Transition Practices: Education for Sustainable Development in Ecotourism

Nea Pakarinen
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Abstract: There is a globally acknowledged urgency for mankind to transition toward sustainability. Empowering people to make sound assessments is the basis for desirable transitions. ‘Education for sustainable development’ (ESD) is an interdisciplinary learning process advancing knowledge, understanding and action for sustainability. To encourage sustainability transitions ESD needs to be personal and place-specific. One platform provisioning for such learning is ‘ecotourism’, where participants have a heightened sense of self, others and the environment. Hence a practice incorporating ESD into ecotourism is investigated in this thesis, to determine whether the setting would be propitious for fostering sustainability transitions. The pertinent sustainability concepts are assessed, and ‘social practice theory’ is utilized in a case study. The approach of social practice theory was preferable, as it holds the assumption that people are able to act in relation to collective cultural activities rather than in immediate responses to internal or environmental events. The effect of ESD in ecotourism is analyzed through observations and unstructured interviews conducted in a case-study in Turkey – Narköy, which is a hotel, organic farm and educational facility. The findings imply that through social practice, pro-environmental transitions can be encouraged and strengthened, with the provisions of having freedom for learning, social interaction, connection with nature, tangible activities and inclusive approach.

Keywords: Sustainable Development, Systems Thinking, Transitions Management, Ecotourism, ESD, Social Practice Theory

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Summary: There is a globally acknowledged urgency for mankind to transition towards sustainability. Empowering people to make sound assessments is the basis for desirable transitions. ‘Education for sustainable development’ (ESD) is an interdisciplinary learning process advancing knowledge, understanding and action for sustainability. Sustainability transitions are long-term processes of structural societal change toward a more environmentally friendly and socially equitable civilization. These transitions cannot be commanded or controlled, but their direction can be affected. To encourage them ESD needs to be personal and place-specific. Tourism as an industry is by and large unsustainable, which calls for ecotourism – a socially and environmentally conscious and low-impact way of travelling. Ecotourism provisions for ESD, as there participants have a heightened sense of self, others and the environment. Hence a practice incorporating ESD into ecotourism is investigated in this thesis, to determine whether the setting would be propitious for fostering sustainability transitions. The pertinent sustainability concepts are assessed, and ‘social practice theory’ is utilized in a case study. The approach of social practice theory was preferable, as it holds the assumption that people are able to act in relation to collective cultural activities rather than in immediate response to internal or environmental events. The effect of ESD in ecotourism is analyzed through observations and unstructured interviews conducted in a case-study in Turkey – Narköy, which is a hotel, organic farm and educational facility. The findings imply that through social practice, pro-environmental transitions can be encouraged and strengthened, with the provisions of having freedom for learning, social interaction, connection with nature, tangible activities and inclusive approach.

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<td>ACAP</td>
<td>Annapurna Conservation Area Project</td>
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<td>DESD</td>
<td>Decade of Education for Sustainable Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>GAP</td>
<td>Global Action Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>GHG</td>
<td>Greenhouse Gas</td>
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<td>GNH</td>
<td>Gross National Happiness</td>
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<td>EAE</td>
<td>Environmental Adult Education</td>
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<td>ECCE</td>
<td>Early Childhood Care and Education</td>
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<td>EFS</td>
<td>Education for Sustainable Development</td>
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<td>EE</td>
<td>Environmental Education</td>
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<td>ESD</td>
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<td>HDI</td>
<td>Human Development Index</td>
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<td>HEI</td>
<td>Higher Education Institution</td>
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<td>HESI</td>
<td>Higher Education Sustainability Initiative</td>
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<td>IEC</td>
<td>Information-Education-Communication</td>
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<td>IUCN – CEC</td>
<td>International Union for Conservation of Nature - Commission on Education and Communication</td>
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<td>SE</td>
<td>Sustainability Education</td>
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<td>SPI</td>
<td>Social Progress Index</td>
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<tr>
<td>TVET</td>
<td>Technical and Vocational Education and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNCED</td>
<td>United Nations Conference on Environment and Development</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<td>UNRISD</td>
<td>United Nations Research Institute for Social Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNWTO</td>
<td>World Tourism Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>WCED</td>
<td>World Commission on Environment and Development</td>
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<td>WWOOF</td>
<td>World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms</td>
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1. Introduction

Humanity is speeding down an unsustainable path, with doom and gloom awaiting. The necessary transitions might seem dauntingly gargantuan, resulting in fear and complacency. Perhaps a warmer welcome can be achieved through altering the perception of transitions into the irresistible and that of prospects. Could leading by example induce a butterfly effect of sustainable practices globally?

“Needless to say, wealth, education, research and many other things are needed for any civilization, but what is most needed today is a revision of the ends which these means are meant to serve.” (Schumacher, 1973, p. 249)

Culture - like education - influences values, skills, ethics, languages and worldviews. If sustainable development is to be realized, intercultural understanding is paramount. A feeling of connectedness would bestow empathy and understanding, ideally lessening inequality and increasing action against injustice. Utilizing the innate curiosity existent in tourism as a podium for increasing environmental awareness and understanding, seems beneficial, also as the tourism industry is largely unsustainable. Ecotourism has been gaining popularity as an alternate form of tourism, which at its best includes education for sustainable development (ESD).

Learning environments are not neutral – they have either a repressive effect or an encouraging one (Hill & Clover, 2003, p. 81). Significant environmental learning is about and for the environment proceeding through and within the environment. Constructive learning will only take place when the learners are able to relate newly acquired knowledge to their own experience of their environment. The pairing of ESD and ecotourism is thus cogent: ESD calls for more practical and place-specific socially interactive learning, whilst education in ecotourism adds significance to the experience.

How does education for sustainable development in an ecotourism setting function in transitioning social practices towards the pro-environmental? This thesis seeks to delve into this question through theoretical review of the constituents; sustainable development, social sustainability, ecotourism and ESD. Empirical observations and reflections from a case study of Turkish small-scale ecotourism initiative Narköy active in ESD, will then be utilized to observe the process in situ. Social practice theory which seeks to determine links between practice and context in social situations, is utilized to gain an understanding of the processes in place. In social practice theory action is seen as stemming from collective cultural activities rather than as a direct response to internal or environmental events (Holland & Lave, 2009, pp. 4-6). How agency is formed, in relations of the physical, mental and object paradigms, in the selected case study is explored in the light of this theory.

2. Background

The adverse impact of humans on the ecosystem is old news; 4000 years ago the collapse of Mesopotamia was connected to the irrigation system poisoning the land, which has been followed by resource depletion, pollution, diminishing biodiversity and global warming among others. Scientists since the 1960’s have championed a new geological epoch of the Anthropocene (Schwägerl, 2014), where human impact on the earth’s ecosystem is perceived to have permanently changed it; “There are, for instance, more trees on farms than in wild forests. And these anthropogenic biomes are spread about the planet in a way that the ecological
arrangements of the pre-human world were not. The fossil record of the Anthropocene will thus show a planetary ecosystem homogenized through domestication.” (The Economist, 2011)

Thus many argue that the currently accepted epoch of Holocene, which began after the most recent ice age 11 700 years ago, should be replaced with the notion of the Anthropocene, whilst others argue that it is a more recent phenomenon.

Figure 1 the Aral Sea – Before and After (National Geographic, 2014)

The Aral Sea, located between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, is a prime example of human impact on the ecosystem. Once one of the largest lakes on earth, it has almost completely dried up due to irrigation use (Fig. 1). The Anthropocene warrants a shift in the perception of humans as mere passive observers of natural cycles into agents central to its workings. This perception of humans as a more pro-active agent, at its best creates a responsibility to preserve and care for the environment, and at its worst to harness it. This chapter outlines the different sustainability paradigms this thesis taps into; sustainable development, social sustainability, education for sustainable development and ecotourism, which all are based much on the notion of the Anthropocene.

2.1 Sustainable Development

The verisimilitude of development continuing in the current fashion is out of the question. Several international agreements, conferences, protests and plans have been taking place since the late 1960’s regarding sustainable development. The most enduring report produced is ‘Our Common Future’ by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED). Known as the ‘Brundtland Report’ (named after WCED chair Gro Harlem Brundtland), the report came up with the most agreed upon definition of Sustainable Development and effectively popularized the term: “Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” (The World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987) The report has been criticized for leaving too much for interpretation and echoing neoliberal sentiments of infinite growth. One of the critics is social science environmental researcher Wolfgang Sachs, who states in his book ‘Planet Dialectics’ that Sustainable development has inherited the fragility of development as a term: “What is sustainable? Sustainable development is development that lasts.” (Sachs, 1999, p. 81) However the strength of the term lies in its broadness; it is easy to agree upon, thus providing for a consensus that the current situation is unsustainable, warranting transitions.

Often a prevalent feature attributed to sustainable development is that of confluence between people, environment/planet and economics/profit (known as the triple bottom line or the 3 P’s). The triple bottom line was coined in 1994 by John Elkington, a sustainability consultant. He envisioned that using only a financial measure of corporate profit was insufficient and social and environmental factors needed to be taken into account to truly measure a corporation’s performance (The Economist, 2009).
According to the model - when the 3 P’s are in balance - sustainable development is achieved (Fig. 2). The triple bottom line has effectively shifted focus to the responsibility of the corporate sector toward society. Based on a similar division between people, economy and the environment is the concept of ‘ecosystem services’, which evaluates nature based on the value it can provide for humans; provisioning, regulating, supporting and cultural. This approach is hailed as laudable in assisting decision makers in climate change mitigation efforts. The approach has largely been criticized for the same reasons; it commodifies nature and asserts the notion of human dominion (Millenium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005). These concepts are now widely utilized in the sustainable development paradigm. Like the Brundtland report, they do not seem to question the need for economic growth. One can then question whether sustainable development as a term is actually only acting as a Band-Aid to hide a gaping wound.

As a very amicable and malleable concept sustainable development can be taken advantage of to uphold the very systems in need of transitions. This has warranted a distinction between weak and strong sustainability. ‘Weak sustainability’ perceives all capital to be interchangeable; human capital can thus substitute for natural capital. ‘Strong sustainability’ acknowledges different types of capital to be complementary, but not interchangeable (Neumayer, 2003, pp. 49-50). ‘Systems thinking’ acknowledges this interconnectedness; “A system is an interconnected set of elements that is coherently organized in a way that achieves something.” (Meadows, 2008, p. 11) The approach calls for understanding of the whole by focusing on the linkages and interactions between its elements. Systems thinking outlines that parts of a system will act differently depending on whether they are acting as a part of the system or in isolation. Systems are dynamic, adaptive, responsive, goal-seeking, resilient, remedial and self-sustaining. Finding the connections between elements enables synchronization of actions. Conjointly with their lifelike qualities systems can consist of inanimate and abstract things - for example information is often what holds a system together and its goal defines its behavior. Systems can change and be evolutionary in the sense that out of one system a completely new one can emerge (Meadows, 2008, pp. 70-71). A practical application of systems thinking is ‘permaculture’ (where ‘perma’ stands for permanent) which aims to mimic the patterns and relationships found in nature. It is applied to all aspects of human habitation, from agriculture to ecological building, from appropriate technology to education and economics. The core tenets of permaculture are to care for the earth, care for the people and return of surplus (Holmgren, 2002). System thinking is utilized to tackle complex problems, because it helps to understand the ‘big picture’ and find leverage points for transitions.

Transitions in this context are perceived as long-term processes of change through which a society or a sub-system of society changes fundamentally (Grin, et al. 2010, p. 98). Transitions cannot be commanded
and controlled, but can be influenced and adjusted with the goal of improvement or innovation. Crises are chances for transitions as they signal that something is not functioning in the system. Transitions are unstable and difficult to predict, but through identifying different phases their direction can be influenced:

- **The pre-development phase** (status-quo of the system changes, but not visibly);
- **The take-off phase** (ignition after which structural change gains momentum);
- **The acceleration phase** (structural changes become visible) and;
- **The stabilization phase** (new dynamic state of equilibrium achieved).

Inciting transitions for sustainable development warrants taking into account the inherent conflicts between the values, ambitions, and goals of a multitude of stakeholders. Changes in state, market, science and civil society are needed if interventions are desired in the above mentioned phases of transitions. Using systems thinking to foster an understanding of the interdependency between these actors, is crucial to formulate a holistic understanding of desirable outcomes. A long-term vision for sustainability transitions is formulated in transition arenas, which are networks of innovators and visionaries from interdisciplinary backgrounds. The necessary sustainability transitions can only be achieved through co-design and learning within and outside these arenas. Knowledge in transitions is developed in a complex, interactive process with a range of stakeholders involved through a process of social learning; “the underlying rationale is that synthesis can only take place through frequent interactions between theoretical knowledge, practical knowledge and practical experience, as a result of which innovation can penetrate and take root at the societal system level.” (Grin, et al. 2010, p. 5)

### 2.2 Social Sustainability

The 1992 UN Rio de Janeiro Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), known as the Earth Summit outlined our common rights and duties with respect to the earth’s natural resources and services. It acknowledged that they are shared with present and future generations. The conference also agreed upon legally binding treaties on biodiversity and climate change and endorsed Agenda 21, which serves as a comprehensive voluntary action plan for societies to realize sustainable development (UNCED, 1992). The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development UNRISD (2014) states that “sustainable development is necessarily people-centered and planet sensitive, guided by values of equal rights and social justice, enabled by pro-active states and well-functioning institutions, and shaped through the participation of empowered populations.” According to UNRISD ‘Social drivers’ (Fig. 3), which are the conditions and factors shaping transitions, need to be addressed to achieve this vision:

![Figure 3 Social Drivers (UNRISD, 2014)](image-url)
The social drivers of development; norms and values, structures and institutions determine and direct action. The divergence within the drivers is addressed in the book ‘Paths to a Green World - The Political Economy of the Global Environment’ by Jennifer Clapp and Peter Dauvergne (2005). They recognize four major worldviews, maintaining they can intermix and overlap:

- **Market Liberals** believe that economic growth translates into wellbeing and that technology can help solve most environmental issues. The World Bank, World Trade Organization and the World Business Council for Sustainable development all align with market liberal thinking.

- **Institutionalists** emphasize a need for strong global institutions and norms, as well as state and local capacities. They stress that environmental issues, population growth and inequalities should be addressed through better policies. United Nations and Global Environmental Facility (GEF) among many other institutions advance this agenda.

- **Bioenvironmentalists** perceive the earth as a living organism – in accordance with the Gaia hypothesis (Lovelock, 2009). Population growth and neoclassical economics are seen as the main drivers of environmental degradation. Human consumption patterns and globalization are criticized.

- **Social Greens** believe economic globalization to increase inequality and that there are physical limits to economic growth. They call for reclaiming the commons, dismantling and downgrading of global economic institutions, changing the nature of trade and production, cancelling developing country debt and localizing economies. The central belief is that a stronger sense of community will fulfill basic needs and enhance quality of life. (Clapp & Dauvergne, 2005)

The worldviews in turn affect what are perceived as social drivers for sustainable development. In Fig.3 the UNRISD listing of social drivers stems from an institutionalist perspective. Social policy is perceived to be key in guaranteeing transformations through protecting people from the vagaries of markets and life, enhancing productivity through health, education and training, addressing inequality through equal distribution and sharing tasks of reproduction and care within the society, and remunerating it. ‘Social policy as a driver of transformation’ would be a combination of economic and social policies. These ‘eco-social’ policies aim to shift behaviors or provide incentives for more sustainable environmental management, thus strengthening the adaptive capacities of individuals and communities. Noteworthy are the eco-social alternatives to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) acting as measures of wellbeing. The Human development index (HDI) stresses that performance of countries should be assessed based on people and their capabilities, not only economic criteria. These capabilities are assessed through measuring factors related to health, knowledge and standard of living (UNDP, 2015). Bhutan has chosen to measure Gross National Happiness (GNH). GNH recognizes the need for economic development, but emphasizes “material and non-material values with the conviction that humans want to search for happiness.” (The Centre for Bhutan Studies & GNH Research, 2015) GNH measures good governance, sustainable
socio-economic development, cultural preservation, and environmental conservation through 33 indicators. Another alternative to GDP gaining ground in western countries is the Social Progress Index (SPI). It measures nutrition and basic medical care; air, water and sanitation; shelter; personal safety; access to basic knowledge; access to information and communication; health and wellness; ecosystem sustainability; personal rights; access to higher education; personal freedom and choice; and equity and inclusion (The Social Progress Imperative, 2015). Currently the index is being used to direct economic decision making into a new direction; the European Commission agreed to use the Social Progress Index (SPI) as a tool to decide how to allocate funds to deprived regions (Confino, 2015). Eco-social policies give space for transitions, by encouraging alternatives to economic development.

The economist John Maynard Keynes whose theories of aggregate demand largely defined current macroeconomics, predicted the following: “- for at least another hundred years we must pretend to ourselves and to everyone that fair is foul and foul is fair; for foul is useful and fair is not. Avarice and usury and precaution must be our gods for a little longer still. For only they can lead us out of the tunnel of economic necessity into daylight.” (Keynes, 2009, p. 201) He believed this period to be that of ‘necessary evil’ for humanity to attain global affluence. Keynes underestimated the self-maintaining capacity of the system. The capitalist market economy has become such an immense entity, it is difficult to alter as it is beyond the control of individuals. It has become so rooted in life, that people forget it is not a given. In order to change it civilization needs to shift its purpose and goals. Economist E.F Schumacher who wrote ‘Small is Beautiful; A Study of Economics as if People Mattered’ opposed Keynes’ view: “The Modern economy is propelled by a frenzy of greed and indulgences in an orgy of envy, and these are not accidental features, but the very causes of its expansionist success.” (Schumacher, 1973, p. 18) In response ‘social and solidarity economy’ and ‘social reproduction and care’ as social drivers of sustainable development call for transitions in the capitalist market economy, into a system where social and environment matters are placed before profit. This could be achieved with forms of collective sharing and exchange and giving support to care-giving work and the needs of care-receivers. Schumacher came up with the idea of ‘Buddhist Economics’ which advocates for meaningful employment and a reworking of how we perceive life “... work and leisure are complementary parts of the same living process and cannot be separated without destroying the joy of work and bliss of leisure.” (Schumacher, 1973, p. 58) Buddhism Economics places emphasis on liberation – not from wealth, but the attachment to wealth thus advocating the driver of ‘employment-centered economic policy’.

‘Equality of opportunity and outcomes’ as a driver for sustainable development is of utmost importance, as it is predominantly a luxury to be able to be concerned about sustainable development, with a majority still struggling to meet basic needs. Perhaps the biggest challenge for sustainability is to address the gross inequalities prevalent in the current system.

French economist Thomas Piketty highlights in his book ‘Capital in the Twenty-First century’, which utilizes economic data going back 250 years, that wealth and capital inequality is an inherent feature of the capitalist market economy and will only increase over time, unless actively restrained by political means (Piketty, 2014). What Piketty calls for is a
more people centered approach to economics: “Now, what could be done? The first thing is that I think we need more financial transparency. We know too little about global wealth dynamics, so we need international transmission of bank information. We need a global registry of financial assets, more coordination on wealth taxation, and even wealth tax with a small tax rate will be a way to produce information so that then we can adapt our policies to whatever we observe.” (TEDSalon Berlin, 2014) The social driver for sustainable development of ‘empowerment, effective participation and accountability’ calls for more transparency, through equal access to knowledge, enabling sound assessment of humanity’s current condition thus aiding in informed decision making.

2.3 Education for Sustainable Development

“You cannot learn without changing, or change without learning.” (Kosko, 1993, p. 205)

Education has increasingly embraced a mechanistic worldview. This view is argued by many to be too simple, resulting in an imbalance in human development (for instance Heimlich, 2002). This shortcoming is best characterized by Charles Darwin in his autobiography: “Up to the age of thirty, or beyond it, poetry of many kinds... gave me great pleasure ... I have also said that formerly pictures gave me considerable, and music very great delight. But now for many years I cannot endure to read a line of poetry.... I have also almost lost my taste for pictures or music... My mind seems to have become a kind of machine for grinding general laws out of large collections of facts, but why this should have caused the atrophy of that part of the brain alone, on which the higher tastes depend, I cannot conceive ... The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature.” (Darwin, 1887, p. 139)

Environmental education (EE) has been around in primary and secondary education since the early 1970’s. EE in Europe was declared “an integral and essential part of every European citizen’s upbringing” (European Commission, 1988). From EE, which has educational aspects about sustainability, emerged education for sustainable development (ESD) as an alternative with deeper focus on participation and equity values for society as a whole and less of a discipline focus (Huckle & Sterling, 1996). ESD is the most widely utilized term, but sustainability education (SE) and education for sustainable development (EFS) are used as well. Unlike other educational movements it was incited by political and economic forums, and is often developed by ministries (signatories of Agenda 21) and left for educators to implement. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which is responsible for the advancement of ESD, defines it as “…an emerging but dynamic concept that encompasses a new vision of education that seeks to empower people of all ages to assume responsibility for creating a sustainable future.” (UNESCO, 2014) Community groups, local authorities, national park authorities, non-governmental organizations (e.g. World Wild Life Fund), the corporate sector, schools and universities are all actors in the field of ESD.

The first priority of ESD is to guarantee basic education for all, second is reorienting existing education and third increasing public awareness, understanding and training. In 2005 UN declared a ‘Decade of Education for Sustainable Development’ (DESD), which ended in 2014. The goal of DESD was to
reorient education policy, practice and investment to address sustainability. It managed to raise awareness on the importance of ESD globally. The follow-up to DESD is the Global Action Program (GAP). GAP aims to reorient education and learning, in order to provide everyone with adequate knowledge for sound assessments and actions regarding sustainable development (UNESCO, 2014).

<table>
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<th>ESD – Transitions</th>
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<tr>
<td>From</td>
<td>To</td>
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<tr>
<td>Passing knowledge</td>
<td>Understanding and getting to the root of issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching attitudes &amp; values</td>
<td>Encouraging values clarification</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seeing people as the problem</td>
<td>Seeing people as facilitators of change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sending messages</td>
<td>Dialogue, negotiation and action</td>
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<tr>
<td>Behaving as an expert – formal &amp; authoritarian</td>
<td>Acting as a partner - informal &amp; egalitarian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Raising awareness</td>
<td>Changing the mental models which inform decision and action</td>
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<tr>
<td>Changing Behavior</td>
<td>More focus on structural and institutional change</td>
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![Table 1 Educational Shifts in ESD (Tillbury, 2011)](image)

ESD is more of a process of transitioning how we learn (Table 1) rather than a discipline to be taught. ESD is transboundary and transdisciplinary - dealing with environment, society, economy and culture and natural science, social science and the humanities. ESD is participatory, locally relevant, culturally considerate, contextual, innovative, constructive, focused, infusive, holistic, practical, integrative, process oriented, empowering, critical, balancing, systemic, connective, ethical, purposive, inclusive and lifelong. The aim of ESD is to “prepare responsible and caring citizens for a changing society.” (Bhandari & Abe, 2003, p. 20) These citizens would through ESD have the knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivations, and commitment to work individually and collectively toward solutions of current problems and the prevention of new ones (E. Heimlich, 2002). Empowerment would be achieved through creating and fostering (Huckle & Sterling, 1996, p. 35):

- A sense of responsibility to the environment, to other people and the future of both;
- The will, knowledge and skills to translate this responsibility into action in both personal and public life;
- The ability to respond positively to change and uncertainty;
- A capacity to see links between individual and group actions, external events, and other factors;
- An interdisciplinary and holistic outlook;
- A healthy skepticism alongside the ability and freedom to be creative;
- A balance of rationality and feeling and intellect with intuition and;
- A sense of self-worth combined with a respect for other individuals and cultures.
ESD is enacted in formal education, non-formal education and informal education on all levels (Appendix 1 Lifelong Learning). Due to its transcendent nature ESD can only be achieved through collaboration within and between disciplines, institutions, industry, educators, communities, individuals and governments. The DESD was able to increase awareness on the institutional and governmental level, but the educational community and general public are largely unaware of the importance and scope of ESD. Structuring and placing ESD in the formal curriculum will be challenging, whilst non-formal ESD will have to struggle dealing with different backgrounds, skill-sets and knowledge bases. Conducting ESD is also difficult - should ESD be actively teaching new information or focusing co-participation of practice that is in accordance with the idea of sustainability (Kiisel, 2015)? Despite these challenges at the end of DESD UNESCO identified ESD to be increasing in all levels of education in most member states with multi-stakeholder partnerships proving to be most effective in executing it. Liz Coleman the head of Bennington College and a strong advocate of interdisciplinary education succinctly stated: “Being overwhelmed is the first step if you are serious about trying to get at things that really matter, on a scale that makes a difference. So what do you do when you feel overwhelmed? Well, you have two things. You have a mind. And you have other people. Start with those, and change the world.” (TED, 2009)

2.4 Ecotourism

The tourism sector is a both a culprit and a victim of climate change; mountain regions and coastal destinations among others are adversely affected by the warming climate and the sector is contributing to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions especially through transportation (UNWTO, 2015).

Sustainable tourism as a concept emerged in the late 70’s - the idea was to provide environmentally and socially responsible travel options. The desire for sustainable tourism has long been taking root in the form of travel to pristine natural areas – desire born of natural resistance to the constructed environment many are habitng. The term ecotourism was coined by environmentalist Hector Ceballos Lascurain in 1983, and was initially used to describe nature based travel to relatively undisturbed areas with an emphasis on education. Ecotourism, like most terms related to sustainability, does not have a fixed definition. Generally ecotourism is thought to involve visiting natural areas in order to learn, to study, or to carry out environmentally considerate activities, all whilst enabling the social and economic development of local communities. Voluntourism, which is travel involving volunteering - often in exchange of accommodation and food - is a meaningful avenue for ecotourism, provided that the work of the volunteer contributes to needs of the local community and could not be carried out adequately with local workforce.

![Diagram of Ecotourism Constituents](Honey, 2008)

Ecotourism has often been utilized as mere greenwashing – negatively impacting the communities and areas it is intended to protect. Holistic ecotourism (Fig. 4) considers impact, human rights, conservation, culture, environment, locals and tourists. The scope of ecotourism is
crucial if the constituents of ecotourism are to be achieved. Large-scale tourism operators often approach ecotourism through acquiring certifications. For ecotourism to have a positive impact and engage locals meaningfully it is best enacted through small-scale initiatives. The biggest challenge ecotourism faces is the risk of commodifying culture to outsiders. Hence the educational aspect of ecotourism is vital in avoiding a one-dimensional experience and fostering an understanding of the cultural and environmental context. ESD in ecotourism aims to educate tourists, members of surrounding communities and the broader public in the host country. Before travel commences tourism providers should supply travelers with reading materials about the local context and the importance of ecotourism for the industry and for sustainable development in general (Honey, 2008, pp. 29-31). Educating local communities and enabling them to manage ecotourism initiatives would provision for heightened responsibility for their surrounding environments. Communities in turn could educate incoming ecotourism operators, as they have the best understanding of the local context.

“Education itself is not a panacea for natural resources management or local environmental problems: rather it is a means for bringing people into the mainstream of sustainable development efforts” (International Union for Conservation of Nature IUCN - Commission on Education and Communication CEC, 2002, p. 56) – this is the carrying notion behind Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) in Nepal, which is a successful initiative combining ecotourism and ESD. The initiative was launched after rapid environmental degradation due to an influx of locals and tourists to the region. In ACAP conservation education and environmental education are used interchangeably and linked with strategies outside of the program. The program educates both local communities and tourists on how to treat the environment sustainably and preserve and enhance local resources. Tourists gain a purposeful experience, through learning about the local context and importance of conservation. Locals receive funding, employment and are educated on how transitioning to more sustainable resource use can increase long-term wellbeing (International Union for Conservation of Nature IUCN - Commission on Education and Communication CEC, 2002). This example functioned as inspiration for my own study by unearthing a similar one for research purposes of this thesis. The most successful aspect of ACAP has been its inclusiveness; it has managed to satisfy all stakeholders involved in politically and ethnically tense environment. Achieving this meant taking into consideration the cultural and historical context in restructuring practices.

3. Social Practice Theory

In this chapter Social Practice Theory is covered, and its approach toward analyzing pro-environmental transitions explicated. Social theories are utilized to systematically interpret the social world in order to form theoretical statements. They provide people with a way to position themselves, which invariably includes ethical, cultural and political dimensions. Social theories provide concrete tools of breaking old models of understanding and introducing new ones (Reckwitz, 2002). Thus with regards to environmentally conscious actions, social theories are key in providing an understanding of how change in behavioral patterns is manifested.

In the 1970’s ‘practice theories’ or ‘theories of social practice’ emerged as a more conceptual alternative to other social- and cultural theories. Practice
A practice consists of meanings, symbols, competences, procedures, materials and technology that are integrated by practitioners, through physical and mental actions. Practices are not possessions of one individual, but can be carried by whoever takes over the processes. Knowledge in social practice is perceived as ‘understanding the world’; including oneself, others, objects and the abstract. Understanding is mostly implicit, collective and interwoven in a historical and cultural context. Social practice includes a sense of desire and avoidance and has a ‘practice-specific’ emotionality. Wants and emotions do not belong to individuals, but exist in the form of knowledge in practices (Reckwitz, 2002).

In practice theory social structures are constructed through routines. Routines are temporal, and are subject to change and breakdowns, due to interpretative indeterminacy and inadequate knowledge with which the agent faces the situation. The social world in practice theory is dominated by diverse social practices which are carried by agents. The individual in practice theory is the crossing point between different practices and the practice co-evolves with the individual’s values. Ethics in practice theory is manifested in the relations between subjects - in creating and taking care of social routines in accordance to what is perceived to be a just and a good life. This perception is constantly evolving: “by keeping democracy at the forefront, making stronger links to social movements, and working at local, national, and global levels, and through persistence and imagination, dialogue, and debate, we can reassert a vision of the world we want.” (Hill & Clover, 2003, p. 14) In social practice theory pro-environmental behavior can manifest and develop, not only through the change of individuals’ values, but through structural-, power-, legal- and social relations. The practices bridge individual experiences with broader socio-technical provisioning networks (Hargreaves, 2011). “Patterns of consumption [and their associated impacts] follow from the routine accomplishment of what people take to be ‘normal’ ways of life.” (Shove, 2004, p. 117) If one desires to influence the direction of transitions, determining what these ‘normal’ social practices consists of and how they emerge, stabilize, evolve and die out, is imperative (Hargreaves 2011).

4. Methodology

The tools for applying social practice theory in the context of this thesis are outlined in this section. This thesis is a qualitative research study, suitable for
social practice theory with its empirical focus. Qualitative research methods originate in the social and behavioral sciences as well as in the humanities. They examine and analyze behavioral variations and their drivers. The why and how of decision making is investigated and the results of qualitative research are descriptive rather than predictive, but utilized to formulate hypotheses. In-depth studies of small groups of people are used to guide and support the construction of hypotheses (Merriam, 2009).

This thesis is based on an ‘anti-positivist’ stance, also known as ‘interpretative’ approach, stemming from the recognition that social sciences cannot be approached in a similar manner to natural sciences. Complete value freedom or objectivity is not possible in social science research. Sociologists do not agree on one general paradigm and they have their own agencies. The anti-positivist approach perceives that ‘positivist’ goals of description, control, and prediction - are incomplete, since they lack the goal of understanding (Weber, 1991, p. 7). The positivist thesis of unified science, which utilizes a natural-scientific model, fails to take into account the relationship between the social sciences and history, and the fact that they are based on a situation-specific understanding of meaning that can be explicated only hermeneutically (Habermas, 1967, p. 22).

The primary sources for this thesis are participant observations, reflection, field notes and unstructured interviews conducted over a ten-day period on site. Secondary sources were acquired through literary review, conferences and desk research. Transition management and systems thinking are used as grounds, on which social practice theory is applied to analyze the case study. Social practice theory was chosen as a framework for the research process, because ESD calls for cooperative learning and ecotourism provides for the planned culturally bound, social and collective activity, which social practice theory seeks to explain.

4.1 Case Study

"Case studies are analyses of persons, events, decisions, periods, projects, policies, institutions, or other systems that are studied holistically by one or more method. The case that is the subject of the inquiry will be an instance of a class of phenomena that provides an analytical frame — an object — within which the study is conducted and which the case illuminates and explicates." (Gary, 2011, p. 511) A case-study method was chosen, because of its emphasis on exploration and description aligning with the qualitative anti-positivist research stance applied in this thesis. Choosing to do a case study enabled conducting research in a real-life context, which was seen as pertinent to truly examine ESD in ecotourism in the light of social practice theory. This is a ‘Critical Instance Case Study’ as it has a focus on examining a situation of unique interest, with limited interest in generalizability (Mann, 2006). Turkey was chosen due to its large tourism sector and Narköy in particular as an accessible model example of, as of yet, a rare scheme.

4.2 Observation

Observation was preferable as a method, because it enables examining participants in a natural setting. In this case study the observations are not independent of the participation of the observer and the occurrences of reflexivity are accepted as a natural part of the observation process. Reflexivity occurs when the observations or actions of observers in the social system have an effect on the very situations they are observing (Finlay & Gough, 2003). ‘Participant as observer’ stance is utilized, where the researcher becomes a part of the setting being observed, with other
participants informed of the research. According to Bernard (1994, pp. 142-3) participant observations lend value to cultural studies by:

- Enabling the collection of different types of data;
- Familiarizing the researcher to the community, thus facilitating involvement into otherwise excluded activities;
- Reducing reactivity and awareness of being observed;
- Aiding to develop culturally relevant and comprehensible questions and;
- Giving the researcher a better understanding of the cultural context, thus lending credence to interpretations.

This strategy was chosen, because it allows the researcher to gain better insight into practices, cultures and motivations of the chosen setting. As social practice theory implies action to stem from collective structures, by immersion in the activities, the researcher is better able to understand the elements behind the practice.

4.3 Unstructured Interviews

Unstructured interviews rely on the spontaneous generation of questions in the natural flow of interaction, with some preconceived notions of what topics are of interest. Unstructured interviews allow to cover areas in detail. According to Punch (1998, pp.162-4) advantages of unstructured interviews are as follows:

- Respondents may be more likely to discuss adversary experiences if the interviewer is sympathetic;
- Respondents have an opportunity to develop their answers;
- Respondents can define and direct the interview toward what they perceive as important;
- If respondents feel at ease they are more likely to provide valid data and;
- The interviewer has more chances to pursue and explore topics.

Unstructured interviews were chosen as a natural extension of participant observation and as the research did not purposefully hold a preconceived plan of how the topic would be dealt with. There was an opportunity to speak with the participants on multiple occasions. To immerse oneself in the social practice it was undesirable to highlight one's position as a researcher in daily interactions. Thus structured and semi-structured interviews were deemed inadequate for the limitations they set. Their knowledge is mainly derived from the interview situation and not a full range of encounters between participants. Unstructured interviews enable the researcher to understand the complex behavior of individuals, without limiting the field of inquiry. They are a useful method for developing an understanding of an as-of-yet not fully understood or appreciated culture, experience, or setting (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006).

5. Results

“By neglecting the experiential learning of people and the cultural impact of an individual’s relationship to his or her environment, top-down unidirectional educational practices diminish people’s curiosity, engagement and creativity. Effective environmental education requires
In this chapter the results of the chosen methods, applied in the case study of Narköy, will be demonstrated.

The potential of ecotourism in Turkey is ripe, due to its natural diversity and a large and growing tourism sector. In 2014 Turkey ranked sixth on the International Tourist Arrivals Index with 36.84 million visitors gaining $26.63 billion in tourism revenue (Today's Zaman, 2015). Turkey has a large domestic tourism sector. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism has set ambitious goals of almost doubling the amount of visitors and tripling the amount of revenue gained from tourism. Its overarching aim is “to increase employment and make tourism a leading sector in regional development in a sustainable manner.” (Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2007)

With the advancement of sustainable tourism - the aim is to enable regional development, better employment and distinguish Turkey from competitors. This would be achieved through revamping existing tourism plans and sites to be more sustainable, diversifying to other locations, helping local economic and social development for the disadvantaged and increasing tourism specific to regional concerns. The goal is also to raise awareness about ecotourism for the public, non-governmental organizations and private companies, through international cooperation and between local and central operators. In its current state ecotourism in Turkey is still at its infancy, predominated by grassroots initiatives, such as Narköy.

5.1 Structure

“Narköy is a homegrown, contemporary center for life and learning which is respectful of its geography, given shape in accordance with nature’s standards and possibilities.” (Narköy, 2015)

Narköy is an organic farm, hotel and educationally focused facility owned by Ahmet and Nardane Kuşcu. The aim of Narköy is to invite people to connect with nature, whilst encouraging social interaction through shared activities. Narköy’s facilities include 14 rooms, family and group lodging, yurts, nomad tents, restaurant, indoor and outdoor classrooms, animal sheds, a seed bank and the farm facilities. Narköy is located amidst the mountains and forests of Kandıra on the Black Sea coast, a couple of hours drive away from Istanbul in the Kocaeli province with Kerpe being the closest town (Fig. 5).

Retired teacher Nar set up NAR T&D in 2002 for family counseling and trainings. In 2005 the company had formed into a training and consultancy firm, with Nar and Ahmet’s son Ozan Kuşcu having joined. Nar had a dream of an ecovillage integrating ‘permaculture’ and Ozan dreamed of an eco-training hotel which then resulted in Narköy – the complex was finished and operational in early 2013 (Fig 6). The Nar Training and Consultancy Center provides training and consultancy services to corporate firms, school classes and individuals, in addition to conducting workshops, ranging from bread-making to mindfulness in nature (Narköy, 2015).
Narköy is a family effort with Ahmet, responsible for technology and IT and Mümtaz, Nar’s brother responsible for the farming, horticulture and seed-production, and with Nar’s sister occasionally conducting trainings. The hotel was partly designed by Ahmet and Nar’s architect daughter Beste, who wanted to adapt it to the natural landscape, with most materials acquired from the locality. The design is ecologically considerate; water is heated by solar panels, the rainwater is stored and used for flushing toilets, a sewage system using plants filters waste water, grey water is purified and wood pellets and logs are used for heating. Electricity is used in some of the buildings, which is turned off-grid in low-season. There are no TV’s and the design of the rooms is kept simple to encourage guests to be close to nature and interact with others. The restaurant functions as a communal space (Fig 7). Nar, Ahmet, Mümtaz and his wife and one other employee live on site.

In addition to allotted farming fields, there are gardens located between buildings which guests and workers are free to harvest from. The design of the restaurant has incorporated a green wall with herbs growing inside and outside the restaurant. Around 80% of the food used is produced on site. The harvest includes fruits, berries, vegetables, cereals, potatoes, nuts, seeds and herbs. At Narköy bread, bakery goods, milk, butter, cheese, jams, fruit compote and vegetable conserves are processed and preserved. There are two greenhouses for extending the growing season for tomatoes, paprika, salad, herbs, eggplant and zucchini. There are sheep, horses, dogs, cats, goats, chicken, ducks and cows. Surplus produce is sold once a week at an organic market in Istanbul.

At Narköy the gender ratio of employees is almost equal. The area surrounding the black-sea coast in Turkey is known for a setting where mostly women are responsible for farm work. Many of the women working at Narköy have farms adjacent to their houses and are married and have children. The locality is characterized by Alevism, which is categorized as a sect of Shia-Islam. Alevism includes shamanistic traditions and is perceived as mystical. Women are free to dress as they please (covering-up is still common), can worship together with men and the relationships are monogamous. Most of the tourists are from Istanbul and the surrounding region and a majority are families staying for a few nights. According to Ahmet and Nar most tourists choose Narköy based on its good reputation and media-visibility, with some having an interest in permaculture farming, alternative lifestyles or ecological concerns. In addition to paid employees and regular tourists, there are volunteers through voluntourism schemes, such as Workaway, World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF) and Tatuta. This avenue was utilized for the field research conducted for this thesis, because
it allowed for the immersion required to examine social practice.

5.2 The Idea

Nar was awarded a ‘Mother Nature’ prize for advancing ecological pursuits in Turkey in May 2015. When enquired about it Nar said she does not know if she can live up to the name: “Well I try to do something good, that is the important thing - to try.” (Pakarinen, 2015)

Behind Nar’s humbleness lies a steely resolve to contribute to a better world. Nar was interviewed for the Contemporary Food Lab internet publication by fellow voluntourist Thann Hoang in March 2015, about her guiding principles, which also contributes in a general sense to the observations and unstructured interviews conducted for this thesis.

Out of the four worldviews categorized by Clapp and Dauvergne - Nar’s approach at Narköy aligns with the bioenvironmentalist and social green thinking. She perceives nature to be a living organism heralding an approach of partnership and reverence. The operational model of Narköy stems from a social-green standpoint; a stronger sense of community enhances quality of life, with ecotourism provisioning for a global concern. The red thread behind Nar’s approach aligns with systems thinking “we can only be at peace with ourselves and others if we are at peace with nature” (Pakarinen, 2015) – to her people are a part of the ecosystem. Hence a disconnection from nature leads people to damage nature and themselves, because they do not understand the ‘big picture’ and symbiotic connection.

Nar grew up on a farm where much of the values formed stem from collective structures; “...Permaculture was the natural way of living. Humans and animals were living together in a self-sufficient way; neighbors were helping each other ... We were using our own seeds. We had no plastic and no waste: everything was turning into something. We used to bake our bread and make our cheese. We were putting watermelon and tomato seeds into cotton fields for people to eat while working. We were not irrigating our fields. We were fishing in the lake near our field. At nighttime, children were listening to tales, they were sleeping under the stars in summer ... We knew how to dream.” – Nar (Hoang, 2015)

Nar would like to see permaculture pervading the social-, recreational and working life. Creating a transition towards a similar social practice is the goal of Narköy, through restructuring traditional practices. With her background as a teacher Nar has experienced first-hand how “the education system is too distanced from nature.” (Pakarinen, 2015)

At Narköy ESD includes implementing the ethos of permaculture through practical activities; classes in nature, workshops, cooking or farming.
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the kitchen, the forest as training fields. We take models from nature, we show and apply them into economics to create sustainable business models.” (Hoang, 2015) Behind workshops such as ‘create your own permaculture garden’, is the hope that people will take the lessons learned home and spread the message.

Nar’s believes in unity: “we all have one big home, this earth – we are all neighbors.” (Pakarinen, 2015) Hence at Narköy there is an emphasis on creating an inclusive environment where co-creation is key; working together, eating together and learning from each other. Kandira was chosen as a location because Ahmet and Nar were charmed by the villagers: “They are leading a slow life and have great appreciation for traditions, with permaculture still being a natural way of life for many” – Ahmet (Pakarinen, 2015).

For the pro-environmental social practices of Narköy to transcend the locality, Nar and Ahmet are collaborating and increasing interaction with others sharing their ethos. During the research period for the thesis there was an advertisement being shot for an electric car and a TV-crew from the national documentary channel filming a series on alternative lifestyles. They are hoping for a positive trickle-down effect through leading by example and collaborating with the mayor and local administration, who support Narköy, into making Kandira a slow-city. Nar envisions a future where they will be fully self-sufficient in energy and food, with more young people in their ranks. Ideally Nar hopes that at some point they will not be needed as an educational unit anymore, because people will have embraced permaculture and begun ‘dreaming again’ (Hoang, 2015). Many of the tourists stated that they were re-evaluating some of their past habits after being on the farm, and felt responsible for supporting such initiatives in the future. Children especially enjoyed the setting; playing with others, animals, helping with farm work and being outdoors. One nine year old from Istanbul, said she preferred Narköy to the usual city breaks in Europe her family goes on. She was happy for the family to spend time together and she liked that Narköy was not “busy & dirty like Istanbul.” (Pakarinen, 2015)

5.3 Functions

At Narköy everyone participates with thoughts, knowledge, feelings and physical labor in creating shared-knowledge. Hence assessing the collective cognitive and symbolic structures at Narköy meant immersing oneself in the practices.

Empowering the locality is important in creating meaningful ecotourism, which Narköy has embraced. The recruitment of employees from a nearby village was purposeful to foster a sense of community and to bridge a connection to the local villages. Most of the employees knew each other beforehand and carpool to work. The scheme at Narköy is especially successful in integrating the volunteers with the paid employees, both enjoying the cultural- and knowledge exchange. As a volunteer one feels useful - meaningfully contributing to lessening the employees work load and providing them with a respite from the mundane. Volunteers work from 9am to 5pm, six days a week, with a two-hour lunch break, and many shorter breaks (Fig 9).
The paid employees work a few hours more and during high-season there is extra hired help. Ahmet stated that the employees ‘run the farm’ (Pakarinen, 2015); there is a deliberate avoidance of hierarchy between the farmhands, volunteers, owners and tourists. Most days the employees did not ask for direction from the ‘superiors’ and seemed comfortable in expressing their opinions. The employees have plenty of autonomy regarding the farm work, and were allowed to bring their children to work, fostering a sense of belonging, ownership and responsibility.

At Narköy there is a focus on creating spaces encouraging learning; the farm, gardens and outdoor classrooms (Fig. 10). The physical spaces at Narköy are designed to facilitate interaction between people, nature and animals - from the buildings, furniture, and layout to the landscape. There are pathways connecting all buildings, plenty of outdoor seating, communal areas, open doors, large tables (Fig 11) with the gardens and animals dotted between buildings. The physical spaces and produce of Narköy act as objects in the social practice.

To create the inclusiveness, integration and connectivity ESD calls for, having a variety of visitors at Narköy is important. Most of the tourists came from affluent backgrounds, but Nar and Ahmet have tried to bridge the gap, by having the option for day-visits and voluntourism, which enables budget travelers to join in. Volunteers were encouraged to spend time in the restaurant, read the magazines and books available there and eat the food - like other tourists. Farming was not ‘glorified’ – the work was conducted daytime and around the tourists (Fig 12), who were encouraged to enquire about farm work, with employees gladly explaining to them what they were doing and why. The tourists were keen to talk with volunteers, provisioning for discussions on permaculture and cultural differences, creating dialogue, locally relevant and participatory ESD, creating the ‘mental’ in social practice. In addition to this the ‘physical’ in social practice was always encouraged as tourists were welcomed to try out farming.
The symbolic structures of knowledge are culturally bound in practice – which was embraced at Narköy through having a non-discriminatory stance towards religions, minorities and socioeconomic status. The innate reverence towards nature, present in Alevism, permaculture and systems thinking direct the operations of Narköy. Cultural events ripe with symbolism are celebrated, such as Hıdırellez on 6th of May, which heralds the arrival of spring. During the celebration, people come together from all walks of life to celebrate the future, health and letting go of the past. At Narköy the celebration involved all the employees, their families, volunteers and tourists - eating, dancing, singing and performing the rituals together. At Narköy the jungle of collective cognitive and symbolic structures constructing practices, is directed towards the pro-environmental by immersing all participants in the present, through the collective activities described in this chapter.

6. Discussion

Small streams, make large rivers. If human practice is built on embodied know-how, then learning should not be about knowing the world, rather about being in the world, which is what ESD in ecotourism, through social practice provisions for. “In this view, anti- or pro-environmental actions, and more or less sustainable patterns of consumption, are not seen as the result of individuals’ attitudes, values and beliefs constrained by various contextual ‘barriers’, but as embedded within and occurring as part of social practices” (Warde, 2005, pp. 82-83). In this chapter the results are discussed in the light of the theories outlined in this thesis.

6.1 Empowerment

Narköy is a good example of holistic ecotourism. An environment has been created where learning and action are integrated, restructuring the ‘mental’, ‘physical’ and ‘object’ paradigms in social practice towards the pro-environmental. The approach of Narköy is considerate towards ESD transitions in many aspects: encouraging clarification of values, perception of people as agents of change, emphasis on dialogue, reflection and action and learning through co-creation - all this with the hope of changing the mental models informing decision-making and action. Out of the transitions ESD calls for – there is a deliberate avoidance of a top-down and problem-based approach. Teaching about doomsday scenarios can be counterintuitive – discouraging learners, so instead Narköy acts as a positive example of an alternative path.

Learners are more likely to develop and retain knowledge, skills, and understanding contextual to their experiences, and not utterly reliant on educational materials: “the hegemony of the specialist, ecologist or naturalist maintains the mystique of environmental interpretation, which remain exclusive rather than inclusive.” (Huckle & Sterling, 1996, pp. 45-51) Top-down interventions, technical assumptions about the nature of change and the role of education as a tool to be used by developers, seem insufficient in inciting sustainability transitions. Out of the social drivers of development, in the approach of Narköy, norms, values and
agency are placed above structures and institutions. Agents cannot be persuaded to change behavioral patterns – rather, transforming practices is key in inciting change, which implies empowerment, participation and accountability as social drivers for sustainable development to be most conducive. For the driver to realize the collective energy and ability in social practices, power relations need to be balanced. The inclusive social learning advanced at Narköy is fostering understanding and equality; knowledge is not merely transferred, but rather is about learning through other viewpoints of reality.

The folk beliefs of the local villagers as well as permaculture principles, are characterized by their approach towards nature in terms of partnership, stemming from the consciousness of direct dependence on nature. Like in systems thinking, at Narköy people are seen as parts of the ecosystem, thus acting differently if they are disconnected from it. At Narköy the community and its surrounding environment are seen as a landscape of resistance, a source of regeneration, happiness and a site of inspiration and beauty, aligning with bioenvironmentalist and social green notions. This viewpoint can help bring people back in touch with their emotional, spiritual, and psychological connections to the land and thereby widening a sense of self and community. One could then argue that ESD in ecotourism can act as a counter for negative globalization; creating a notion of ‘biospheric culture’ extending the boundaries of concern and realizing transpersonal solidarity (Huckle & Sterling, 1996, pp. 29-30). This heightened the sense of interdependence created through social practice succeeds in making complacency, which plagues sustainability, difficult.

6.2 Advancement

Transitions are needed on a grander scale in tourism. Could an example of ESD in ecotourism such as Narköy, be enacted on a grander scale in a traditionally touristic destination? Using Narköy as an example - perhaps tourism revenue could be redirected into supporting other local industries sustainably – thus strengthening and empowering locals to value their surroundings as more than a source of revenue. Could holistic ecotourism then act as a tool for rural areas to detach themselves from the ‘rat race’ – enabling them to preserve traditional values and their heritage, through revenue from tourism? For future research I would suggest explorations into whether the example set by Narköy could be applicable to already existing tourism scenarios. Perhaps through alternate measures of wellbeing and eco-social policies, there would be more incentives for introducing this model of ecotourism on a grander scale, enabling for more widespread adaptation of such initiatives, inciting changes in market, science and civil society, taking into consideration the institutionalist and market liberal viewpoints as well. A creative possibility driven orientation facilitates understanding and discourse between different actors on what kind of a future is desirable. This could enable actors to take into account the differentiating values, ambitions and goals of all stakeholders and the differentiating worldviews, aiding in finding leverage points for interventions in transition phases.

Through creating new collective and symbolic structures with a shared way of ascribing meaning to the world, what is desirable and what is the ‘norm’ has been effectively shifted towards the pro-environmental at Narköy. Bringing ecological considerations on the table through social practice made the participants re-evaluate the routines they carry in everyday life. Narköy does not claim to have a universal strategy for
sustainable development, but a functional one reflecting local circumstances. Narköy as such is acting as a smaller-scale transition arena, changing sub-systems of society, hoping to contribute to larger-scale transitions. The end-goal is not that of a global impact, but the initiative carries humble hopes that leading by example might lead to a positive snowball effect.

7. Conclusion

Understanding relationships between people and the environments we inhabit is vital in fostering sustainability transitions. Characterized by fluidity and evolution, interpreting the systems currently in place calls for an approach considerate of the linkages and interactions between the elements that construct them. Through finding these connections, action can be synchronized towards larger transitions. As information is what holds a system together – through a platform provisioning for freedom of learning in an environment advantageous for interaction, such as ecotourism – ESD can be utilized to affect transitions for sustainability through restructuring practices. From the example of Narköy one can draw the conclusion that once participants are immersed in a social practice on all levels (interacting with objects utilizing their physical and mental capacities), the process of how the world is interpreted can be affected towards the pro-environmental, enabling for an intervention in the structure of a system.

As a final note, I wish to quote R.H Tawney’s sentiments in his book The Acquisitive Society, which resound with the findings of this thesis: “It is obvious indeed, that no change of system or machinery can avert those causes of social malaise which consist in the egotism, greed, or quarrelsomeness of human nature. What it can do is create an environment in which those are not the qualities which are encouraged. It cannot secure that men live up to their principles. What it can do is to establish the social order upon principles to which, if they please, they can live up to and not live down. It cannot control their actions. It can offer them an end on which to fix their minds. And, as their minds are, so in the long run and with exceptions, their practical activity will be.” (Tawney, 1920, p. 55)
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Appendix

1. Lifelong Learning

The goal of ESD is to be implemented on all levels and types of education, which are categorized as follows according to UNESCO (2014):

- Formal education in schools, universities, and colleges is based on an established curriculum and approved teaching and assessment methods.
- Non-formal education occurs through organized learning outside the formal system for example in adult literacy, youth groups, trainings and associations.
- Informal education happens through daily activities, and is provided through personal relations, cultural and/or religious contexts, community groups, media, entertainment etc.

ESD begins with early childhood care and education (ECCE). ESD in ECCE manifests as playful and creative learning contributing to social and environmental awareness. Children have the greatest capacity to learn from age 0-8, in addition to these being the years when a child forms many of their values and approaches to learning which is why ESD in ECCE is important. Parents, local communities, kindergartens and pre-schools are the educators. Children play an active role in learning – engaging in activities outside the learning environment. Examples of this have been children writing to local authorities regarding environmental concerns, acting as educators to their parents, creating public awareness posters and campaigning. Giving children responsibility for their own learning process and outcomes empowers them and ESD pedagogies in ECCE help (UNESCO, 2014):

- Build upon the everyday experience of children;
- Provide curriculum integration and creativity;
- Support intergenerational problem-solving and solution-seeking;
- Promote intercultural understanding and recognition of interdependency;
- Involve the wider community;
- Support active citizenship in the early years and;
- Aid in the creation of lifelong cultures of sustainability.

Feelings of self-worth and cooperation and communication skills should be developed at a young age, because these are the foundations one begins to build upon, before entering the schooling system with its more defined social hierarchies. Research has shown that children with a high self-regard are more likely to have positive attitudes towards others, due to the feeling they can express their own thoughts and feelings clearly and thus have an interest in listening to others (Huckle & Sterling, 1996, pp. 59-62)

During the DESD decade ESD was most advanced in primary and secondary education, with curricula reform and targeted projects. There was a significant shift from interest in ESD to integrating ESD on a practical level as illustrated in the Table 2 below.
The DESD member states achieved this through changes in curriculum, advances in pedagogies, adopting of whole-school approaches, utilizing recognition and certification schemes, strengthening school-community interactions, and teacher preparation. ESD in primary and secondary education is not only about knowledge acquisition, but the desired outcome of changes in capabilities, attitudes, values and choices. The review of DESD revealed, that ESD implemented from a decentralized standpoint with flexibility and autonomy allocates to schools gained stronger foothold. It allowed for locally relevant content, parental interest and community participation. The shift in pedagogies has been from teacher lead to teacher-facilitated and collaborative. The whole-school approach calls for the inclusion of sustainability as a cross-cutting topic in the school curriculum; the reduction of a school’s ecological footprint; the strengthening of student participation in sustainability activities at school as well as in the home and community; and the improvement of school-community relationships in all matters related to ESD (UNESCO, 2014). ESD in primary and secondary levels should also be critical of schools as institutions and support different forms of educational arrangements as well (Huckle & Sterling, 1996).

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is perceived by UNESCO to be a good platform for harboring skills for sustainable development as it is already a field where educators, government, business and industry are collaborating. Out of all the educational levels DESD engaged in, TVET was lacking and there was little action on ESD integration to TVET, despite DESD efforts. The problem lies in the fact that TVET is often perceived as education directed at acquiring a set of skills for a specific niche in the labor market. Both ESD and TVET however have a focus on practical implementable skills, thus TVET would be an excellent medium for ESD. Industries such as tourism and construction have a large ecological impact, thus the employees ought to be aware of the implications of their work, outside the manual realm. It is crucial to advance transversal skills such as strategic management and leadership skills, adaptability, systems thinking, risk management, collaboration, communication and entrepreneurship (UNESCO, 2014). The industry harbored perspective of transitioning to environmentally friendly materials and operations being costly, is also prevalent in TVET. New material acquisitions and refurbishing institutions require financial investments. Also TVET outside the formal realm needs to be addressed. And it needs to be targeted at all industries and not just the ones with more apparent environmental consequences.
Universities are bureaucratic, conservative and traditional institutions but also centers for innovation, knowledge acquisition and curiosity. Thus universities have long addressed sustainable development on some levels, but with their authoritarian structures, universities tend to implement change only from a top-down approach. A bottom-up approach is possible, but requires voluntary and individual enthusiasm and effort. Universities in order to implement ESD, should acknowledge that environmental responsibility is shared with all individuals in the institution. DESD saw an increase in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) commitment to ESD (Table 2), especially through more research and involvement on local levels. ESD related programs and specializations have been on the rise. Disciplinary boundaries, lack of cooperation between institutions and educators not familiar with ESD are hindering the advancements in HEIs. Over 270 universities have joined the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI), put forth at the Rio +20 conference, which has the goals of putting plans for sustainability in place, infusing sustainability in the curriculum and being transparent about reporting it. In some cases ESD has been driven by government policy, such as the Swedish government’s amendment to the higher education act, which states that higher education institutions have to promote sustainable development to assure for present and future generations a sound and healthy environment, economic and social welfare, and justice (Universitets- och högskolerådet, 2015). Other countries such as Finland, note the autonomy of HEIs in planning their own curriculum. This has resulting in some institutions having a high-level ESD and some very low levels. Overall there is noteworthy increase in student demand for ESD in HEIs, campuses have made advances in operational sustainability and research on ESD has increased (UNESCO, 2014).

Table 3 Average rating of ESD integration in informal education in 2005 and 2013 for UNESCO member states (UNESCO, 2014)

“`To wait 30 years for the next generation to make changes that benefit the environment is unthinkable. The ecological risks are too immediate.``” (Hill & Clover, 2003, p. 83) Non-formal education acts not only as a support to ESD in formal education, but it encompasses adult learning and education. It includes those who have limited access to formal education. Modes have been developed especially in developing countries to raise awareness and train leaders in Sustainable development concerns. In the developed countries the attention environmental adult education (EAE) has received is limited due to the market-driven provisioning framework and the perception of adults being ‘set in their ways’. ESD in adult education relates personal and structural perspectives and seeks to understand relationships over power and knowledge, through discovering and re-discovering what we know about nature and each-other. It is about working with people through arts, dialogue, debate and
experience, resistance and the land to tackle complex issues. It acknowledges that its audience has existing ecological knowledge and aims to bridge these through dialogue and debate to provision for new ecological insights (Hill & Clover, 2003, p. 10).

During DESD there has been an increase in ESD in community volunteering, outdoor learning centers and other hands-on projects in addition to a noticeable increase in public awareness and media attention (Table 3). The responsibility for public awareness should not only lie with the governments – industry should take more initiative. Within enterprises there is a need for more ESD related awareness and training, as this is the sphere where a majority of adult learners spend most of their time. The business sector has had an increase in ESD activities, as the realization that ‘business as usual’ will not be as profitable in the long run as transitioning to more sustainable actions. This is done in the form of trainings for sustainable development and informing about sustainability agreements and their content where the enterprises are taking part. Sustainability consultants are often hired to provide trainings. The business sector has been investing plenty in technical trainings mainly due to financial incentives to be gained from increasing resource efficiency. The focus should move from teaching models and frameworks towards critical decision making skills in the business sector. Often the pitfall of environmental education has been the illusion of impacting change from the outside through planned processes; however, especially dealing with adults, one has to take into consideration the non-rational nature of social change. “If planners and reformers use such terminology as change-agents, managed change and planned change, they and their followers tend to believe that the use of language and the logic of rational change imply a control of the change process itself. In contrast a review of educational reform and implementation literature suggests that the rhetoric of reform is probably its most important manifestation, rather than the change it claims to produce.” (International Union for Conservation of Nature IUCN - Commission on Education and Communication CEC, 2002)

Environmental public education is an example of this; one-way communication campaigns send short motivating messages on media. The information-education-communication (IEC) strategy utilized here is a common framework for non-formal ESD (UNESCO, 2014).
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