nature of the concept (Stanford, 2008; Barr et al., 2010; Grimwood et al., 2015). The campaign further portrays responsibility as a simple quest attainable for every traveller, which consolidates the mainstream view of responsible tourism (Goodwin, 2013) but simultaneously, it de-emphasizes the complex nature of the notion as responsibility in a tourism context has been noted to be far from simple (Sin, 2017). The campaign further has a notable Western-centric view of responsibility, which helps to sustain the prevalent notion of othering visible in the tourism context (Norgaard, 2011; Hanna, 2013; Butcher, 2015), thus rendering responsibility as an inherent characteristic of one group while another is deprived of responsibility (Sin, 2017). Conversely, this notion goes against the moral view of the notion, as all humans are argued to always have responsibility (Grimwood & Doubleday, 2013) and paradoxically, the mere construction of responsibility for sustainability in the literature and its portrayal in the Responsible Traveller campaign exacerbates the North/South divide rather than alleviates it. However, the framing of responsibility can also be viewed as providing a base for positive behavioural outcomes, as it builds upon notions of citizenship and personal responsibility as opposed to the continuation of capitalistic hedonism (Germann Molz, 2016).

Kyllönen (2016) extensively addressed the moral implications of responsibility by looking at individual and collective perspectives, and consequently found two alternate collectivist views that he termed the retrospective no-individual-responsibility and the prospective primacy-of-collective-prevention. Consequently, Kyllönen (2016) builds upon the temporal elements of responsibility as defined by Cane (2002) and notes that individuals can, retrospectively, be held morally responsible for their unsustainable actions if the individuals knowingly sustain and foster carbon intensive practices. Correspondingly, Kyllönen (2016) notes that individuals as a collective have a prospective responsibility for sustainability, as large scale collective behavioural action is required in order to reach the required level of sustainability on a societal level. The Responsible Traveller campaign further supports the collective action prospect, as it aims to engage people and travellers as a whole on a path of enhanced sustainability while simultaneously promoting the individual
actions each traveller can take. In addition, the prevailing status quo of a carbon intensive society is seen to not exonerate individuals of moral responsibility to act in a sustainable way (Schinkel, 2011), which suggests that when individuals travel, they should do it in a responsible way and consequently, the tips for a responsible traveller become crucial. The literature further highlights individual and collective forms of responsibility by focusing on the concepts of PSR and CSR, the former representing an individual and the latter a collective approach to responsibility. Studies that focus on PSR consequently place the individual at the center of the responsibility debate (McKercher et al., 2014; Foller-Carroll & Charlebois, 2016), which consolidates the moral views on responsibility as outlined by Fennell (2008) and Grimwood & Doubleday (2013). A prospective responsibility is further recognized by both the literature and the Responsible Traveller campaign, notably in relation to the direction of responsibility (Glanville, 2011). Individuals are seen to have a prospective, forward-looking responsibility towards future generations and the environment that surrounds us, which is highlighted in the literature by a concern for the well-being of future generations and the environment (e.g. Miller et al., 2010; Moskwa et al., 2015) and in the campaign as a responsibility to change the world and seek a better future. Furthermore, the direction of responsibility is also aimed at a responsibility towards the Global South (Foller-Carroll & Charlebois, 2016; Germann Molz, 2016; Sin, 2017; Olsen et al., 2018) and this notion is further perpetuated by the Responsible Traveller campaign, as travel is equated to helping millions.

The role of communication and marketing in the inference of responsibility is notable in the literature and these techniques can readily be discerned in the Responsible Traveller campaign. Stanford (2008) found that industry representatives associate respect as a notable feature of responsible tourism behaviour and this word has a pronounced presence in the entire Responsible Traveller campaign. Consumers are challenged to show respect in all their tourism endeavors and these endeavors encompass the holistic dimensions of sustainable development. Consequently, the campaign builds upon the discourse of responsibility for sustainability with sustainable development at its core by relying on means of emotionally laden communication to promote a message of respect that permeates the whole discourse. Targeting emotions have, in turn, been noted to foster responsible behaviour while having the potential of making a great impact (Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007; Gössling, 2018). While the concepts of sustainable development and sustainable tourism encompass a holistic three pillar approach, there is a notable focus on the environmental dimension in the studied literature, which suggests that environmental factors take precedence in the academic discourse of responsibility for sustainability. Such a focus on the environmental dimension can be viewed as warranted due to the environmental challenges facing the world, but nevertheless, the academic discourse demonstrates a clear lack of focus on responsibility for sustainability from a social- and economic perspective. The Responsible Traveller campaign however, clearly focuses on all three pillars and thus exemplifies that all aspects of tourism, whether social-, economic- or environmental, can be responsible.

Similar ways of using language as a way to promote positive characteristics was noted by Hanna (2013), who found a dichotomy between the use of seemingly similar words. The author found that discourses favoured to use the word traveller when referring to informed and responsible citizens as opposed to the word tourist, which was denoted to refer to irresponsible others or common consumers (Hanna, 2013). Similarly, the word citizen tends to connote with individuals leading sustainable, responsible lifestyles while the word consumer is inclined to be used when referring to the ethereal, irresponsible other (Hanna, 2013; McKercher et al., 2014). In contrast, a citizen-consumer is seen as an individual who is faced with the notion of making informed and responsible consumption and behavioural choices in their everyday lives (Barr et al., 2011a; b; Luh Sin et al., 2015). The Responsible Traveller campaign actively makes use of these allusions and the overall message of the campaign is framed in a way that promotes global citizenship by taking responsibility for economic-, environmental- and social aspects while on holiday. In addition, the word traveller is consistently used throughout the campaign, with one notable exception; when addressing the audience of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism on the last page of the brochure. In this instance, consumers are addressed as stakeholders, as tourists, which implies a collective group of individual holidaymakers. Consequently, the Code can be seen to be aimed at the masses, which can be connected with the call for enlightened mass tourism (Weaver, 2014), while the Responsible Traveller campaign targets a group of adventurers and dreamers seeking nothing but a better future, which can readily be attributed to those privileged enough to engage in the explorational and transformational form of tourism the campaign perpetuates.
5.3. Consumers’ perceived responsibility

Several studies have ascertained that consumers embody attitudes consistent with sustainability but that these attitudes do not manifest in sustainable behaviour, which has resulted in a ubiquitous and notorious attitude-behaviour gap of consumers (e.g. Kasim, 2004; Yan et al., 2008; Hares et al., 2010; Cohen et al., 2013; Juvan & Dolnicar, 2014; Hall et al., 2016; Higham et al., 2016). Consequently, scholars have noted that sustainable attitudes cannot be trusted to lead to sustainable behaviour (Reiser & Simmons, 2005; Cohen et al., 2013) and Mika (2015) further argues that the dissonance between attitudes and behaviour should be regarded as an inevitable characteristic of the tourism industry. As a result, the tourism literature has experienced a shift in how sustainability is addressed within tourism, and an emergent discourse of responsibility for sustainability can consequently be discerned. Industry discourses are seen to create consumer segments that value sustainability as opposed to sustainable consumers existing as pre-defined clusters waiting to be tapped into by marketers (Caruana & Crane, 2008). In contrast, scholars note that tourism consumers form a heterogeneous group that can create their own narratives of what it means to be responsible in a tourism context while also being able to relate to and abide by industry narratives (Caruana et al., 2014; Luchs et al., 2015). The context in which sustainable behaviour takes place has consequently been noted to lie at the core of the responsibility debate (see e.g. Stanford, 2008; Barr et al., 2010, 2011a; b; Cohen et al., 2013; Grimwood et al., 2015; Lah Sin et al., 2015; Miller et al., 2015; Sin, 2017), thus impacting the notion of consumers’ perceived responsibility for sustainable behaviour. The second research question of this study aims to address this notion by asking *How do consumers perceive their responsibility for sustainability in a tourism context?*

Tourism is seen as a discretionary activity people engage in in order to satisfy hedonistic needs and to attain personal benefits (McKercher et al., 2010; Boluk, 2011), while the prevailing social system of global capitalism is regarded to enhance the image of travel as a personal right and freedom (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2010; Miller et al., 2010; Mika, 2015). The Responsible Traveller campaign sustains this view by encouraging travel and by promoting to enjoy the unexplored places of Earth, which correlates with the findings of Gössling (2018) who noted that tourism endorses unsustainability by feeding into notions of indulgence and entitlement. The notion of having a right and freedom to travel can consequently be viewed as an extension to the human right of making individual choices, but scholars have questioned this ethical value of individual choice when it seems to result in detrimental environmental consequences (Hall, 2013). In addition, Fennell (2008) challenges the notion of ‘tourism as freedom’ by noting that any chance of freedom is taken away if consumers deny responsibility. Yet, consumers are known to prefer short-term, tangible benefits to the self when engaging in travel related decisions (Budeanu, 2007; Higham et al., 2016; D.A. Tasci, 2017; Penz et al., 2017) and are reluctant to alter their behaviour when a personal sacrifice is involved (Higham et al., 2016). The highly debated topic of air travel (Barr et al., 2010; Hares et al., 2010; Cohen et al., 2013; Cadarso et al., 2015; Gössling & Buckley, 2016; Han et al., 2016; Higham et al., 2016) can be considered such a sacrifice, as renouncing flying could mean forfeiting the freedom to visit certain destinations and losing personal benefits such as time, convenience and money. Even when a sustainable choice has been made, the overall sustainability of the choice can result in a rebound effect when the sustainable product is used in excess to satisfy a sense of sustainable hedonism (Budeanu, 2007; Font & McCabe, 2017). Still, Fennell (2008) argues that sacrifice and self-consciousness form essential aspects when moving towards responsibility.

After examining the literature, it can be ascertained that the tourism context in general does not instil a sense of personal responsibility within consumers and consequently, consumers do not seem to perceive that they have a responsibility for sustainability in a tourism context. However, such a statement is simultaneously overly simplistic, as exceptions occur and since consumers use an array of self-preserving mechanisms to deter the cognitive dissonance of their travels. Notably, consumers readily justify their travels by proclaiming that everyone else is behaving in the same way or by using moral licensing as an excuse (Barr et al., 2010; McKercher et al., 2010; Miller et al., 2010; Font & McCabe, 2017), they blame others for not acting sustainably or responsibly (McKercher et al., 2014; Luchs et al., 2015; Hanna et al., 2016; Juvan et al., 2016) or seem unaware of the link between travelling and sustainability (McKercher et al., 2010; Miller et al., 2010; Penz et al., 2017). The profound notion of “A holiday is a holiday” thus permeates even the minds of those strongly committed to and outspoken about environmental concerns and -action (Barr et al., 2010). Simultaneously, consumers show a distinct characteristic of entitlement by not accepting a personal
responsibility to change their behaviour towards increased sustainability unless other individuals and, interestingly, developing nations change their behaviour correspondingly (Miller et al., 2010; McKercher et al., 2014). This castigation of the Global South is particularly peculiar, as the construction and framing of responsibility deprives the Global South from responsibility in the matter. In similarity, the Responsible Traveller campaign is noticeably directed towards privileged, Western consumers that have the means to engage in international travel. While the tourism context seems disinclined to provide consumers with a sense of personal responsibility for sustainability, other contexts such as dimensions incorporating the home (Sharpley, 2001; Barr et al., 2010, 2011a; b; D.A. Tasci, 2017; Penz et al., 2017) or food and events (Mair & Laing, 2013; Moskwa et al., 2015; Sidali et al., 2015; Dodds & Holmes, 2017; Hitchings et al., 2017) seem to foster sustainable behaviour. Consequently, tourism seems to linger in a void where everyday social norms and moral values are absent (Cohen et al., 2013; Hitchings et al., 2017).

However, voluntourism, backpacker tourism and cultural- and natural heritage tourism form notable exceptions to the statement that tourism does not instil a sense of personal responsibility. Literature consistently characterizes voluntourism as a means to ‘give back’, as extending a sense of geography of care and responsibility and as a way to meaningfully contribute to global issues by ascribing to a sense of PSR (Luh Sin et al., 2015; Foller-Carroll & Charlebois, 2016; Germann Molz, 2016; Olsen et al., 2018). Such consumers are seen to strive towards becoming so called global citizens (Foller-Carroll & Charlebois, 2016) and voluntourism is consequently seen to foster notions of citizenship rather than the continuation of capitalistic hedonism (Germann Molz, 2016). The unique position that voluntourism holds in the responsible tourism discourse is further enhanced by the Responsible Traveller campaign, as volunteer tourism is the only form of tourism explicitly mentioned in the brochure. While voluntourism can be viewed as a conscious decision to take personal responsibility for sustainability, backpacker tourism has been noted to unknowingly be able to contribute to sustainable lifestyles due to the inherent low-budget nature of the activity (Iaquinto, 2015). Tourism incorporating aspects of indigenous, cultural- and natural heritage are further noted to be able to inspire and foster behavioural change and a heightened sense of responsibility within consumers (Walker & Moscardo, 2016; Jamal & Smith, 2017), and these notions are both explicitly and implicitly present in the Responsible Traveller campaign.

The literature suggests that there are several possible explanations for consumers’ lack of perceived personal responsibility in a tourism context, and these reasons are notably related to the issue of global warming and climate change. The tourism industry contributes to around 5% of global CO₂ emissions with the transport- and accommodation sectors responsible for 95% of the emissions (Penz et al., 2017) and while climate change as a topic has penetrated popular culture (Kellstedt et al., 2008), a recent study still indicates that consumers question the scientific evidence of climate change and even view heightened CO₂ levels as beneficial to nature, which consequently diminishes the felt individual responsibility to act (Hanna et al., 2016). Interestingly, consumers simultaneously seem to have a profound trust in scientific solutions to mitigate the effects of global warming (Kellstedt et al., 2008; Barr et al., 2010). Furthermore, as the Responsible Traveller campaign clearly illustrates, travelling in itself is never questioned or castigated. Indeed, the campaign notably promotes going off the beaten track and to experience and respect all that makes an international destination different and unique. One can wonder why the largest international organization responsible for promoting sustainable and responsible tourism so bluntly feeds into the glamorized view of travel and thus promotes the prevalent status quo (Gössling, 2017, 2018). Miller et al. (2010) further noted that framing climate change as a global, collective problem results in a so called bystander effect where no-one assumes responsibility, as a problem framed as a collective responsibility reduces the felt individual responsibility and the enticement to act upon the problem (Passafaro et al., 2015). In addition, scholars have found that consumers might see sustainability as an inherent part of any tourism product and therefore not something one should pay a higher price for (Lebe & Vrečko, 2015), which correlates with the product development approach brought forth by Font & McCabe (2017) and the idea of mainstreaming responsible tourism (Goodwin, 2013) or enlightened mass tourism (Weaver, 2014). If industry discourses are seen to entice sustainable consumer segments through the notion of responsible consumption, the moral predicament shifts from the consumer to the organisation and consequently also emancipates the consumer from the moral implications inherent to travel (Caruana & Crane, 2008).
Whatever the underlying reasons for individuals abrogating themselves of personal responsibility for sustainability in a tourism context, the literature suggests key points that require further consideration. Consumers construct and image of an ethical self through their consumption choices and these choices may be made to portray an ethical image of themselves to others (Boluk, 2011). Moskwa et al. (2015) noted that ethically superior alternatives can offer higher personal gratification while other scholars have asserted that the consumption of ethical or certified products and services generate psychological benefits by promoting personal moral values, which can lead to an enhanced self-image as a responsible tourist (Boluk, 2011; Marchoo et al., 2014; Martínez García de Leaniz et al., 2017). Likewise, consumers are known to prefer short-term, tangible benefits in their travel related decisions (Budeanu, 2007; Higham et al., 2016; D.A. Tasci, 2017; Penz et al., 2017). It thus becomes evident that sustainability in tourism should be framed as attributes that feed into a positive, responsible self-image of the consumer while simultaneously providing tangible, personal benefits. Some scholars have already jumped on the bandwagon of promoting the tangible benefits of sustainability (Budeanu, 2007; Gössling & Buckley, 2016; D.A. Tasci, 2017; Font & McCabe, 2017; Gössling, 2017) and the Responsible Traveller campaign does this in abundance by providing ample examples of tips that are deemed responsible and that simultaneously provide benefits to the self in form of e.g. increased enjoyment and authentic experiences. In addition, sustainability is seen to be in a need of reimagining in order to instil responsibility, which highlights the role of communication and use of language in the discourse (Font et al., 2012, 2017; Mair & Laing, 2013; D.A. Tasci, 2017). While education and raising awareness are seen as measures to enhance consumer responsibility, the literature clearly suggests that these measures are not enough to instil a sense of responsibility or to create behavioural change (Reiser & Simmons, 2005; Kellstedt et al., 2008; Barr et al., 2010; Hares et al., 2010; McKercher et al., 2010; Hall, 2013; Gao et al., 2017; Sin, 2017) and consequently, there is abundant evidence that suggest individuals refuse to change their behaviour (Budeanu, 2007; Barr et al., 2010, 2011b; Hares et al., 2010; McKercher et al., 2010; Miller et al., 2010; Han et al., 2016).

Notable in the literature, however, is the urgent call to challenge the prevalent status quo and its underlying notion of capitalist consumption. With a few exceptions, the literature clearly indicates that a system change (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2010; Hall, 2013; Melissen et al., 2016; Truong & Hall, 2017) and a shift towards genuine sustainable lifestyles (Barr et al., 2010; Gössling, 2018) incorporating notions of global citizenship (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2010; Foller-Carroll & Charlebois, 2016; Germann Molz, 2016) and new social norms (Miller et al., 2010; Hibbert et al., 2013; Gössling, 2018) is needed, as industry self-regulation and behavioural change are seen as inadequate to rise to the challenge of global warming and climate change (Buckley, 2012b; Saarinen, 2013). Several studies further indicate that consumers would embrace regulation, increased taxation and to tackle the problems as a collective, rather than as individuals (Blamey & Braithwaite, 1997; Barr et al., 2010; Sinnott-Armstrong, 2010; Higham et al., 2016). Prominent in the literature is also an ongoing academic debate on who, ultimately, has the responsibility for sustainability in tourism. While industry responsibility (Caruana & Crane, 2008; McKercher et al., 2010; de los M. Santos-Corrada & Figueroa, 2012; Pereira et al., 2012; Moskwa et al., 2015; Carrigan et al., 2017), consumer responsibility (Holland et al., 1998; Hares et al., 2010; McKercher et al., 2010; Barr et al., 2011a; b; Schinkel, 2011; Luh Sin et al., 2015; Foller-Carroll & Charlebois, 2016; Kylönen, 2016; D.A. Tasci, 2017; Font et al., 2017) and shared responsibility (Kasim, 2006; Dodds & Kuehnel, 2010; Saarinen, 2013; Luchs et al., 2015) receive significant attention, the majority of academia call for government regulation and policy measures (Perez-Salom, 2000; Budeanu, 2007; Kasim, 2007; Brodhag, 2010; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2010; McKercher et al., 2010; Sinnott-Armstrong, 2010; Buckley, 2012b, 2013; Rogerson & Sims, 2012; Cohen et al., 2013; Cadarso et al., 2015; Hanna et al., 2016; Higham et al., 2016; Truong & Hall, 2017). However, it has been noted that the prevailing social dilemma and the corresponding lock-in of the various stakeholders’ interests in the tourism industry can prevent the change towards heightened sustainability (Melissen et al., 2016) as both consumers and nations reason in ways that abrogate responsibility by waiting for others to act first (Jamieson, 2010). Yet, as climate change has been termed “the greatest challenge to the sustainability of tourism in the 21st century” (UNWTO & UNEP, 2008), it is high time to move away from the viscous loop of assigning responsibility for sustainability to others and instead embark on a path where all stakeholders share the responsibility for sustainability so as to truly instil “… a tradition of responsibility” (Bickford et al., 2017) and to tackle responsibility for sustainability as a “... shared challenge and commitment” (Luchs et al., 2015, p 1463).
6. Conclusion

The discussion on sustainable and responsible tourism has, throughout the past years, received increased attention on a global scale and the concept of responsibility for sustainability has never been as palpable as today. The tourism industry is characterized by its complex nature encompassing an array of stakeholders and context across the world, which poses a challenge to sustainable tourism management. The studied literature indicates that aspects related to the environment, global warming and climate change take precedence over the other two pillars of sustainable development, while the Responsible Traveller campaign tries to address the holistic notion in a more equal manner. While the tourism industry seems to have taken initiatives towards increased sustainability through industry self-regulation and policy guidelines, consumers continue to demonstrate a reluctance to engage in voluntary behavioural change in order to tackle problems such as global warming and climate change. Notably, the literature suggests that consumers find responsibility for sustainability as an inherent characteristic in the home context, but readily abandon this view when making travel related decisions. Consequently, consumers are not just suffering from an attitude-behaviour gap, they lack a personal sense of responsibility for sustainability in a tourism context.

This study has mapped out the emergent discourse of responsibility for sustainability and outlined how the notion is constructed, framed and enacted within tourism. The findings suggest that responsibility is characterized by fluency due to the surrounding context, social norms and personal identities and individuals can simultaneously relate to sustainability in varying ways. Notable is that the concept of responsibility is constructed by stakeholders residing in the Global North, and responsibility is subsequently seen as a responsibility towards the Global South, future generations and the environment. This definition of responsibility constitutes a problem in itself, as it indicates that there is one group with responsibilities and one deprived of it. Furthermore, the world at large seems to be in a state of lock-in, where everyone feels it is the responsibility of someone else to act upon sustainability and as a consequence, nobody does. It is clear however, that behavioural change in itself will not be enough to reach the required level of sustainability and thus the academic call for government regulation and policy measures needs to be heeded to. As we live in a world where the effects of global warming can be seen as the new norm, it is paramount that we move away from a notion where one has to seek out sustainable options, and instead shift on a path where sustainability constitutes the new norm.

This study has largely addressed responsibility for sustainability from an environmental perspective and consequently, future research could focus on the discourse from a social- or economic perspective. In addition, notions of responsibility in the tourism transport industry would form an interesting topic for future study, as consumer dissonance becomes most notable when addressing mobility and since this aspect of the travel seems to be outside the sphere of sustainable consideration when making travel related decisions. Furthermore, in order to gain a better understanding of responsibility for sustainability from various contexts, it would be vital to study the discourse from the perspective of the Global South, which thus forms a particularly prominent topic for future research.
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8. References


