

# On outdoor recreation in Swedish coastal and marine areas

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## On outdoor recreation in Swedish coastal and marine areas



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## Introduction

This paper is about outdoor recreation in Swedish coastal and marine areas and is part of a larger PHD project study of Kosterhavet National Park (KNP) - the most recently introduced national park in Sweden. Characteristic for KNP is that about 98 % of the park area consists of marine and coastal environments unique not only to the West Coast of Sweden, but also on a national and even international level. It is Sweden's first national park with a distinct marine focus and is one of the few marine national parks in Scandinavia, one other being the Norwegian twin National Park 'Ytre Hvaler', located just on the other side of the border next to KNP. Both national parks are praised for their stunning marine scenery and unique biophysical world. For this reason both national parks receive a great number of visitors each year, with numbers spiking during the summer months, where the small islands and coastal communities in the national parks receive thousands of day trippers, second homers and recreationists. They all seek the beautiful nature scenery and the tranquility of the marine landscapes and for some visitors the parks also offer new and adventurous activities such as diving, snorkeling and kayaking. For this reason, outdoor recreation (through various activities) is an important, but also dominating factor, in the two national parks, which at times clashes with the also important aspects of protecting and conserving the unique nature and landscapes.

However well visited the two national parks are, studies of outdoor recreation in marine and coastal areas are very few, at least in a Swedish research context. Most studies on outdoor recreation in Sweden tend to focus more on inland, or terrestrial, nature areas such as the Swedish mountains (fjällen) or the Swedish forests. As a result, not much knowledge about outdoor recreation in Swedish marine and coastal areas is available: for instance what people do in marine and coastal landscapes, where they do it and why they do it, and how this all relate to the landscape use, are important questions we simply do not much about. For this reason, my PHD project will try and remediate this situation by contributing with new knowledge of outdoor recreation in Swedish marine and coastal areas - with KNP as my case study example. My research goals or aims in the project are threefold:

- 1) I want to investigate what coastal landscapes/areas people use/prefer and how their activities and recreational experiences relate to different landscapes in the national park
- 2) I will test and develop new, qualitative and quantitative monitoring methods and techniques to study outdoor recreation in coastal/marine areas.
- 3) I will discuss existing zoning strategies as well as further needs for zoning, including an analysis and discussion of zoning models as possible useful tools for management

In order to investigate all this, however, it is important first take one step back and get acquainted with what there already is to know about outdoor recreation in Swedish marine and coastal areas. The aim of this paper is therefore to investigate various official formulations, views and contributions on outdoor recreation in marine and coastal areas (e.g. political statements, research). As such, this paper will not only be an informative part of my PHD research, but it will also bring some much needed light to a research field that has been overlooked, or even neglected, at least in a Swedish research context.

## Outdoor recreation in Swedish coastal and marine areas

In order to investigate and do research on *outdoor recreation*<sup>1</sup> in *Kosterhavet National Park*, it is important to first take a step back and look at what the concept of outdoor recreation actually means and what past and current literature say about the topic of outdoor recreation, especially in relation to outdoor recreation in Swedish *coastal* and *marine areas*. The reason for this conceptual clarification is because outdoor recreation is a very broad field of study that at times can be hard to fully comprehend and which furthermore is hard to separate from other related concepts such as ‘tourism’, ‘nature tourism’, ‘sustainable tourism’, ‘ecotourism’ as well as sports-and leisure based activities (Svenskt Friluftsliv 2008; Wolf-Watz 2010; Emmelin et al 2010). Also, outdoor recreation does not belong to a single research field or tradition. Rather it involves, or extends to, many different scientific disciplines such as cultural/social geography, human ecology, recreation ecology, sociology and psychology (Emmelin et al 2010). As a result, researching outdoor recreation can be a very comprehensive and complex task, and often includes variations of scientific branches such as tourism studies, leisure studies, social studies, cultural studies, health studies as well as landscape use, landscape planning, landscape management and nature policy (Vejre et al 2010). Thus, there are many research traditions, -angles and -views that are activated, when outdoor recreation is on the agenda.

To narrow the scope of this literature paper, focus is set on taking a closer look at the topic of outdoor recreation in Sweden, but only in a coastal and marine context. In top of that, only Swedish literature contributions will be studied and included, primarily as a way to limit an already heavily overloaded discipline, but also because outdoor recreation in Sweden is a unique topic in its own right. This paper therefore does not include international literature or studies on outdoor recreation in marine and coastal areas. As such, the approach in this paper is rather eclectic, although there are some themes that will be followed throughout the paper. Also important is to emphasise that this paper in no way can or will represent a full list of everything ever written about or related to outdoor recreation in Swedish marine and coastal areas. This job is a much too comprehensive (if not a never-ending) task. Instead this paper will present some of the most important and influential Swedish studies and documents with influence on outdoor recreation in coastal/marine areas in Sweden and present them in a both descriptive, but also critical way.

The paper has five parts. First part is a short introduction to the concept of *outdoor recreation*, e.g. what outdoor recreation is, why outdoor recreation is important, what impacts outdoor recreation involve and the difference between outdoor recreation and other similar concepts such as *tourism*, *nature-based tourism* and *sports activities* etc. Second part takes a look at how the *government* and *local authorities* view outdoor recreation in Sweden, with an emphasis in outdoor recreation in coastal/marine areas. Third part investigates how the *outdoor sector* and *major outdoor organisations* in Sweden view outdoor recreation, again with an emphasis on outdoor recreation in coastal/marine areas. Fourth part is a closer look into what Swedish *research contributions* have concluded about

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<sup>1</sup> In Swedish: ‘*Friluftsliv*’. In this paper ‘*outdoor recreation*’ will be used to cover the word Swedish word ‘*friluftsliv*’, although there are complications involved when using the two words on like terms. See Sandell (1993), Emmelin et al. (2005), Wolf-Watz (2010) and Beery (2011) for further discussions of the relationship between the two concepts.

outdoor recreation in coastal and marine areas, with an emphasis on how outdoor recreation in these areas has been discussed in various, often interdisciplinary studies. Finally, the fifth part will conclude this paper, including a short description about what *my study* of Kosterhavet National Park will contribute with to the research field of outdoor recreation in coastal and marine areas.

## What is 'outdoor recreation'?

On one hand it is very simple to say what *outdoor recreation* is: it is activities we do or perform outdoors, often in a natural landscape, during our leisure time, i.e. in our non-work related time (Emmelin et al 2010; Berry 2011). On the other hand, however, when one really thinks about it, the concept of outdoor recreation actually becomes rather difficult to define, once the concept is opened up in its full meaning (Wolf-Watz 2010). First of all, it is not very clear what can or should be included and excluded in *outdoor recreation*. For example, what is the difference between outdoor recreation and tourism? Or what about outdoor recreation and nature based tourism? Or outdoor recreation and sports- and leisure activities? These distinctions may not be very big, but they are none the less important, especially in a research context where clear definitions are often necessary. Second of all, this is further complicated by the fact that there is no universal or homogenous understanding or definition of what *outdoor recreation* is (Andkjær 2004; Lundmark 2009; Forsberg 2009). And third of all, as a consequence, the definition of outdoor recreation is much contested and varies not only between different stakeholders, but even so between different countries (Sandell 2003; Wolf-Watz 2010, Beery 2011). To demonstrate this, three definitions on 'outdoor recreation' - one Swedish definition, one Australian definition and one American definition - are presented here and will work as a way to narrow down the concept:

- 1) A Swedish definition: “[outdoor recreation is stay] in the outdoors in the natural and cultural landscape to gain well-being and nature experiences without an involvement of competition”<sup>2</sup>
- 2) An Australian definition: “Outdoor recreation activities have been defined as those activities that are undertaken outside the confines of buildings (i.e., in the outdoors); and do not involve organized competition or formal rules; and can be undertaken without the existence of any built facility or infrastructure; and may require large areas of land, water and/or air; and may require outdoor areas of predominantly unmodified natural landscape [...] Outdoor recreation activities include (but are not limited to) non-competitive [activities]”<sup>3</sup>
- 1) An American definition: “Outdoor recreation, broadly defined, is any leisure time activity conducted outdoors. Within the vast range of such a definition lies an almost unlimited number of possible activities, from wilderness camping to neighborhood playground use and outdoor performances”<sup>4</sup>

Although the three definitions are different, four general elements still emerge: 1) outdoor recreation effects human well-being, 2) it involves activities, 3) it takes place in the outdoors in our natural and

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<sup>2</sup> Author's translation. Regeringen 2010 & [www.friluftsforskning.se](http://www.friluftsforskning.se). This definition is also close to the Norwegian definition of '*friluftsliv*' with the wording '*without an emphasis on competition*' as a Swedish extension to the Norwegian definition. As put forward by Berg 2000 and emphasized by Svenskt Friluftsliv 2008 and Forsberg 2012

<sup>3</sup> Outdoors Queensland: [http://www.qorf.org.au/01\\_cms/details.asp?ID=686](http://www.qorf.org.au/01_cms/details.asp?ID=686) (2012-10-01)

<sup>4</sup> Florida Department of Environmental Protection:

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/files/scorp/OutdoorRecreationDefined.pdf> (2012-10-01)

cultural landscapes and 4) it leaves out the element of competition (opposite sports activities - see next section). In relation to my case area in KNP, all four elements are also valid in the definition of outdoor recreation that I will use in my study. However, at the same time I want expand the four themes to also include peoples' experiences related to outdoor recreation and nature, which is a fifth theme that I will be investigating in my study of outdoor recreation in KNP. In other words, I want to modify the three definitions above in order to make the definitions better suit the purposes in my study. With inspiration from the three definitions above combined with my own research strategies, my definition of *outdoor recreation* here therefore is:

*Activities performed outdoors in our leisure time for enjoyment and pleasure as well as well-being with a focus on peoples' recreational experiences and how these experiences relate to the use of the landscape and nature (i.e. the experience and use of the physical surroundings).*

The definition includes the *planning process* and *travel* involved in the outdoor recreation activities, and acknowledges that cultural and natural landscapes are both important to recreational activities.<sup>5</sup> For the rest of this paper the above definition is the one that I will use. As such, outdoor recreation includes personal hobbies and interests as well as more physical related activities such as hiking, sailing, skiing, camping or kayaking etc. which usually require some kind of extraordinary effort and mobility factor. But it can also relate to simpler, more daily activities such as gardening, walking the dog, picnicking or picking mushrooms and berries. Furthermore, as 'outdoor' implies, outdoor recreation takes place outside the home or work, e.g. the park downtown, a close-by river, the nearby forest etc. (Svenskt Friluftsliv 2008). That means that outdoor recreation can take place essentially anywhere except indoors, as also stated by all three definitions above.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, in general, outdoor recreation involves going or travelling to areas where there are good opportunities for experiencing nature, since these areas often offer good and optimal settings for doing or performing various outdoor recreation activities. Especially *protected areas* (such as state parks, nature reserves and national parks) attract a lot of people, since these areas facilitate outdoor recreation activities with beautiful scenery (Svenskt Friluftsliv 2008; Aukerman et al 2009). In Sweden, popular areas for outdoor recreation are often protected nature areas, and include *forest-, mountain- and coastal* areas, where there are many and long-rooted traditions for performing outdoor recreation activities. As a consequence, the Swedish nature reserves and national parks receive great numbers of visitors each year. Many people also have summer lodges or second homes in, or close to, these areas, so that it becomes easier and more accessible to perform outdoor recreation activities. This is very much also the case scenario in my project area of Kosterhavet National Park.

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<sup>5</sup> Inspired by Wolf-Watz (2010)

<sup>6</sup> For a more in-depth discussion of the concept of *outdoor recreation*, see Wolf-Watz 2010



## Outdoor recreation and other concepts

Going back to the aforementioned differences between *outdoor recreation* and other categories such as *tourism*, *nature tourism* and *sports- and leisure activities*, it can sometimes be necessary to distinguish between them. When are you for example a tourist and not just a person engaging in recreational activities? And what is the difference between recreation activities and sports activities? And what about nature based tourist activities? How do they relate to or differ from outdoor recreation? These questions are not easily answered, as the lines between the concepts are very thin, and conceptual grey zones often the result. Looking closer at the different categories, however, some differences can be detected:

Outdoor recreation and tourism. Like outdoor recreation, *tourism* is also a broad and complex concept that lacks a universal definition (Lundmark 2009; Forsberg 2009). However, according to the World Tourism Organization (WTO 1995), tourism is defined as ‘*The activities of persons traveling and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes*’.<sup>7</sup> This definition is also adopted in Sweden (Turistdelegationen 1995). Tourism therefore involves travelling to a destination outside ones home and engaging in various activities. Keeping in mind the above definition of outdoor recreation, the definition of tourism is not very far from the definition of outdoor recreation. In fact, the two concepts often overlap, especially from a consumer- and practical/performing perspective (Fredman et al 2008; Sandell 2009; Aukerman et al 2009; Lundmark 2009; Gotlands kommun 2010). However, there are also differences, mainly in the sense that although outdoor recreation can be organized and made commercial (Ankre 2007; Wolf-Watz 2010), tourism as such usually involves a bigger consumer, commercialization and business dimension usually not seen in outdoor recreation (Emmelin et al 2010; Wolf-Watz 2010). Also, tourism activities usually involves staying outside the home for one or more nights, while outdoor recreation usually is viewed as activities performed on a shorter time scale and in areas close to the home (FRISAM 2001; Wolf-Watz 2010). Still, the two concepts are hard to separate, they remain blurry, (Miller 1993) and have to be considered and discussed in every case scenario.

Outdoor recreation and nature based tourism. Like outdoor recreation and tourism, *nature based tourism*<sup>8</sup> (or sometimes just *nature tourism*) also lacks a universal definition (Fredman et al 2008; Lundmark 2009). And like outdoor recreation and tourism, the border between outdoor recreation and nature tourism is almost none existent (Svenskt Friluftsliv 2008). Nature tourism is usually understood as travelling to a destination, where tourism activities in the form of nature experiences are the central motivation and where visits to some kind of natural environment are the basis for different activities (Agardy 1993; Bell et al 2007; Forsberg 2009; Lundmark 2009). As such,

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<sup>7</sup> UNWTO’s definition is generally accepted as the main, worldwide definition of ‘tourism’, although small variations of the definition do exist in other relations and among other stakeholders

<sup>8</sup> Nature based tourism, as defined here, includes other key concepts such as green tourism, wildlife tourism, adventure tourism and rural tourism, as they all relate to nature based activities and experiences (Agardy 1993; Tourism Western Australia 2006)

outdoor recreation activities can easily be seen as nature tourism activities and vice versa with no particular difference other than the fact that nature tourism (again) can be seen as a way to commercialise and organise outdoor recreation (Lundmark 2009). Also, the time scale is again a factor of difference between outdoor recreation and nature based tourism, as outdoor recreation activities are usually performed on a shorter time scale than nature based tourism activities, where longer travel often is involved.

Outdoor recreation and eco-tourism. *Eco-tourism* (or *responsible tourism*) is sometimes, and rightly also, considered part of nature based tourism in general, as the activities involved in eco-tourism also have travel to and experiences of nature as a central theme (Agardy 1993; Tourism Western Australia 2006, Bell et al 2007). However, there is one unique feature about eco-tourism which makes it possible to distinguish from nature based tourism: the emphasis of a sustainable and ethical dimension in the tourist activities. Eco-tourists are committed to learn, understand and preserve natural areas, mostly by practising and emphasising ecologically and culturally sustainable tourism activities, including interest and participation in local nature projects and local communities (Agardy 1993; Tourism Western Australia 2006; Bell et al 2007; Garpe 2008; [www.ecotourism.org.au](http://www.ecotourism.org.au)). As a result, ecotourism differs from regular nature-based tourism and outdoor recreation activities in the way that eco-tourism is a more specialised nature-based/recreational activity.<sup>9</sup>

Outdoor recreation and sports activities. The difference between outdoor recreation activities and sports activities is easier to describe, although it can still be difficult to separate the two categories. Just think of activities such as sailing, skiing and surfing. Are they sports activities or recreational activities? Or both at the same time? However, there is one big difference between them: the inclusion of the competition element in sports activities. As mentioned in the above definition of outdoor recreation, an important aspect is that the involvement of competition usually is not part of outdoor recreation activities. In sports activities, however, the whole competition aspect is essential for the activities and thus they differ from outdoor recreation activities (Fredman et al 2008). The borders, however, still remain rather blurry, especially as sports activities of course can be performed without the element of competition.

To sum up, the outdoor recreation category is not an easy category to determine or define. Other categories such as *tourism*, *nature based tourism*, *ecotourism* and *sports activities* all share similarities with outdoor recreation. It is therefore of no surprise that the categories are often confused and mixed (and even misused) by different organisations and professional people as well as researchers. In the end, the only thing that can determine what category is the correct category to use is to relate the category back to the original research question and context, and make sure to define the differences between the categories from the onset of the research process.

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<sup>9</sup> Of course, nature-based tourism and outdoor recreation can also be sustainable activities, but the difference is that the sustainability dimension is usually not the main focus of nature-based or normal recreational activities.

## Why are studies on outdoor recreation important?

After these clarifications, we move on to take a closer look at what studies on outdoor recreation are contributing with. Because why are these studies on outdoor recreation important? To answer this question, it might be useful to look at three different impacts of outdoor recreation: 1) *the social impact*, 2) *the economic impact* and 3) *the environmental impact*. The *social impact* can best be described as the social benefits that are associated with outdoor recreation and which are often related to the economic impact of outdoor recreation (see below). Nowadays people spend much of their lives between family and work, and although leisure time has increased among the general population compared to just 50 years ago, people are still caught up in busy routine lives with little time left for leisure activities. Therefore, outdoor recreation is a means to step away from the presence of a routine life and instead spend time on supporting social bonds as well as individual well-being (Driver et al 1991; O'Sullivan 2001; California State Parks 2005; Garpe 2008; Svenskt Friluftsliv 2008; Aukerman et al 2009). Thus, outdoor recreation it is a matter of *life quality*: by performing outdoor recreation activities one's life quality is simply raised (Driver et al 1991; Frances 2006; Bell et al 2007; Svenskt Friluftsliv 2008; Aukerman et al 2009).

The *economic impact* can best be described as positive and negative economic effects associated with outdoor recreation. The positive effects are usually seen in two ways: 1) the benefits of the consumer and 2) the benefits of a healthy society. The benefits of the consumer refers to those financial benefits outdoor recreation activities often yield, when people spend money on for instance accommodation, food, fees etc. This is a direct link to the benefits of tourism where the consumer, as mentioned above, is an important aspect (Driver et al 1991; Garpe 2008; Marwijk 2009). The benefits of the of a healthy society, on the hand, refers to the fact that a population with access to, and who regularly engage in, outdoor recreation activities has lower health costs than a population with little or no tradition for performing outdoor recreation activities (Driver et al 1991; Siegenthaler 1997; California State Parks 2005; Bell et al 2007; Garpe 2008; Svenskt Friluftsliv 2008; Church 2011). Or simply put: when people are healthy and their life quality is secured, they are less prone to illness and depression etc. and thus also more valuable to the work force and society (Sandell 2009; Svenskt Friluftsliv 2007; Svenskt Friluftsliv 2008; Svenskt Friluftsliv 2012). Finally, the negative effect is mostly related to the environmental impacts of outdoor recreation, and the economic costs related to this, especially in connection with loss of biodiversity and wear and damage on our natural surroundings.

Last, but not least, the *environmental impact* can best be described as those positive and negative impacts outdoor recreation activities carry with them when performed in natural surroundings, and is therefore closely related to the economic impact as seen above. The positive impact on the environment is usually associated to those benefits that the presence of outdoor recreation activities potentially entails. By this is understood that if outdoor recreation activities are performed in respect of the natural world, outdoor recreation activities can be a great asset to the conservation of nature

(Svenskt Friluftsliv 2008).<sup>10</sup> Through activities in natural surroundings, and by learning more about the different parts in our complex biophysical world, people can learn to understand and thereby also better protect our green world (Garpe 2008; Aukerman et al 2009; Marwijk 2009). Thus outdoor recreation activities, if planned and organised right, can be pro-active for a better natural world. The negative impacts, however, are usually the ones discussed in *recreational ecology*, because it relates to the negative effect of tourism or recreational activities on nature (Driver et al 1991; Marwijk 2009). Badly planned tourism and recreational activities in a natural area (and especially in a protected area) can be a very destructive force, especially if management procedures and measurements are not taken at an early stage of the planning process. Human impact on the environment in the shape of tourism and recreational activities (e.g. wear, use, erosion etc.) are well known and well documented.<sup>11</sup>

To sum up, studying outdoor recreation, and especially the impacts of outdoor recreation activities and their *positive and negative effects*, is a good way to learn more about the link between different social, cultural aspects and environmental aspects of our society. At the same time it is also important to emphasise that outdoor recreation as a research field is shared by many professional disciplines (as mentioned earlier) and therefore also an *ever-ongoing discussion* (or a dynamic research field, if you like), that will always change and expand according to ongoing and new trends and developments in society and in nature. That is also why research on outdoor recreation is essential, as there is an urgent need to keep track of these trends and developments in the coming years, and especially to ensure new data in order to discuss problems and challenges associated with outdoor recreation activities. In this aspect, monitoring of outdoor recreation, and further case studies of different outdoor recreation scenarios, are vital elements to know more about how to better plan for and manage outdoor recreation in the future - especially in connection with environmental management and spatial planning in coastal and marine areas, where fragile ecosystems and human use of the land- and seascape often create conflictual situations. In this aspect, and as we will see next, official legislation and the local authorities are important and often have a role to play, as they not only set up goals for outdoor recreation on a national, regional and local level, but because they also define how outdoor recreation should be planned and managed.

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<sup>10</sup> As seen above, nature-based tourism, and especially ecotourism, are two good examples of how outdoor recreation activities in the form of tourism activities can have a positive effect on the environment as both categories usually imply and promote a sustainable view on nature

<sup>11</sup> See for instance Cole 1983; Magill 1989; Bell et al 2007; Pröbstl et al 2010; Rettie 2012

## Official legislation and the local authorities<sup>12</sup>

The importance of outdoor recreation and tourism in coastal and marine areas has long been recognized and problematized (Hall 2001). Not only among the ‘usual suspects’, i.e. green NGO’s<sup>13</sup> concerned with the sustainability of fragile coastal environments around the world, but also on a bigger political level, such as in the UN, OECD and IUCN (Bruckmeier 1998a-c). The role of coastal ecosystems and coastal resources has been a heated topic ever since the discussion about biodiversity started to gain terrain in the 1970s and 1980s. However, during the recent years, tourism impacts on coastal and marine areas have gained an almost renewed attention, i.e. in *recreational ecology*, which is a research discipline that often focuses on the topic (also, see above). In this discussion, the main focus has been set on the fact that coastal zones are under great stress and influence from human use and presence (Bruckmeier 1998c), while the political agenda often has been to look further into how biodiversity management and natural resource use best can be managed in a sustainable way and often within a *human ecology* framework.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, sustainable management of coastal and marine areas requires not only knowledge and facts from the ‘hard sciences’ (nature sciences), but also knowledge about structures and ideas from the human-social world, especially related to political decision-making about, and economic evaluation of, coastal resources. For this reason, an interdisciplinary strategy is often needed, as it can confirm how the natural world and the human-social world are interlinked, including coastal and marine areas (Bruckmeier 1998a-c). For instance, new legislation related to marine and coastal management have important impacts on the future outlook of coastal and marine areas, especially when the question is how to best manage, protect and use coastal and marine landscapes and resources. That task is not an easy task and involves different stakeholders at different national, regional and local levels (Morf 2006 & 2011). As such, even global political discussions and regulations about how to manage and plan for a sustainable coast- and maritime life (including the effects of recreation and tourism) can be quite influential, as they are also affecting policymaking on a Swedish national level through interregional agreements and programs involving different countries.<sup>15</sup>

But to take a step down and look at the Swedish national level, what does official Swedish legislation and various local authorities actually say about outdoor recreation in Sweden, especially in relation to goals set for the development of outdoor recreation in coastal/marine areas? To answer these

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<sup>12</sup> In this section I have chosen to only focus on the political organs and legislation documents where outdoor recreation in coastal areas is specifically mentioned, or documents that have great influence on outdoor recreation in coastal areas. For a more comprehensive overview of the different international, national, regional and local levels of legislation and policymaking with effect on Swedish coastal and marine areas, see Ankre 2007; Morf 2006; Morf 2011

<sup>13</sup> For instance Greenpeace, NOAH and WWF

<sup>14</sup> For instance through the *Integrated Coastal Management* (ICM) strategy or the expanded version: the *Integrated Coastal Zone Management* (ICZM) strategy. For more information on ICM and ICZM, see Bruckmeier 1998a-c

<sup>15</sup> For instance *OSPAR* for the North Sea, various *INTERREG* projects among the Nordic countries, the above mentioned *ICZM* recommendations and the international *Habitat* directive. All programs and agreements include policies, directives and recommendations with effect on coastal and marine management and planning, also in the case of the West Coast of Sweden, where Kosterhavet National Park is located (Morf 2011)

questions, one central governmental agency<sup>16</sup>, one regional and two local authorities<sup>17</sup> as well as key documents will be examined, including some of the most recent, and therefore also valid, official documents with influence on the development of outdoor recreation in coastal/marine areas. But first a little background on the recent political prioritisation of outdoor recreation in Sweden.

Like the situation on the international scene, outdoor recreation has been on the political agenda in Sweden for many years. However, it is only in recent years that there has been a gradual shift towards directly including and involving goals for outdoor recreation in different key political and environmental policies (Emmelin et al 2005; Ankre 2007, Svenskt Friluftsliv 2008; Emmelin et al 2010). Before then, topics like *nature conservation*, *biodiversity* and *sustainable development* had a tendency to dominate the political discussions, especially during the 1980s and 1990s, where they placed high on the political agenda above the topics of outdoor recreation and tourism (Emmelin et al 2005; Svenskt Friluftsliv 2008; Emmelin et al 2010). But as Emmelin et al (2010) point out, new political attention has been given to outdoor recreation in Sweden since the early 2000s, especially because of the consequences of 1) an ever-growing tourism industry and 2) a higher demand for recreational activities among the population.<sup>18</sup> This has gradually led to a situation where outdoor recreation as a central area of interest is ‘competing’ with other areas of national importance and prioritisation, such as environmental protection and conservation, biodiversity and climate change. As it is now, the Swedish Government and the central authorities<sup>19</sup> have thus recognized the importance of including outdoor recreation in the national politics, especially in relation to, and in collaboration with, politics on environmental protection in Sweden. This is particularly also visible in the governmental proposition on outdoor recreation from 2010, which frames much of the current policy on outdoor recreation in Sweden today (Regeringen 2010b).

Another good way to see this gradual shift is in an written announcement from 2003, in which the Swedish government decided to direct financial support to Swedish outdoor recreation organisations (Regeringen 2003; Regeringen 2010a), first administrated and managed by *Naturvårdsverket* and later by *Svenskt Friluftsliv* (see note 16). Another way to see the shift is to simply visit *Naturvårdsverkets* webpage, where outdoor recreation is clearly prioritized as an independent category next to themes

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<sup>16</sup> In this case, I will only focus on *Naturvårdsverket* (The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency – SEPA), as the agency is managing the national legislation on outdoor recreation next to priority areas such as nature conservation, climate etc. Another important governmental agency would also be *Boverket* (The Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning), who is the main authority on spatial planning and development in Sweden. However, as *Boverket* tends to follow much of *Naturvårdsverket*’s policy on outdoor recreation, and therefore also supports the general governmental view on outdoor recreation (Regeringen 2010b), *Boverket* will not be given more attention in this paper. For more on *Boverket*’s view on outdoor recreation, visit [www.boverket.se/Vagledning/PBL-kunskapsbanken/Teman1/Nationella-mal/Natur--miljo/Friluftsliv](http://www.boverket.se/Vagledning/PBL-kunskapsbanken/Teman1/Nationella-mal/Natur--miljo/Friluftsliv). It is, however, important to mention that the task of distributing the funds for outdoor recreation in Sweden is no longer managed by *Naturvårdsverket*, but is instead allocated the organization *Svenskt Friluftsliv*, which is an umbrella organization for many of the bigger outdoor organizations in Sweden (Svenskt Friluftsliv 2012)

<sup>17</sup> In this case the local *County Administrative Board* (Västra Götalands Län) and the two *local municipalities* (Strömstad Kommun and Tanum Kommun) are central to the PHD project, as they are the regional and local authorities working and cooperating with Kosterhavet National Park

<sup>18</sup> For a more in-depth overview of how outdoor recreation has been prioritized politically in Sweden during the recent years, see Svenskt Friluftsliv 2008 (p. 36) and Emmelin et al 2010

<sup>19</sup> Such as *Naturvårdsverket* and *Boverket*

such as environmental protection and conservation, pollution, climate change etc.<sup>20</sup> Going back to 1999, *Naturvårdsverket* was also behind an important and land marking report titled 'Sektorsmål för friluftsliv och naturturism'.<sup>21</sup> In the report outdoor recreation is clearly given an important and independent role alongside more commonly known themes such as environmental protection and conservation in Sweden (*Naturvårdsverket* 1999). Focus in the report is set on the future arrangement and development of both outdoor recreation and nature based tourism in Sweden with an emphasis on how to manage both categories in a sustainable way. Although the goal descriptions in the report are somewhat general in their outline, they still demonstrate the governmental support of outdoor recreation as an independent category not just connected to, or part of, either tourism related- or environmental policymaking.

Today *Naturvårdsverket* (together with *Svenskt Friluftsliv* - see again note 16) is heavily involved in the policy making for outdoor recreation in Sweden. By linking environmental planning and conservation with outdoor recreation and sustainable- and nature based tourism, *Naturvårdsverket* has managed to establish a strong connection between conservation, recreation and tourism in all Swedish landscape planning. At the same time, *Naturvårdsverket* also acts as an important communicator, or link, between the government and the regional and local authorities (i.e. the local municipalities and counties), who as the last political segments in the chain of authority are responsible for implementing the national goals and strategies on outdoor recreation, tourism and the environment put out by *Naturvårdsverket*. As a result, *Naturvårdsverket* has a strong influence on what is decided about the future planning of outdoor recreation in Sweden.

To pin point *Naturvårdsverket* in the right direction, two important 'guidelines' exist and will be highlighted here. One is the *Environmental Code*<sup>22</sup> from 1999 and the other one is the officially formulated *Areas of National Interests*,<sup>23</sup> pointed out by the Swedish Government. The *Environmental Code* is a legislative document containing environmental law policy and regulations in Sweden, and works on a national level to be used by, as well as guide, *Naturvårdsverket* and the local municipalities and counties in their environmental work (Ankre 2007). In the *Environmental Code*, outdoor recreation is mentioned in chapter 3-§6 alongside environmental protection as two important features in the enactment of Swedish environmental law (MB 1998, chapter 3-§6). Both land and marine areas of particular interest for nature conservation, cultural conservation and outdoor recreation are to be protected according to the *Code*, thus again emphasizing the close relationship between environmental protection and outdoor recreation (MB 1998; *Naturvårdsverket* 2006). Swedish coastal areas are also mentioned in the *Code* to be of high importance, both for environmental as well as for recreational purposes, and in chapter 4-§2 the coastal areas and archipelagos in *Bohuslän* are in fact mentioned and underlined as priority areas (MB 1998, chapter 4-§2). This is an interesting detail, especially since it is not all Swedish protected areas that are mentioned in the *Code* and therefore underlines the importance of the coastal and marine areas in *Bohuslän*.

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<sup>20</sup> [www.naturvardsverket.se](http://www.naturvardsverket.se)

<sup>21</sup> Translation: *Sector goals for outdoor recreation and nature tourism*

<sup>22</sup> Translated: *Miljöbalken (MB)*

<sup>23</sup> Translated: *Riksinresser*. Together with the *Environmental Code*, the *Areas of National Interests* are meant to guide *Naturvårdsverket* and *Boverket* and the regional and local authorities in their work with spatial planning, local development, environmental protection, outdoor recreation and tourism development

Moving on, areas of interest for environmental protection and for development of outdoor recreation and tourism are also the main purpose behind the *Areas of National Interests*.<sup>24</sup> For example, in *Naturvårdsverket's* handbook on the *Areas of National Interests* from 2005, areas of national interest for outdoor recreation (which often coincide with areas of national interest for environmental protection) are key areas in attracting both domestic and international visitors (Naturvårdsverket 2005; Naturvårdsverket 2006). According to the document, the value of the qualities associated with the appointed interest areas cannot be underestimated, especially because these qualities provide good settings and opportunities for nature and the human/social world to interact and benefit from each other. In this aspect, an important part of the planning process of these areas is to provide easy access to the areas, while at the same time protect them against any negative impact (especially impacts from human resource use). Noticeable in the handbook is therefore also the importance of protecting big interconnected nature areas, including the natural and social/cultural values associated with *marine- and coastal areas* (Naturvårdsverket 2005). By creating good settings for protection of the natural landscape as well as good opportunities for positive recreational experiences in coastal and marine areas, the negative impacts are lessened (or at least, expected to lessen). Thus the *Areas of National Interests* is a very useful planning tool that guides and emphasizes future planning options of the Swedish landscape, including coastal and marine areas.

However, to avoid negative impacts completely is not possible. Hazardous factors and impacts on the environment therefore have to be detected and monitored in order not to create hindrances for a rich nature and outdoor life in Sweden. According to the Swedish government (Regeringen 2010b) that means that occurrences like pollution (e.g. oil spills or discharging of various toxics) and other disturbances from humans (e.g. noise, crowding, over-exploitation) have to be either controlled or stopped entirely, especially in protected coastal and marine areas, where even small disturbances can cause severe damage to fragile coastal and marine environments. The goal is therefore to maintain a balance between 1) a healthy environment and 2) use of the coast and the sea. This entails detailed planning on resource use- and management (Regeringen 2010b), and includes - among other things - the enforcement of the Swedish shoreline protection<sup>25</sup> as well as the integration of biodiversity goals with goals on outdoor recreation and tourism. Thus, it is vital that production, recreation and other exploitation of the coast and the sea is done in a balanced way.

Put differently, the important thing therefore is to make sure that outdoor recreation and tourism activities in coastal and marine areas are carried out in a sustainable way to avoid negative impacts not only on the environment, but also on the local area and population. This is also one of the key messages in *Naturvårdsverket's Värna – Vårda – Visa*<sup>26</sup> report from 2011 (Naturvårdsverket 2011), where the sustainable aspect is emphasized as an implicit part of all current and future conservation and recreation planning in Sweden. This includes monitoring and gathering of information about visitors, a task which is emphasized as an important tool in management strategies (especially in

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<sup>24</sup> The *Areas of National Interests* are stated in the *Environmental Code* in Chap. 3 & 4 and *Boverket* - in collaboration with *Naturvårdsverket* - has the responsibility to implement them through the local and regional authorities ([www.boverket.se/Planera/Nationell-planering/Riksintressen](http://www.boverket.se/Planera/Nationell-planering/Riksintressen)).

<sup>25</sup> In Swedish: *Strandskydd*

<sup>26</sup> Translation: *Uphold – Protect – Show*. The recommendations in *Värna – Vårda – Visa* apply to all protected areas in Sweden, including Kosterhavet National Park



protected areas) in order to gain knowledge about people's preferences and motives for visiting a given area, but also to plan for better conditions for visitors in consistence with the often vary fragile natural settings. Additionally, another important message is the need to employ competent managers and planners in protected areas, i.e. professionals with skills and knowledge about how to plan and manage both outdoor recreation and environmental protection in the same area. Thus monitoring procedures and the establishment of a continuous updated knowledge base about the area, and the visitors in the area, can help and contribute in the planning process (Naturvårdsverket 2011), which is also an important part of *adaptive management*,<sup>27</sup> which is an often adopted and preferred management strategy in many Swedish protected areas.

To further guide the future development of and work with outdoor recreation in Sweden, there is a need to have clear cut goals to show the right direction. This is also the conclusion drawn in the latest official contribution from Naturvårdsverket to the discussion on the future scenario of outdoor recreation in Sweden, which includes a listing of 10 focus points, or goals, for the future policy of outdoor recreation (Naturvårdsverket 2012). Inspired by the aforementioned governmental proposition on the future of outdoor recreation on Sweden from 2010 (Regeringen 2010b), Naturvårdsverket lists the following future goals for outdoor recreation in Sweden:<sup>28</sup>

1. *Accessible nature*
2. *Strong commitment and cooperation*
3. *Allemansrätten forms the basis of outdoor recreation*
4. *Access to nature for outdoor recreation*
5. *Attractive natural areas close to urban centres*
6. *Sustainable regional growth*
7. *Protected areas as a resource for outdoor recreation*
8. *Valuable outdoor recreation at school*
9. *Outdoor recreation for the good health of the people*
10. *Good knowledge of outdoor recreation*

All 10 goals of course have relevance for the development of outdoor recreation in both inland and coastal/marine areas in Sweden. But looking specifically at Kosterhavet National Park, all goals can be seen as the foundational principles behind the establishment of the Park (as well as other protected areas in Sweden), emphasizing the close relationship between recreational activities and the natural settings where they take place. Thus, the document is a valuable indicator of and guideline to current and future outdoor recreation planning/management, while it - at the same time - underlines the importance of bridging outdoor recreation with protected nature areas.

The above mentioned goals are also important in how the regional and local authorities<sup>29</sup> connected with Kosterhavet national Park view outdoor recreation in their region. In this aspect, however, not much new can be said, as the local county and municipalities follow the officially appointed national goals for outdoor recreation as well as the current policies and above mentioned goals on outdoor recreation pointed out by Naturvårdsverket. For instance, Västra Götalands Län mentions the importance of creating good conditions for a rich outdoor life and securing easy access to nature, while

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<sup>27</sup> Naturvårdsverket 2007, p. 9. For more on adaptive management strategies, see Lee 1999, and especially in relation to coastal areas, see Walters 1997

<sup>28</sup> Translated from Naturvårdsverket 2012 (p. 19)

<sup>29</sup> The local county, *Västra Götalands Län*, and the two local municipalities, *Strömstad* and *Tanum Kommun*

also emphasizing the right of public access and especially the need for areas of consideration in the archipelagos around the Koster Islands and the west coast.<sup>30</sup> Strömstad and Tanum municipalities also share the same view, while specifically stating the importance of following the *Areas of National Interests* by providing good conditions for activities like swimming, sailing, canoeing and angling in coastal and marine areas along the northwest coast of Sweden.<sup>31</sup>

To sum up, therefore, the official view on outdoor recreation has become an integral and inseparable part of environmental planning and management in Sweden, especially in connection to protected areas, where outdoor recreation activities and needs co-exist (and sometimes collide) with environmental protection. As such, it is also easy to see a clear line from policies made by the highest authorities (e.g. *Naturvårdsverket* and *Boverket*) to the enactment of the policies on a regional and local level by the municipalities and counties. As a result, the future of outdoor recreation in coastal and marine areas in Sweden is very much dependent on the current national strategy on the environment, including the *Environmental Code* and the *Areas of National Interests* as well as the overall political aim to better integrate environmental protection and resource use with better conditions for outdoor recreation in coastal and marine areas. This, then, also holds true in the case of Kosterhavet National Park, where the local authorities, with the help from the national park managers, are trying to balance goals for environmental protection and conservation with goals for outdoor recreation and tourism.

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<sup>30</sup> [www.lansstyrelsen.se/vastragotaland/Sv/djur-och-natur/friluftsliv/Pages/default.aspx?keyword=friluftsliv](http://www.lansstyrelsen.se/vastragotaland/Sv/djur-och-natur/friluftsliv/Pages/default.aspx?keyword=friluftsliv)

<sup>31</sup> [www.stromstad.se/download/18.4d6139c61330eabfdb4800015101/V%C3%A4rdebeskrivning+MB+3+kap+friluftsliv.pdf](http://www.stromstad.se/download/18.4d6139c61330eabfdb4800015101/V%C3%A4rdebeskrivning+MB+3+kap+friluftsliv.pdf) and [www.tanum.se/vanstermenykommun/kulturochfritid/turism.4.c1e4d51040921e17880002355.html](http://www.tanum.se/vanstermenykommun/kulturochfritid/turism.4.c1e4d51040921e17880002355.html)

## The public outdoor sector and major outdoor organizations

While the national, regional and local authorities are important in pointing out official goals and regulations for outdoor recreation, there are also other important stakeholders influencing the current and future scenario of outdoor recreation in Sweden, including, of course, outdoor recreation in coastal/marine areas. For some years now there has been a growing and rather active outdoor sector in Sweden, especially following the renewed focus on outdoor recreation in recent years - partly as a result of people's growing need to engage in outdoor recreation activities and partly because outdoor recreation finally has been cemented as political area of priority (as pointed out earlier). Many Swedes are either members of or in some way or another associated with different outdoor organizations and although some of them are small and powerless, put together they all have a strong influence on how outdoor life and recreation is perceived and practiced in Sweden. Going through each and every outdoor organization in Sweden is, of course, not my task here. Instead, I will only mention a few of the major and most influential outdoor recreation organizations in Sweden (i.e. the usual suspects), especially to emphasize the two intersected subjects of *shore line protection* and *the right of public access*, which are two topics that Swedish outdoor organizations advocate for quite strongly.

To better develop and secure good conditions and opportunities for outdoor recreation in Sweden is one of the main political goals stated by the Swedish government, Naturvårdsverket and the local authorities (as mentioned above). However, the same goal is also valid for all the outdoor organizations in Sweden, including the support of sustainable ways to create good settings for recreational activities involving both environmental protection and local communities. This point is made very explicit by the previously mentioned organization *Svenskt Friluftsliv* (see note 16), who considers themselves a spokesman organization for outdoor recreation opportunities in Sweden. This entails being the facilitator of a dialogue between the Swedish government and *Svenskt Friluftsliv's* member organizations, while making sure that good conditions and development of outdoor recreation in Sweden is secured (Svenskt Friluftsliv 2008). Another task is to secure and distribute governmental funding to the member organizations and to raise the overall status of outdoor recreation among the Swedish people. This includes advising local, regional and national authorities in outdoor related matters; especially questions connected to problems with the *right of public access*, which *Svenskt Friluftsliv* consider a fundamental aspect of outdoor recreation in Sweden (Svenskt Friluftsliv 2011).

Nowhere else is this more visible than in the debate about *shore line protection*, which *Svenskt Friluftsliv* has put forward as one of their key topics, placing themselves as a defender of future free access to all coastal areas in Sweden. This in turn also means that public access in the form of outdoor recreation in coastal and marine areas is viewed as a public good and a fundamental right by *Svenskt Friluftsliv*, to be secured by *the Environmental Code*, and should not be hindered by the authorities or private landowners (Svenskt Friluftsliv 2008). More specifically related to coastal and marine areas, *Svenskt Friluftsliv* states that: 'coastal areas and archipelagos should aim for high biodiversity, a world of experiences and a rich natural and cultural world, while at the same time also protecting the conditions for outdoor recreation' (Translated. Svenskt Friluftsliv 2008). It is a statement that again emphasizes the value and importance of coastal and marine settings to outdoor recreation.

The same message about the *right of public access* and the *shore line protection* is also supported by *Friluftsförbundet*<sup>32</sup> and *Naturskyddsföreningen*<sup>33</sup> respectively. *Friluftsförbundet*, for instance, emphasizes that the *shore line protection* has to be kept and maintained by the authorities, and not compromised by giving unnecessary dispensations to private landowners (Friluftsförbundet 2009). The most important thing is to create and secure opportunities for good outdoor experiences. And that means that rules associated with outdoor recreation, as a fundamental community interest, should be protected and be integrated in policies on both a local, regional and national level, including *the right of public access* (Friluftsförbundet 2012).

*Naturskyddsföreningen* takes this statement one step further by claiming that if dispensations and limitations in the shore line protection are accepted, it will result in an undermining of the *right of public access* and therefore make one of the key foundations and factors behind outdoor recreation in Sweden invalid (Naturskyddsföreningen 2008; Naturskyddsföreningen 2009). This is also the main message in a co-written report from 2008, where also the current legislation on *shore line protection* is criticized for not being followed by private landowners, thus clearly showing how the local authorities have failed to guard one of basic rights of the public (Naturskyddsföreningen et al 2008). As such, the conclusion in the report is very clear: enforce the *shore line protection* more effectively, both in order to secure goals for biodiversity, but also to create better opportunities for outdoor activities (with the *right of public access* as the foundation for further development).

Important outdoor organizations in Sweden with some degree of influence on coastal and marine areas also include *Svenska Turistföreningen*, which is the one of the largest accommodation providers in Sweden, as well as more water-activity based organizations such as *Svenska Båtunionen*, *Svenska Kanotförbundet*, *Svenska Kryssarklubben* and *Sportfiskarna*.<sup>34</sup> Although their manifests and activities are very different, they all share the coast and the sea as their common ground of interaction, or in the case of *Svenska Turistföreningen*, uses the coast and sea from a sales- and consumer point of view. However, after a bit of research, they are mainly providing information and services, and thus do not have clearly formulated views on outdoor recreation as such, or, if they have, they formulate their view along the same lines as *Svenskt Friluftsliv*, *Friluftsförbundet* and *Naturskyddsföreningen*.

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<sup>32</sup> *Friluftsförbundet* is a member organization in *Svenskt Friluftsliv*, and is an organization which also maintain a focus on creating good conditions for an active outdoor life in Sweden ([www.friluftsframjandet.se](http://www.friluftsframjandet.se))

<sup>33</sup> *Naturskyddsföreningen* is not a member organization in *Svenskt Friluftsliv*. However, the organization has nature protection as their main focus and their work includes providing information on nature related topics as well as participation in political and public debates, including matters concerning outdoor recreation in Sweden ([www.naturskyddsforeningen.se](http://www.naturskyddsforeningen.se))

<sup>34</sup> All five organisations are member organisations in *Svenskt Friluftsliv*

## Academic views on outdoor recreation in coastal and marine areas

Moving on from the Swedish outdoor organizations and the public outdoor sector to investigate what science has contributed with to the field of outdoor recreation in Swedish coastal/marine areas is a bit of a larger task.<sup>35</sup> This is not only due to a recent upswing and growing popularity of research on outdoor recreation (Emmelin et al 2005; Emmelin et al 2010), but also because studies on outdoor recreation, i.e. more knowledge of outdoor recreation, increasingly is needed to accompany the above mentioned national goals on outdoor recreation and the recent political prioritization of outdoor recreation (Svenskt Friluftsliv 2008). In this aspect, science and knowledge from the Swedish universities play a key role, especially because science has the ability to both guide, and provide content for, the national political agenda on the future of outdoor recreation in Sweden. Nowhere else is this more visible than in a recent research program titled *Outdoor Recreation in Change*<sup>36</sup>, which is supported by *Naturvårdsverket* and involves about 15 researchers from seven different research institutes around Sweden. Their goal is to be ‘an interdisciplinary, national research program for the study of outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism in Sweden’ with an aim ‘to present a broad picture of the dynamics of outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism in Sweden’.<sup>37</sup> The research program has already resulted in numerous publications on trends and developments in outdoor recreation and has managed to create strong ties between science and the political agenda.

The most important job for science in the study of outdoor recreation as a phenomenon has been to not only secure outdoor recreation as a political area of prioritization, but also to establish outdoor recreation as an evolving and highly dynamic research discipline within the universities (Svenskt Friluftsliv 2008). Shifting political prioritization of outdoor recreation in Sweden, followed by new recreational trends, have led to new and different views on outdoor recreation, thus giving outdoor recreation new dimensions. As a result, outdoor recreation has become a very active and dynamic concept and research discipline, which science has made it its fine job to document and discuss with knowledge derived from different case scenarios and from different geographical locations.<sup>38</sup> Themes and topics in these research contributions typically cover questions such as what recreational activities people engage in (popular activities), where they do it (geographical distribution) and what they gain from it (experiences).<sup>39</sup> Looking more closely at outdoor recreation in coastal/marine areas, however, one dominating area of discussion in the recent research debates on outdoor recreation has been the topic of the *right of public access* (as mentioned above). This is a debate that is not only very visible in local and regional policymaking, but is also a very active research discussion glued to any study on

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<sup>35</sup> For a large and more general work on outdoor recreation in Sweden, see Emmelin et al (2010)

<sup>36</sup> Translated: *Friluftsliv i förändring*

<sup>37</sup> [www.friluftsforskning.se](http://www.friluftsforskning.se)

<sup>38</sup> For example, looking at outdoor recreation from a broader angle, and beyond outdoor life in coastal/marine areas, one will quickly notice that focus in much of the Swedish research has often been to analyse and critically discuss the concept of outdoor recreation itself, often combined with case studies and research results from destination areas with very different social and environmental contexts (for instance forest-, mountain-, and coastal areas as well as urban areas).

<sup>39</sup> The studies are usually supported with data and results from monitoring studies, where outdoor recreation trends and patterns are put into numbers and statistics, and discussed in order to improve management and planning in nature areas. For monitoring studies of outdoor recreation, see for example Vuorio 2000; Fredman & Hansson 2003; Fredman et al 2005

outdoor recreation in Sweden in general, especially in relation to the heated debate between private landowners and the *shore line protection* (Ankre 2007).

Other typical topics circulating outdoor recreation as a research discipline include *conflicts* and *challenges* associated with recreational activities in coastal and marine areas (such as conflicts between different user groups or human impact on the environment) or management challenges (especially in regards to how a destination area is best planned). Especially conflicts between locals, second home users and daily visitors have been studied quite thoroughly, and there are Swedish case studies from different coastal areas. For instance, Segrell (1995) points out that the Swedish coasts have always attracted a lot of different users, but that recent years have seen a growth of conflicting interests in coastal areas, especially between outsiders (visitors) and locals (permanent population). Conflicts often stem from different user interests and about different opinions on how the coasts and marine areas are to be utilized or not utilized (i.e. the *right of public access* and the *shoreline protection*). In order to investigate this, Segrell (1995) takes a step back and looks at the environmental, social and economical role of the Swedish coasts from a historical point of view, and what value these areas have nowadays for both locals, visitors as well as authorities and industries. In this aspect, Segrell (1995) states that the coasts are important as vocational and recreational areas to a growing urban population, who wants to utilize the coast side by side with the local population and industries. This, of course, creates conflicts between the users of the coastal and marine areas, which Segrell maps out, including a discussion of what the driving forces and powers behind a growing interest in the Swedish coasts exactly are, and how it is possible to avoid that these driving forces end up in conflictual situations.

Conflicts between different users in coastal areas are also one of the main topics in Müller's dissertation from 1999 about German second home users in the Swedish countryside. In his dissertation Müller (1999) points out that there is a tendency for *local people* and *second home users* to get along better, at least compared to *second home users/locals* versus *short-time visitors*. Second home users often spend a lot of time in their second home and therefore also treat their second home destination exactly as such: a second home. Just like the local population, they are therefore also very protective and sensitive against any intrusion and disturbances, especially caused by short-time visitors (Müller 1999). Like Segrell, Müller also recognises the importance of the coastal areas for a still growing urban population who, according to him, have an often romanticized picture of what coastal life is like and therefore travels to the coast to get an authentic experience, or feeling, of rural life as well as new opportunities for recreational activities.

It is these expectations that often collide with the local population (and second homers) and become a conflict point between those who do not want change (often the second homers who do not want their 'paradise' to be spoiled) and those who want a degree of development (mostly the locals who need development and business to survive) (Müller 1999). The conflict point, however, is not easily resolved. Especially since a growing urban population, with an often romanticized idea of life along the coast and a growing need for recreational opportunities, have difficulties relating to the reality of the local life and pace in the coastal communities. Combined with a growing and blurred seasonal population in many coastal areas, this scenario therefore makes it difficult (if not impossible) to avoid conflictual situations. The task, or challenge, therefore is how to create an area or destination where different groups, and therefore also different conceptions, are present. This would include a try to plan

and manage for a shared environment, and to make compromises between the groups (Müller 1999). In reality, of course, the way to find and strike the happy medium between the different groups is always fraught with problems and difficulties, and is most likely a conflict that will never really cease.

As pointed out above, the urban interest in coastal areas is a challenge to the local population and pace of life, since the urban *newcomers* have different interests in - and needs of - the area. Often the local population is not geared to the speed brought in by the new people and many times it involves into a clash between often modern and fast thinking urban mentalities versus old and traditional mind sets - so to speak (Nyström 1990). This is also evidenced in Nyström's (1990) doctoral dissertation, which demonstrates that many city dwellers from Stockholm between 1970 and 1985 moved out of the city and into the Stockholm archipelago, where they made their second homes into permanent addresses, both as a result of expensive house prices in the capital and because of a growing wish for many city dwellers to move back to a rural living (Nyström 1990). This new tendency quickly caused local tensions, especially since new dynamics and different living standards introduced by the urban population. The result was a complex and often heated relationship between the locals and the second home owners that is still present today (Müller et al 2010). However, some conflicts are not permanent. According to Müller et al (2010), some of the conflicts are actually gradually reduced, when second home users have been living in the areas for many years, or even generations, and thus reached a certain local status. This situation can help diminish some of the distances between locals and the second home users, although it seems that conflicts and challenges never really seem to disappear completely (as also pointed out above).

For this reason it is very important to emphasise that the coastal communities, especially in the Swedish archipelagos, are - and always will be - a mix of different social fragments and interests (Nordin 2005b). On one side of the social spectre, there is the local community with an identity formed out of the local history and surroundings and carefully developed through many generations. According to Nordin (2005b), the locals are usually involved in their traditional occupations at their own speed, although these occupations are often hard pressed and challenged by modern times and new sources of income, such as tourism. On the other side of the spectre, there are all the seasonal guests and second homers, who arrive at their own, often busy pace, and with other intentions to use the coastal areas than the local population. Following the considerations from Nordin (2005b) and Segrell (1995), visitors are more likely to see the local community as a setting for their own, often romanticised, use of the landscape, instead of a place with an already fixed identity. Thus, they often do not share the same attachment to the area as the locals. In fact, visitors and second homers often create their own identity and attach it to the place of visit, and put new significance to the destination or their second home, such as a place where peace and quiet is attained. It is when these two sets of identities, and the implications involved herein, clash that conflicts occur and create inhomogeneous areas as a result.

As mentioned above, this view is also shared by Segrell (1995), who also emphasises that conflicts of interests will always occur, because the coast and archipelagos always will remain a contested place with different meanings and identities attached (Segrell 1995). The image or picture of the Swedish coasts, and especially the Swedish archipelagos, are rooted deep in the hearts of many Swedes as a place where an old and idyllic life style can still be obtained and found intact. This is also a point put

forward by Nordin (2005a), who claims that the picture of the Swedish archipelagos is built not through the eyes of the locals, but instead by external and historical depictions generated through various media forms. Most people not living by the coast see life at the coasts and the archipelagos as something peaceful and relaxing, and as a contrast to their daily, urban life. In tourist brochures and postcards the picture is the same. The only problem is that the local people often do not see things quite like this. It is their daily life and work place that is depicted after all - a life that may not be as rosy as the tourist brochures want to present it. As a result, the visitor's perception and the local's perception of the coasts and the archipelagos are often very different, and have a tendency to surface and manifest when conflicts between locals and visitors occur.

In spite of different perceptions and potential conflicts in the coastal areas, the appeal of the coastal and marine areas in Sweden still manage to attract thousands of visitors each year. People come to spend their holidays and participate in various activities, or in case of the second home owners: to live there for a longer period of time. To find out what people do in Swedish coastal areas is one of the aims behind Ankre's study from 2005, which is a study case from the Luleå archipelago in Northern Sweden. Focus in her study is set on visitor activities in and visitor attitudes towards visiting the Luleå archipelago, and includes discussions on management planning tools and current zoning strategies in the archipelago, as well as reflections on sustainable tourism development and potential conflicts in the area (Ankre 2005). Most interestingly though, Ankre also introduces and discusses the concept and method of the *Wilderness/Purism Scale*<sup>40</sup>, which is a tool to understand different user groups in a given area by putting them into different categories based on their activities, experiences and motivation for being in the area. Through data from observations, interviews and surveys, Ankre manages to show the distribution of the visitors in the Luleå archipelago as well as the attitudes among the visitors towards the Luleå archipelago as a destination. For instance, by using the Wilderness/Purism Scale, Ankre (2005) concludes that while the majority of the visitors are *neutralists* with no specific preferences or demands to the area, small groups of *urbanists* (people preferring service, easy access, consumption etc.) and *purists* (people preferring freedom, untouched environment, minimal contact etc.) do in fact exist in Luleå archipelago. Other conclusions from Ankre's findings include that one of the main reasons for visiting the Luleå archipelago is the possibility to experience nature and the sea, while peace and quiet also attract quite a few people. Sunbathing, hiking and socialising with friends and family are also all high ranking activities (Ankre 2005).

Another important note by Ankre (2005) in the same study is the emphasis on the need for managers (and researchers) to produce visitor data and keep updated with information about visitors through means of *management plans* and *monitoring*. To apply management and point out different land use for different users (e.g. *zoning*), it is crucial that knowledge of the visitors (e.g. visitor distribution and attitudes) are used by the managers when planning the future outlay of a given area - especially to avoid potential conflicts between different user groups and user interests (Ankre 2005). A good way to do this, according to Ankre, is to compare the manager's view with the visitor's view on the future development of the archipelago, especially related to tourism development and conflict management. This point is taken further in yet another, more thematic study by Ankre and Emmelin from 2006,

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<sup>40</sup> Ankre is the first person to introduce the *Wilderness/Purism Scale* in a coastal/marine context in Sweden. For more on the *Wilderness/Purism Scale*, see Emmelin 1997; Emmelin et al 2005; Emmelin et al 2010



where focus is set on a discussion of zoning possibilities. The study area is again the Luleå archipelago, using the same data and results from the previous study. This time Ankre and Emmelin (2006) take a step back and evaluate the current zoning efforts and strategies in the area, especially related to how discontinuous landscapes, such as the Swedish archipelagos, can be effectively managed. To discuss this topic, Ankre and Emmelin introduce the concepts of Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)<sup>41</sup> and Water Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (WROS)<sup>42</sup> as two possible management approaches. By discussing local planning frameworks and current strategies in the area, Ankre and Emmelin finally conclude that the current, temporary zoning efforts are not very effective when compared with fresh data about where visitors actually are and where conflicts in the area occur. Instead, efforts around introducing elements from the ROS or WROS models in the management and planning of the archipelago could be a solution. However, Ankre and Emmelin are still critical about both models and emphasise that zoning in discontinuous landscapes - both from a general and practical point of view - indeed is a very difficult task. Without going any further with the two models, they finally conclude that there are no easy zoning solutions in areas like the Swedish archipelagos.

Yet another study by Ankre (2007), still using data from the first study, Ankre discusses visitors and zoning considerations in relation to another occurring conflict area in Swedish coastal and marine areas; namely that of *noise*. This time however, zoning and conflicts are more directly set up against the Swedish planning system, which involves everything from environmental legislation on a national and local level<sup>43</sup> to different planning paradigms. By focusing on conflicts of interests in the Luleå archipelago, Ankre (2007) discusses visitor experiences of peace and quiet set up against emotional bonds to the area. That is, what attachment people have to the Luleå archipelago and how this relates to their overall enjoyment of the place when problems with disturbances, such as noise, occur. This so-called place identity and emotional attachment to places, bring back the words from both Nordin (2005a; 2005b), Segrell (1995) and Müller (1999), who also discussed conflicts around place identity in their respective studies. As mentioned earlier, different perceptions of the coastal areas and archipelagos exist between different users, whether it is between locals, seasonal visitors or second homers. Along with these perceptions, different place identities and attachments are created among different users, which opens up for potential conflicting opinions of what is right and what is wrong in a given destination area (such as the Luleå archipelago). This is also one of Ankre's (2007) main points, who concludes her study by showing that the problem of *noise*, and the protection of *silence*, is an important matter to people in the Luleå archipelago, and that zoning can be a helpful management tool in this aspect. However, again the conclusion is that a discontinuous landscape - like the Luleå archipelago - makes zoning initiatives very difficult. The best thing managers can do is then to achieve good and updated knowledge about the visitors and locals, and include these different groups in the planning process of the area in order to create a better destination for all users (Ankre 2007).

The Luleå archipelago is not the only coastal area to be investigated in a Swedish context. Also the *Blekinge archipelago* has been a target for investigations, again performed by Ankre and Emmelin (no date) and Ankre (2009). The Blekinge archipelago is, however, a bit more special compared to the Luleå archipelago, since the Blekinge archipelago is part of the now so-called *Blekinge Biosphere*

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<sup>41</sup> See Stankey 1982; Fredman et al 2005; Emmelin et al 2005; Emmelin et al 2010

<sup>42</sup> See Aukerman 2009; Aukerman et al (2004)

<sup>43</sup> Such as the *right of public access* and the *shore line protection*

*Reserve*, pointed out by UNESCO in 2011 to be the first marine biosphere reserve in Sweden. However, at the time of the investigation by Ankre (2009), the biosphere reserve was not yet established, and therefore her study shows some interesting results from a time just before the reserve was founded. In her study, Ankre (2009) continues some of the previous debates and topics from her earlier studies in the Luleå archipelago, such as the conflict area of noise vs. silence, and zoning considerations inspired by the ROS model. This time, however, focus is mainly put on spatial planning and a discussion of biosphere zoning vs. the ROS model. This includes a discussion of goal interferences between nature conservation (the biosphere reserve) and tourism development (tourism and outdoor recreation) in relation to conflicts associated with noise. This debate Ankre builds on the so-called *conceptual framework of eco-strategies*<sup>44</sup> adapted from Sandell (2000 & 2005), where different use and perceptions of landscape is a central discussion. Also interesting is that the role of tourism and recreation is more emphasised in the Blekinge study, where Ankre (2009) moves on to lay out all the positive and negative sides of founding the biosphere reserve, while also linking local support with tourism as key factors in the process. She concludes with a remark of the role and importance of national legislation (and therefore also the authority of the local municipalities) to address the issue of noise.

Leaving Ankre and the conflicts of noise and identities bound to different coastal locations behind, another conflict area associated with Swedish coastal and marine areas is often the role of *natural resources in landscape management*. As mentioned earlier, Swedish coastal and marine areas are contested areas where many interests are present and where many key factors are involved, including political, financial, social and environmental interests of various kinds. Therefore, local management and political regulations of coastal resources (and the conflicts associated herewith) are often discussed in connection to coastal and marine areas in Sweden., and also one of the main topics discussed by Morf (2006) in her rather comprehensive, but very interesting analyse of spatial planning and management of coastal resources along the Swedish West Coast. In her study, Morf discusses local participation as a key role when political planning and management initiatives are on the agenda in coastal and marine areas and to open up this debate, Morf (2006) investigates current managerial and planning scenarios along the West Coast of Sweden. She does this by analysing and using national, regional and local resources and knowledge, as well as case study examples, to discuss how different levels of political mechanisms are affecting land and resource management on the West Coast. Morf (2006) then continues to discuss how the development of small coastal communities has formed into heated political debates about the future of these communities, because of different opinions of and interests in the coastal landscape. Thus Morf proves that although planners and politicians have tried to solve the issues through spatial planning, solutions are still far off, especially because political interests often clinch and collide with local interests, especially around the topics of conservation and development (including tourism and recreation). According to Morf (2006), it is therefore crucial to include the local voices in the beginning of any planning process to avoid insoluble conflicts.

Morf (2006) further shows that while there seems to be a co-existence or balance of interests between locals and the authorities in some coastal areas, conflicts between the two groups are often not easily solved in other areas. Especially when many stakeholders are involved, development has to be

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<sup>44</sup> See Sandell 2000; Sandell 2005; Emmelin et al 2010

carefully planned in order to gain political and, not least, local support. As a positive example of collaboration between locals and authorities Morf (2006) emphasises the islands of Koster in Kosterhavet National Park. Although conflictual opinions exist between the local community on Koster and the local authorities, traditions for problem solving are good, because of an early inclusion of the local community in the discussions of land management on the islands. This was also the case in the process of creating Kosterhavet National Park, where a joined local and political support was (and still is) very visible. For instance, during the project, the local people and organisations accounted for local interests and were representative for the delicate social and environmental conditions on and around the Koster Islands. As a contrast, however, a very recent study shows that the national park status has resulted in a few new negative attitudes among the locals towards further building Kosterhavet National Park as a destination (Byström 2012). The problem seems to be lack of participation and ownership of the project, thus reinforcing again the fact that coastal areas (like the Koster islands) are always going to be contested areas, vulnerable to different conflictual situations.

Looking more closely at the case of Kosterhavet National Park and the topics of outdoor recreation and tourism, the two topics still remain problematic areas of discussion. Recreation and tourism are not mentioned much in any of Morf's study, but they are more areas of conflict among other conflicting topics central to the Koster Islands. However, one interesting finding is that tourism and recreational impact on the local environment seems not to be studied in depth on Koster or in the surrounding areas (Morf 2006, p. 239 & 243). Also important is that conflicts and competition between permanent and seasonal residents are mentioned to be a conflict point, especially in connection to Norwegian investors, who own much of the land on Koster and around Strömstad, and who are very protective about their land and their rights. Other conflict areas mentioned by Morf are 1) disturbances from motorized watercrafts (noise, pollution, ecological degradation), 2) a debate around recreational/tourism landscape vs. local cultural/historical landscape, 3) the fact that many locals feel that they are a minority among the summer guests (crowding) and 4) that recreation purposes compete with local fishing (leisure boats take away space in the small harbours). The overall theme related to recreation and tourism activities, however, seems to be connected to a more general discussion of conservation vs. exploitation of the landscape, and how some locals are in support of changes on a small scale (development), while many seasonal guests prefer a status-quo situation (no development). This was also pointed out by Müller (1999) above. The future challenge for the Koster Islands (and the new national park) Morf therefore sums up to be: 'sustainability of all the new activities and to develop local enterprises, while taking into account that the natural resources of the archipelago for primary production and tourism are limited' (Morf 2006, p. 248).

To sum up, different conflict scenarios seem to be one of the main topics in the literature about the Swedish coastal and marine areas. And not only connected to different perceptions of and identities attached to coastal destinations, but also in regards to the interplay between planning, development and local participation. This especially also goes for planning of outdoor recreation and tourism in *protected* coastal areas, where there seems to be a general lack of knowledge about the mechanism involved in planning *outdoor recreation* and *nature conservation* in the same area. For instance, Stenseke (2010) tries to uncover the role of outdoor recreation in the planning process of Kosterhavet National Park, but has to conclude that the fundamental knowledge of outdoor recreation and tourism in the park area was insufficient during the process. Stenseke then goes on to demonstrate that while

the biophysical conditions in the area are well documented, the same systematic data on outdoor recreation is not available. In fact, while the biophysical competences were plenty, experts on outdoor recreation were missing altogether in the planning process (Stenseke 2010). Without this knowledge and competence, it can be very hard to understand the mechanisms between conservation and recreational activities, and plan for a better destinations scenario (including how to stop conflictual situations before they arise). To better integrate outdoor recreation in conservation planning, and to have an overall strategy for outdoor recreation, is therefore the last advice put forward by Stenseke.

## Reflections and conclusion

Apart from the studies from Luleå, Stockholm, Blekinge and now also Kosterhavet National Park, there are not many other studies focusing on outdoor recreation in Swedish coastal and marine areas. Consequently, this asks the question as to why outdoor recreation and tourism in coastal and marine areas, and the planning of these two activities, are not much researched, especially seen in relation to the fact that coastal and marine areas are some of the most popular and visited area types in Sweden. Up until now, studies on outdoor recreation in Sweden have mainly paid attention to terrestrial areas, such as forest and mountain areas, while the coast and the ever-so-popular Swedish archipelagos have been a bit neglected.

The reason for this is unclear and the question will have to be left unanswered for now. However, some quick suggestions could be that coastal and marine areas often are very diverse and fragmented areas, where it is difficult to track and document outdoor recreation patterns and activities (Ankre 2007). Also, coastal and marine areas are often a mix between visitors, seasonal guests and permanent residents, which makes it very difficult to separate the different groups and their motivation to do outdoor activities, especially compared to more enclosed and bounded inland destinations where people often are visitors only (Ankre 2007). Third, and maybe most importantly, a reason could also be that coastal and marine areas usually are not as isolated or rid of human presence as most mountain and forest areas. People live there and the landscape is not as easily put in a 'conservation box', as many of the other terrestrial protected areas are. Or said differently: coastal and marines areas have a way of being 'taken for granted' more as places for *living* and *recreation*, not necessarily as places of *recreation* and *conservation*. However, this difference is exactly what makes Kosterhavet interesting, as it is an area where all three components (*living*, *recreation* and *conservation*) have to co-exist.

Nevertheless, the situation still is that not too much is known of outdoor recreation in Swedish coastal and marine areas. But that does not make research on outdoor life in coastal and marine areas any less interesting. On the contrary, as seen above, these areas are interesting, exactly because *they are* difficult to study. This is an open challenge to any researcher and leaves good opportunities to contribute with new knowledge on outdoor recreation in Sweden. This paper is one step. And as I have now hopefully managed to show, there is in fact a thin red line in the planning and management of outdoor recreation in Swedish coastal and marine areas: all through what the official legislation, the local authorities, the public outdoor sector and the major outdoor organizations say about outdoor recreation, to what different researchers from different disciplines so far have concluded about outdoor recreation in Swedish coastal and marine areas.

As such, there are four dominating themes in the material: one is the emphasis of the sometimes very *sensitive relationship and connection between outdoor recreation/tourism and nature conservation*, especially in regards to how both are well integrated in different local planning scenarios with the coast and the marine as the setting (Naturvårdsverket, Svenskt Friluftsliv, Västra Götalands Län and Strömstad and Tanum municipalities). Another theme is the focus on *conflicts*, especially between different perceptions and identities to be found in and attached to the Swedish coastal and marine areas (Segrell, Nordin, Ankre, Müller). A third theme is related to *spatial planning and management of*

*outdoor recreation*, and especially the different challenges involved with this work (Naturvårdsverket, Ankre, Morf, Stenseke). And last, the fourth theme is how outdoor recreation and tourism is connected to *local development* and *opportunities* for local communities, but also on the problems encountered in this work (Naturvårdsverket, Morf, Ankre, Byström).

These four themes seem to be equally important topics when studying and working with outdoor recreation in coastal and marine areas in Sweden, and will be topics I undoubtedly will touch down upon in my study of outdoor recreation in Kosterhavet National Park. I will carry on the discussions and keep in mind that in order to investigate outdoor recreation, it is important to prioritize outdoor recreation as an independent research discipline, and relate it to local policy making, nature conservation projects and the local community. Therefore, I will not only try to contribute with more general knowledge of outdoor recreation in Swedish coastal areas, but I will also strive to contribute on a larger scale with studies on how to actually investigate and monitor outdoor recreation in coastal areas. This includes discussions of the above mentioned four themes, as well as debates around new themes, problems and challenges that might surface when I begin to take a closer look at how to plan for and manage outdoor recreation in protected coastal and marine areas. As a result, I hope to contribute to as well as stimulate the academic and professional debates on outdoor recreation in Swedish coastal and marine areas.

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