Enacting Regenerative Tourism in Urban Destination Development: A Practice-Theoretical Study of Regenerative Copenhagen

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Abstract

In recent years, regenerative tourism has gained increasing attention among scholars and practitioners as a transformative approach to tourism development, aiming to generate positive value for destinations, communities, and environments. Despite this growing interest, there remains limited empirical research on how regenerative tourism is practiced, particularly within urban destinations. This gap persists despite scholars' claims that regenerative tourism may offer meaningful responses to the complex sustainability challenges faced by cities. Against this backdrop, this thesis examines how regenerative tourism is practiced in urban destination development in Copenhagen, focusing on two destination development initiatives: Regenerative Copenhagen and CopenPay. The study adopts a practice-theoretical perspective, shifting the analytical focus to situated doings and sayings and how these are shaped by broader contextual arrangements. Through a qualitative, interpretivist research design, the thesis identifies and analyses the practices through which regenerative tourism is enacted and situates these practices within the wider urban destination development landscape. The findings show that regenerative tourism in Copenhagen is enacted through three interrelated practice bundles: framing, organising, and performing. These practices are expressed through long-term visions and new value narratives, collaborative project structures, and business-led activities in which tourists participate in practices such as waste collection and urban farming. However, the analysis also reveals several key tensions, including the ambiguity surrounding the meaning of regenerative tourism, uneven business capacity to engage in regenerative activities, and the challenge of enacting regenerative ambitions within growth-oriented tourism systems.

By examining regenerative tourism through a practice-theoretical lens within urban destination development, this thesis contributes a nuanced understanding of both the possibilities and limitations of enacting regenerative tourism in an urban context.

Keywords: Regenerative tourism, urban destination development, practice theory, Copenhagen, CopenPay, Regenerative Copenhagen.

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1 Introduction

Tourism has become one of the world's largest and fastest-growing industries, with international tourist arrivals reaching an estimated 1.52 billion in 2025 (OECD, 2020; UN Tourism, 2026). This growth has largely been driven by an industrial tourism model oriented towards profit maximisation and continuous expansion (Ateljevic, 2020; Bellato et al., 2023). While this model has generated significant economic benefits, it has simultaneously contributed to a range of persistent challenges for destinations. These include increased greenhouse gas emissions, pressure on natural resources, and negative effects on the quality of life and well-being of local communities (Gössling et al., 2023; Hall, 2019; Lenzen et al., 2018). In response, both scholars and practitioners have long sought to develop approaches to mitigate these impacts. Since the early 1990s, sustainable tourism has become a framework aimed at balancing economic development with environmental protection and social equity, drawing on the broader principles of sustainable development (Bramwell & Lane, 2011; Butler, 1999; Gibbons, 2020). Despite its widespread adoption, sustainable tourism has increasingly been criticised for its limited transformative capacity. A core critique is that it largely operates within, rather than challenges, the growth-oriented logic of the tourism industry, often prioritising economic outcomes over the well-being of local communities and natural environments (Dredge, 2022; Gibbons, 2020; Mihalic, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed this dependency by bringing global tourism to an abrupt halt and revealing the extent to which many destinations and communities rely on continued tourism growth and its associated revenues (Cave & Dredge, 2020; Lew et al., 2020; Sigala et al., 2021). At the same time, the pandemic created space for reflection on tourism's purpose and future role in society, intensifying calls to rethink destination development beyond incremental sustainability improvements. The pandemic also highlighted emerging travel trends, including a growing demand for more sustainable and participatory forms of tourism that support local communities and ecosystems (Ateljevic et al., 2020; Economist Impact, 2022; Suryani, 2024).

Within this context, regenerative thinking has in recent years gained traction as an alternative and transformative approach to tourism development (Iddawala & Lee, 2025). In simple terms, regenerative tourism seeks to move beyond the idea of doing less harm and instead aims to "leave a place better than it was found" (Bellato & Pollock, 2025, p. 5). Regenerative thinking

originates in natural science and has subsequently been adapted within social science (Husamoglu et al., 2025; Hussain & Haley, 2022). It is grounded in an ecological worldview, drawing on systems thinking in which humans are understood as interconnected with natural systems (Bellato et al., 2022; Dredge, 2022), and has been applied within fields such as agriculture and design (Bellato & Pollock, 2025; Hussain & Haley, 2022; Mang & Reed, 2012). Applied to tourism, regeneration refers to practices that actively restore and revitalize ecosystems, communities, and local economies, with the aim of generating net positive outcomes for destinations (Bellato et al., 2023; Cave & Dredge, 2020; Luong et al., 2024). Regenerative tourism involves reciprocal participation among multiple stakeholders, including tourists, who are encouraged to move from passive consumption toward active contribution (Bellato & Cheer, 2021; Iddawala & Lee, 2025). Sheldon (2022) distinguishes between different levels of regenerative tourism. At the macro level, it reflects a fundamental shift in how tourism is practised and valued, moving away from extractive models toward stewardship-oriented approaches that prioritise the long-term well-being of destinations. Whereas, at the micro level, it focuses on creating meaningful experiences for tourists that actively support local communities and environments through activities such as tree planting, trail maintenance, and cleaning beaches (Husamoglu et al., 2025; Manthiou et al., 2025). Moreover, regenerative thinking has informed tourism development across scales, including destination-level planning, community-led initiatives, and purpose-driven tourism businesses that seek to embed regenerative principles into their practices (Cave & Dredge, 2020; Sheldon, 2022; Vegas-Macias et al., 2026).

However, despite its growing popularity as a transformative alternative to sustainable tourism, regenerative tourism remains unevenly implemented and highly context dependent in practice. Its inherently place-based character makes it difficult to establish universal principles that can be consistently applied across different tourism settings (Bellato et al., 2023; Iddawala & Lee, 2025). Consequently, several scholars caution that, without stronger empirical and practical grounding, regenerative tourism risks being reduced to a superficial buzzword or appropriated as a form of greenwashing (Bellato & Pollock, 2025; Fusté-Forné & Hussain, 2025; Hussain & Haley, 2022). This reflects a broader tendency within the field, where regenerative tourism remains more developed as a conceptual and normative framework than as an empirically grounded practice (Ateljevic, 2020; Cave & Dredge, 2020; Bellato & Pollock, 2025; Luong et

al., 2024). Accordingly, Bellato et al. (2024) call for more empirical research on how regenerative tourism is operationalised in practice, particularly research conducted in collaboration with tourism actors. While a limited body of empirical research on regenerative tourism has begun to emerge, existing studies have predominantly focused on small-scale, rural, and nature-based contexts, reflecting the field's strong grounding in ecological regeneration (Bellato et al., 2023; Bellato & Pollock, 2025; Iddawala & Lee, 2025). As a result, there is still limited understanding of how regenerative tourism is practiced within urban destinations, where tourism development is shaped by complex social challenges as well as political and institutional dynamics (Bellato & Cheer, 2021; Paddison & Hall, 2024). This represents a significant gap in the literature, particularly given the continued growth of urban tourism and the increasing pressures faced by cities, where regenerative approaches may offer a transformative approach to tourism development (Day & Lee, 2024; Koens, 2021; Paddison & Hall, 2024). Consequently, Koens (2021) calls for more empirically grounded research examining how regenerative tourism is enacted in practice within urban contexts. A practice-theoretical perspective is particularly well suited to capturing how practices are enacted, as it takes practices as the central unit of analysis and focuses on what actors do and say, and how competences, material arrangements, and meanings shape this enactment (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 249; Schatzki, 1996, p. 89; Shove et al., 2012, pp. 7-8). Thus, this thesis adopts a practice-theoretical perspective to address the aforementioned research gaps.

Research Aim

Against this backdrop, the aim of this thesis is to advance understanding of how regenerative tourism is enacted within urban destination development through a practice-theoretical perspective. Moreover, it aims to investigate how these practices are shaped by broader urban contexts. In doing so, the thesis seeks to bridge the gap between regenerative tourism as a conceptual ideal and its practical enactment within complex tourism development processes. To facilitate this, the thesis empirically investigates how multiple actors engage in and shape regenerative tourism practices in the context of Copenhagen. More specifically, the thesis is guided by the following research questions:

Research Questions

RQ1: Through which practices is regenerative tourism enacted in destination development in Copenhagen, and how are these practices shaped by materials, competences, and meanings?

RQ2: How are regenerative tourism practices in Copenhagen shaped by their institutional context?

Within practice theory, enactment refers to how practices are continuously carried out through what actors do and say in ongoing, situated processes (Barnes, 2001, p. 29). In this thesis, enactment is understood as the active and continuous process through which regenerative tourism is produced, reproduced, and made meaningful in practice. While regenerative tourism involves a wide range of stakeholders across multiple domains (Husamoglu et al., 2025), this thesis delimits its empirical focus to actors engaged in urban destination development, understood as the production site. Empirically, the study is based on two destination development initiatives, Regenerative Copenhagen and CopenPay, situated within the urban context of Copenhagen.

Empirical Context

Both Regenerative Copenhagen and CopenPay are projects initiated by Wonderful Copenhagen (WOCO). WOCO is the official Destination Management Organisation (DMO) of Copenhagen, whose purpose is to promote and develop tourism in Copenhagen (Wonderful Copenhagen, n.d.a). WOCO is internationally recognized as a frontrunner in sustainable urban development, consistently ranked among the top-performing destinations on the GDS-Index, which benchmarks destinations worldwide on sustainability performance in tourism (Global Destination Sustainability Movement, n.d.a; Global Destination Sustainability Movement, n.d.b; Sustainable EU Tourism project, n.d.) and has achieved EarthCheck Sustainable Destination certification (Wonderful Copenhagen, 2025a). WOCO has developed several strategic initiatives that aims to balance tourism growth with local quality of life, climate goals, and broader urban sustainability ambitions, including Tourism for Good (sustainable tourism development), Beyond Copenhagen (spatial redistribution), and Planet Copenhagen (net-zero collaboration), and most recently Copenhagen All Inclusive, which seeks to account holistically for tourism's impacts

(Wonderful Copenhagen, 2019; Wonderful Copenhagen, n.d.b; Wonderful Copenhagen, n.d.c; Wonderful Copenhagen, 2024). Within this context, Wonderful Copenhagen has in recent years begun working with regenerative tourism.

Regenerative Copenhagen

Regenerative Copenhagen, a destination development project, explores the value and potential of developing regenerative tourism in the capital city, running from October 2025 until September 2028. Financed by the Danish Board of Business Development, Regenerative Copenhagen is a research-based project aimed at understanding how regenerative principles can be applied by tourism businesses in Copenhagen as well as developing a model for regenerative tourism that can guide future initiatives in Copenhagen and other cities (Wonderful Copenhagen, n.d.d). Due to the early stage of Regenerative Copenhagen, this thesis was granted access to unpublished documents. Therefore, the description of the project is based on the Project Application, which will later be presented in the methodological chapter. According to the Project Application, the initial phase of the project focused on developing a "Knowledge Base", carried out by the external consultancy firm BARK (BARK Rådgivning, n.d.). This included mapping how tourism actors engage with regenerative tourism in practice and formulating recommendations for its further development in Copenhagen. Moreover, Regenerative Copenhagen brings together an expert group consisting of researchers from Danish universities, representatives from the City of Copenhagen, and public and private actors. These actors will participate in quarterly meetings focused on knowledge exchange and collaboration, to support the development of regenerative activities. Moreover, the project will recruit 35 businesses to participate in an innovation process, supported by regenerative experts and financial assistance to develop regenerative tourism experiences. Finally, the project focuses on disseminating the experiences gained from the project to other destinations, thereby contributing to the broader development of regenerative tourism. Regenerative Copenhagen directly builds on the experiences gained from CopenPay (Wonderful Copenhagen, n.d.d).

CopenPay

CopenPay is a nudging-driven campaign rooted in the principles of regenerative tourism (Project Application; Wonderful Copenhagen, 2025b). The initiative was launched for a limited period in

summer 2024, when WOCO collaborated with a range of actors across the region of Copenhagen to provide tourists with tangible rewards for engaging in pro-environmental and socially responsible experiences, such as collecting waste, arriving by train, or biking. The underlying idea was to encourage tourists to contribute positively to local environments and communities (VisitCopenhagen, n.d.; Wonderful Copenhagen, 2025c). The campaign was repeated in the summer of 2025 in an enhanced 2.0 version, with a significantly increased number of participating actors, totalling 100 businesses (Wonderful Copenhagen, 2025d).

This thesis primarily focuses on Regenerative Copenhagen. However, due to the timeframe of the study, the project remained in its early stages of development, limiting the ability to follow the later innovation processes through which businesses were selected to develop regenerative tourism experiences. As Regenerative Copenhagen builds directly on experiences from CopenPay, the thesis additionally draws on interviews with actors involved in CopenPay to address this limitation and incorporate a business perspective. This enables an examination of how regenerative activities are enacted in practice across different tourism initiatives in Copenhagen. Together, the two initiatives serve as illustrative examples of how regenerative tourism is translated from conceptual principles into situated practices within urban destination development, thereby providing a relevant empirical context for addressing the identified research gap.

Outline of this Thesis

In this first chapter, the aim of the study has been presented as well as the empirical context. Following this introduction, Chapter 2 provides a review of literature on urban tourism and destination development, as well as regenerative tourism, its application in urban contexts and its practical implications. Chapter 3 introduces practice theory, outlining its theoretical foundations and analytical value, and discusses its application within contemporary tourism studies. It concludes by presenting an adapted practice-theoretical framework and clarifying how it is applied in the analysis of regenerative destination development practices. Chapter 4 outlines the methodological approach, including the research design, data collection and sampling strategy, presentation of the empirical data, and the analytical strategy. It also addresses methodological limitations and ethical considerations. In Chapter 5 the empirical findings are presented and

analysed through a practice-theoretical lens, in dialogue with key concepts from the literature review, including an analytical discussion of how these findings relate to broader contextual conditions. The thesis concludes in Chapter 6, which summarises the main findings and answers the research questions. It also outlines the academic and societal contributions and limitations of the study, followed by suggestions for future research and practical implications.

2 Literature Review

Urban Destination Development

Urban tourism takes place in urban areas characterised by high population density and a concentration of cultural, economic, and social functions (Bock, 2015; Maxim, 2024). Urban tourism includes both business and leisure travel and covers a wide range of activities, from classical sightseeing, museums, multifunctional cultural venues, and architecture to more everyday, place-based experiences in urban neighbourhoods (Nilsson, 2024, pp. 428-429; Urošević et al., 2023). In urban destinations, attractions and services are often concentrated within a limited geographical area, resulting in tourists and local residents sharing the same infrastructure, services, and public spaces (Bock, 2015; Nilsson, 2024, pp. 428-429; Urošević et al., 2023). The significant growth of tourists in urban destinations has been driven by factors such as the expansion of low-cost airlines and digital technologies, which have made cities more accessible and attractive, especially for short, frequent trips (Bock, 2015; Maxim, 2024; Nilsson, 2024, p. 439). Nilsson (2024, pp. 431-432) argues that the success of urban destinations traditionally has been measured by increasing visitor numbers and tourism revenue, with cities competing to attract tourists through place marketing, infrastructure development, and the expansion of tourism services. In this way, tourism growth is closely connected to urban competitiveness, as it increases a city's visibility and may further contribute to economic growth. At the same time, the rapid growth of urban tourism presents a range of challenges for cities (Maxim, 2024; Nilsson, 2024, pp. 429, 439). A central issue is the growing tension between residents and tourists. This tension is often associated with gentrification, a process in which rising prices and market-driven pressures, frequently linked to tourism development, can displace local communities from their neighbourhoods (Nilsson, 2020; Nilsson, 2024, p. 439). Another major source of strain is overtourism, a concept used to describe excessive visitor numbers that lead to overcrowding, often concentrated in city centres, placing pressure on infrastructure and ultimately reducing residents' quality of life (Crabolu et al., 2026; Hajarrahmah et al., 2024; Koens et al., 2018; Paredes-Rodriguez & Spierings, 2020). Further, the pursuit of continuous tourism growth also creates significant environmental challenges. As Gössling and Higham (2021) argue, tourism accounts for a significant share of global carbon

emissions, placing substantial pressure on the environment and making it increasingly difficult to reduce these emissions amid continued growth in the sector. As a result, recent research increasingly calls for a shift away from growth-oriented models towards more sustainable and balanced approaches to urban destination development (Mihalic, 2020; Crabolu et al., 2026; Gössling & Higham 2021; Maxim, 2024). Urban destinations have increasingly experimented with a range of development strategies to mitigate the negative effects of tourism growth. Such approaches stress the importance of managing tourism in ways that account for environmental limits, social well-being, and long-term resilience of urban destinations, through more responsible forms of destination management (Crabolu et al., 2026; Gössling & Higham, 2021; Hajarrahmah et al., 2024). Cities are therefore increasingly implementing policies to regulate tourism development, including limits on visitor numbers, tourist taxes, restrictions on short-term rentals such as Airbnb, and strategies to redistribute tourist flows (Crabolu et al., 2026; Guttentag, 2015; Gössling & Higham, 2021). However, although such strategies may address some of the negative impacts of urban tourism, they often remain focused on managing growth more effectively rather than fundamentally rethinking tourism's role in urban development (Crabolu et al., 2026).

The Role of DMOs in Destination Development

Historically, DMOs were primarily concerned with promoting destinations nationally and internationally, often referred to as Destination Marketing Organisations. However, in recent years, the role of DMOs has increasingly been understood as extending beyond traditional destination marketing (FU-TOURISM, 2024; James & Halkier, 2019, p. 94). Heeley (2016) argues that the primary purpose of DMOs is to attract tourists to destinations, with their performance primarily measured through economic indicators such as turnover, employment generation, and overall economic growth. Dredge (2016) further argues that DMOs are historically rooted in an industrial understanding of tourism focusing on competitiveness and economic performance. However, their role has expanded towards broader destination management, including tourism planning, coordination of stakeholders, innovation, and sustainable development (FU-TOURISM, 2024; James & Halkier, 2019, p. 96; Sheehan et al., 2016; Toma & Mihai, 2022). The literature emphasises DMOs' ability to bring together diverse public and private stakeholders, including authorities, businesses, and locals, into collaborative

networks that may facilitate more coherent and sustainable destination development (Reinhold et al., 2023; Sheehan et al., 2016; Toma & Mihai, 2022). This requires strong knowledge management capabilities, as DMOs must respond to changing market conditions, sustainability demands, and emerging trends while navigating fragmented stakeholder environments (FU-TOURISM, 2024; Sheehan et al., 2016). Thus, today DMOs both work with aligning tourism development with broader economic, environmental, and social goals, while continuing to perform destination marketing activities (Reinhold et al., 2023; Toma & Mihai, 2022).

Regenerative Tourism

The process of regeneration refers to the capacity of living systems to renew, restore, and adapt over time (Hussain & Haley, 2022), thus creating and maintaining the conditions necessary for life to thrive (Pollock, 2019). Moreover, it is grounded in an ecological worldview that understands humans and nature as fundamentally interconnected and mutually co-evolving (Du Plessis & Brandon, 2015). Central to this worldview is living systems thinking, which conceptualizes ecological and social systems as interdependent, nested within larger adaptive systems (Dredge, 2022). Moreover, Bellato et al. (2024) and Bellato and Pollock (2025) trace the roots of regenerative thinking to a plurality of knowledge traditions, including Western scientific approaches and Indigenous knowledge systems. This plurality contributes both richness and complexity to the concept. As Mang and Reed (2012) observe, regeneration is not a universally agreed-upon concept, rather its meaning varies across worldviews, giving rise to conceptual ambiguity. Despite this, regenerative principles have been applied across a wide range of fields, including agriculture, design, and architecture (Ateljevic, 2020; Bellato & Pollock, 2025; Mang & Reed, 2012), illustrating how regenerative thinking has evolved from a scientific concept into a set of principles that have been adopted across multiple industries. Within tourism, Owen (2007) was the first to explicitly apply regenerative thinking through the design of ecotourism resorts. In 2012, Anna Pollock introduced the Conscious Travel approach, applying living systems theory to tourism and posing the critical question: *Can tourism change its operating model?* Pollock (2012) challenged the dominant industrial paradigm of tourism by proposing a value-driven, transformative framework that prioritizes well-being and resilience over economic measures. According to Bellato et al. (2023), the Conscious Travel approach laid the conceptual foundations for what later became known as regenerative tourism, exerting a strong influence on

subsequent academic scholarship. Although regenerative practices in tourism can be traced back to 2007, the concept did not gain significant momentum until around 2020, driven by growing recognition of the limits of sustainable approaches to tourism, escalating climate crises, and increasing social pressures on destinations (Dredge, 2022; Iddawala & Lee, 2025).

Despite growing scholarly attention, the concept remains ambiguous, leading several scholars to clarify its core principles. Drawing on a comprehensive review of leading regenerative tourism literature, Bellato et al. (2023) identify recurring themes and propose the following working definition:

> "Regenerative tourism is a transformational approach that aims to fulfil the potential of tourism places to flourish and create net-positive effects by increasing the regenerative capacity of human societies and ecosystems. Derived from an ecological worldview, it weaves Indigenous and Western scientific perspectives and knowledges. Tourism systems are regarded as inseparable from nature" (Bellato et al., 2023, p. 9).

At the same time, Bellato et al. (2023) note that the context-dependent and pluriversal nature of regenerative tourism complicates efforts to establish a single definition. Expanding on this, Hajarrahmah et al. (2024) argue that regenerative potential is rooted in the specific social and ecological conditions of each destination and should therefore be guided by place-based attributes. Although scholars resist a universal definition, there is increasing agreement that conceptual progress depends on identifying shared foundational principles. Iddawala and Lee (2025) argue that recurring themes can serve as guiding pillars for planning and practice. Based on a review of 255 articles, they identify five core themes of regenerative tourism: community centrism, an ecological worldview that frames tourism as a living system, meaningful multi-stakeholder collaboration, the pursuit of net-positive outcomes, and a deliberate move beyond conventional sustainability paradigms. Similarly, Sheldon (2022) synthesises the core attributes of regenerative tourism into eight principles. Building on John Fullerton's (2015) principles of economic regeneration, Sheldon adapts these ideas to a tourism context and demonstrates how regenerative tourism can support the long-term thriving of destination communities, environments, and economies. Together, these contributions suggest that, while

regenerative tourism remains conceptually fluid, a set of guiding principles is gradually emerging. A central element across these understandings is the shift toward an ecological worldview, marking a departure from the industrial paradigm that has historically shaped tourism development (Bellato et al., 2023; Iddawala & Lee, 2025; Sheldon, 2022). Within this worldview, destinations are understood as interconnected living systems, and nature is reframed as an active relational partner requiring care and shared responsibility (Dredge, 2022). From this perspective, tourism is positioned as a positive contributor to social and ecological systems rather than as an unavoidable source of degradation. As Sheldon (2022) argues, regenerative development centres the restoration, wellbeing, and resilience of living systems at the centre of tourism planning and governance, while Pollock (2019) similarly emphasises the pursuit of net-positive benefits for both hosts and guests. Bellato et al. (2023) contend that regenerative tourism moves beyond traditional sustainability paradigms by shifting the focus from harm mitigation to positive contribution and renewal. In line with this, Day and Lee (2024) observe that regenerative thinking is increasingly being integrated into sustainable destination development, reflecting growing dissatisfaction with the limitations of sustainability. At the same time, regenerative tourism is not universally framed as a complete rupture from sustainability as some scholars instead describe it as an evolution of sustainable tourism that builds on decades of research and practice (Luong et al., 2024). Across the literature, however, regenerative tourism is consistently understood not as a fixed end state, but as a long-term, transformative paradigm.

Actors in Regenerative Tourism

Across the literature, regenerative tourism is often practiced at a micro-level through experiences in which the tourist takes on an active role in the restoration of local communities and natural environments (Mathisen et al., 2022; Husamoglu et al. 2025; Sheldon, 2022). Husamoglu et al. (2025) identify a range of regenerative tourism activities involving the engagement of tourists, businesses, and local communities in destination restoration. These include initiatives such as tree planting, nature and ocean clean-ups, trail maintenance, and the restoration of camping and agricultural areas, as well as experiential and socially oriented activities such as forest bathing, community meeting spaces, and programmes supporting marginalised groups. These activities are predominantly situated in rural, nature-based destinations. Moreover, regenerative tourism is framed as a bottom-up process that requires active engagement from local communities and

businesses (Dredge, 2022; Mathisen et al., 2022). Consequently, stakeholders are understood not only as actors whose interests must be managed, but as active participants in regenerative processes (Bellato et al., 2023; Dredge, 2022; Iddawala & Lee, 2025), emphasising collaboration, long-term engagement, and shared responsibility across stakeholder groups (Bellato et al., 2022; Bellato & Pollock, 2025). Tourism businesses have traditionally been framed as drivers of economic growth, whereas regenerative tourism reframes them as contributors to the well-being of places and communities rather than primarily economic actors (Bellato & Pollock, 2025; Dredge, 2022). Vegas-Macias et al. (2026) extends this, arguing that businesses can facilitate regenerative activities, thus enabling tourists to contribute to the destination. Moreover, local communities are framed as key actors in shaping authentic regenerative processes (Fusté-Forné & Hussain, 2025), as they are seen to hold place-based and historical knowledge that can inform tourism planning and experience design (Bellato et al., 2023; Iddawala & Lee, 2025). As Dragin-Jensen et al. (2025) argue, DMOs play a crucial role in facilitating networks and mediating collaboration among stakeholders engaged in regenerative development. Building on this perspective, Crabolu et al. (2026) argue that DMOs should expand their role beyond destination marketing to include stewardship and regenerative development, as they are uniquely positioned to coordinate and facilitate such transformative processes. However, this role is challenged by conceptual ambiguity, difficulties in measuring regenerative outcomes, and varying levels of stakeholder willingness. In practice, regenerative destination management therefore involves translating regenerative principles into locally meaningful and actionable practices (Crabolu et al., 2026; Vegas-Macias et al., 2026).

Regenerative Tourism in Urban Destinations

Day & Lee (2024, p. 66) argue that regenerative principles can address the social and environmental pressures created by tourism growth, thus potentially representing a solution to addressing several aspects of urban destination development. They further contend that by actively involving local residents in tourism planning processes, regenerative tourism can help mitigate some of the negative impacts experienced by communities in tourism-intensive cities. Koens (2021), argues that the values and purposes connected to urban tourism shifts in a regenerative mindset, thus affecting destination development and how success is measured towards more holistic metrics, including social cohesion, environmental health, and community

well-being. In this context, tourism is no longer evaluated only in terms of managing positive and negative impacts, but as a tool that can actively support urban regeneration (Bellato & Cheer, 2021; Day & Lee, 2024, pp. 63-64, 66; Koens, 2021). An emerging body of tourism scholarship examines how regenerative principles can be applied to complex urban destinations. Bellato and Cheer (2021), examines regenerative tourism development through the urban case of Melbourne, Australia. The case demonstrates that, although marginalised stakeholders hold valuable knowledge and perspectives that could contribute to regenerative and sustainable destination development, their participation in tourism planning is often restricted because they are perceived as lacking the necessary skills or competencies to engage effectively. Another case study, focusing on CopenPay in Copenhagen, investigates regenerative tourism by examining how tourism enterprises actively mediate social value creation by encouraging climate-friendly actions and promoting encounters between visitors and local actors (Vegas-Macias et al., 2026). Moreover, the study examines how regenerative activities take shape in a Copenhagen context, including collecting waste from the city's canals, jogging and picking up waste in large urban green spaces, and volunteering in urban farming. Additionally, Amore & Pecorelli (2025, pp. 400-404) investigate regenerative tourism through the case of the Quartiere Barona neighbourhood in Milan, which illustrates how regenerative principles are linked to local community involvement and the activation of underused urban spaces, through sound walking itineraries, which invite tourists to experience places through sound, neighbourhood-level cultural mapping, which identifies local cultural assets and stories, and community-led walking routes, where residents contribute to shaping visitor experiences. These initiatives show how tourism and cultural activities can be used to support positive social and environmental change within an urban context. Together, these empirical contributions show that regenerative principles can actively involve local businesses and communities in designing regenerative tourism experiences in urban destinations.

Challenges in Translating Regenerative Tourism into Practice

Although regenerative tourism is increasingly positioned as a transformative alternative to conventional tourism models, its practical implementation remains limited (Bellato et al., 2024; Sheldon, 2022). The literature identifies several interconnected challenges that help explain this gap. Rather than relying on predefined solutions, regenerative approaches emphasise dialogue,

diverse perspectives, and alignment around shared values (Bellato & Cheer, 2021; Koens, 2021). Furthermore, the inherently place-based and normative nature of regenerative tourism makes it difficult to translate into clear operational frameworks and measurable indicators, creating uncertainty among tourism actors regarding how it should be implemented (Bellato & Pollock, 2025; Hajarrahmah et al., 2024; Iddawala & Lee, 2025). Second, the structural conditions of tourism development are often poorly aligned with the long-term and systemic nature of regeneration (Hussain & Haley, 2022). While regeneration implies gradual processes of renewal unfolding over extended timeframes, tourism planning typically prioritises short-term economic returns, rapid implementation, and measurable outputs (Cave & Dredge, 2020; Hussain & Haley, 2022). Finally, regenerative tourism challenges dominant understandings of value in tourism. Rather than focusing on growth and profitability, it emphasises well-being and relational values (Bellato et al., 2023; Sheldon, 2022). However, destinations and tourism actors remain economically dependent on visitor growth and revenue, making it difficult to move beyond conventional performance metrics (Dredge, 2020). Together, these challenges highlight a fundamental misalignment between regenerative ambitions and existing tourism systems.

Taken together, this literature review suggests that the challenge of performing regenerative tourism is not only conceptual but also deeply practical. While existing research provides valuable insights into the values and ambitions underpinning regenerative tourism, it offers limited understanding of how these ambitions are translated into and realised through broader destination development practices, particularly in urban contexts. Moreover, existing empirical studies tend to focus on micro-level regenerative activities, leaving a gap in understanding how regenerative tourism can be operationalised at the level of destination development. As a result, there is limited knowledge of how regenerative principles are integrated into the complex social, political, and institutional dynamics that shape urban tourism systems.

3 Theory

A Practice-Theoretical Approach to Studying Regenerative Tourism in Urban Destination Development

The Field of Practice Theory

Since the 1970s, practice theory has gained increasing prominence within social theory (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 243), contributing to what has been described as the "practice turn" (Schatzki, 2001; Nicolini, 2012, p. 1). This work draws on philosophical traditions associated with Ludwig Wittgenstein, Charles Taylor, Martin Heidegger, and Harold Garfinkel's ethnomethodology, as well as the work of social theorists such as Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault, and Anthony Giddens (Nicolini, 2012; Reckwitz, 2002, p. 243; Schatzki, 2001, pp. 10-11). Rather than constituting a single unified theory, practice theory refers to a range of approaches that share a common concern with understanding social life through practices. Although practice theorists differ in their conceptual emphases, they generally share the understanding that practices are embodied, materially mediated, and organised through shared knowledge (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 249; Schatzki, 2001, p. 11; Shove et al., 2012, p. 9). Schatzki (2001, pp. 13-14) argues that practice theory shifts the understanding of social order as produced and reproduced through practices rather than individual attitudes or macro-level structures. Moreover, Schatzki (2001, p. 11) argues that practices are "centrally organized around shared practical understandings", meaning that the knowledge required to perform a practice is socially shared rather than individually possessed. Reckwitz (2002) defines practices as:

> "… a routinized type of behaviour which consists of several elements, interconnected to one another: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, 'things' and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge" (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 249).

This definition highlights that practices emerge through the dynamic interconnection of bodily, mental, and material elements and thus no single element can account for a practice on its own. Moreover, Reckwitz (2002, p. 249) argues that practices consist of repeated and routine enactments that are reproduced across time and space by multiple actors. Reckwitz (2002, p.

244) further argues that the turn to practices reflects a broader concern with the 'everyday', directing analytical attention toward ordinary activities such as cooking, working, or organising. To illustrate this, Reckwitz (2002, pp. 251-252) uses the example of playing football which depends on bodily performances, shared practical understandings of how the game is played, and material arrangements such as the ball and the field. The significance of this example is not the individual elements themselves, but the way they are linked together in practice. If these relations break down, the practice can no longer be performed in its recognisable form. Practice theory thus offers a relevant lens for analysing how shared knowledge, mental and bodily activities, and material arrangements come together in the enactment of social life.

Practice Theory in Tourism Research

Within the social sciences, practice theory has been used to empirically investigate diverse aspects of social life, particularly in organisational and consumption studies (Schatzki, 2019; Ren et al., 2019a, p. 3; Nicolini, 2012, p. 1). In tourism research, however, practice theory has only recently gained traction and remains comparatively underdeveloped. This is partly because tourism has traditionally been framed as an extraordinary activity, which contrasts with practice theory's emphasis on routine, everyday practices (Larsen, 2019, pp. 41-42). A key development in the field is the growing recognition that tourism and everyday life are increasingly intertwined, with tourism enacted alongside non-touristic practices (Ren et al., 2019a, p. 4). From this perspective, practice theory offers a valuable analytical lens for understanding these entanglements. Over the past decade, a growing body of research has actively developed practice-theoretical approaches to tourism, demonstrating their value for analysing tourism as a practice-based phenomenon (Bargeman & Richards, 2020; Bispo, 2016; Lamers et al., 2017; James et al., 2019a). Bispo (2016), for example, calls for a re-theorisation of tourism from a practice perspective, highlighting its ability to illuminate the blurred boundaries between tourism and non-tourism practices. In line with this, Lamers et al. (2017) demonstrate how practice theory enables the analysis of processes such as change, learning, and innovation across both tourism consumption and production contexts. Accordingly, an increasing number of scholars have adopted practice perspectives to examine the diverse practices through which tourism is constituted and enacted in specific contexts (Ren et al., 2019a, pp. 3-4). Existing studies applying a practice lens have predominantly focused on tourism consumption from an individual

perspective (Ren et al., 2019a, p. 3; James et al., 2019b, p. 168). This strand of research has often examined everyday and mundane tourism practices such as sleeping (Valtonen & Veijola, 2011), walking (Hannam & Witte, 2019), and running (Larsen, 2019). Other studies have applied practice theory to other empirical contexts, including the role of forests in tourism (Rantala, 2010), practices in Arctic expedition cruising (Lamers et al., 2017), circular economy tourism practices (Sørensen & Bærenholdt, 2020), and tourism scams (Xu et al., 2021). While often used to study individual tourism consumption, practice theory is equally applicable to more complex phenomena, including tourism production processes such as destination development and innovation (Derriks et al., 2019; James et al., 2019b, p. 168; James & Halkier, 2016; Ren et al., 2019b). For example, James and Halkier (2019) apply a practice-theoretical lens to analyse destination development in Danish coastal areas as bundles of interconnected practices, such as creating and promoting tourism experiences. Through interviews with DMOs, their study demonstrates that destination development emerges through the interaction of multiple practices over time, shaped by the interplay of materials, meanings, and competences. It further shows how these configurations become path dependent, shaping development trajectories, reinforcing established patterns, and helping explain variations in adaptability across destinations. In a similar vein, Østrup Backe (2020) employs a social practice-theoretical approach to examine how "the local" is enacted through culinary tourism initiatives in Sweden. Conceptualising culinary tourism as bundles of interrelated practices, the study analyses how meanings, materials, and competences interact in the framing, organisation, and performance of food-based tourism. The findings highlight how destination identities are continuously produced and negotiated through the coordination of practices among multiple actors. More recently, Vegas-Macias et al. (2026) apply a practice-theoretical approach to the case of CopenPay to examine how regenerative tourism experiences are enacted and how they generate social value. Based on interviews and observations, they identify four bundles of practices through which enterprises facilitate value creation between tourists and residents. Their findings suggest that regenerative tourism can produce social value, but only when enterprises actively organise and mediate the practices through which this value emerges.

Taken together, these studies demonstrate how practice theory offers a powerful lens for analysing tourism as complex constellations of interconnected practices involving multiple actors, meanings, materials, and competences. Crucially, this shifts the analytical focus from

tourism as a strategic or discursive construct to tourism as something that is continuously enacted in practice. This perspective is particularly relevant for this thesis, as it enables an examination of regenerative tourism as an emergent phenomenon enacted through the practices in urban destination development. Despite the growing body of work, tourism research adopting a practice-theoretical lens remains limited, with scholars continuing to call for further empirical and theoretical development (Bargeman & Richards, 2020; Bispo, 2016; Lamers et al., 2017; James et al., 2019b, p. 147). In response, this thesis seeks to contribute to the theoretical and empirical advancement of this field by applying a practice-theoretical perspective.

A Pluralistic Practice-Theoretical Framework

Building on Nicolini's (2012, pp. 214-216) argument that selectively drawing on multiple practice-theoretical traditions can generate richer and more nuanced empirical insights, this thesis combines complementary concepts from practice theory as well as insights from practice-oriented tourism studies to capture the complexity of urban destination development practices.

The thesis draws on Schatzki's (2017) concept of bundles of interrelated practices connected through "common actions, common organisational elements or common material entities" (Schatzki, 2017, p. 134). Extending this perspective, Shove et al. (2012, p. 81) conceptualise practice bundles as loose-knit constellations of interrelated practices that together constitute more complex social phenomena. Relations within and between such bundles may involve both collaboration and tension, as practices can mutually reinforce one another or compete for resources, legitimacy, and attention (Shove et al., 2012, pp. 87-88). Building on this perspective, the thesis conceptualises urban destination development as constituted through multiple interconnected practices. Based on the empirical data presented in Chapters 4 and 5, three overarching and interrelated practice bundles were identified across Regenerative Copenhagen and CopenPay: framing regenerative tourism in an urban context, organising regenerative tourism collaboration, and performing regenerative tourism through business-led activities. Moreover, the enactment of these practices is understood as being continuously produced and reproduced through the engagement of multiple actors. Following Shove et al. (2012, p. 63), practices do not exist independently, but are sustained through the actors who carry them,

conceptualised as carriers of practice. Importantly, carriers are not passive implementers of practices, but draw on the know-how, competences, motivations, and situated understandings associated with particular practices (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 256). As actors often participate in multiple practices simultaneously, they may transfer knowledge, experiences, and competences across different contexts (James & Halkier, 2019, p. 99), thereby contributing to the adaptation and transformation of practices over time. In this thesis, the concept of carriers of practice is used to analyse how actors enact regenerative tourism through their engagement in urban destination development practices. Barnes (2001, p. 31) argues that practices should not be understood as automatic or self-sustaining routines, but as collective accomplishments continuously produced through interaction between social agents. From this perspective, practices persist through interdependent and coordinated action between actors (Barnes, 2001, p. 33). Barnes' (2001) contribution is therefore useful in emphasising the ongoing work and coordination required for practices to exist. In this thesis, this perspective is used to highlight how actors' participation and collaboration are central to the enactment of regenerative tourism in practice.

Zooming In: Analysing Materials, Competences, and Meanings

Furthermore, Nicolini (2012, pp. 216-240) proposes a "package" of theories and methods for the empirical study of practices. Central to this approach is an iterative movement between different analytical levels through the strategies of "zooming in" and "zooming out". Zooming in focuses on the concrete and situated enactment of practices, capturing the detailed "doings and sayings" through which practices are performed in everyday contexts. In contrast, zooming out traces how these practices are connected across time and space and how they are shaped by other practices, structures, and arrangements beyond the immediate situation. To zoom in on practices at a more detailed analytical level, this thesis draws on Shove et al.'s (2012) conceptualisation of social practices. This framework builds on earlier practice-theoretical work, particularly Reckwitz's (2002) understanding of practices as configurations of bodily and mental activities, forms of knowledge, emotions, and motivations (Shove et al., 2012, p. 6-7). Building on this, Shove et al. (2012, pp. 22-23) reformulate this understanding into three analytically distinct yet interconnected elements: materials, competences, and meanings. In doing so, they provide a more operational framework for empirically analysing practices. Shove et al. (2012, p. 15) acknowledge that such a reductive approach inevitably simplifies the complexity of social life.

However, they argue that this simplification is analytically useful, as it provides a way to understand how practices are both stabilised and transformed over time. Through repeated performances, the interrelations between elements are reproduced and stabilised over time. Importantly, the elements are mutually constitutive and interdependent, meaning that changes in one element may destabilise or transform the practice as a whole. Shove et al. (2012, pp. 26-30) illustrate this through the example of driving a car. In this case, materials include the vehicle and its associated technologies, competences refer to the skills required to drive and maintain it, and meanings concern how driving is understood, valued, and experienced. Increased car reliability, as a change in materials, reduced the need for mechanical skills, thereby reshaping required competences and altering the meanings associated with driving. By tracing the historical evolution of cars, Shove et al. (2012, pp. 21-31) demonstrate how practices emerge, persist, transform, and disappear as connections between materials, competences, and meanings are formed, maintained, or broken. This illustrates how shifts in one element can have cascading effects across the practice as a whole, making the framework particularly well suited for analysing processes of change, transformation, and development.

Materials

Materials refer not only to physical objects, but to the broader material arrangements that make practices possible, including technologies, infrastructures, organisational tools, devices, and the human body (Shove et al., 2012, pp. 7, 14, 23-30). Changes in these configurations can transform practices by redistributing what is required of practitioners, for instance when tasks are delegated from humans to technologies or organisational systems (Shove et al., 2012, pp. 24, 28-30, 41). From this perspective, materials are not external supports to social practices but constitutive elements of them, as they simultaneously enable, shape, and constrain how practices are performed (Reckwitz, 2002, pp. 252-253). Accordingly, this thesis identifies and analyses the material arrangements through which regenerative tourism is framed, organised, and performed within urban destination development. It examines how regenerative ideas and practices are stabilised through concrete materials, guidelines, infrastructures, and organisational configurations.

Competences

Competences encompass a wide range of embodied and cognitive capacities, including skills, practical know-how, learned techniques, and shared understandings of what constitutes appropriate performance (Shove et al., 2012, pp. 7, 14, 23-30). Competences are acquired through training, experience, and socialisation and are unevenly distributed among individuals and groups, thereby shaping unequal participation in practices. They are also dynamic, evolving in relation to changes in materials and meanings, and may persist even when not actively enacted, remaining embedded in manuals, guidelines, or organisational routines. In this thesis, competences are analysed as integral to the practices of framing, organising, and performing regenerative tourism, with a focus on the skills, know-how, and techniques mobilised in these processes.

Meanings

Meanings refer to the social, cultural, and symbolic significance attached to a practice, including norms, expectations, emotions, motivations, values, and aspirations. A key point is that meanings are understood as an internal element of practice, rather than as an external or purely individual driving force (Shove et al., 2012, pp. 7, 14, 23-30). In this sense, meanings help constitute practice by shaping what it is understood to be and why it matters, thereby providing a rationale for participation. Meanings are closely linked to broader cultural discourses and may shift as practices become associated with different actors or contexts. Throughout the analysis, this thesis will examine the meanings associated with enacting regenerative tourism through framing, organising, and performing. Particular attention is given to understanding why regenerative initiatives emerge and how the visions and values are presented in the initial phases of development.

Zooming Out: Situating Practices in Their Context

After examining the situated practices in detail, a "zoomed out" approach is applied to explore how these practices are connected across time and space through actions, organisational structures, and material arrangements (Nicolini, 2012, p. 231). This shifts the analysis from isolated instances of practice to the broader configurations in which they are embedded, highlighting how practices are shaped, enabled, and sometimes constrained by other surrounding

practices (Nicolini, 2012, p. 230). In this thesis, the zoomed out analysis investigates how the situated practices of framing, organising, and performing are interconnected and influenced by wider institutional, discursive, and political contexts. In doing so, the analysis demonstrates how these broader contexts shape which practices emerge, how they develop, and the conditions under which they operate.

4 Methodology

Research Design

The research questions guiding this thesis were developed based on a gap identified through contemporary tourism scholarship, and the projects of Regenerative Copenhagen and CopenPay served as relevant empirical contexts for investigating this, in which actors were actively working to translate regenerative tourism into practice. Together, this enabled the study to be grounded both in an identified academic gap and in a concrete practice-based issue. Given the exploratory nature of the research questions and the study's interest in how regenerative tourism is practised through urban destination development, the thesis adopts a qualitative, interpretivist, and practice-theoretical approach. According to Flick (2023, p. 62), interpretation refers to the process of understanding the meanings embedded within qualitative data. Epistemologically, we adopted an interpretivist stance, aiming to interpret how different actors enact regenerative tourism in practice, through a practice-theoretical lens. Following Flick (2023, pp. 61-63), we treated the empirical material as interpretively produced rather than as neutral data that directly mirror reality. Moreover, we adopted a social constructionist view, understanding regenerative tourism not as an objective entity with a fixed meaning, but as a phenomenon continuously constructed through the meanings, materials, and competences in destination development practices.

Literature Search

To identify the problem formulation in this thesis, an initial literature search was conducted to map the development of regenerative tourism and to identify the research gap. Building on the research questions, a more targeted search was then carried out to identify literature that could further inform both regenerative tourism and urban destination development. The literature search was conducted on Finn, Lund University Library Tool (Lund University Libraries, n.d.). The literature search focused on peer-reviewed articles and used key search terms such as "regenerative tourism", "regenerative activities", "tourism transformation", "Destination Management Organisations" and "urban destination development". According to Flick (2023, pp. 141-142), researchers can trace references and recurring authors as a way of identifying relevant

literature. Following this approach, we reviewed reference lists and identified recurring authors across the literature, which helped establish a chain of studies that informed the literature review. The final selection consisted of research monographs, original research articles, and edited books.

Data Collection

To illuminate how regenerative tourism is practiced in urban destination development, data was collected through qualitative methods, including observations, semi-structured interviews, and relevant documents. This enabled the capturing of actors' "doings" and "sayings" within Regenerative Copenhagen and CopenPay, providing processual insights into how regenerative tourism is enacted in practice.

Researcher Positionality

The three authors of this thesis are employed at WOCO, which positions us as organisational insiders. However, the Regenerative Copenhagen and CopenPay projects fall outside our daily work and are situated in a different part of the organisation. This positionality provided advantages, such as contextual understanding and access to relevant actors and documents, but it may also have introduced potential biases. During data collection, some actors may have moderated their critical perspectives due to our connection to WOCO, and we may have risked overemphasising positive framings. To address these risks, we made our researcher role explicit, emphasised voluntary participation, and clarified that participation would not affect participants' relationship with WOCO during data collection. Importantly, the project was independently designed and conducted by the authors, with full control over the research aim, data collection, analysis, and presentation of findings, and should therefore be understood as an independent academic study.

Semi-structured Interviews

According to Clark et al. (2021, pp. 425-427), semi-structured interviews allow for comparability across interviews while still providing the flexibility needed to explore participants' own experiences, interpretations, and reflections in depth. This flexibility was deemed relevant given the exploratory nature of the research questions. Participants were selected through purposive

non-probability sampling using criterion sampling, which Clark et al. (2021, pp. 378-379) describe as the selection of participants based on their relevance to the research topic. In this thesis, this involved sampling businesses participating in CopenPay and representatives from WOCO, as they could provide practice-based insights into the production and enactment of regenerative tourism. Through our position at WOCO, we gained access to an internal contact list of businesses participating in CopenPay. Participants were purposively selected based on two criteria: involvement in CopenPay and the ability to represent their organisation's practical experiences, as well as providing activities that went beyond tourist rewards to include initiatives aimed at contributing positively to the destination. In addition, the study included project managers from both CopenPay and Regenerative Copenhagen, a WOCO representative with practical experience in regenerative tourism through other projects, a WOCO representative who participated in the expert group for Regenerative Copenhagen, and a business representative also involved in the expert group. These actors were included due to their roles in coordinating and planning regenerative tourism at the destination level. To guide the interviews, we developed semi-structured interview guides tailored to different participant groups (CopenPay participants and WOCO representatives) (Appendix A). While the interview questions were guided by the research questions and designed to encourage participants to reflect on their practical experiences with regenerative tourism, the interviews also allowed space for participants to introduce issues and perspectives they considered important. According to Clark et al. (2021, p. 425-427), this approach supports both consistency across interviews and openness to new insights emerging from the empirical material. In total, the study draws on 13 semi-structured interviews, consisting of 4 interviews with WOCO representatives and 9 interviews with CopenPay businesses (Table 1). All interviews with businesses were conducted online via Teams, Google Meet or by phone, while all interviews with WOCO representatives were conducted in person. The interviews were conducted jointly by all three researchers to ensure comprehensive coverage of the subject and to support a shared interpretation of the empirical data. Typically, one person led the interview, while the others took notes and asked follow-up questions when relevant. All interviews were audio-recorded with participants' consent and transcribed to facilitate a systematic analysis. In transcripts, interviewers are labelled 'I', while interviewees are labelled by first name, as permission was granted. All interviews were conducted between February 23

and March 30, 2026, ranging from 34 to 97 minutes with an average length of 51 minutes and 45 seconds.

Name	Organisation	Position	Analytical Relevance	Date	Time
Sofie	Statens Museum for Kunst (SMK)	Marketing Manager	CopenPay Participant	23 February	34:46
Jes	Naturpark Amager	Manager	CopenPay Participant	24 February	48:22
Yasemin	Zoologisk Have	Sustainability Manager	CopenPay Participant	25 February	50:38
Mette	Local Ambassadors	Founder	CopenPay Participant	25 February	42:47
Steffen	Øens Have	Founder	CopenPay Participant	25 February	55:34
Rachel	Dråben i Havet	Founder	CopenPay Participant	26 February	47:56
Jonas	WOCO	Head of International Communication	WOCO representative: responsible for CopenPay	27 February	46:29
Mads	TagTomat	Founder	Regenerative business founder and expert group member	27 February	57:08
Tobias	Green Kayak	Founder	CopenPay Participant	2 March	48:27
Morten	WOCO	Senior Manager, Regenerative Copenhagen	WOCO representative: Project leader of Regenerative Copenhagen	2 March	01:17:21
Joakim	Reffen Copenhagen Street Food	Senior Marketing Manager	CopenPay Participant	3 March	41:18
Lene	MeetDenmark (WOCO)	Senior Manager	WOCO representative: Expert group member, working with regenerative business tourism	9 March	01:02:49
Jesper	MeetDenmark (WOCO)	Senior Manager	WOCO representative: Experience with implementing regenerative initiatives in business tourism	30 March	59:08

Table 1. Overview of interviewees

Observations

According to Reckwitz (2002), practice theory shifts analytical attention towards what actors actually do in their everyday lives and emphasises observation as a key method for understanding the performance and reproduction of practices. In line with Flick's (2023, pp. 288-289) understanding of observation as a method for collecting data on interactions and processes, observations were deemed relevant for capturing how collaboration and coordination unfolded in practice. Due to our employment at WOCO, we were granted access to participate in two meetings held in connection with Regenerative Copenhagen, which enabled observation of how actors engaged in framing and organising regenerative tourism, as well as how collaboration and coordination unfolded in practice. According to Flick (2023, p. 300), overt observation refers

to the extent to which the observation is revealed to those being observed. During these observations, our role was overt, as our presence and purpose were known to participants in all observed settings. According to Clark et al. (2021, pp. 256-258), unstructured observation involves observing without a fixed observation schedule and documenting relevant observations in detail. In this study, the observations were unstructured but guided by a loose focus on how regenerative tourism was discussed, how roles and responsibilities were negotiated, and what tensions or uncertainties emerged. During and immediately after the observations, we wrote field notes, which were later used alongside interviews and documents to contextualise statements and support triangulation. As shown in Table 2, the observations included a meeting on the development of the knowledge base between WOCO and BARK and an expert group meeting, which involved a discussion on the selection criteria for recruiting businesses to Regenerative Copenhagen. Further, the meetings provided insight into how the project was framed, coordinated, and qualified among different actors.

Meeting	Purpose	Duration	Our role	Data Produced
Meeting with BARK	Knowledge-base development	1,5h	Overt - Minimally participating	Field notes
Expert Group Meeting	Actor interaction and coordination	2,5h	Overt - Minimally participating	Field notes
Expert Group Discussion	Discussion of questions related to the criteria for the open call	30 min	Overt - Participatory, facilitating role	Transcribed recording and Field notes

Table 2. Overview of observed meetings

Documents

According to Flick (2023, pp. 345-346), documents can be used as qualitative data, but they should be understood as materials produced by someone for specific purposes. The documents used in this thesis included internal documents from Regenerative Copenhagen, as well as selected publicly available materials. These documents were purposively selected on the basis that they could illuminate the study's research questions. As shown in Table 3, the document material included the Project Application for Regenerative Copenhagen, providing a detailed description of the project's purpose, process, and objectives. In addition, PowerPoint presentations from the observed meetings were collected, along with WOCO's invitation to

expert group members, questions for expert group to discuss, the open call sent out to recruit businesses, and the knowledge base developed by the external consultancy firm BARK (BARK Rådgivning, n.d.).

Name	Owner	Type	Content	Length
Project Application: Regenerative Copenhagen	WOCO	PDF	Formal project application, including framing, aims, potential outcomes, and organisation	11 pages
Morten Presentation: Meeting with BARK	WOCO	PowerPoint	Early project framing and dialogue with BARK	14 slides
Morten Presentation: Expert Group Meeting	WOCO	PowerPoint	Presentation of the project to the expert group	14 slides
BARK's Presentation	BARK	PowerPoint	Presentation of knowledge base for expert group	34 slides
Invitation to The Expert Group	WOCO	PDF	Invitation and framing of expert groups role	2 pages
Questions for Expert Group Discussion	WOCO	PDF	Questions to discuss the expert group for open call criteria	1 page
Open Call	WOCO	PDF	Invitation for business to apply for participation	5 pages
Regenerative Copenhagen Knowledge Base	BARK	PDF	Regenerative Copenhagen Knowledge Base	25 pages

Table 3. Overview of documents

Data Analysis

According to Rennstam and Wästerfors (2018), data analysis can be understood as a process of sorting, reducing, and arguing, through which data is progressively organised, narrowed down, and developed into analytically grounded claims. The analysis in this thesis followed a similar iterative process. Following Alvesson and Sköldberg's (2018, pp. 4-5) understanding of abduction, our analysis moved back and forth between the empirical data, emerging codes and themes, and relevant theory. To begin the sorting process, we familiarised ourselves with the material through repeated readings of interview transcripts, field notes, and documents. In line with Rennstam and Wästerfors' (2018, pp. 69-78) understanding of sorting as an early phase of the analytical work, we organised the material by identifying recurring patterns and developing tentative distinctions across the dataset. Through this process, it became evident that regenerative

tourism is enacted through multiple practical phases. Based on this initial sorting, three key practices were identified: framing, organising, and performing, which are further elaborated in the analysis chapter. The dataset was then coded according to segments relevant to the research question, gradually structuring the material around these three practice bundles. While some segments were clearly linked to a single practice, others cut across multiple practices, reflecting overlaps in how regenerative tourism is enacted. Following the initial sorting phase, the material was reviewed and refined through iterative comparison, merging overlapping categories and further reducing the dataset in relation to the research focus. In line with Rennstam and Wästerfors (2018, pp. 107-108, 142), reduction is not understood as simplification, but as a process of selecting and condensing analytically relevant material while preserving complexity, nuance, and tensions. In the final stage of arguing, empirical data is linked to theory, and patterns are interpreted and developed into analytical claims (Rennstam & Wästerfors, 2018, pp. 144-146). Accordingly, the analysis presented in the next chapter interprets the findings through a practice-theoretical lens, drawing on concepts identified in the literature review. Moreover, the analysis was conducted collaboratively by all three researchers through shared coding, continuous comparison of interpretations, and joint discussion of emerging themes. This collaborative process helped challenge individual assumptions and reduce confirmation bias.

Research Quality

Since the study is qualitative and interpretive, research quality is assessed through trustworthiness, which Clark et al. (2021, pp. 363-364) describe in terms of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. In this study, these criteria are addressed through transparency in the research design, triangulation across data sources, and reflexive engagement with the empirical data. Trustworthiness was strengthened by combining semi-structured interviews, observations, and documents, including field notes written during and immediately after interviews to support interpretation. The analytical process was documented through ongoing coding, memo-writing, and collaborative discussions of emerging themes, supporting both credibility and dependability by making the analytical process more systematic and traceable. As this thesis focuses on the empirical examples of Regenerative Copenhagen and CopenPay, the findings cannot be generalised to other contexts. Instead, we aim to support analytical transferability by providing context-rich insights into how regenerative

tourism initiatives are organised and enacted in an urban destination. In terms of credibility and confirmability, the analysis aims to ensure transparency in how analytical claims are developed and to demonstrate that findings are firmly grounded in the empirical data. To reduce potential researcher bias arising from our involvement in WOCO, we maintained a reflexive and critical stance throughout the analytical process, continuously interrogating how our positionality might shape the interpretation of the findings. A limitation of the study concerns the scope of perspectives included. By specifically sampling interview participants involved in CopenPay, other business actors engaged in regenerative development in Copenhagen were not included, which may have excluded relevant perspectives.

Ethical Considerations

This study followed general research ethics principles, including informed consent, confidentiality, and responsible data handling (Flick, 2023, pp. 119-128). Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the interview procedure (including recording and use of quotations), and their right to withdraw at any time or exclude specific statements. Informed consent was obtained orally prior to each interview, and participants were provided with information on how their data would be stored and used in the thesis (Appendix B). While the topic was not considered highly sensitive, the study involved organisational perspectives and internal processes that could be misinterpreted or misrepresented. Therefore, particular care was taken in selecting and contextualising quotations, avoiding the presentation of single statements as representative of entire organisations without supporting context. Although participants consented to being identified by name and organisation, recordings and transcripts were stored securely with restricted access. Consent was also obtained from WOCO, allowing us to use unpublished, internal documents. As all interviews were conducted in Danish, quotations used in the analysis were translated into English for transparency. Uncertain translations were discussed among all three researchers, with limited support from translation tool DeepL for individual words. Further, all quotes used in the final analysis were sent to the interviewees for their consent, to ensure that they agreed with our interpretation and translation of their words.

5 Analysis

Drawing on Nicolini's (2012) notion of "zooming in", the analysis first examines the practices of framing, organising, and performing in detail, exploring how meanings, materials, and competences are connected within each practice. The analysis of how Regenerative Copenhagen is framed in an urban context, and how collaboration around regenerative tourism is organised, draws on documents, observations, and insights from actors involved in the project. To examine how regenerative activities are performed in practice, interviews with actors involved in CopenPay are incorporated, providing insight into how business-led regenerative tourism activities are enacted in Copenhagen.

Framing Regenerative Tourism in an Urban Context

The first practice concerns how regenerative tourism is framed within Regenerative Copenhagen. In this thesis, framing refers to the ways in which visions and ideals of regenerative tourism are articulated, communicated, and made meaningful through the practices of involved actors. From a practice-theoretical perspective, framing is not understood merely as a discursive exercise, but as an active and practical accomplishment through which regenerative tourism is established as a relevant and legitimate approach to destination development. This part of the analysis draws on the Project Application for Regenerative Copenhagen, Morten's Presentation at the Introductory Meeting with BARK, BARK's Presentation, observations from the Meeting with BARK, the Regenerative Copenhagen Knowledge Base, and interview with Morten (WOCO), project manager of Regenerative Copenhagen.

Reframing Tourism Through New Meanings

Presenting Long-term Visions

A central theme emerging across the empirical data is that regenerative tourism is presented as a long-term, transformative approach to destination development. While Regenerative Copenhagen builds on CopenPay, it is framed as moving beyond the temporary campaign logic associated with CopenPay towards something more permanent. When reflecting on how Regenerative Copenhagen should distinguish itself from CopenPay, Morten (WOCO) emphasizes that: "It is about creating a lasting offering, not just a campaign". Thus, an ideal of permanence becomes

attached to Regenerative Copenhagen, distinguishing it from campaign-based and short-term tourism initiatives. This meaning is stabilised through the project's material arrangements. In the Project Application regenerative tourism is described as creating "... the foundation for (...) experiences that generate a lasting effect", and states that "The project will take the next step and develop lasting, attractive offerings year-round". The Project Application further includes the target that "75% of participating companies should continue offering regenerative products one year after the project ends". The Project Application can therefore be understood as a material element within the framing practice, as it formalises and reinforces the ideals associated with regenerative tourism as a long-term approach to destination development. Morten's (WOCO) distinction between sustainable and regenerative tourism further clarifies how long-term meanings are constructed and attached to regeneration: "Sustainable tourism has offered clear goals. Regenerative tourism offers vision". Here, regenerative tourism is framed as moving beyond measurable optimisation and fixed targets, and is instead associated with direction, imagination, and long-term transformation. The quote therefore illustrates how regenerative tourism gains meaning relationally through its distinction from existing sustainability practices and logics. This understanding aligns with Bellato et al. (2023) and Pollock (2019), who similarly position regeneration as a long-term transformative process that moves beyond conventional sustainability approaches.

A Response to Urban Tourism Challenges

The potential of regenerative tourism as a response to the challenges associated with tourism growth in Copenhagen emerges as one of the most significant themes across the empirical data. In the Project Application, tourism's high resource consumption and growth in Copenhagen are described as creating "an urgent need for a paradigm shift in the way future tourism products are developed", and regeneration is introduced as a possible response: "One new direction could be regenerative tourism". Furthermore, in BARK's Presentation, Regenerative Copenhagen was framed as a potential response to both the recent growth in tourism numbers in Copenhagen and the declining local support for this continued growth. Thus, regenerative tourism is attached to a problem-solution meaning, becoming worth pursuing because it is framed as a response to pressures that existing tourism practices are unable to solve. This links regenerative tourism to possibly address urban tourism challenges around growth and environmental pressures, which

are central challenges in the literature on urban destination development (Nilsson, 2024; Koens, 2021; Gössling & Higham, 2021). However, this framing is not straightforwardly anti-growth. The Project Application states:

> "With a tourism behaviour that does not wear as heavily on its surroundings, the Capital can better accommodate the expected increase in the number of visitors (…) In this way, the project can be seen as a way to secure future revenue in the tourism industry…".

Thus, the Project Application frames regenerative tourism through two partly competing ideals: paradigm shift and continued growth. Rather than rejecting tourism growth, regenerative tourism is framed as a way of making future growth more manageable by changing visitor behaviour and developing tourism practices that contribute to maintenance and preservation. At the same time, regenerative tourism is also connected to destination competitiveness, as the Project Application states: "The results of the project and a new regenerative Capital narrative can strengthen the Capital Region's competitiveness as an international, sustainable destination". The framing practice therefore does not replace existing tourism development logics but rather seeks to rework the meanings attached to them. This tension becomes central to the framing practice, as regenerative tourism is connected both to transformative ideals and to existing economic growth logics. Regenerative tourism is thus framed as an approach capable of accommodating future tourism growth while simultaneously addressing its associated challenges. In this way, the findings reflect how DMOs increasingly operate at the intersection of destination promotion and competitiveness, while simultaneously engaging with broader environmental and social challenges facing destinations (Reinhold et al., 2023, Toma & Mihai, 2022).

While regenerative tourism is framed as being able to address some challenges, its limitations are also acknowledged across the empirical data. For example, Morten (WOCO) states: "If we genuinely want to reduce the CO_2 footprint, we would look more towards aviation, whereas regenerative tourism can more be used to create positive encounters between tourists and locals". Thus, regenerative tourism is not framed as a solution to all of tourism's environmental impacts, particularly those associated with aviation. This limitation was also discussed during the Meeting with BARK, where it was emphasised by Morten (WOCO) that the limits of regeneration must

be acknowledged, as the concept is often presented in an overly idealised manner in the literature. Framing can therefore be understood as a practice where actors attach meanings to regenerative tourism by shaping both what it is understood to address and what its limitations are, thereby providing a rationale for participation.

Rethinking Tourism Value and Actor Roles

Across the empirical data, regenerative tourism is consistently framed through a new value narrative. Rather than understanding tourism mainly as an economic sector or a potential burden on destinations, Regenerative Copenhagen frames tourism as something that can contribute to broader social and environmental value. Morten (WOCO) articulates this shift when contrasting regenerative tourism with more traditional sustainability approaches: "Where sustainable tourism primarily concerns resource consumption, CO_2 emissions (…) this instead becomes a broader form of value creation that is more positive". The Project Application similarly describes regenerative tourism as something that "... not only creates burdens but can also contribute broader positive value" linking this value to political agendas such as "green transition" and "employment of people on the margins of the labour market". In the Meeting with BARK, regenerative tourism's value is further discussed between BARK and WOCO to include "cleaner harbours, jobs for vulnerable groups, social inclusion, meaningful encounters", and the development of "new narratives about the value of tourism". These examples illustrate how the framing practice actively redefines tourism by attaching new social and environmental meanings to it. This resonates with Koens (2021, p. 36), who conceptualises regenerative urban tourism as being "in service to the city system", where tourism is understood as having net-positive impacts and the potential to create value for both local communities and natural environments. This reframing is particularly significant in an urban context, as Nilsson (2024, pp. 428-429) argues that tourists and residents co-exist within the same spaces, infrastructures, and everyday urban life. Morten (WOCO) links regenerative tourism directly to local legitimacy: "… then there is a value proposition that it creates a better encounter between locals and tourists (…) Regenerative tourism offers new value narratives to Copenhageners for why they should host tourism". A point further supported in the Project Application: "Regenerative tourism engages tourists in the maintenance and development of the city, which can increase local support and reduce potential conflicts". Here, regenerative tourism is framed as a practice that must generate value for locals

to justify tourism's place in the city. This justification is articulated through a shift of the tourist's role, from a passive consumer to an active contributor, an argument that is consistently emphasised across the empirical data. In the PowerPoint presented by Morten (WOCO) during the Meeting with BARK, the activation of tourists in the maintenance and development of the destination (e.g., through CopenPay) is linked to increasing Copenhageners' willingness to support and host tourism. Similarly, the Project Application describes regenerative experiences as those "where tourists actively contribute to preserving and developing the destination" and emphasises that "the tourist is not merely a consumer, but also an active contributor". Through this framing, the tourist is positioned not as a passive consumer of the destination, but as a carrier of regenerative practices. Morten (WOCO) further articulates this understanding when describing regenerative tourism as: "... a gigantic systemic shift (…) Both citizens and tourists (…) we are all, in reality, guests and residents (…) and participate in living systems". Here, regeneration is framed as requiring a reconfiguration of relationships between tourists, residents, and the destination itself, where tourism becomes embedded within broader social and ecological systems. This understanding is connected to concrete forms of action when Morten (WOCO) explains: "And then we talk about actual maintenance, meaning that tourists, for example, collect litter and that they take on a societal responsibility …". The tourist is thus framed as an active participant in caring for the destination. From this perspective, the reconfiguration of the tourist's role can also be understood as a way of legitimising tourism's presence within local communities. Moreover, businesses are similarly framed as central actors in the maintenance and development of the destination, as discussed during the Meeting with BARK. In this way, both tourists and businesses are positioned as active participants. Similarly, Iddawala and Lee (2025) argue that tourists and businesses are frequently highlighted as key actors in the restoration and maintenance of local environments and communities within regenerative tourism.

Developing Competences for Urban Translation

Across the empirical data, regenerative tourism is repeatedly described as difficult to understand and operationalise, indicating that the associated competences and know-how for its practice remain emergent and under development. During the Meeting with BARK, the concept was discussed by Morten (WOCO) and BARK as an "empty concept", "very fluffy", and even a "conversation stopper". This indicates that regenerative tourism has not yet stabilised as a shared

practical understanding among the involved actors. Rather, it requires translation, clarification and collective sense-making before it can be enacted in practice. This challenge becomes particularly visible in the context of Copenhagen. Morten (WOCO) emphasises that regenerative tourism must be place-based: “You have to start from the place you are in (…) what its specific characteristics are. What kinds of particular problems there are…”. The competence required is therefore not only knowledge of regenerative tourism as a general concept, but the ability to translate it into a specific destination context. This is especially difficult in Copenhagen, where regeneration cannot easily be linked to natural landscapes. When reflecting on the adoption of regeneration, a process rooted in natural sciences, Morten (WOCO) states: “The closer you get to the city, the further you move away from what we traditionally think of as nature (…) So we have been somewhat uncertain about whether it even makes sense”. This quote illustrates the difficulty of applying a concept often rooted in nature-based destinations and ecological restoration to a dense urban destination. It supports arguments in the literature that one of the core challenges of regenerative tourism lies in translating ecological and natural-scientific thinking into tourism practice (Hussain & Haley, 2022). In Copenhagen, the question becomes what regeneration should mean when the destination is primarily defined by urban life, social relations, and everyday practices rather than natural landscapes. This leads to a reconfiguration of the meaning of “ecosystem”: “What is the fragile ecosystem in Copenhagen? (…) Life in Copenhagen (…) that is our unique ecosystem” (Morten, WOCO). This redefinition shows how regenerative tourism is adapted to Copenhagen’s specific conditions. Regeneration is not simply transferred from nature-based contexts into the city, it is translated through the practical work of identifying what is fragile, valuable and in need of care in this particular destination. In this process, Copenhagen’s “ecosystem” is reframed as life in Copenhagen: the social, cultural and relational life of the city. This reflects the literature’s understanding of regenerative tourism as place-based and context-dependent, where regenerative potential must be understood in relation to the specific social, ecological, and cultural conditions of each place (Bellato et al., 2023; Hajarrahmah et al., 2024; Iddawala & Lee, 2025).

The lack of a unified understanding also helps explain the role of BARK in the project. In response to the conceptual ambiguity surrounding regenerative tourism, BARK was commissioned by WOCO to develop an operational language and clarify how the concept could be translated into practice. This resulted in the Regenerative Copenhagen Knowledge Base,

which presents nine recommendations based on academic knowledge and experiences from other actors working with regenerative tourism development. In the Knowledge Base, the recommendations emphasise working long-term with the specific needs, challenges and values of the local area, creating local collaborations, developing small and tangible activities in which tourists can participate actively, and measuring success through broader indicators such as well-being and nature rather than only through overnight stays or visitor numbers. These recommendations are intended to guide both the expert group and the concrete innovations of new regenerative experiences. In this way, the Knowledge Base functions as a practical framework for how regenerative tourism should be understood and performed in a Copenhagen context. Practice-theoretically, this can be understood as a process of developing shared competences and know-how, through which a common foundation for working with regenerative tourism is established.

Stabilising Through Project Materials

Regenerative tourism in Copenhagen is not only framed through visions, value narratives, and competences, but is also materially stabilised through project documents such as the Project Application, PowerPoint presentations, and the Knowledge Base. From a practice-theoretical perspective, these documents constitute material elements that actively shape the framing practice. They do not merely communicate ideas, but help stabilise and reinforce particular meanings, ideals, and competencies associated with regenerative tourism.

Overall, the framing practice involves the ongoing construction of a shared understanding of what regenerative tourism should entail in the specific context of Copenhagen. This is achieved through the attachment of particular meanings to regenerative tourism, alongside the mobilisation of competences to translate these meanings into practice. These meanings and competences are then stabilised and made actionable through materials, which together contribute to establishing regenerative tourism as both relevant and valuable for the city's tourism development. The analysis thus demonstrates the interdependence of meanings, competences, and materials.

Organising Regenerative Tourism Collaboration

Building on the previous section, this analysis examines how regenerative tourism is organised. From a practice-theoretical perspective, organising can be understood as a practical accomplishment through which actors collaborate to create a shared practical understanding of regenerative tourism. This practice draws on the Project Application, BARK's Presentation, Morten's Presentation at the Expert Group Meeting, the Invitation to the Expert Group, the Open Call, Expert Group Discussion, and Observations from the Expert Group Meeting. Further, statements from Morten (WOCO), Lene (MeetDenmark), and Mads (TagTomat) are used to examine how different forms of knowledge and practical experience are brought into the organising process.

Organising Through Distributed Competences

Within Regenerative Copenhagen, competences are not located within one actor alone but are distributed across several actors. Observations from the Expert Group Meeting provide a more concrete site for examining how these competences are at play in organising regenerative tourism. During the Expert Group Meeting, Morten (WOCO) presented the expert group as a "Professional exchange and partnership for regenerative tourism in an urban context", and his PowerPoint further stated that the purpose of the meeting was to "Establish a shared understanding, language, and framework for regenerative tourism" and to "Provide guidance for upcoming innovation initiatives". This illustrates that competences in the organisation of regenerative tourism are distributed and actively produced through interaction between actors, where the expert group functions as a site for developing shared understanding, language, and operational frameworks. The expert group consists of WOCO, consultants, researchers, actors from other DMOs, and both private and public actors. Morten (WOCO) explicitly describes regeneration as "... a new field for me, and a new field for the team", explaining that WOCO was "... trying to create an overview and formulate what a good project could be in a DMO context. What kind of values it could offer Copenhagen and the companies and Denmark and the tourists". This suggests that WOCO does not organise Regenerative Copenhagen by already possessing complete regenerative expertise, but instead frames it as a pilot project in the Project Application. Rather, WOCOs key competence lies in facilitation including shaping the project, coordinating its direction, and assembling actors who can help translate regenerative tourism into

an urban context. This reflects the changing role of DMOs as coordinators of stakeholders, knowledge, and sustainable destination development rather than merely destination marketers (Sheehan et al., 2016; James & Halkier, 2019). In regenerative tourism, this role becomes even more facilitative, as DMOs must translate ambiguous principles into actionable practices (Crabolu et al., 2026; Dragin-Jensen et al., 2025; Vegas-Macias et al., 2026).

The observations from the Expert Group Meeting reveal how distributed competence becomes visible in practice. A presentation round of the experts showed the diversity of competences gathered in the room, consisting of public-sector actors working with "the official guiding principles for sustainable tourism [at national level]", strategic destination and business development actors with experience from "business development of companies", tourism researchers, as well as business representatives with practical industry knowledge. From a practice-theoretical perspective, the competences did not emerge within the project itself but were brought into the meeting on the basis of actors' previous professional practices. The expert group therefore became a site where existing experiences from sustainable tourism, destination development, business development, research, and urban green practices were connected to the emerging practice of regenerative tourism. At the same time, the composition of the group also reveals certain limitations. Day & Lee (2024, p. 66) contend that regenerative tourism can actively involve local residents in tourism planning processes, thereby helping to mitigate some of the negative impacts experienced by communities in tourism-intensive cities. However, the expert group did not include representation from local residents and only two business representatives. This matters because the knowledge gathered in the meeting shapes what can be discussed, qualified, and made actionable, while also risking privileging institutional, research-based, and destination-management perspectives over situated community and business knowledge. Mads (TagTomat), a local business participating in the Expert Group Meeting, is particularly illustrative because he does not present himself as a regenerative tourism expert. Rather, he brings practical, place-based business knowledge from working with urban food production, green communities, and opportunities for people to "interact with nature and food", as he described it during the meeting. This also shapes how he positions himself in relation to the project. In the interview, Mads (TagTomat) explains that he was initially contacted as a possible participant in one of the innovation processes, but that he instead suggested he should be part of the expert group, since, as he put it, "we already do all of that anyway". Rather than seeing

TagTomat as a business in need of developing regenerative practices from scratch, he presents the company as already engaged in such practices, while in need of support to translate them into a viable tourism context.

During the expert group meeting, time was also allocated to discussing how the innovation process for new regenerative experiences should be structured. Morten (WOCO) facilitated the discussion by presenting guiding questions, including "What kinds of businesses do we want to reach?" and "Where is the greatest potential?" (Questions for The Expert Group Discussion), which served to frame and steer the discussion. One expert emphasised the importance of ensuring "a certain degree of variety in different types of experiences and services" as well as variation in businesses' "geographical location", noting that "Tourism in Copenhagen is not one homogeneous size. The challenges in central Copenhagen are very different from those you encounter 10 kilometres outside the city centre" (Expert Group Discussion). Another expert, however, argued instead for prioritising "what kinds of needs, challenges, and issues these companies need to address in this area" (Expert Group Discussion). These differing perspectives illustrate how expert participants draw on situated knowledge and practical experience of tourism to articulate distinct priorities for the innovation process. From a practice-theoretical perspective, this observation illustrates how WOCO actively facilitates the engagement of experts' distributed competences, which are subsequently drawn upon to inform the operationalisation of regenerative tourism. In Barnes' (2001) terms, this points to organising as a collective accomplishment, in which the project is held together through the coordination and alignment of distributed competences rather than through the authority of a single actor. This distributed constellation of competences enables the organising of regenerative tourism as a collaborative process, while also reflecting the inherently negotiated nature of its operationalisation. At the same time, it resonates with existing literature emphasising collaboration, place-based knowledge, and stakeholder involvement in regenerative approaches (Bellato et al., 2023; Bellato & Pollock, 2025; Iddawala & Lee, 2025; Koens, 2021), while leaving open questions regarding which forms of knowledge are prioritised and legitimised within the organising process.

Organising Through Emerging Meanings

While the organising practice is shaped by distributed competences, it is also held together by emerging meanings, which are co-constituted through the framing of regenerative tourism and

reinforced through material elements. This is exemplified in BARK's Presentation at the expert group meeting, where tourism was framed as "the means - not the goal", signalling an understanding of tourism as a vehicle for producing positive outcomes rather than an end in itself. A similar orientation is reflected in the interview with Lene (MeetDenmark), also a member of the expert group, who argues that the discussion should be directed towards "value creation", emphasising that "the encounter between people is (…) much of the value creation that can take place" within regenerative tourism. Taken together, these meanings reorient tourism away from conventional growth-oriented logics towards a focus on what tourism produces for the city and its inhabitants. In this sense, regenerative tourism is configured both as an enabling means for this shift and as a practice centred on the creation of social value. Moreover, during the Expert Group Discussion the value of Regenerative Copenhagen was raised through "How should we evaluate these innovation processes and ensure that they are involved in a relevant way, so that they can be used in the future in connection with other regenerative projects?". One expert reflected on the question: "What are we measuring? What is the bottom line? When will this be considered a success?", emphasising that "there are so many bottom lines here", as value may be created simultaneously for guests, businesses, municipalities, the city, and local communities. Another expert further problematised this by asking: "What is the value, and who will own what we create in this project? Who is going to benefit from this project?". These observations illustrate that meanings surrounding regenerative tourism, including how success is defined and measured, remain unsettled and are actively negotiated within the organising practice. This reflects a key tension in the regenerative tourism literature, namely the need to move beyond conventional growth-oriented metrics and instead develop more holistic understandings of destination well-being (Sheldon, 2022).

Organising Through Project Materials

According to the Project Application, Regenerative Copenhagen is organised through three interconnected tracks: "a knowledge track (Track 1), an innovation track involving 35 tourism businesses (Track 2), and a dedicated dissemination track (Track 3)". From a practice-theoretical perspective, these tracks can be understood as material-organisational devices that structure the temporal and procedural ordering of the project. Rather than being neutral administrative divisions, they actively shape how regenerative tourism is made actionable by sequencing it into

knowledge production, business experimentation, and dissemination. In doing so, the structure enacts a process-based understanding of regenerative tourism, in which knowledge is first produced, then translated into practice, and subsequently circulated and scaled. This resonates with regenerative urban tourism literature emphasising collaboration, co-creation, and context-specific experimentation rather than standardised solutions (Bellato & Cheer, 2021; Day & Lee, 2024; Koens, 2021), as the tracks configure how multiple actors are mobilised across time and activities. A further material arrangement shaping the organising practice is the Invitation to the Expert Group, where members were invited to participate in quarterly meetings at WOCO, gaining "unique access to the project's ongoing results" as well as opportunities to provide "input and feedback for its continued development". This document not only coordinates participation but also positions the expert group as a structured site for knowledge exchange. In addition, insights generated through the expert group meetings were subsequently used to shape the Open Call issued by WOCO, inviting businesses to apply for participation in the innovation track. The Open Call outlines that workshops, consulting, sparring, and testing is offered, while requiring businesses to commit "min. 30 hours for the project" and contribute to "new knowledge and practices in the field of regenerative tourism". In this way, the Open Call functions as a material that makes regenerative tourism actionable by converting an abstract and ambiguous concept into a structured format for participation, commitment, and experimentation. From a practice-theoretical perspective, these materials do not merely support organising, they actively shape it by defining who can participate, how knowledge is produced, and how regenerative tourism is enacted in practice.

Overall, this practice shows that organising is facilitated by WOCO, and that regenerative tourism is enacted through organising as an ongoing process of translation, coordination, and negotiation among actors. Rather than being implemented from a fixed model, it is gradually made workable through project documents, meeting formats, distributed competences, and emerging meanings. At the same time, the expert group meeting shows that this process is not neutral, as the actors involved shape which forms of knowledge and value become visible.

Performing Regenerative Tourism Through Business-led Activities

The third practice concerns how regenerative tourism is performed through concrete business-led activities. As Regenerative Copenhagen was still in its early stages of development, CopenPay is used as an empirical entry point into this business practice field, enabling an examination of how tourism actors in Copenhagen enact activities framed as regenerative. This analysis is based on interviews with CopenPay participants and Jonas (WOCO), responsible for developing and running CopenPay as listed in Table 4.

Name	Organisation	Analytical Relevance
Sofie	Statens Museum for Kunst (SMK)	Part of CopenPay in 2024 and 2025
Jes	Naturpark Amager	Part of CopenPay in 2024 and 2025
Yasemin	Zoologisk Have	Part of CopenPay in 2025
Mette	Local Ambassadors	Part of CopenPay in 2025
Steffen	Øens Have	Part of CopenPay in 2024 and 2025
Rachel	Dråben i Havet	Part of CopenPay in 2025
Tobias	Green Kayak	Part of CopenPay in 2024 and 2025
Joakim	Reffen	Part of CopenPay in 2025
Jonas	WOCO	Responsible for developing and running CopenPay

Table 4. Overview of interviewees included in the performing practice

Performing Regeneration Through Situated Activities

A central feature of CopenPay is that regenerative tourism is performed through business actors who carry, adapt, and mediate the activities (Vegas-Macias et al., 2026). According to Jonas (WOCO), CopenPay contains both a regenerative aspect and a distinct “micro-activist track, where the primary focus is on awareness”. As he explains, the aim of the campaign is to “influence behaviour by getting tourists to do something” and to create “a dispersal effect in tourism by turning everyday life into an attraction”. Similarly, the Project Application for Regenerative Copenhagen refers to CopenPay as a relevant predecessor and describes the project as relying on businesses that “develop and invest in regenerative tourism offerings”. Across the interviews, several concrete activities were highlighted. One example was “bike for a free coffee” (Joakim, Reffen), while Tobias (GreenKayak) described how a leisure activity is transformed into environmental care: “Our concept is that you can use our kayaks for free if you

spend your time collecting waste during your trip". At Øens Have, tourists were invited to "help out in our urban farm (…) As a thank you, participants were offered a cup of coffee or tea" (Steffen, Øens Have), while Rachel (Dråben i Havet) organised activities around Copenhagen where participants would "go for a walk to remove waste, and when they came back, they weighed the waste they had collected". These examples illustrate how regenerative tourism is enacted through concrete and situated activities in which tourists are encouraged to contribute positively to local environments and communities. Tourists are therefore positioned not merely as consumers, but as active participants whose value to the destination is redefined through practices such as waste collection, urban farming, local encounters, and movement beyond the city centre. As Tobias (GreenKayak) explains: "It's really powerful that we can set aside money and economics and simply say: try to do something good". This statement illustrates how contribution itself becomes integrated into the tourism experience. Using Shove et al.'s (2012) terminology, both the businesses and the tourists can be understood as carriers of practices. The businesses do not simply implement a campaign designed by WOCO, they rather adapt, perform, and reproduce activities framed as regenerative through their own routines, spaces, and resources. Simultaneously, tourists take on active roles in the maintenance and care of the destination, thereby also becoming carriers of regenerative practices.

Performing Through Material Arrangements

Across the interviews, participants highlighted a range of material elements involved in performing their CopenPay activities. From a practice-theoretical perspective, these materials are not neutral backdrops, but actively shape what tourists can do, where participation can take place, and what forms of contribution become possible. GreenKayak, for example, depends on kayaks, litter pickers, the harbour, and the visible accumulation of waste. As Tobias (GreenKayak) explains, the concept aims to "activate as many people as possible in the fight for a cleaner harbour and ocean". The kayak can therefore be understood as a material arrangement through which tourists are enabled to perform environmental care, making regenerative participation practically possible. Similarly, Rachel (Dråben i Havet) relies on urban spaces and waste as central material elements, while Jes (Naturpark Amager) describes how trails, metro infrastructure, and accessible urban landscapes enable participants to "remove invasive species" as part of the activity. Local Ambassadors similarly depend on neighbourhoods and metro

stations as material infrastructures shaping participation. As Mette (Local Ambassadors) explains: “And then you simply go for a walk in the area where you live (…) And we have actually quite naturally ended up with a starting point for all the tours at a metro station”. In this way, existing urban infrastructures become integrated into the performance of regenerative tourism by enabling movement, encounters, and participation across the city. At the same time, materials also constrain what can be performed. For example, Sofie (SMK) explains: “... we could not really participate in the same project the following year, because we cannot allow people to bring waste into the museum due to safety concerns. Bringing bacteria and dirt into a museum can conflict with artworks that are not able to tolerate it”. This illustrates how the CopenPay activity depended on the materiality of waste, which became incompatible with the preservation requirements of the museum environment. Similarly, at Øens Have, the activity generated a level of interest that exceeded the physical capacity of the urban farm, illustrating how spatial material arrangements shape the scale and organisation of regenerative activities. While kayaks, waste, urban gardens, and metro stations constitute visible material arrangements, the interviews also reveal the importance of less visible organisational forms of materiality, such as technologies, infrastructures, and economic resources, which both enable and constrain the performance of regenerative practices. Jes (Naturpark Amager) explains:

> “In the first year we participated, we were responsible for the entire registration process ourselves, and that involved a lot of hassle (...) We simply cannot spend time dealing with ten emails a day because tourists suddenly need to change something. It should just run automatically”.

This highlights how booking systems and digital infrastructures become integral material elements in sustaining regenerative activities in practice. Sofie (SMK) similarly points to internal organisational constraints: “... we have also found it difficult to allocate internal resources to this, for example to organize internal workshops with relevant employees to develop these activities”. Yasemin (Zoologisk Have) further emphasises financial sustainability as a condition shaping participation: “We depend on generating an operating surplus to maintain and repair our facilities, which means we do not always have funds available for broader regenerative initiatives”. Together, these examples demonstrate that performing regenerative tourism depends not only on values and intentions, but also on access to material capacities, infrastructures, and

organisational resources. At the same time, they reveal how regenerative tourism may reproduce unequal conditions for participation, as not all businesses possess the same material capacity to engage in and sustain regenerative initiatives. This is further illustrated by Joakim (Reffen) who explains that participation was manageable because the activities could build on "existing resources (...) and on the way guests already use the place". In this sense, regenerative tourism becomes easier to perform when it aligns with already established material arrangements and organisational routines.

Performing Through Uneven Competences

Across the interviews, it became evident that competences, such as practical know-how, organisational routines, communication abilities, and prior experience, are unevenly distributed across the CopenPay businesses. For some businesses, the principles underpinning CopenPay aligned closely with existing practices and organisational objectives. Joakim (Reffen) explains: "It fits well with our ambition to be more than just a place to eat and drink. Reffen is also a place for learning, community, and action. And CopenPay aligns very precisely with that approach". Rachel (Dråben i Havet) similarly describes how CopenPay fitted naturally into their existing routines: "I simply say that this is the day people can join, and then they can meet those who show up, or those who are curious about a litter walk". For these businesses, participation required relatively little reconfiguration, as their existing practices already aligned with the campaign. Their involvement therefore depended less on creating entirely new practices and more on translating existing activities into the CopenPay format. In contrast, Mette (Local Ambassadors) describes participation as considerably more demanding:

> "For me, it required quite a lot of additional resources, because I had to set up all these tours. During the process, we also agreed that we needed to introduce a registration system, and that quickly became administratively heavy".

The empirical data thus illustrate how some businesses were able to build on existing competences and routines, while others had to develop new administrative procedures, communication skills, and organisational practices in order to participate. While registration systems can be understood as material infrastructures, the ability to manage and integrate them into everyday operations also constitutes a competence. In this sense, the performance of

regenerative tourism depends not only on the existence of systems and resources, but also on the practical capacity to use and maintain them. The interviews further show that effectively communicating regenerative activities in ways that attract tourists also requires specific competences. Yasemin (Zoologisk Have) describes this as "cracking the communication code (...) We actually did not get any [CopenPay visitors]", suggesting that engaging tourists is not merely a matter of offering an activity, but of making participation understandable, attractive, and meaningful. This is particularly significant because CopenPay depends on tourists recognising what type of participation is expected of them. From a practice-theoretical perspective, the competence to perform regenerative tourism therefore also involves the ability to translate activities into compelling visitor experiences. CopenPay is also organised as a network in which participating businesses are invited to take part in workshops and share knowledge. As Jonas (WOCO) explains: "We invite people [businesses], run workshops, bring them together and try to pair them up so that, together with others, they can come up with good ideas". These workshops can therefore be understood as a space for competence development and knowledge exchange, where businesses learn from other organisations and position themselves within a broader network of actors. However, across interviews it became clear that the function of the network is experienced unevenly. Jes (Naturpark Amager) describes it as highly valuable:

> "… there were many representatives from large hotel chains. Suddenly, you are sitting there with communication and event managers from major hotel chains who become aware of us. They had no idea we existed and said, 'what you are doing sounds really exciting' (…) I have been able to share my story and my product with far more people".

A similar experience is described by Joakim (Reffen), who explains that the network "provides visibility, legitimacy, and access to a network of actors working in the same direction". In contrast, Yasemin (Zoologisk Have) expresses a more critical experience: "I was left with a sense of disappointment, also in relation to the CopenPay team (…) Still, I regret that we did not receive more guidance or feedback from the CopenPay team along the way". These contrasting experiences indicate that while the network is designed as a mechanism for competence development and coordination, its effects are unevenly distributed across participating actors. As a result, some businesses can draw on existing skills and integrate activities smoothly into their

practices, whereas others must develop new competences, making participation more resource intensive. This leads to variation in how consistently and effectively the practice is enacted across contexts. Consequently, the development and dissemination of regenerative tourism depend not only on collaboration across actors, but also on active coordination and facilitation. This underscores the role of DMOs in supporting businesses in developing and sustaining regenerative activities. In this regard, Crabolu et al. (2026) emphasise the potential role of DMOs in facilitating regenerative transitions by acting as coordinating and enabling actors within destination systems.

In addition, performing regenerative activities requires competences that tourists themselves must develop through participation. At Naturpark Amager, tourists acquire practical know-how related to nature management, such as removing invasive species or using traditional tools. Similarly, at Øens Have, participation requires an understanding of ecological processes. As Steffen (Øens Have) explains: “Being part of working in the field is more than just holding a shovel. You need to know what to do, how to harvest, it’s actually quite complex, so it requires a fair amount of introduction”. He further notes that limited competences among tourists can create practical challenges: “It is often faster for a gardener to do the work themselves than to introduce a group of people to it”. Jonas (WOCO) similarly frames Copenhagen as a destination where tourists should return home “more knowledgeable”, adding: “You should be challenged by our culture; it’s about participation, immersion, and learning”. Competences are therefore not only a prerequisite for participation, but are also developed through participation itself, as tourists are encouraged to learn new ways of engaging with and caring for the destination. At the same time, as highlighted by Steffen (Øens Have), meaningful participation depends on adequate preparation and guidance, ensuring that tourists are equipped to contribute in practice.

Performing Through Contested Meanings

Moreover, certain meanings emerged across the empirical data and were attached to the performance of regenerative tourism activities, contributing to making the practice meaningful and worth enacting. Across the interviews, one of the most prominent meanings is associated with social value, with several participants emphasising the interpersonal encounter as central to the activities. Jes (Naturpark Amager) highlights the “interpersonal encounter” and the sense of

community that arises when tourists and locals work together. Mette (Local Ambassadors) similarly describes the “meeting between people” as central to their CopenPay activity, where both tourists and locals become curious about one another. Reflecting on tourist motivations, Jonas (WOCO) notes that “people come to participate in the activity. We’ve done some survey on why people do this, and the main reason is unique experiences (...) and then the social aspect”. This indicates that the meanings attached to CopenPay are primarily relational, centred on encounters, learning, and participation. This resonates with regenerative urban tourism literature, where social cohesion and relational values are central to how tourism can contribute to the city (Bellato & Cheer, 2021; Day & Lee, 2024; Koens, 2021). It also aligns with Vegas-Macias et al’s. (2026) findings which show how CopenPay mediates social value creation through interactions between tourists and residents. Across the empirical data, the meaning of contribution is also closely linked to symbolic value. Joakim (Reffen) describes regenerative tourism as “tourism that gives something back, to the place, the local community, and the people involved, rather than simply consuming”. Tobias (GreenKayak) similarly notes that participants may feel like “climate heroes”, pointing to the symbolic gratification of having contributed to a perceived good. This symbolic dimension is not necessarily trivial, rather, it helps render participation meaningful, attractive, and communicable to tourists. At the same time, the empirical data shows that the meaning of “regenerative” is contested. Several actors question whether small-scale activities can meaningfully be framed as regenerative tourism. Both Tobias (GreenKayak), Sofie (SMK), and Yasemin (Zoologisk Have) point to the paradox of long-haul travel, where tourists may fly significant distances and generate substantial CO_2 emissions in order to perform relatively small environmental actions upon arrival. As Sofie (SMK) explains: “Of course, there are some built-in paradoxes in relation to tourism, because there is always some CO_2 consumption involved in travelling, as people have to transport themselves from one place to another”. Yasemin (Zoologisk Have) goes further, describing the concept of regenerative tourism as “fake news” and a “misused word”. Reflecting these concerns, Sofie (SMK) also expresses initial scepticism regarding potential greenwashing: “We were a bit sceptical at the beginning, as we were, of course, somewhat concerned that there might be an element of greenwashing in the campaign”. As responsible for CopenPay, Jonas (WOCO) explains that the communication strategy deliberately avoided the term “green” to mitigate such associations. Sofie (SMK) further notes: “So it's a really nice communication initiative, but it doesn't really do

anything to enhance our green profile". These accounts demonstrate that meanings are neither fixed nor universally shared. The same activities are interpreted differently across actors: for some, they represent meaningful participation, social value creation, and an opportunity to engage tourists, for others, they appear largely symbolic or insufficient in relation to tourism's broader environmental impacts.

Overall, this section has shown how regenerative tourism is enacted through business-led activities as an interplay of material arrangements, competences, and meaning-making, carried by both businesses and tourists as carriers of practice. Regenerative activities take shape through attempts to position tourists as active contributors to the destination. At the same time, the practice remains fragile and contested, as material constraints, unevenly distributed competences, and divergent understandings of regenerative value shape both its performance and interpretation.

Zooming Out

Interconnections between Framing, Organising and Performing

Following Schatzki (2017, p. 134), practices are not understood as isolated entities but as interdependent and overlapping through "common actions, common organisational elements or common material entities". Building on this, the analysis zooms out to examine how the three practice bundles, framing, organising, and performing, are interconnected. The framing practice establishes regenerative tourism as meaningful by linking it to long-term transformation, social value creation, local legitimacy, and tourists as active contributors. The organising practice builds directly on these meanings and is anchored in shared materials such as the Project Application and the Knowledge Base, which also informed discussions in the expert group. In this sense, organising does not operate independently of framing, but translates its meanings into operational structures, including the expert group format and the Open Call to businesses. These formats materialise framing by turning abstract visions into coordinated processes through which regenerative tourism can be developed in Copenhagen. The performing practice, illustrated through CopenPay, is related in a slightly different way. Rather than being produced by Regenerative Copenhagen, CopenPay functions as an existing field of business-led activities that

Regenerative Copenhagen builds on by drawing on their experiences and practical knowledge. These activities illustrate the kinds of business-led tourism experiences that Regenerative Copenhagen seeks to develop through its innovation track, as stated in the Project Application: "... it would be particularly relevant to invite the existing CopenPay participants (...) These tourism businesses have already demonstrated an interest in working with regenerative tourism experiences in the Capital Region". In this way, performing practices make visible how regenerative tourism is already enacted in situated, small-scale activities, and these practices in turn inform both the framing and organising of Regenerative Copenhagen by providing insight into what regeneration looks like in practice. Across the three bundles, there is therefore a continuous circulation of meanings, materials, and competences.

Analytical Discussion: Situating Regenerative Copenhagen in its broader urban context

According to Nicolini (2012, p. 231), practices are relationally constituted and shaped through their connections with other practices. The practices of Regenerative Copenhagen must therefore be understood as embedded within and shaped by broader institutional arrangements, discourses, and policy frameworks. According to Bærenholdt and Meged (2023), tourism has increasingly been reframed in WOCO's strategic evolution from a narrow focus on economic growth towards a broader generator of societal value. This development is visible across several of WOCOs strategies. The Localhood Strategy, launched in 2017, sought to disperse tourism geographically across Copenhagen and integrate it more closely with local life in response to the challenges associated with tourism growth (Bærenholdt & Meged, 2023). In 2021, Comeback Copenhagen was developed as a post-pandemic recovery action plan aimed at restoring tourism levels to pre-COVID-19 levels, while also incorporating sustainability objectives (Wonderful Copenhagen, n.d.e). Planet Copenhagen introduced an ambition to position Copenhagen as "the world's most sustainable destination" (Wonderful Copenhagen, 2022, p. 2), while Tourism for Good further consolidated tourism as a vehicle for broader value creation and local participation, presenting itself as an "invitation to a journey towards sustainable tourism by 2030" (Wonderful Copenhagen, 2023, p. 1). Most recently, WOCO's strategy, Copenhagen, All Inclusive (2024-2030), explicitly frames tourism as a contributor to "making the world a better destination". It does so through its measurement framework, the Copenhagen Compass, which

seeks to move beyond traditional economic indicators, such as overnight stays and revenue, towards a broader understanding of tourism's societal value creation (Wonderful Copenhagen, 2024). Situated within this context, Regenerative Copenhagen can be seen as a continuation and operationalisation of WOCO's already established strategic direction. This is also reflected in the Project Application, where Regenerative Copenhagen is explicitly anchored in The Copenhagen Compass: "The methods, data, and measurement parameters developed in the project are based on The Copenhagen Compass (...) which aims to measure the broader societal values of tourism". Regenerative Copenhagen therefore exists within a context where tourism is already being actively rearticulated as something that should create value for residents and the city of Copenhagen more broadly. Thus, Regenerative Copenhagen can be understood as an example of how projects are used to operationalise the broader goals embedded in WOCO's strategy. At the same time, critical tourism scholarship has questioned whether WOCO's strategic shift represents substantive transformation or primarily a discursive reframing of tourism (Bærenholdt & Meged, 2023). Extended to Regenerative Copenhagen, this raises the question of whether the underlying rationality of tourism development has in fact changed, or whether the concept of regeneration primarily functions as a new discursive framing that legitimises continued tourism growth. The purpose of Regenerative Copenhagen directly addresses the objectives of Denmark's national tourism strategy, "Veje til Bæredygtig Turismevækst [Roadmap for Sustainable Tourism Growth]", by advancing both tourism innovation and the green transition. As stated in the project application, "the project particularly contributes to two of the themes outlined in the funding call and in Veje til Bæredygtig Turismevækst". In Denmark's national tourism strategy, tourism is linked to economic growth, international competitiveness, increased visitor numbers, and year-round tourism, while simultaneously integrating environmental and social sustainability objectives (By-, Land-, og Kirkeministeriet, 2024). The strategy therefore does not position sustainability and growth as conflicting logics, but as mutually compatible ambitions. Moreover, in the interview with Morten (WOCO) he explains how funding calls from the Danish Board of Business Development are closely aligned with political priorities: "… they send out a call for proposals outlining what they want to support in the coming year. And in that, it then says 'regenerative', which is something they want to support …" He further notes: "All DMOs read that announcement material, and then they frame their projects accordingly. You don't apply with a project that doesn't fit into that framework, because then you won't receive

funding". These statements illustrate that funding is not merely a neutral background condition, but a constitutive element in the enactment of regenerative tourism. The project does not emerge independently of its strategic priorities but is articulated in ways that align with what is politically desirable. Moreover, a key analytical tension concerns whether Regenerative Copenhagen represents a meaningful rupture with existing tourism growth logics, or whether it effectively sustains them through a rearticulation in terms of positive impact, societal value, and regeneration. The framing practice illustrated that tourism growth is not fundamentally questioned in Regenerative Copenhagen. Rather, it is rearticulated through a distinction between "good" and "bad" growth, through the reconfiguration of tourists as active contributors. Thus, Regenerative Copenhagen seeks to introduce regenerative tourism experiences in Copenhagen, but it does so within a political and funding system that prioritises sustainable growth. The project is made possible by this system, as funding, institutional legitimacy, and political support provide the conditions for its implementation. At the same time, this dependence complicates the assumption that regenerative tourism is primarily a bottom-up process (Dredge, 2022; Mathisen et al., 2022). While Regenerative Copenhagen includes clear bottom-up elements, particularly through the involvement of local businesses in innovation processes and the implementation of concrete activities, it is simultaneously shaped by strong top-down dynamics. Denmark's national tourism strategy, funding frameworks, and policy priorities influence which projects are developed, how regeneration is framed, and which forms of tourism innovation are made possible. Regenerative Copenhagen should therefore be understood as both a top-down and bottom-up development practice, as it is shaped by policy and funding from above, while relying on local businesses to translate and enact regenerative ambitions in practice.

A further tension concerns temporality. Regenerative tourism is often associated with long-term and systemic transformation (Hussain & Haley, 2022), where change emerges gradually through evolving relationships between people, places, and ecological systems. This long-term orientation was also evident in the project's framing practice, where regeneration was associated with long-term transformation. However, as the funding framework of Regenerative Copenhagen is organised as a three-year project and must therefore translate these long-term ambitions into short-term activities, deliverables, and measurable outcomes. This temporal structure does not necessarily undermine the project's regenerative ambitions, but it conditions the form that regeneration can take in practice. In this sense, regeneration becomes tied to the logics of project

management and evaluation, where success must be demonstrated through concrete and measurable indicators. This is reflected in the Project Application, which states: “It is an explicit objective that at least 75% of the participating businesses have regenerative offers one year after the end of the project period”. Continuity is operationalised through the expectation that businesses continue carrying these activities forward after the project has ended. At the same time, the empirical data illustrates how such continuity cannot be taken for granted. Jesper (MeetDenmark), drawing on his previous experience with regenerative tourism, reflects on the barriers businesses face in participating in and advancing the agenda:

> “I think the biggest barriers, even though it sounds boring, are motivation, willingness, and curiosity, as well as the demands of a busy everyday life where money has to be made. It becomes difficult to manage, and we also met many who said: we haven’t even got a handle on sustainability yet”.

Jesper’s (MeetDenmark) reflections highlight how businesses encounter regenerative tourism not simply as an inspiring vision, but also as an additional demand placed upon businesses that do not necessarily have the time or financial resources to engage with new and complex sustainability agendas. The quote points to how economic pressures, limited time, and conceptual ambiguity shape businesses’ willingness and capacity to engage with regenerative initiatives. Regenerative tourism thus becomes dependent on whether businesses perceive the concept as understandable, manageable, and economically meaningful within their everyday operations. This challenge is further reinforced by the Project Application’s identification of business recruitment as “the most central risk in the project”. The ability to sustain regenerative practices therefore depends on aligning regenerative ambitions with the operational realities of commercial tourism actors. Drawing on experiences from previous regenerative initiatives, Lene (MeetDenmark) similarly emphasises that businesses “... needs to run [economically]”, underscoring how participation in regenerative tourism ultimately remains conditioned by economic realities. Her statement illustrates how regenerative tourism needs to be economically viable. In this way, the analysis points to a fundamental tension between the transformative and long-term aspirations of regenerative tourism and the practical conditions under which businesses operate, a tension that was also evident within the performing practice, where several CopenPay businesses highlighted the challenges of balancing regenerative initiatives with

existing economic and organisational demands. Thus, Regenerative Copenhagen is also structured around financial support for businesses that later in the project participate in the innovation track, which is supported by tourism consultants who help guide the development of regenerative experiences for tourists. This indicates that regeneration is not only emerging from businesses independently but is actively facilitated and shaped through external expertise and funding structures, which guide how regenerative tourism is conceptualised and translated into practice.

As uncovered in the framing practice, Regenerative Copenhagen primarily focuses on value creation and behavioural change within the destination, while the environmental impacts of travel to and from Copenhagen remain difficult for WOCO to address directly. Jesper (MeetDenmark) reflects on this dilemma in relation to earlier work with regenerative tourism in a business and meetings context:

> "Also at the conference, when we presented it, the discussion quickly became: 'If you fly 1,200 people in for a meeting, can the entire account be made up?' So I think we succeeded in sparking an important discussion, but I don't think we succeeded in cracking the code when it comes to the regenerative".

This reflection illustrates an internal awareness among WOCO actors of the structural tension between regenerative ambitions and the carbon-intensive mobility systems that underpin international tourism. Similar concerns were also expressed by several CopenPay participants in the empirical data analysed in the performing practice. In this sense, aviation functions as a key boundary for regenerative tourism, as it represents one of the most significant sources of tourism-related emissions (Lenzen et al., 2018). Although a destination can actively seek to increase local value creation, encourage more responsible visitor behaviour, and redesign on-site tourism practices through regeneration, it remains structurally dependent on polluting transport systems that are outside its direct control. Regenerative tourism thus risks becoming limited to the destination, where change happens mainly locally, while the larger problem of CO_2 emissions from transport is left largely unaddressed. This tension is particularly significant given that regenerative tourism is frequently associated with the ambition of generating net-positive impact (Pollock, 2019; Iddawala and Lee, 2025; Bellato et al., 2023). If tourism is expected to "give

more than it takes", the question of what is included in the accounting of impact becomes important. However, other actors argue that small-scale regenerative activities have the potential to influence the broader discourse on tourism. Lene (MeetDenmark) emphasises the value of incremental change, stating: "Small initiatives are also valuable. It can be the small thing as well. It can be a good starting point, a stepping stone towards something bigger". Rather than framing this as a limitation, her statement positions regeneration as a gradual process, where small-scale interventions may function as entry points for broader transformation and wider debates. Similarly, Jonas (WOCO), Head of CopenPay, describes such initiatives as "micro-activist traces" capable of shaping behavioural change over time. This connects to Sheldon's (2022) understanding of regenerative tourism as operating across micro and macro scales, where localised and micro-level interventions can contribute to wider systemic shifts, even if indirectly. In the context of Copenhagen, regeneration therefore emerges primarily through micro-level practices and behavioural nudges, yet with an underlying aspiration that these incremental changes may accumulate and exert pressure on a broader sustainability agenda, as also emphasised by Lene (MeetDenmark).

Overall, this section illustrates Nicolini's (2012) point that practices are not isolated entities but are relationally constituted through their entanglement with other practices. Regenerative Copenhagen is continuously shaped by surrounding policy frameworks, funding logics, organisational constraints, and tourism strategies, which define both what regeneration can become and how it can be enacted in practice. This is also evident in the way business practices and international transportation practices remain outside the project's direct control yet fundamentally shape its possibilities and limitations.

6 Concluding Remarks

This thesis set out to examine how regenerative tourism is enacted in urban destination development practices. Drawing on a practice-theoretical framework, the thesis explored how regenerative tourism is shaped through the interaction of materials, competences, and meanings. Empirically, the study focused on the destination development projects Regenerative Copenhagen and CopenPay situated in Copenhagen, both initiated by WOCO, the DMO, and analysed through interviews, meeting observations, and project documents. In response to the first research question, the thesis finds that regenerative tourism in Copenhagen is enacted through three interrelated practice bundles: framing, organising, and performing. Rather than appearing as a fixed model or a complete paradigm shift, regenerative tourism is enacted as an ongoing process of translating regenerative ideals into an existing urban tourism system. Firstly, regenerative tourism is enacted through framing practices. Through project materials and actor competences, regenerative tourism is given direction and made understandable in the context of Copenhagen. This framing translates regenerative principles, often associated with nature-based contexts, into an urban destination setting. It is further legitimised through meanings centred on long-term transformation, responses to urban challenges, and narratives of tourism as contributing to the maintenance of the destination. At the same time, regenerative tourism was also framed as a way of legitimizing continued tourism growth, by reconfiguring tourists' roles towards maintenance. Framing is therefore not simply the communication of a predefined concept, but an ongoing practice of translation, learning, and materialisation through which regenerative tourism becomes locally meaningful and practically actionable. Regenerative tourism is further enacted through organising practices, which builds directly on the framing of regenerative tourism and mobilises actors with relevant knowledge into collaborative structures, such as the expert group. Through the interplay of competences, meanings, and material arrangements, regenerative ideals are translated into more concrete project constellations that can support the development and later implementation of regenerative initiatives. In this way, organising connects broad regenerative ambitions to the practical and institutional conditions of destination development. Finally, regenerative tourism is enacted through performing practices. In CopenPay, regenerative tourism is performed through situated micro-activities designed by local businesses. These activities often position tourists as active participants in forms of

environmental or social maintenance, thereby making both tourists and businesses carriers of regenerative practices. The activities take different material forms, such as kayaks, urban infrastructure, and existing business resources. Moreover, it was uncovered that businesses depend on specific competences, including ecological knowledge and communication skills, as well as competencies for tourists to participate in regeneration. However, the analysis also shows that businesses do not have equal capacities to develop and sustain such activities. This highlights the importance of WOCO's facilitating role in supporting businesses, while also showing that this support is not always experienced as sufficient. Across these practice bundles, regenerative tourism appears as an emergent and still unstable practice. In contrast to how practices are defined as routinised behaviour, our findings suggest that regenerative tourism is still being actively constructed through ongoing processes in which actors define and align meanings, competences, and materials to shape a shared understanding. Framing provides the conceptual vocabulary through which regeneration becomes meaningful, organising translates this vocabulary into institutional arrangements and collaborative infrastructures, and performing tests these meanings through concrete activities. The practices are connected through different material arrangements such as project applications, the knowledge base, and the way Regenerative Copenhagen builds on experiences from CopenPay. Overall, WOCO operates as a mediating actor between national strategic priorities, local stakeholders, and tourism businesses.

In response to the second research question, the thesis shows that regenerative tourism practices in Copenhagen are shaped by broader urban, institutional, and discursive contexts. Regenerative Copenhagen operates as an operationalisation of WOCO's strategic direction, but it remains embedded in funding structures and national tourism strategies that continue to prioritise sustainable growth, competitiveness, and measurable outcomes. This creates a central paradox. Regenerative tourism is framed as a transformative alternative to conventional tourism development and as a response to the limitations of sustainability. Yet, it must also be made fundable, measurable, and legitimate within a policy environment still grounded in growth-oriented logics. These findings nuances existing regenerative tourism literature, which often positions regenerative tourism as a transformative alternative to growth-oriented tourism systems. In the Copenhagen case, regenerative tourism is not external to the existing tourism system but is developed from within it. This does not mean that regenerative tourism lacks potential. Rather, it shows that its enactment is conditioned by the institutional, political, and

funding structures it seeks to challenge. Its transformative ambitions are therefore shaped by project timeframes, DMO logics, policy frameworks, funding requirements, and the unresolved environmental costs of tourism mobility.

The thesis contributes to regenerative tourism literature by providing empirical insight into how regenerative tourism is enacted in practice within an urban destination context. In doing so, it addresses the need for more empirical and practice-oriented studies of regenerative tourism, particularly in cities. The study shows that in an urban context, regeneration is not limited to ecological restoration, but is also enacted through meaningful encounters, local engagement, and attempts to rethink the value tourism creates for the city. It further contributes theoretically by demonstrating the value of a practice lens for studying regenerative tourism. Rather than treating regenerative tourism as a fixed concept or established strategy, the analysis shows how it is continuously produced through the doings and sayings of actors and through the relations between materials, competences, and meanings. Importantly, the study also shows that regenerative tourism in Copenhagen is not yet a routinised or stabilised practice based on shared understandings. Instead, the empirical data reveals that the meaning of regenerative tourism remains contested and actively negotiated, both in terms of what it should mean and how it should be enacted in practice. As such, regenerative tourism in this context cannot be understood as an embodied, taken-for-granted routine, but rather as an emerging and still unsettled practice that is in the process of being formed. While the findings are context-specific and not directly generalisable to other urban destinations, they provide analytical insights and practical considerations for other cities exploring regenerative tourism. It suggests that regenerative tourism cannot simply be implemented by introducing a new concept or campaign. Instead, DMOs and other coordinating actors need to support the translation between regenerative ideals and concrete activities within the concrete place. This requires shared language, practical infrastructures, collaborative formats, and support, such as communication guidance, financial or administrative assistance, and support with developing activities that fit within businesses' existing capacities. However, the study also has limitations. The empirical scope is limited to the production side of the destination. While the analysis includes perspectives from WOCO, businesses, consultants, and other actors involved in the development of regenerative tourism, it does not include direct perspectives from tourists or local residents. This is relevant because both groups are central to the enactment of regenerative, with tourists being positioned as active

contributors and locals as key actors in place-based regeneration. Future research could therefore examine how tourists experience and understand their contributory role in regenerative activities, and how locals perceive such initiatives. Further, Regenerative Copenhagen was still in an early phase at the time of the study. The thesis therefore primarily captures how regenerative tourism is framed and organised before the full implementation of the innovation processes. CopenPay was used as a related empirical example of how regenerative tourism activities are already performed in Copenhagen. Future research could follow Regenerative Copenhagen over time to examine whether the project succeeds in developing more durable regenerative practices and whether participating businesses continue their activities beyond the project period.

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Appendix

Appendix A - Interview Guides

Interview Guide - CopenPay participants

Introduction to interview:

Thank you for participating in the interview and for taking the time to speak with us. Your experiences and perspectives are very valuable to our thesis. [Informed Consent presented]. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you may choose to stop the interview at any time or decline to answer any questions. All information you share with us will be treated confidentially and used solely in connection with the thesis. We will ask for your permission to use the company name as well as your name and position in the project. You are very welcome to share your thoughts openly and honestly, both positive and critical perspectives are relevant to our work. If anything is unclear along the way, please let us know. To ensure the accurate processing of your answers, we would like to record the interview. The recording will be used only for this purpose and will, of course, be treated confidentially. Is it okay if we record the interview?

Probes:

- *Can you elaborate on that?*
- *Would you tell us a little more about that?*
- *What do you mean when you say…?*
- *Can you give an example?*

Theme	**Questions**
Warm-up	Briefly tell us about (insert business) and what you do? (what interfaces do you have with tourists and locals)? How is your organisation structured (employees, private/public, NGO)? What is your day-to-day role?
Introduction to CopenPay	How did you become involved in CopenPay? - Do you remember how the initiative was presented to you? What motivated you to participate? ● Probe: Was it driven by values, business, branding, network - or something else? ● Probe: Was there anything you hoped to change or influence? How does participation in CopenPay fit with what you want to stand for as a company?
The CopenPay activity in practice	Can you tell us about your CopenPay activity? ● Probe: What is the “reward”? ● Probe: How did you develop it? ● Probe: What considerations were behind it? What resources has it required for you to be part of CopenPay? ● Probe: Time, finances, competencies, organisation?

Regenerative tourism - understandings and interpretations	When you hear the term “regenerative tourism”, what comes to mind? Did the regenerative perspective play a role in the development of your CopenPay activity? Why/why not? ● Probe: If needed, explain what regenerative tourism means (leaving the place better than when you arrived). ● Probe: Are there other areas where you work regeneratively? ● Could you see yourselves participating in other regenerative initiatives?
Collaboration	What does it mean to you to be part of the CopenPay network? ● Probe: Strengthened collaboration? Have you collaborated with other actors in connection with the activity? ● Probe: What significance has the collaboration had for making the activity work? ● Probe: Has the collaboration changed anything in the way you work?

Communication and value creation	How have you worked to communicate your CopenPay activity? ● Probe: Which messages have been important to you? ● Probe: Have you experienced that guests understand the intention? What do you experience that guests/tourists get out of participating? ● Probe: Is it behavioural change, awareness, community, something else? What have you gained from being involved? ● Probe: In terms of business? Network? Identity or values? Why should an actor become part of a CopenPay concept? Has anything surprised you about being part of CopenPay? ● Probe: Challenges, barriers, positive learnings?
Future	How are you continuing to work with CopenPay or similar activities? If you are. ● Probe: Do you also have the concept outside the CopenPay period? ● Probe: Do you see it as a temporary project or a long-term direction? What learnings do you take with you from CopenPay? ● Probe: What would it take to make it easier for you to work regeneratively or engage in CopenPay in the future?

Closing	Is there anything important we have not covered that you would like to add? Thank you for your time

Interview Guide: WOCO representatives - Morten

Introduction to the interview:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the interview and for taking the time to speak with us. Your experiences and perspectives are very valuable for our thesis. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you may choose to stop the interview or refrain from answering questions at any time. [Informed Consent presented]. All information you share with us will be treated confidentially, and interview transcription are only available for us and supervisor/censor. Further, it is used solely in connection with the thesis. We will ask for your permission to use the company name as well as your name and position in the project. You are very welcome to share your thoughts openly and honestly; both positive and critical perspectives are relevant to our work. If anything is unclear along the way, please let us know. To ensure the correct processing of your answers, we would like to record the interview. The recording will only be used for this purpose and will, of course, be treated confidentially. Is it okay if we record the interview?

Probes:

- *Can you elaborate on that?*
- *Would you tell us a little more about that?*
- *What do you mean when you say…?*
- *Can you give an example?*

Theme	**Questions**
Introduction	Could you briefly introduce yourself and your role at Woco?
Regenerative Copenhagen and similar concepts	Could you explain what Regenerative Copenhagen is? Who initiated the project, and why? - What problems is the project intended to solve / what is the purpose of the project? - Have you received financial support? - Was it initiated with others? How is the concept different from other things that have been tested at Wonderful Copenhagen (e.g. in connection with sustainability initiatives)? Do you have experience with or knowledge of similar concepts in Copenhagen or elsewhere? What has surprised you the most in your work with Regenerative Copenhagen? - Challenges, barriers, positive learnings

The tourism industry	What considerations have you made about whom you wanted to invite to participate in the project? ● Probes: How have they received it? Have you faced challenges in getting actors to participate? What barriers do you experience? What types of actors are part of the advisory group in Regenerative Copenhagen? (companies, municipalities, researchers, locals). What makes it interesting/beneficial for the actors in the advisory group to participate? (What value does it have for them, what motivates them, what is the outcome?) Do you foresee any challenges in finding companies for the innovation processes?
Regenerative tourism in general	How would you define regenerative tourism? How does regenerative tourism differ from, for example, sustainable tourism? How do you see the potential of regenerative tourism in a destination context?
The concept in practice	Do you use the term regenerative tourism when speaking with tourism actors and businesses? How do actors generally respond to the concept and its values?
Tourism in Copenhagen	How would you describe tourism in Copenhagen these days? How does tourism affect the development of the city?

	How do you/WOCO work to balance tourism in relation to local life / the environment?
Future (wrap-up)	How do you think tourism can contribute more positively to city life in the future? What role can regenerative initiatives play in a city like Copenhagen going forward? - Value creation → what value can they have Where do you see the greatest potential for change in tourism? Is there anything important we have not covered that you would like to add? Thank you for your time

Interview Guide WOCO representatives - Other

Introduction to interview:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the interview and for taking the time to speak with us. Your experiences and perspectives are very valuable for our thesis. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you may choose to stop the interview or refrain from answering questions at any time. [Informed Consent presented]. All information you share with us will be treated confidentially, and interview transcription are only available for us and supervisor/censor. Further, it is used solely in connection with the thesis. We will ask for your permission to use the company name as well as your name and position in the project. You are very welcome to share your thoughts openly and honestly; both positive and critical perspectives are relevant to our work. If anything is unclear along the way, please let us know. To ensure the correct processing of your answers, we would like to record the interview. The recording will only be used for this purpose and will, of course, be treated confidentially. Is it okay if we record the interview?

Probes:

- *Can you elaborate on that?*
- *Would you tell us a little more about that?*
- *What do you mean when you say…?*
- *Can you give an example?*

Theme	**Questions**
Introduction	Could you briefly introduce yourself and your role at MeetDenmark? Could you tell us a little about your background / familiarity with working regeneratively? - Probe: Do you work regeneratively on other projects?
Regenerative Copenhagen	Could you tell us a little about your thoughts behind participating in the advisory group for the Regenerative Copenhagen project? - Probe: What does MeetDenmark gain from participating, potentials / barriers What is your / MeetDenmark's role in the advisory group?
Regenerative tourism in general	How would you define regenerative tourism? How does regenerative tourism differ from, for example, sustainable tourism? - Probe: How do you experience working with the regenerative as being different from your work with sustainability?

The concept in practice	Do you use the term regenerative tourism when speaking with tourism actors and businesses? How do you experience actors generally responding to the concept? - Probe: Does the concept resonate with people?
Business and meeting tourism	What potential do you see for regenerative tourism within business and meeting tourism, or more generally within tourism? How widespread do you experience regenerative ways of working to be in business and meeting tourism, and how is this being worked with?
Future (wrap-up)	How do you think tourism can contribute more positively to city life in the future? What role can regenerative initiatives play in a city like Copenhagen going forward? - Value creation → what value can they have Is there anything important we have not covered that you would like to add? Thank you for your time

Appendix B - Informed Consent

Informed Consent

Agreement on Informed Consent and Data Protection in Interviews

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to examine how regenerative tourism is enacted within the context of urban destination development, focusing on Regenerative Copenhagen and CopenPay. The interview is part of a master's thesis in MSc in Service Management, with a specialisation in tourism, at Lund University, Campus Helsingborg.

The interview material will only be used for the purpose of writing the thesis.

The persons responsible for conducting, transcribing, and analysing the interview are:
Frida Rudbeck Toksvig, Kathrine Johanne Poulsen and Emilie Maja Jensen.

The responsible persons will ensure that all data is treated confidentially and only used for the agreed academic purpose.

Voluntary participation

Although the researchers are currently connected to Wonderful Copenhagen, participation is entirely voluntary and will not affect the interviewee's relationship with the organization, CopenPay, or related project activities. The interview material will only be used for the purpose of the thesis and will be analysed independently.

Personal data

The following personal data may be processed: Name, role, organisation, voice recording, and interview transcript.

No sensitive personal data will intentionally be collected or processed.

Recording and analysis

- The interviewee agrees that the interview may be recorded, transcribed, and scientifically analysed.

- Only the interviewers, the supervisor/censor, where necessary, will have access to the audio recording and transcript. The material will be used for transcription, coding, and analysis.

- Audio recordings, transcripts, and related interview materials will be stored securely on password-protected devices.

- Selected quotations from the interview may be used in the thesis. These quotations will be used in a way that accurately reflects the interviewee's statements and will be submitted to the interviewee for approval, as they will be translated into English.
- All materials collected through interviews will be deleted after the completion of the project in June 2026.
- The interviewee may withdraw their consent, completely or partially, within 10 days after the interview. If consent is withdrawn within this period, the interview material will not be used in the thesis.

Rights and data protection

Lund University is the data controller for the processing of personal data. The interviewee has the right to request information about the personal data processed, to have inaccurate personal data corrected, and to lodge a complaint with the Swedish Authority for Privacy Protection if they believe that their personal data is being processed incorrectly. Questions about data protection may be directed to Lund University's Data Protection Officer at: dataskyddsombud@lu.se

Consent

By agreeing to participate in the interview, the interviewee confirms that they have received and understood the information above and agrees to the interview being recorded, transcribed, analysed, and used for the purpose of the thesis.

Institution: Lund University, Campus Helsingborg, Universitetsplatsen 2, Helsingborg

Date and time of interview: 23th February 2026, 11AM

Interviewer: Frida Rudbeck Toksvig, Present: Kathrine Johanne Poulsen, Emilie Maja Jensen.