

TOURISM AND ISLANDSCAPES:

Cultural realignment, social-ecological resilience and change

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ABSTRACT: If, as according to Robin (2015: online), “islands are idealised ecological worlds, the Edens of a fallen planet”, the rationale underpinning tourism expansion should acknowledge MacLeod’s (2013) notion of “cultural realignment” that calls for optimal and resilient encounters. This introductory article to the subsequent theme section of the journal on sustainable tourism acts as a bridge toward the development of emergent themes that describe how island peoples adapt and respond in localised cultural islandscapes as a consequence of tourism expansion. The links between cultural alignment and social-ecological resilience are clear and the principal and overarching question posed in this introductory article is: To what extent are islandscapes resilient to rapidly changing utilities, significances and ways of life wrought by tourism expansion? The vulnerability-resilience duality remains firmly entrenched in the discourse on islands where tourism has become prominent, and although tourism provides some resiliency, overall, islandscapes remain subject to externally driven fast and slow change that exercises an overwhelming influence. Islander agency will likely remain subject to the fluctuations in the demands of the tourism supply chain. Therefore, tourism as a standalone focus of islands is a high-risk proposition, especially in contexts where externally driven change is likely to intensify.

KEYWORDS: Social-ecological resilience, cultural realignment, fast change, slow change

Introduction

The island-minded idea of nature, separated from culture, has also changed. Some say we are at the ‘end of nature’: there is now a human signature on all the global flows: the biophysical system is also cultural, as the new epoch of the Anthropocene is imagined. (Robin, 2015: online).

Libby Robin’s treatise captures the urgency for critical interrogations into the intersection between tourism and the contemporary cultural landscapes of small islands. Islands have

always maintained allure as sights of paradisiacal conceptualisations and the embodiments underlined by nature, remoteness and the ‘island vibe’ fit neatly into the touristic endeavour. Central to Robin’s concern is the harmonisation of social and ecological concerns as the demands on islands from internal and external pressures intensifies. Robin’s drawing of links between islands, human signature and global flows in the Anthropocene is pertinent to critical examinations of the ways by which tourism growth impinges on the islandscapes and overall social-ecological resilience. Indeed, as Renes emphasises, “islands have long been used as a metaphor for human society as a whole” (2014: 44), and this quality makes the examination of tourism and its impacts on islandscapes fitting.

In articulating landscapes in island contexts, the term *islandscapes* is employed in this theme section of *Shima* to demarcate between characteristics that are particular to islands. For Pungetti, islandscapes embrace “narratives on biocultural diversity and traditional ecological knowledge” (2017: ii) and such sentiments pay heed to the social and ecological underpinnings that shape their fundamental notion. Islandscapes encompass both the landscape (physical and cultural landscapes) and seascapes (coastline and other bodies of water that encompass islands) and this intersection makes up the essential character of islands. Pungetti defines islandscapes as compromising the “interaction of abiotic, biotic and human processes developing on an island over time, and relating to the distinct island landscape and seascapes characters and values” (2017, forthcoming). The notion of islandscapes is extended here to include cultural islandscapes to take in MacLeod’s cultural alignment thesis that is central to this theme section.

If, as according to Robin “islands are idealised ecological worlds, the Edens of a fallen planet” (2015: online), the rationale underpinning tourism expansion should acknowledge MacLeod’s (2013) notion of “cultural realignment” that calls for optimal and resilient encounters. Cultural realignment applied to tourism suggests that the “marketing of images and branding of a group of people, dwelling place or cultural site; the promotion or reorganization of tangible and intangible heritage” and “cultural representation, cultural interpretation and cultural commodification” must consider the fundamental nature of tourism induced change (*ibid*: 74). MacLeod’s appeals call for a rethink concerning the resilience of islandscapes in the face of tourism and other related expansionary initiatives. This is exemplified in Cole’s (2012) examination of Bali where, as a direct consequence of unrelenting tourism expansion, there has been a discernible decline in water security and sovereignty.

For the most part, references to small islands encompass contexts that necessarily embody nature and culture, not as distinct or loosely affiliated constructs but as an amalgamated and conjoined whole. The fundamental description of an island is a body of land surrounded by water. More generally, the precise definitions of what an island is are multivalent, with the key distinction tending between classification as an island or rock, and as distinct from, and smaller than, a continent (or an island country) related to its suitability for human habitation (Mirasola, 2015). This delineation reinforces essential links between human and nature and such a deliberate bifurcation draws linkages between nature and culture, social-ecological aspects and the environmental humanities on small islands. Furthermore, the associated connection to human signature speaks of the intimate relationship between the attendant landscapes and seascapes that inhabit and envelope small islands.

In interrogating the links between tourism, landscapes and seascapes (islandscapes) on small islands, Baldacchino's assertion that "Islands – especially small ones – are now, unwittingly, the objects of what may be the most lavish, global and consistent branding exercise in human history" (2012: 55) is acknowledged. Buckley et al's characterisation of cultural landscapes as "a place where the setting would not look the same without the culture, and the latter would not look the same without the landscape" (2008: 48) is also evoked. In a sense, both Buckley et al and Baldacchino gesture toward caution and advocate for greater attention to be paid to the adaptive capacities (resilience) of island communities and islands themselves in the face of inevitable tourism expansion. The extent to which cultural frameworks act to shape sense of place is a fundamental underpinning of islandscapes and the social-ecological resilience in situ.

This article acts as a bridge between the case studies from Denmark, Spain, Tahiti, Papua New Guinea and Pitcairn that follow in this theme section, and toward the development of emergent themes that describe how island peoples adapt and respond in localised cultural islandscapes as a consequence of tourism expansion. In particular, the links between cultural alignment and social-ecological resilience are clear. Accordingly, a thematic analysis that makes commentary about the ways in which island communities in vastly contrasting contexts have gone about developing adaptive capacities to the changes induced as a result of heightened and prolonged touristic activity is submitted. The principal and overarching question posed in this article is: to what extent are islandscapes resilient to rapidly changing utilities, significances and ways of life wrought by tourism expansion?

Islandscapes and tourism

That islandness is an inherently a "socially constructed idea of place tied to the notion of an islandscape" (Frieman, 2008: 146) is pertinent to the touristic endeavor given that tourism is a construction of humans in nature. Small islands, such as those in the Pacific and Caribbean, embody the socially constructed nature of islandness and the boundedness that tends to be conveyed in treatises regarding them. The embellishment of islandscapes for tourism is found in the hackneyed conceptualisations of famed holiday isles such as Bali, Hawai'i and Fiji, and others of the same ilk, that leverage sun, sand and sea, so often at the centre of island destination development.

In the development of tourism and island place-making, islandscapes are very often portrayed as sites of pleasure with social constructions tied to romanticised themes around romance, seclusion and the wider notion of 'getting away from it all' (Baldacchino, 2012). Yet, islands, in and of themselves, and beyond this fascination with them as nodes within the tourist bubble, are also sites of socio-economic and environmental tension, underlined by the practicality of distance from metropolitan centres, and mostly laden down by terms of trade that are very often onerous and difficult to overcome. However, one instance where remoteness can be beneficial is in international cruise tourism to small islands within ideal cruising distances from key ports of origin. For example, the islands of the Pacific are favourably located with regard to the cities of the Australian east coast for cruises under a week's duration, as are the islands of the Caribbean to the US mainland (Figures 1 and 2). There are also, of course, wider social and ecological imposts associated with cruise tourism on islandscapes (Cheer, 2017).



Figure 1 – Fijian landscape, Nacula Island (source: Cheer, 2011).



Figure 2 - Cruise tourism dominating the landscape, Efate Island, Vanuatu (source: Cheer, 2015).

Historical legacies are also an integral aspect that shapes islandscapes and in particular the relics of colonisation, conflict, free settlement, development and the after effects of natural climatic events. Settlement and colonisation, which overlap to some degree, encompass similar patterns of change underpinned by disruption to old and preexisting frameworks,

innovative industries usurping older ways, and changing approaches to the exploitation of social and ecological resources. In particular, the aftermath of the colonial project maintains an indelible imprint on many islandscapes, as characterised by edifices harking back to the French and British administration in the Caribbean and Pacific Islands respectively. Government buildings and trading posts tend to dominate islandscapes and the built heritages that are a leftover of this era are distinct reminders of the past, and often used to stimulate tourist interest. Very often such legacies are fundamental to present day struggles for self-determination and sovereignty, as exemplified in Hawai'i, Rapa Nui (Easter Island), New Caledonia, Timor Leste and Tahiti, among others.

Sociopolitical shifts also define landscapes, especially war, as evidenced in the Pacific Islands, and wider, unexplained phenomenon such as that historically linked to the first peoples of Rapa Nui. The islands of Tahiti, once the center of French nuclear testing, bear testimony to the political legacies left behind, as do the remnants of the Pacific War in the islands of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands and in the northern Pacific at Truk and the Marshall Islands. The same can be said for other small island settings beyond the Pacific Ocean, such as the Falkland Islands, that have experienced conflict first hand, especially in Britain and the Mediterranean (Carr and Reeves, 2015). War or battlefield tourism is mobilised in such contexts where past conflicts provide fecund material for tourism promotions, such as at dive sites where wartime wreckage are ideally predisposed for tourism. Yet the significances of war heritage and its meanings for the current generation of islanders are often ignored. As Carr and Reeves (2015: 1) question: can islands really act as 'controls or laboratories' or even bounded entities that allow us to understand the macrocosm of war memory/heritage microcosm? Also, the extent to which islandscapes are shaped and the way ideas about them are challenged by climate change is overwhelmingly embodied in the possibility that low-lying islands are slowly becoming inundated by rising sea levels, alongside the growing incidence of extreme climate events that cast shadows over the well-being and economic prospects of such island contexts (eg the Carteret islands). However, as McMillen et al argue, for Pacific islanders, the "practices and knowledge associated with their resilience to environmental variability and unpredictability in the past suggest an adaptive capacity that is relevant to addressing the social-ecological effects of climate change now and in the future" (2014: 1). This notion that islanders are well adept at practicing adaptation and resilience, or realignment as MacLeod argues, has mostly held sway. However, whether islanders and islandscapes can withstand the unprecedented and overwhelming forces of social (globalisation) and ecological (climate induced) transformation will test the famed ability of islanders to reconcile the contemporary challenges that emerge.

Cultural alignment

In evoking MacLeod's (2013) notion of cultural alignment, the cultural realignment project is centered on realigning disparities (or misalignments) that contribute to change that occurs to islanders and, by association, to islandscapes, through prolonged and intensive tourism development (Pratt and Harrison, 2015). The question of islander agency over such change is raised as a barometer that underlines when misalignment takes place. Culture, in MacLeod's terms, encompasses people and place and, by extension, the social and ecological. The misalignment that MacLeod's gestures towards is that which sees islanders vulnerable to change that undermines their resilience to the vicissitudes of tourism and its demands on islandscapes. Moreover, cultural alignment alludes to the ways representation of islanders and islandscapes are prone to bastardisation and oversimplification (Figure 3).

In referring to vulnerability and resilience on islands (alignment), Hall argues that in island contexts, “notions of resilience and vulnerability are not just metaphors but are realities faced in the consumption of resources from a finite space” (2012: 180).



Figure 3 – Traditional Culture for sale, on Île de Pine, New Caledonia (photo by Herrschner, 2016).

While the principal focus of MacLeod’s seminal essay on cultural re-alignment (2015) is on the routes behind the procurement of images, representations and interpretations of islanders and岛scapes (and the processes of change that emerge) his arguments emphasise that processes of cultural realignment are mostly externally driven and that they have the capacity to destabilise and disrupt islandscapes. As he states, cultural realignment proposes that there is a “distinct element of intentional agency with a predetermined objective” (2015: 86) and while this is obvious, the expansion of tourism tends to be underpinned largely by external pressures that mold the nature of the encounter that islanders have with tourism. Cheer (2017) exemplifies the disproportionate influence of external agents pointing out that communities on small islands tend to be reliant on the global tourism supply chain and are therefore subject to the vagaries of the ‘demand side’. Therefore, not only do the processes of cultural alignment necessitate consideration of intentional islander agency, they require that adaptive capacities to externally driven pressures are continually reinforced. Miyajima Island in Japan is a case in point, where carrying capacities are often breached in peak periods leading to overcrowding and sub-optimal islandscapes (Figure 4).



Figure 4 - Tori Gates at Miyajima Island, Japan (source: Cheer, 2015).

Social-ecological resilience

Where cultural misalignment occurs, this is often due to processes that have breached thresholds within localised social-ecological systems (Lew and Cheer [eds], 2017). Such breaches are very evident in islandscapes where tourism has become firmly entrenched beyond acceptable levels of change. Ostrom introduced the idea of social-ecological systems (SES) to explore the interdependent relationships among humans and their interactions with biophysical and non-human biological units demonstrating that a complex multitude of subsystems and internal variables, both social and ecological, continuously interact (Ostrom, 2009; Ruiz-Ballesteros, 2011; Strickland-Munro et al, 2010; Young, 2010). Analysing the characteristics of its components, the resources, users, governances and settings, and how they interact, can help diagnose outcomes. The resilience of SESs refers to the ability to absorb changes without shifting to a new phase or state of equilibrium and retaining the same form and function (Folke, 2006; Gunderson, 2000; Pollard and du Toit, 2011; Walker et al, 2006).

In a resilient SES, disturbances can offer the opportunity to innovate the nature of the relationship between social and ecological components (Folke, 2006), while in vulnerable ones, small disturbances can have significant negative inter-related social and environmental impacts (Adger, 2006). SES thinking has only recently been used in exploring island tourism relations. Araral (2013) considered tourism as one of the factors that is affecting the resilience of the Ifugao SES in the Northern Philippines, and Cole and Browne (2015) used it to explore relations between tourism and water on Bali. The interconnectedness of elements within the tourism system as a subsystem of the SES reinforces the notion that disturbance in one element, can have flow-on impact on the entire system and this is magnified in island contexts, such as in the Bali case.

Bali has been promoted for tourism since Dutch colonial times. "More than any other tropical island, Bali has become the most exotic of exotic locations, a fantasy of all the splendors of the Orient and beauties of the Pacific" (Vickers, 1989: 2) and has seen almost constantly growing numbers of tourists, reaching 4.92 million visitors in 2016 (BPS, 2017). In Cole and Browne's analysis it was clear that the transience and fluctuation of resource users associated with tourism cannot be underestimated. Too many of Bali's water users are tourists and tourism investors/developers who can be said to consume water resources but are not directly affected by water shortages. Furthermore, Bali's SES resilience is inhibited by "cultural factors and weak governance, ineffective rule enforcement, and a lack of monitoring and knowledge sharing" (Cole and Browne, 2015: 450). Unmonitored and increasing use of underground water supplies is an example of slow change. There is a time lag between the pumping of ground water and its impact, and while damage in one area will affect the rest of the system, knowledge of the inter-relationships between human actions and the extent and timescale of ground water degradation is lacking (Theesfeld, 2010). There has been no single dramatic event conferring the unstable state but a gradual incremental change bought about powerful external stakeholders using environment resources with impunity. Bali parallels many other coastal island destinations where the tourism industry is a significant driver of change in fragile SESs, contributing to the erosion of its resilience (Adger 2006). Wet rice cultivation symbolises the "Balinese lifestyle" (Straus, 2011), it is part of the Balinese "ecological identity" (Gossling, 2003: 9), it is important for thinking about cultural identity (MacRae, 2005) but unregulated development has led to a vicious cycle of declining agriculture and increasing tourism as water is skewed away from the former in favour of the latter. The loss of the paddy is the loss of a way of life, the loss of a traditional landscape and the loss of a quintessential tourism attraction (Cole, 2012). As Cole suggests, the role of water in Balinese landscapes, aesthetics, ritual, culture, social networks and, of course, tourism must be recognised and supported.



Figure 5 - Lew's Scale, Change and Resilience (SCR) of system response to disturbance/change (source, Lew and Cheer [eds] forthcoming 2017)

The issue of scale and rates of change are demonstrative of the way tourism in island contexts manifests. Lew's 'Scale, Change and Resilience' systems model (above) captures this framework for resilience, identifying four key social-ecological system responses including:

- 1) **Management** - adaptive responses in tourism contexts that are contingent on sectoral organisations. Here, instances of fast change (such as disasters) when aligned with wider system factors (the sector) require adaptive responses that are framed by management responses and it is through such premeditated controls, that communities might be able to rebound quickly. In the case of islands, management responsibilities are often located at the metropolitan centre (or beyond) and at a local level, little hands-on management is applied.
- 2) **Resources** – here, slow change is characteristic in defining sustainability thresholds and the development of resilience responses. In the case of islands, the resources required to build resiliency are typically meagre, meaning that adaptation to slow change requires the availability of resources beyond the island community that can help develop adaptive responses to the vagaries of scale and intensity in the change that occurs. Slow economic transformation is an example in many islands where traditional livelihoods have over many years given way to the 'new', cash-based economy. Any disturbance to the newly-found equilibrium then requires adaptive responses that should be driven from the bottom-up.
- 3) **Planning** – that planning lies within the subsystem, or the remit of the tourism sector, implies that island communities are generally outside the locus of such planning. This is often done at supra-regional or national levels intensifying the diminishment of islander agency. In tourism practice, this very often means that adaptive responses are largely driven from outside island shores, making islander communities dependent of externally driven responses.
- 4) **Governance** – this refers to the wider strategic management of the tourism sector where the development of resiliency frameworks is concerned. This might include the framing of environmental protection legislation or tax provisions that provide the bases for the development of resilience responses. Such initiatives are ideally driven from a localised base and where adaptation to fast drivers of change (for example, extreme weather events) is required and from where programmed responses can be enacted.

For small island contexts, adaptive responses are now subject to unprecedented levels of disturbance and social-ecological systems are being tested like never before. Adaptation to environmental change for islands appears to be the most prominent of disturbances (Lew and Cheer [eds], 2017) and the illustration of small low-lying islands inundated with rising sea levels stands as a poignant visual. Additionally, adapting to social, political and economic changes is also equally formidable given demographic changes (depopulation or population growth respectively), political fluctuations (territorial disputes, sovereignty movements) and economic changes (regional trade, resources depletion) (Cheer and Lew [eds] 2017). The extent to which tourism expansion inhibits or fosters renewed adaptive capacities in response to more global rather than local changes remains subject to contextual underpinnings. However, what is certain is that in many cases, tourism intensifies the local-level pressures already felt and as a consequence the trajectory of sustainable tourism development can become unwieldy to deal with (Cheer and Lew, 2017).

Tourism and Islandscapes: A Concise Thematic Analysis

The intersection between tourism and islandscapes exemplifies the contemporary social-ecological and economic engagement of islanders beyond the shores of their home islands. Islands have forever been described as vulnerable and dependent on the metropolitan centers upon which they have tended to depend and as the processes of regionalisation and globalisation unfold. Additionally, islands have been promoted for the resilience of communities on the basis that, despite the vulnerabilities evident, they have managed to survive and thrive and in some cases, maintain social-ecological integrity of their islandscapes and strengthening of their economies (see Campbell, 2009, for example). The vulnerability-resilience duality is evident throughout extant literature and where tourism is concerned, it is also seen to imbue such dualism. Furthermore, the case studies in this theme section embody this duality and more importantly, raise complementary themes that appear to be fundamental of islandscapes in the present day. Further to providing a concise review of nascent issues in each of the cases, a typology of emergent themes is provided.

Nueva Tabarca, Alicante, Spain

This case exemplifies the changing significances and utilities that islands undergo over time and sheds light on the way island communities have had to adapt in order to survive. Nueva Tabarca is typical of small island communities that have evolved over time in response to their position in relation to the metropolitan centre and the extent to which it has served its purpose. In amongst the many shifts that have taken place over time, the island's people have had to adapt and realign to slow social-ecological and economic change. Numerous economic development plans have been trialed to improve self-determination and the independence of the island's peoples, especially through resource exploitation. but very often this is undertaken with scant regard given to social-ecological implications. Tourism has emerged as a prominent player in the landscape of Nueva Tabarca and cultural heritage is, in this case, a significantly underexploited resource - with much emphasis continually placed on sun, sand and sea as drivers of tourism. Concerns over social-ecological resilience and appeals for more strategic and planned tourism expansion are called for.

The French Pacific

The French Pacific, although not a country as such, comprises island countries in the South Pacific that are still subject to French colonial administration. This context has an overarching influence on the dynamics within the political economy and central to where tourism is situated, and this therefore, makes way for an articulation of the many tensions that proliferate within the social-ecological framework of these diminutive French territories. Most notably, this includes Tahiti (French Polynesia), New Caledonia and Wallis and Futuna, where traditional cultural assets continue to be key markers of the respective islandscapes. However, sustained efforts to monetise the various forms of traditional cultural assets is questioned on the basis that it detracts from the particularities of islandscapes that define a unique sense of place. In a sense, this speaks of the decline of social resilience in local communities as well as an inability to shape and influence tourism development trajectories. Amongst all of this is the wider drive for independence and

political self-determination and within which tourism appears as just another exemplification of the deficiencies in islander agency.

East New Britain, Papua New Guinea

Papua New Guinea is an example of a larger and more diverse landscape that encompasses living cultures that are ideally predisposed to tourism. Yet the country is belaboured by a range of binding constraints, including disappointing development progress, questionable political governance and underperforming health, education and crime situations, amidst what is an enormously productive resources sector. As a result, tourism growth has been constrained but this has not prevented attempts to grow the sector in the country. In the case of the Nakanai Mountains in East New Britain province, adventure tourism holds enormous potential but any chance of optimising tourism is held back by poor infrastructure and the dearth of strategic industry development. As is often the case with tourism landscapes in the Global South, the extent to which grassroots communities can be the beneficiaries of tourism expansion remains unclear. Here, local communities find themselves outside the locus of control and efforts to monetise their landscapes often fall to the endeavours of outsiders. As a consequence, levels of local ownership and agency, the ability to ensure that tourism has a minimal impact on traditional livelihoods and longstanding cultural landscapes, remains poor.

Pitcairn Island

The case of Pitcairn Island raises the well-discussed duality of islands that centres on the intersection between a past that is still very much influential, and a present that is imbued with change; not all of this change is conducive to the protection of unique landscapes in situ. Both internal and external pressures easily buffet social-ecological resilience on Pitcairn, especially the extent to which landscapes can be restored and reimaged to align with islander interests that have waned over time. In particular, human social networks, a vital aspect of landscapes, are diminishing on the island as a result of depopulation. The island's existence as a British Protectorate underlines the nature of conflict and collaboration, and a context where islanders no longer feel 'in charge' of their landscapes but are instead disempowered subjects of the Crown. Tourism may offer one way out where articulations about the island and islanders are shaped by local narratives and not from unrelated third parties faraway.

Bornholm Island, Denmark

The question of authenticity of landscapes is exemplified on Bornholm island where making and remaking cultural identity through craft-art is evident in community interaction with tourism. Tourism is a welcome recipient of craft-art and other commercially oriented endeavors that seek to develop local culture toward the expansion of the rural economy. The ability for islanders to self-organise and adapt is central to the social capital that underlines community resilience. However, the key concern in this regard, is towards the dynamics of authenticity and the extent to which islanders have agency and can influence matters to enable them to undertake a meaningful role in the process of tourism development.

Emergent Theme	Implication
Islander agency	The diminution of islander agency is viewed as an overarching feature of contemporary islandscapes. This is especially evident where tourism is concerned in the sense that external parties have a considerable influence on the extent to which tourism can be a driver for island development.
Historical legacies	Historical legacies can comprise binding constraints that hinder local-level resilience. This might include land alienation, resources depletion or governance frameworks that prolong the absence of islanders in decision-making.
Social-ecological resilience	This implies a systems approach where all components of the system are interconnected and therefore co-dependent to a large extent. For example, where political inertia occurs, this can have a profound impact of the type of tourism that becomes established over time.
Centre-periphery dynamic	It seems clear that centre-periphery tends to have an overriding influence on the success and or failure of tourism in island contexts. For example, for remote islands, great dependency is placed on the continuation of arrivals from the 'mainland' and where such ties are severed, this can have a profound impact on tourist arrivals.
Human social networks	Human social networks and the ability to self-organise are key tenets in socio-ecological systems analysis. In most cases, small islands endure depopulation or communities that are disparate from each other and without the means to form strong social networks. This hinders the development of resilience mechanisms.

Conclusion: Cultural Alignment, Social-Ecological Resilience and Change

When it comes to cultural realignment, MacLeod (2015) points toward adaptation, especially adaptation to change, both fast and slow, that can have severe implications for island communities and the attendant islandscapes. The notion of islandscapes is cognisant of the systems approach in which all elements within the social-ecological system are intertwined and therefore interdependent. Islands are a strong example of the interconnectedness of all aspects of social-ecological systems and where the compromise of one part of the framework can have considerable downstream impacts elsewhere. The case studies in theme section exemplify the vulnerability of islands while also at the same time pointing out how islands have enacted adaptive responses to internal and external shocks, and to fast and slow change where tourism has become predominant.

Whether islanders and islandscapes can be realigned as MacLeod suggests, or whether the influence of external and internal shocks are beyond islander agency being applied toward resilient outcomes from tourism, remains unclear. The implications suggest that the

vulnerability-resilient duality remains firmly entrenched in the discourse on islands and where tourism has become prominent but, overall, islandscapes remain subject to externally driven fast and slow change. Islander agency will likely remain subject to the fluctuations in the demands of the tourism supply chain. Therefore, tourism as a standalone focus of islands is a high-risk proposition, especially in contexts where externally driven change is likely to intensify. Renes (2014: 56) expresses the view that the extent to which tourism acts as a hindrance or aid makes islandscapes an important resource for local 'soft' tourism, although on many islands conflicts exist between the values of landscape and heritage and the large-scale development of coastal mass-tourism. In the long term, the mass tourism may turn out to be just another phase in this long history of economic fluctuations.

Thus, in returning to the overarching question posed in this section, "to what extent are islandscapes resilient to rapidly changing utilities, significances and ways of life wrought by tourism expansion?", it is pertinent to ask whether tourism just another in the long line of interventions that islandscapes and islanders seamlessly adapt to, shifting toward new steady states? Or is tourism an example of a disturbance phenomenon that islandscapes and islanders have great difficulty with and one that leads to unprecedented change and, by implication, misalignment? And what of cultural alignment – is this, as MacLeod suggests, essential toward optimising social-ecological resilience?

It seems clear that one of the implications of the research outlined above is that an understanding of what the critical success factors are for tourism in island contexts is crucial. Most importantly, ensuring that islanders maintain agency over the conduct of the business of tourism is vital. This ensures local-level engagement and that the trickle-down effects of tourism are in their favour. Secondly, historical legacies are a determinant over the extent to which islandscapes become amenable to the touristic endeavour – at times, it can be both but for the most part this appears largely dependent on context. Additionally, it seems that the tipping point as to whether tourism creates favourable impacts for island communities is the extent to which social-ecological systems remain in synchrony. This is especially important where natural resources are heavily drawn on for tourism and where contestation between local well-being and tourist demand is evident. The issue of peripherality remains strong and is evident as a determinant that underlines the propensity for islands to grow the tourism enterprise – the tourism supply chain remains firmly coordinated by actors at the centre and this leaves islanders outside the locus of control. Lastly, human social networks appear essential in building islander agency and sovereignty over islandscapes where tourism has become prominent.

The implications of this research are manifold, and at the very least, understanding how islandscapes and islanders can develop adaptive capacities to what appears to be a more dynamic and unpredictable context is essential. Climate change, political upheaval, extreme climate events, global economic change and shifts in the social order are pertinent issues confronting islanders today. The presence of tourism arguably intensifies the impacts of the various internal and external shock mechanisms. Therefore being able to deal with the nature of what is either fast or slow change will be fundamental to islander wellbeing and the maintenance of unique islandscapes.

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