Regional Economic Impacts of Recreation: Measuring Visitor Expenditures in Pallas-Ounastunturi National Park

Nordic and Baltic Workshop on Visitor Information Needs and Monitoring Methods

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Maija Huhtala
University of Helsinki
More information needed about the economic impacts of recreation

- Principal decision of the Council of State 2/2003
- Substudy of SUOVI -project: Regional economic impacts of recreation in conservation areas

Method: Visitor survey / input-output -model

- annual number of visitors in the area
- average spending per visitor
- regional coefficients from input-output tables
Objectives of the Presentation

• Experiences from a case study:
  • Measuring the visitor spending in Pallas-Ounastunturi NP
• Comparing two methods: visitor survey and expenditure diary
Pallas-Ounastunturi National Park

- Situated in northern Finland, in municipalities of Muonio, Kittilä and Enontekiö
- Established in 1938
- Among the Finland’s three largest NP:s; 510 km2
- Number of visitors annually 130 000

Source: Metsähallitus

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Method I: Visitor Survey

• Conducted in 2003 by Metsähallitus

• Sample altogether 1052; 473 in winter season and 579 in summer season

• On-site survey

• One question about expenditures related to the whole trip
  – “How much money did you use during your visit to various purposes?”
  – Meals / Accommodation / Travel costs / Programme services / Other expenses

• Troubles to remember or estimate expenditures

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Method II: Expenditure Diary

- Conducted in 2004 (ongoing)
- Mail-back expenditure diary: spending and few background questions
- Research area: national park and its surroundings; ~ 20 km radius
- Target sample altogether 600: 300 in winter season, 300 in summer
- Response rate after winter season 62 %
### Example of an Expenditure Diary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Object of the expense</th>
<th>Sum (€)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.6.2004</td>
<td>Café</td>
<td>4€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.6.2004</td>
<td>Nature trip with a guide</td>
<td>20€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.6.2004</td>
<td>Grocery</td>
<td>10€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.6.2004</td>
<td>Ice cream</td>
<td>1,5€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.6.2004</td>
<td>Souvenir</td>
<td>6 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.6.2004</td>
<td>Petrol</td>
<td>12€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.6.2004</td>
<td>Wilderness hut, reservation fee</td>
<td>5€</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Respondents quite similar: comparison possible
• Spending comparison problematic as survey information incomplete
  – Length of respondents’ stay in the area
  – Type of accommodation
• Experiences from diary positive
• Problem with both methods: individual vs. party spending
Experiences and Results Shortly (2)

• In average independent visitors use (excl. travel cost)
  259 € /winter trip according the survey (n=290, md. 150€)
  305 € / winter trip according the diary (n=295, md. 252€)

• Price of the package trip on average (excl. other spending)
  506 € /winter trip according the survey (n=35, md. 380€)
  448 €/ winter trip according the diary (n=127, md. 400€)

• Distribution of the results especially in survey high
• Average trip length according the diary 7 days
• Results parallel with literature

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Conclusions

• Survey: overall, slightly underestimated, view of spending
• Diary: more accurate information
  – Spending in different purposes
  – Elements included in package trips
• Diary useful if visitor number large and different consumption possibilities exist
• In other areas surveys exact enough

Maija Huhtala, University of Helsinki