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Perspectives on proximity tourism in Fryslân

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Chapter 6

Weather perceptions, holiday satisfaction and perceived attractiveness of domestic vacationing in The Netherlands¹

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Chapter 6

Abstract

Despite variable and relatively cool summer weather, domestic vacations in countries around the North Sea are an important type of tourism. However, relations between weather and domestic tourism in this region remain understudied. A quantitative research (n=326) among domestic camping tourists in The Netherlands explores perceived personal significance of the weather, operationalized as Weather Salience (WxS), and its relation with attractiveness of domestic vacationing, adaptive touristic behavior and perceived differences between home and destination. Results show that WxS relates positively to attitudes toward domestic tourism and to holiday satisfaction. While higher levels of WxS enhance feelings of being away from home due to the weather, lower WxS increases indifference about holiday weather. Weather differences between home and destination are perceived but depend on region, accommodation type and WxS levels. Implications for (domestic) tourism climatology research are discussed and potential lessons for stakeholders employing tourism activities in temperate climates are provided.

6.1 Introduction

Weather and climate have received considerable attention in tourism research in the last decade. They are major drivers for tourist travel (Becken & Wilson, 2013), shape tourist experiences (Jeuring & Peters, 2013) and are part of the imaginaries of destinations all over the world. However, the influence of weather conditions differs considerably per destination and type of touristic activities (Lohmann & Kaim, 1999). In other words, weather impacts are strongly context sensitive. Also, not all places are blessed with favorable climatic circumstances for tourism (Denstadli, Jacobsen, & Lohmann, 2011) and few destinations are able to consistently deliver on promises of blue sunny skies or white powdered mountain peaks. At almost all tourist destinations, variations in the weather may, at times, result in sub-optimal, unfavorable and occasionally even dangerous weather conditions (Jeuring & Becken, 2013). Thus, tourism stakeholders need to prepare for and adapt to such weather conditions, either physically or mentally (de Freitas, 2003). In sum, this makes weather variability an important factor to consider for local tourism management stakeholders, for example in terms of providing bad weather facilities (Rauken, Kelman, Steen Jacobsen, & Hovelsrud, 2010), adequate and timely risk communication (Ayscue, Curtis, Hao, & Montz, 2015; Jeuring & Becken, 2013; Scott & Lemieux, 2010) or managing destination images (Hamilton & Lau, 2004).

A particular context pertains to domestic tourism taking place in temperate climates, such as northwest Europe. The weather in this region is highly variable and even in summer 'ideal' weather conditions for tourism and recreational activities are far from guaranteed (Lohmann & Kaim, 1999; Matzarakis, de Freitas, & Scott, 2007). It is therefore that many people living there travel South, in search of warmer, drier and more comfortable weather, if only temporarily. Moreover, it has been stated that weather and climate in northern Europe is unfavorable for tourism (Nicholls & Amelung, 2015). Still, domestic tourism in countries around the North Sea is the main

type of tourism in these areas, arguably opposing the hegemonic directions of push and pull factors found in many tourism contexts (Prayag & Ryan, 2010). While domestic tourism in northwest Europe is an understudied topic (Canavan, 2015; Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017), the role of the weather in the imaginaries, experiences, motivations and behavior of domestic tourists in this region has received even less attention.

An understanding of the role of the weather in this context is of importance for unravelling motivations for domestic non-visitation (Gardiner, Grace, & King, 2015), enhancing tourist experiences in 'suboptimal' meteorological climates, and providing geographically and temporally tailored weather facilities in such regions (Lohmann & Kaim, 1999). Further, various studies mention that tourists from nearby are more likely to cancel a holiday or move on to another destination due to inclement weather or bad weather forecasts (Becken & Wilson, 2013; Denstadli et al., 2011), thus making tourism businesses that mainly depend on proximate tourists especially vulnerable to weather variability. Moreover, weather appears to play an important role in perceptions of geographical otherness and (un)familiarity (Jeuring & Peters, 2013). Since perceptions of otherness are among the core motivations for tourist behavior, weather as a factor affecting the level of perceived (dis)similarity between home and away should be studied in order to better understand domestic tourism experiences.

This exploratory study aims to contribute to tourism climatology research, by focusing on domestic tourism in a temperate climate context. Geographically situated in Fryslân, a province in the North of The Netherlands, the objective is to get an understanding of (1). The personal significance of the weather for Dutch domestic camping tourists; (2). The relation between personal significance of the weather and beliefs, attitudes and intention towards domestic tourism; (3). The perceived impact of the weather on destination choice, satisfaction with, and adaptive behavior

during domestic camping holidays, and; (4). Weather-based perceptions of difference between home and away.

6.2 Theory

6.2.1 *Image and experience of domestic, near home tourism*

Ever since the arrival of affordable air travel, domestic holidays increasingly seem to have become the less attractive little brother of international tourism. Being able to travel further has not only led to a wider range of destination options and increased global competitiveness between destinations, it arguably has also polarized destination images through associations with geographical distance between home and away (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017; Larsen & Guiver, 2013). However, despite the successful framing of tourism geographies along dichotomies where distant places are exotic, different and attractive, and where the proximate is familiar, mundane and to be escaped (Salazar, 2012), domestic holidays are far from obsolete. The contemporary global share of domestic holidays is far bigger than international holidays (UNWTO., 2014), which justifies an interest in the motivations and experiences of domestic vacationers.

Domestic tourism often takes places in a context that is relatively near or even within people's familiar, everyday life environment, hereby opposing the hegemonic imaginary of tourism being a business of travel, adventure and discovery. While this may seem unattractive for some, for others this appears a key motivation to spend a holiday near home: it is the experience of not having to do anything at all that many domestic vacationers seek and appreciate (Blichfeldt & Mikkelsen, 2013), providing a unique experience of freedom (Mikkelsen & Cohen, 2015). At the same time, motivations are very practical, ranging from financial constraints that sometimes even result in a staycation (Bourdeau, 2012; Hall, 2009), to personal limitations due to family circumstances, or a mere preference for

familiarity (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017). This does not mean however that what can be called 'proximity tourism' (Diaz-Soria & Lluordes Coit, 2013) or 'microdomestic tourism' (Canavan, 2013) does not allow for experiences of out-there-ness (Elands & Lengkeek, 2012; Lengkeek, 2001), fulfilling needs to escape and a sense of being away from home. To the contrary, in people's busy daily lives, doing nothing (including not travelling) can feel like being in another place (Blichfeldt & Mikkelsen, 2013), while unfamiliarity and otherness can be experienced close to home in many ways (Szytniewski & Spierings, 2014). Similarly, research on domestic vacationers in The Netherlands found that a certain mindset is instrumental to be able to see otherness and difference within familiar environments (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017). Further, research on domestic tourism in Australia highlights generational differences in beliefs and attitudes towards domestic holidays (Gardiner et al., 2015), while such differences were absent with respect to international holidays.

In short, absolute geographical distance and perceived subjective distance are related in non-linear ways (Larsen & Guiver, 2013). This makes the context of domestic tourism both interesting and complex, particularly since it plays out on a spatial scale level where touristic experiences are woven into people's everyday lives. In this proximity tourism context, consumption and production overlap and the development and management of destination imaginaries are co-created and a responsibility of many local stakeholders (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017). A tailored research approach is therefore needed, in order to understand the underlying motivational processes, the experiences and socio-economic benefits found in the context of holidaying domestically and near home. A potentially important factor that has thus far hardly been a topic of research in the context of domestic tourism is the weather. Given the importance of weather conditions in destination image, tourist motivations, experiences and holiday behavior, and the variable characteristics of

Northern European weather, an exploration of this nexus seems worthwhile and timely.

6.2.2 Weather and tourism

Relations between weather and tourism are multiple, complex and nuanced. People travel to destinations to experience particular weather conditions, and tourism businesses depend strongly on favorable weather circumstances, be they warm and sunny weather for beach tourism (Moreno, Amelung, & Santamarta, 2008; Ruddy & Scott, 2016) or enough snow to cover ski slopes (Gorman-Murray, 2008; Hopkins, 2013; Scott, Gössling, & de Freitas, 2008; Williams, Dossa, & Hunt, 1997). As such, weather conditions both enable and inhibit tourist activity across space and time.

Research on tourism climatology (Matzarakis, de Freitas, & Scott, 2007; de Freitas, 2003) has become a well-established niche in the field of tourism studies. It can be categorized into three fields of interest (Gössling, Abegg, & Steiger, 2016): regional climate indices (Matzarakis, Mayer, & Iziomon, 1999; de Freitas, 1990), weather and climate induced tourism flows (Becken & Wilson, 2013; Falk, 2015; Rosselló-Nadal, Riera-Font, & Cárdenas, 2011), and weather preferences and behavior (Hübner & Gössling, 2012; Lohmann & Hübner, 2013; de Freitas, 2015). Most tourism climatology research acknowledges that the weather is first and foremost experienced on an individual level, in turn impacting the way (groups) of individuals perceive regions and destinations, move within and between places and adapt to physical and psychological weather stimuli. How people respond and adapt to different weather circumstances thus is partly 'a function of an individual's perceptions of weather and climate and, in particular, those aspects they consider to be important' (de Freitas, 2015, p. 2).

Stewart's (2009) concept of Weather Salience (WxS), defined as 'the degree to which people are psychologically attuned to and affected by weather and weather changes' (Stewart, Lazo, Morss, & Demuth, 2012, p.

172) discerns seven dimensions through which the weather becomes personally significant to people. These include paying attention to weather cues, impacts of the weather on mood, and attachment to weather patterns, hereby reflecting the multiple ways weather conditions are embedded in people's lives. The emerging line of studies employing the WxS concept has thus far not been used as a basis to further the understanding of weather in a tourism context. Neither has WxS, to the authors knowledge, been studied outside of the United States. In the present research, three fundamental aspects of how perceived personal significance of the weather can influence the way tourists make meaning of, and engage with the places they visit are addressed: perceptions of attractiveness, behavioral and psychological adaptation, and perceptions of difference between home and holiday destination.

First, attractiveness of weather conditions can make or break a holiday: "mist in the mountains limits possible vistas that were anticipated for, but an opening in the clouds granting a peek into a valley might be experienced as even more impressive than when seen on a bright sunny day" (Jeuring & Peters, 2013, p. 210). Attractiveness of the weather has been measured objectively, for example by constructing physiological equivalent temperature (PET) indices (Rutty & Scott, 2014; Scott et al., 2008; de Freitas, 1990), but also more subjective methods have been used, such as stated preference surveys (Denstadli et al., 2011). Importantly, preferred and experienced weather conditions tend to be attributed to the spatial context in which they occur, for example in terms of tourism destinations or countries of residence. While evidence for long-term impact on, for example, destination choice is mixed (Gössling et al., 2016; Hübner & Gössling, 2012), weather conditions appear to be an important part of memorized tourist experiences (Gössling et al., 2016; Jeuring & Peters, 2013).

Also, in the ongoing process of building, experiencing and evaluating tourism destinations' attractiveness, the weather often is an

important contextual factor, for example affecting the construction of a sense of place (Jeuring & Peters, 2013). For long, many tourism destination marketing efforts have been building on imaginaries that are representing favorable or even ideal weather conditions (Gorman-Murray, 2008; Salazar, 2012), to be found in most tourism brochures and websites. Consequently, the weather has become a part of destination brands and of the image of a place more broadly (Gómez Marín, 2005). In the context of northern European countries –important countries of origin for destinations with warmer and more stable climates– the weather plays an important role both as push and pull factor (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017). Nevertheless, relatively few studies have focused on the attractiveness of temperate climates (Denstadli et al., 2011), particularly in the context of domestic tourism.

Second, behavioral and psychological adaptation pertains to destination choice, travel timing and to adaptation during a vacation. Strongly motivated by a need for comfort, people are very well able to adapt to various weather circumstances (de Freitas, 2015). In the decision stage this results in evaluating possible holiday destinations in terms of finding a match between preferred and expected weather conditions (next to other factors such as landscape and price (Lohmann & Kaim, 1999)). At destination, behavioral adaptation pertains to using weather forecasts (Ayscue et al., 2015; Becken & Wilson, 2010, 2013), clothing choice (de Freitas, 2003) or aligning daily activity schedules and travel itineraries with prevailing weather conditions (Becken & Wilson, 2013).

Psychological adaptation can range from active emotional coping on both the intra- and inter-personal level (e.g., families), to passive acceptance of inclement weather (de Freitas, 2003). In relation to destination image and destination choice, at destination weather conditions that are less optimal than expected can also result in cognitive dissonance (Robert, 1973), with tourists needing to cope with the

consequences of the choices they made earlier (e.g., choosing to spend their vacation in a temperate climate). Thus, understanding behavioral and psychological adaptation of tourists spending their vacation in a temperate climate with variable and often relatively cool weather is important to provide those tourists with tools to deal with weather variations during their vacation.

Third, weather conditions can contribute to people's experience of difference between home and away, an important aspect of touristic experiences. When people travel to other places, meteorological conditions can be different from or similar to when at home, familiar when experienced earlier or unfamiliar when not. The weather appears to be one of the ways people make sense of where they are, for example through comparison with earlier experiences (Jeuring & Peters, 2013). As such, the holistic meta image of destinations on the country level is nuanced and specified on the individual level of actual weather experiences, embedded in the local context of holiday accommodations and daily activities. In turn, these specific experiences can be extrapolated to higher level evaluations of destinations and holidays as a whole.

In some places, the experience of inclement weather has become embedded in the local culture, nation state identity and destination image (Endfield, 2011; Harley, Strauss, & Orlove, 2003; Limb & Spellman, 2001). For example, in the context of Europe, people in the United Kingdom have an image of being strongly engaged with the weather (Harley et al., 2003), while similar accounts can be found for people from Benelux countries. This can result in polarized comparisons between country of residence and tourism destinations, with imagined weather differences as representations of distance between home and away, as motivations for travel and as a source for otherness (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017). As such, unawareness of potential microclimatic differences on the intraregional level can lead to ignorance toward the potential attractiveness of near home tourism

destinations. At the same time, awareness of and experiencing differences between the weather at home and the weather at a (geographically proximate) destination, can be a relevant source for unfamiliarity and a sense of 'being away from home'. This becomes particularly relevant when considering people's ability to construct comfortable microclimates (de Freitas, 2003), even in atmospheric conditions that seem uncomfortable on a lower spatial resolution.

Given the high exposure to weather conditions (Hewer, Scott, & Gough, 2015), the abovementioned three aspects are particularly relevant for camping tourism in the context of northern Europe, which is arguably challenged by variable and relatively suboptimal weather conditions. This might make spending a domestic vacation in northern Europe potentially less attractive and camping tourists need to have relatively strong adaptive skills in order to cope with weather variability. Also, increased exposure makes weather induced experiences of difference between home and away more likely for tourists spending their vacation on camping grounds than for people who spend their vacation in less exposed environments.

Nevertheless, domestic tourism within countries along the North Sea is an important economic factor, particularly in more rural regions (Bel, Lacroix, Lyser, Rambonilaza, & Turpin, 2015; Canavan, 2015). Predominantly in the summer season, a considerable number of people stay within their country of residence to spend their main holiday, often on camping grounds (Blichfeldt & Mikkelsen, 2013; Blichfeldt, 2004). Some scholars have done fruitful research on camping tourists (Blichfeldt, 2004; Triantafillidou & Siomkos, 2013), but particular attention for the weather in domestic tourism has thus far been limited to only a few studies (Gössling et al., 2016; Hewer et al., 2015; Lohmann & Kaim, 1999; Rantala, Valtonen, & Markuksela, 2011). Thus, much is to be learnt about the local context of domestic tourism, where people willingly choose to spend their holidays in variable and potentially familiar weather circumstances.

6.3 Methodology

6.3.1 Study area

The study was situated in the Dutch province of Fryslân, one of the twelve provinces of The Netherlands (Figure 6.1). Being a generally rural region for Dutch standards, over forty percent of its surface is water, including a major part of the Wadden Sea (World Heritage area). The Southwest of the province has an extensive network of fresh water lakes, embedded in agricultural landscapes with dairy livestock, while its Southeastern part contains large forested areas and is more secluded and patchy. In terms of tourism regions, the province's tourism marketing discerns three areas (Jeuring, 2016), which roughly match the three different regions just described: the Wadden Islands, the Frisian Lakes area and the Frisian Woods area (Figure 6.1). Situated along the southern part of the North Sea, weather conditions in Fryslân are strongly influenced by its coastal geography. Having a temperate sea climate, winters are relatively mild, even though frosty days with maximum temperatures below zero degrees Celsius occur occasionally.

Maximum temperatures during the summer season tend to be around 20 degrees Celsius, sometimes rising as high as 30 degrees Celsius. Average monthly rainfall ranges between 60 millimeter and 70 millimeter. Weather conditions can change quickly throughout the year, even within a couple of hours. Importantly, while summer months are the warmest of the year, they also see most days with rainfall (Sluijter, Leenaers, & Camarasa, 2011).

Peak holiday season is during the summer months July and August (ETFI., 2012) and, similar to other regions on higher latitudes (Denstadli et al., 2011), daily and seasonal weather variability are an important challenge for the local tourism sector (ETFI., 2012). Intraregional variation in weather patterns are often attributable to places' distance from the coast. While the Wadden Islands have arguably lower temperatures in summer than places

more inland, they have a higher average hours of sunshine, particularly in the (early) summer season (Sluijter et al., 2011).

After the Second World War, tourism in Fryslân developed significantly, currently generating almost one billion euros on a yearly basis and providing jobs for around seven percent of the Frisian population (ETFI., 2012). Most tourism is domestic, while German visitors are the major group of foreign tourists. Major tourist attractions pertain to rural qualities such as nature, tranquility and 'big skies'. Important touristic activities are soft outdoor activities such as watersports (both on the fresh water lakes as on the Wadden Sea), cycling and beach tourism (ETFI., 2012). Jeuring (2016) and Jeuring and Haartsen (2017) provide a more extensive touristic profile of Fryslân. The combined characteristics of Fryslân's climate, geography and the importance of tourism for the regional economy, demands for knowledge about the role of weather perceptions of its attractiveness as tourism destination.



Figure 6.1 Tourist regions in Fryslân (Jeuring, 2016).

6.3.2 Instrument

A printed survey (in Dutch language) was used to measure the following items and scales. Multi-item scales measuring Value Beliefs, Attitudes and Intention towards domestic tourism were adapted from Gardiner et al. (2015) to the Dutch context. Value Beliefs pertained to four dimensions: Emotional Value (five items e.g., 'Taking a holiday in The Netherlands makes me feel good'), Novelty Value (five items e.g., 'Taking a holiday in The Netherlands is something different'), Price Value (four items e.g., 'Holidays in The Netherlands offer value for money') and Quality Value (four items e.g., 'Holidays in The Netherlands offer an acceptable standard of quality'). Attitudes (e.g., 'I like holidays in The Netherlands') and Intentions (e.g., 'I intend to go on a holiday in The Netherlands in the near future') were each measured with three items. Internal reliability (Table 6.2) of all scales was acceptable to good (Vaske, 2008).

Perceived personal significance of the weather was operationalized through the Weather Salience (WxS) concept and measured with the Weather Salience Short Form (seven items, see Table 6.1), developed by Stewart et al. (2012), a shorter version of the original Weather Salience Scale (Stewart, 2009). Next, a number of items were included to measure weather impacts on people's holiday. These items were developed on an exploratory basis, based on findings from other studies on the various ways weather affects tourism see Section 2. and pertained to aspects of destination attractiveness (Gómez Martín, 2005; Lohmann & Kaim, 1999) (e.g., 'The weather plays a role in my holiday destination choice'), but also to adaptive behavior in relation to weather conditions (Becken & Wilson, 2013; Denstadli et al., 2011) (e.g., 'I am fine with adapting my daily holiday schedule to the weather conditions'). To measure the extent to which differences between home and destination are experienced through weather conditions (Jeuring & Peters, 2013), one exploratory item was included ('The holiday weather contributes to my experience of being

away from home'), next to eleven weather aspects (based on Lohmann & Hübner, 2013) for which respondents could indicate whether they apply to home or to their holiday destination (e.g., 'Weather conditions change more quickly'). The survey was concluded with a set of demographic items. A number of items and scales included in the survey are not addressed here as these measures are beyond the purpose of this paper. IBM SPSS Statistics software (version 23) was used for the data analysis.

6.3.3 Procedure and sample

Data collection took place in August 2015 on camping grounds in the province Fryslân. Given the exploratory nature of the study and the main purpose being to get insight in conceptual relationships, a convenience sampling technique was deemed appropriate. Convenience sampling is common in tourism research given the transient character of the population and the logistic complications for reaching this population (Young, 1999). Potential respondents were approached on seventeen different camping grounds, spread across the three main holiday regions of the province (Figure 6.1). The camping grounds varied from small nature based grounds to large parks with an abundance of facilities. First, permission was asked from the camping owners to distribute the survey. On two occasions we were not allowed to distribute the survey (both camping grounds being located on the Wadden Islands). In these cases, we moved on to other, similar types of camping grounds. After obtaining permission, guests were approached by explaining the context of the research and were asked if they wanted to participate by filling out the survey. A total of 379 people were approached, of which 344 agreed to participate and the rest declined for various reasons (e.g., no interest, bad timing). While most of the surveys were collected shortly after being filled out, some respondents were given a return envelope, not all of which were actually found back in the researcher's mailbox. Also, after collecting the surveys, it appeared that a

Table 6.1 Factor analysis results of Weather Salience items.

Items	F1	F2	F3	M (SD)
1) I take notice of changes that occur in the weather	.78			3.69 (.89)
2) I notice how the clouds look during various kinds of weather	.76			3.34 (.98)
3) I plan my daily routine around what the weather may bring	.70			3.50 (.95)
4) The weather or changes in the weather really do not matter to me ^a	.53			2.33 (1.16)
5) I am attached to the weather and climate of my hometown		.84		3.66 (1.01)
6) It is important to me to live in a place that offers a variety of different weather conditions throughout the year		.83		3.58 (1.08)
7) In the past I have wished for weather that would result in a weather-related holiday			.97	2.70 (1.43)
Cronbach's alpha	.62			
Pearson correlation		.48		
Total WxS score	14.19 (2.72)			24.16 (3.69)
Eigenvalue	2.10	1.40	1.02	
Percent variance explained	30.0	20.0	14.6	

Item 1-4 and 7 coded 1=never to 5=always, item 4 and 5 coded 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. ^aItem reverse coded.

number of surveys were only filled out partially. These were excluded from the analysis. This left us with a total of 326 usable surveys and a response rate of 86 percent.

The sample ($n = 326$) consisted of 58 percent female and 42 percent male camping tourists. Travel parties comprised families with kids (57%), with kids being mostly between six and twelve years old. Travel parties with just adults made up for 37 percent of the sample, while six percent were single campers. The duration of the holiday was for the majority (81%) seven nights or longer. While about 40 percent stayed in a tent, 60 percent stayed in a caravan or motorhome.

Table 6.2 Comparisons between Low, Medium and High WxS groups of perceived value, attitude and intention towards domestic tourism in The Netherlands.

	Mean ^a (SD)	Test statistic	Significant differences at 0.05 level ^b
EV ($\alpha=.85$)			
Low	5.29 (1.08)	F(2,313)=7.32, p=.001	Low WxS respondents have significantly lower EV perceptions than Medium WxS respondents.
Medium	5.74 (.65)		
High	5.65 (.71)		
NV ($\alpha=.69$)			
Low	4.67 (.98)	F(2, 313)=2.86, p=.06	No significant differences between WxS groups.
Medium	4.99 (.82)		
High	4.86 (.93)		
PV ($\alpha=.82$)			
Low	4.87 (.98)	F(2,309)=1.29, p=.278	No significant differences between WxS groups.
Medium	5.11 (.90)		
High	5.04 (.96)		
QV ($\alpha=.82$)			
Low	5.48 (1.05)	F(2,315)=4.62, p=.01	No significant differences between WxS groups.
Medium	5.83 (.64)		
High	5.81 (.62)		
AT ($\alpha=.82$)			
Low	5.42 (1.13)	F(2,315)=8.14, p=.001	Low WxS respondents have significantly less positive attitude towards domestic tourism than Medium WxS respondents.
Medium	5.91 (.64)		
High	5.84 (.77)		
IN ($\alpha=.72$)			
Low	4.97 (1.37)	F(2,318)=5.79, p=.003	Low WxS respondents have significantly less intention to engage in domestic tourism than Medium WxS respondents.
Medium	5.52 (1.00)		
High	5.20 (1.17)		

EV: emotional value; NV: novelty value; QV: quality value; PV: price value; AT: attitude; IN: intention.

^aLikert scale of Strongly disagree (1) to Strongly agree (7).

^bBased on Tamhane's T2 post hoc comparisons.

6.4 Results

6.4.1 Weather Salience

First, insight in perceived personal significance of the weather was obtained by measuring respondents' levels of Weather Salience (WxS) (Table 6.1). Summed WxS scores of the seven items ranged between 11 and 34, with an average of 24.16 (SD = 3.69). One-way ANOVA showed that respondents had significantly higher levels (0.88 mean difference) of WxS ($F(1,1782) = 11.26, p < 0.001$) than respondents in the original study of Stewart et al. (2012), indicating a relatively high degree to which this sample was psychologically attuned to and affected by weather and weather changes. However, when exploring the dimensionality with a Principal Components Analysis (with Varimax rotation) (Ramkissoon, Smith, & Weiler, 2013), a three factor solution was found (Table 6.1). Based on these findings, it was decided to continue the analysis with a summed scale of the four items underlying the first factor. This factor included most aspects of the Weather Salience concept. Internal reliability of the four item scale was relatively low (Cronbach's Alpha = .62), but acceptable in the current context (Loewenthal, 2001; Vaske, 2008). For the purpose of this study, this scale will be referred to as WxS, even though we are aware this does not cover the whole range of WxS dimensions (see also section 6.5).

Subsequently, the sample was grouped into several categories, in order to get more insight in the distribution of WxS and potential differences related to subgroups of respondents, using one-way ANOVAs. Diverging from the findings of Stewart et al. (2012), female and male respondents did not differ significantly. Also, Weather Salience appeared to be unrelated to frequency of past domestic holidays, frequency of past international holidays, household type (with or without kids), age and income. Yet, discerning between type of camping accommodation, people staying in a tent (14.73, SD = 2.66) had significantly higher levels of WxS than people staying in a caravan/motorhome (13.81, SD = 2.71, $F(1,318) = 9.02, p =$

0.003). This points to a relation between weather experiences and holiday accommodation. To look into this relation more deeply, in a number of subsequent analyses distinction will also be made between accommodation types (section 6.4.3).

Table 6.3 Comparisons between Low, Medium and High WxS groups of perceived impacts of the weather on holiday satisfaction, destination choice and adaptive behavior.

Impacts	WxS groups			F	p	η
	Low	Medium	High			
1. The weather during my current holiday has a positive influence on my holiday satisfaction.	3.78 ^a (.92)	3.95 ^{ab} (.73)	4.20 ^b (.78)	4.56	.011	.17
2. The weather during my current holiday has a negative influence on my holiday satisfaction.	2.22 (.94)	2.38 (.87)	2.25 (.94)	n.s.		
3. The holiday weather contributes to my experience of being away from home.	3.90 ^a (.92)	4.22 ^b (.85)	4.59 ^c (.64)	10.15	.001	.25
4. When the weather is bad it occurs to me that I might as well have stayed at home.	2.90 (1.21)	3.20 (1.22)	3.03 (1.45)	n.s.		
5. At my current holiday destination I have sufficient ways to enjoy myself when the weather is bad.	3.76 (1.13)	3.67 (1.09)	3.88 (1.03)	n.s.		
6. I am fine with adapting my daily holiday schedule to the weather conditions.	4.00 (.82)	3.98 (.91)	4.05 (.90)	n.s.		
7. The weather plays a role in my holiday destination choice.	3.24 ^a (1.27)	3.44 ^a (1.14)	3.90 ^b (1.15)	5.30	.005	.18

Means with different superscripts are significant at $p < .05$ based on LSD (item 3 and 7) or Tamhane's T2 (item 1) post-hoc analysis. Items measured on five-point scale (1=Strongly disagree; 5=Strongly agree).

6.4.2 Values, attitudes and intention towards domestic tourism

Next, the analysis focused on the relation between Weather Salience and values, attitudes and intention toward domestic tourism. In line with Stewart et al., (2012) procedure, respondents were grouped in low (average minus one standard deviation, $n = 49$), medium (between average minus one and plus one standard deviation, $n = 209$) and high (average plus one standard deviation, $n = 64$) Weather Salience. The scores of the three groups on perceived value, attitudes and intention towards domestic tourism in The Netherlands were compared with one-way ANOVAs and post-hoc group comparisons (Table 6.2).

Post-hoc tests revealed significant group differences for Emotional Value, Attitude and Intention between people with low WxS and medium WxS. This indicates that people with low WxS attribute relatively little emotional value to domestic tourism, that they have a relatively less positive attitudes towards domestic tourism and their intention to engage in domestic tourism is lower than people with medium WxS. Note that all groups scored above the scale mean. Interestingly, no significant differences were found between low WxS and high WxS groups. A –not significant– tendency could even be discerned where high WxS respondents scored somewhat lower on each scale than medium WxS respondents. Overall though, a medium level of Weather Salience seems to be most positively related to values, attitudes and intention towards domestic tourism in The Netherlands.

6.4.3 Perceived impact of weather on satisfaction and adaptive behavior

Relations between perceived significance of the weather and perceptions about domestic tourism become more meaningful when something can be said on how weather is dealt with during a domestic vacation. Therefore, by using one-way ANOVAs and post-hoc comparisons, the extent to which

levels of WxS were related to perceived impacts of weather on people's satisfaction and adaptive behavior was examined (Table 6.3).

Results indicated that the weather has a positive influence on people's holiday satisfaction, particularly for people with higher levels of WxS. On the other hand, weather conditions were perceived to have little negative effects on satisfaction with current holidays. Next, respondents perceived the weather to have an important impact on people's experience of being away from home and –to a lesser extent– on their holiday destination choice. Again, this was especially strong for higher WxS respondents. Interestingly, irrespective of their level of WxS, respondents were generally neutral about the extent to which any bad weather conditions experienced during their holiday would make them think they might as well stayed at home. Thus, respondents feel little weather-induced regret, once they have made the choice to go on a camping holiday. Also, respondents stated to be quite adaptive to varying weather circumstances, both in terms of their perception of the availability of bad weather alternatives and their willingness to adapt to prevailing weather.

Next, for the same seven statements a distinction was made between people staying in a tent and people staying in caravan/motorhome (Table 6.4) by testing group differences with one-way ANOVAs, as these are the two main types of camping accommodation used by the respondents. While more or less the same overall tendencies were found as for the WxS groups, significant differences appeared in the context of holiday satisfaction: positive influence of the weather was significantly higher for people's staying in a tent, while the this was turned around for negative influences. This is interesting, since people in a tent are arguably more exposed to the prevailing weather conditions.

Table 6.4 Comparisons for perceived impacts of the weather on holiday satisfaction, destination choice and adaptive behavior between people staying in tent and caravan/motorhome.

Impacts ^a	Accommodation		F	p	η
	Tent	Caravan			
1. The weather during my current holiday has a positive influence on my holiday satisfaction.	4.11 (.74)	3.90 (.76)	6.17	.013	.14
2. The weather during my current holiday has a negative influence on my holiday satisfaction.	2.16 (.86)	2.44 (.90)	7.50	.007	.15
3. The holiday weather contributes to my experience of being away from home.	4.35 (.75)	4.19 (.88)	n.s.		
4. When the weather is bad it occurs to me that I might as well have stayed at home.	3.05 (1.30)	3.17 (1.23)	n.s.		
5. At my current holiday destination I have sufficient ways to enjoy myself when the weather is bad.	3.63 (1.13)	3.80 (1.05)	n.s.		
6. I am fine with adapting my daily holiday schedule to the weather conditions.	4.05 (.87)	3.96 (.91)	n.s.		
7. The weather plays a role in my holiday destination choice.	3.60 (1.13)	3.46 (1.19)	n.s.		

^aItems measured on five-point scale (1=Strongly disagree; 5=Strongly agree).

6.4.4 Weather aspects as signifiers of difference between home and away

It was already found that some domestic camping tourists attribute an important role to the weather in their experience of being away from home (particularly when having higher levels of WxS, Table 6.3). In order to find evidence for specific weather conditions underlying these perceptions, weather differences between home and destination were measured for eleven weather aspects (Table 6.5). Overall, while most respondents were able to indicate whether they perceived a difference or not between home and holiday destination, for most weather aspects the majority of the respondents did not perceive any differences. This was not entirely

surprising, given the relative similarity of overall climatic circumstances within The Netherlands (recall the geographically proximate context of domestic tourism). However, biggest differences were perceived for wind conditions; stronger wind was perceived more often at holiday destinations, while less strong wind was perceived to be occurring more often at home. Other weather aspects that people perceived to be occurring relatively often at their holiday destination were comfortably warm weather (possibly attributable to people spending their holiday in the summer season), quickly changing weather conditions and fresh/cold weather conditions.

Table 6.5 Perceived differences in weather conditions between home and destination.

Perceived weather differences	Percentage attributed difference			
	At destination	At home	No difference	Don't know
1. More often a strong wind	42.3%	11.1%	40.4%	6.2%
2. Wind is less strong	12.7%	38.0%	44.1%	5.2%
3. More often comfortably warm	24.1%	11.8%	56.0%	8.0%
4. Weather conditions change more quickly	26.1%	6.2%	56.2%	11.5%
5. More often fresh/cold	22.2%	9.8%	58.2%	9.8%
6. More often continuous drizzle/rain	5.3%	15.5%	62.2%	17.0%
7. More often uncomfortably warm/hot	6.8%	21.5%	63.1%	8.6%
8. More often a heavy rain shower	8.6%	12.6%	64.6%	14.2%
9. Sun shines more often	19.4%	6.2%	65.4%	9.0%
10. More often a thunderstorm	5.6%	11.3%	65.6%	17.5%
11. More often cloudy	5.8%	15.7%	66.5%	12.0%

Next, these perceptions of difference were scrutinized with a one-way ANOVA test for differences between WxS groups and type of holiday accommodation. This was done as follows. First, answers per weather aspect were split into two categories, separating between (1). Perceived

difference and (2). No difference/don't know. Then, answers for all weather types were summed, resulting in a variable where lower values indicate lower levels of weather perceived difference, and higher values indicate higher levels of perceived difference. On average, respondents had on average an opinion about 3.37 (SD = 3.36) (out of eleven) weather aspects. People staying in a tent ($M = 4.28$, $SD = 3.62$) perceived significantly more differences ($F(1,307) = 16.74$, $p = 0.001$) than people staying in a caravan/motorhome ($M = 2.72$, $SD = 3.04$). When discerning between different levels of WxS, it appeared that the differences between accommodation types were significant for medium and high WxS groups, while no differences were found for people with low WxS (Table 6.6). Testing for an interaction between WxS and accommodation type did however not reveal a significant result.

Table 6.6 Perceived weather differences between home and holiday destination for people staying in a tent and caravan/motorhome, per level of Weather Salience.

Levels of Weather Salience	Tent ^a	Caravan ^a	F	p	η
	M(SD)	M(SD)			
Low WxS	2.4 (2.2)	3.0 (2.7)	n.s.		
Medium WxS	4.7 (3.6)	2.7 (3.2)	16.05	.001	.27
High Wxs	4.6 (4.0)	2.8 (2.8)	4.06	.05	.26

^aAverage number of perceived differences out of 11 weather aspects.

Finally, spatial differences in perceived weather characteristics were examined by comparing perceptions of tourists staying in three different holiday regions within the province of Fryslân (Wadden Islands, Frisian Lakes and Frisian Woods), each with an arguably different microclimate. It has to be noted that the geographical distinction between sub regions is based

on regional tourism marketing structures (Jeuring, 2016) and not on climatological

data. Thus, while a distinction between islands, fresh water lakes and forested areas has face validity in this context, the division is primarily illustrative for the hypothesis that weather can play a role in people's perceptions of difference between home and away.

Table 6.7 Differences in weather conditions between home and destination, per holiday region.

Perceived weather differences	Percentage attributed difference ^a											
	At destination			At home			No difference			Don't know		
	W	L	I	W	L	I	W	L	I	W	L	I
1. More often a strong wind	11.7	45.2	68.9	18.4	10.4	4.7	62.1	39.1	20.8	7.8	5.2	5.7
2. Wind is less strong	20.6	10.3	7.5	8.8	40.5	63.2	62.7	40.5	25.5	7.8	4.3	3.8
3. More often comfortably warm	16.5	17.4	39.0	6.8	13.0	15.2	68.9	61.7	37.1	7.8	7.8	8.6
4. Weather conditions change more quickly	10.7	17.4	51.0	8.7	3.5	6.7	68.9	67.0	31.7	11.7	12.2	10.6
5. More often fresh/cold	10.7	18.1	37.7	10.7	7.8	11.3	71.8	62.9	39.6	6.8	11.2	11.3
6. More often continuous drizzle/rain	3.9	9.6	1.9	3.9	6.1	36.8	79.4	66.1	41.5	12.7	18.3	19.8
7. More often uncomfortably warm/hot	12.6	4.3	3.8	4.9	13.8	46.2	74.8	69.8	44.3	7.8	12.1	5.7
8. More often a heavy rain shower	6.8	12.9	5.7	5.8	3.4	29.2	76.7	69.0	48.1	10.7	14.7	17.0
9. Sun shines more often	7.8	5.2	46.2	4.9	9.6	3.8	77.7	75.7	42.5	9.7	9.6	7.5
10. More often a thunderstorm	5.9	6.1	4.8	9.9	4.4	20.0	71.3	71.1	54.3	12.9	18.4	21.0
11. More often cloudy	5.8	7.8	3.8	6.8	3.4	37.7	77.7	74.1	47.2	9.7	14.7	11.3

^aW=Frisian Woods, L=Frisian Lakes, I=Wadden Islands. Relatively strong perceived differences per weather type are highlighted in bold.

One-way ANOVAs per holiday region, testing for differences between WxS levels and accommodation types, on the summed total of perceived weather differences did not provide significant results. However, when comparing the regions with each other, it was found that particularly on the Wadden islands ($M = 5.4$, $SD = 3.6$) tourists perceive substantially more weather differences, compared with camping tourists in the Frisian Lakes ($M = 2.6$, $SD = 2.6$) and Frisian Woods ($M = 2.0$, $SD = 2.8$; $F(2,307) = 37.87$, $p = 0.001$) areas.

A subsequent distinction between different weather aspects shows that perceived type of weather differences varies considerably across the holiday regions (Table 6.7). Not surprising in the light of the results presented just above, most differences were found for the Wadden Islands, and (much) less for the Lakes and Woods areas. Quickly changing weather conditions and fresh/cold weather, but also comfortable warmth and sunshine are perceived to be different much more often on the Wadden Islands than elsewhere. Wind plays an important role in both the Lakes area and on the Wadden Islands, but not in the Woods area. Less wind than at home was perceived to be the most important difference for the Woods area. Another interesting finding is that while some weather conditions are perceived to be typical for the destination, other (i.e., drizzle, hot weather, heavy rain, cloudy weather and thunderstorms) are experienced more often at home, showing that both experiences of absence and of presence are noticed and potentially underlie perceived difference.

6.5 Discussion and conclusion

This paper provides insight in the personal significance of the weather among domestic camping tourists in The Netherlands. Employing Weather Salience (Stewart, 2009; Stewart et al., 2012) as a concept that captures the extent to which people are psychologically attuned to and affected by

weather and weather changes, the study related various levels of WxS with beliefs, attitudes and intention towards domestic tourism. Further, it was explored how WxS affects tourist experiences and behavior, and whether domestic tourists perceive weather-based differences between home and away on the small geographical scale of domestic camping in The Netherlands.

The results of this paper should be interpreted in the context of a number of limitations. Levels of Weather Salience among the sample were significantly higher than found in Stewart et al., study (2012). However, comparisons between the studies remain somewhat difficult given the variations in the convergence of underlying WxS dimensions and the different sample types. Also, the shortened WxS scale was used and its dimensional characteristics as found in this study should be embedded in further research in order to get deeper insight in the stability of these dimensions within the context of tourism and recreation. Particularly, research should verify ways to improve the relatively low internal reliability of the WxS scale as found in this study. The actual weather during the surveying period was mostly sunny summer weather with temperatures well above the average for August in The Netherlands. This might have affected the variance in weather evaluations, particularly with respect to measuring weather impacts pertaining to short term time frames (e.g., the current vacation) and to the absence of perceived negative impacts. In addition, no distinction was made between seasonal camping guests and short-term guests or first time and repeat visitors. People who have a seasonal camping place might benefit from increased temporal flexibility in their choice to spend time at the camping ground. As such, they are able to adapt to both favorable and inclement weather conditions more easily, for example by alternating between home and their camping place. Another potential limitation concerns the in-situ nature of the study, resulting in a sample with respondents who all have already decided to go on a

domestic camping holiday. Thus, generalization of the findings to tourists who have decided otherwise remains difficult. Finally, using a convenience sampling technique limits the generalizability of the results to larger populations of camping tourists.

Despite these limitations, the results provide input for a discussion about the role of the psychological significance of weather in the context of domestic tourism in temperate climates. To our knowledge, this study was the first to explore the Weather Salience concept outside of the United States and also the first to employ it in a tourism context. Based on the findings, WxS appears to be a useful concept that is a valuable addition to the tourism climatology literature. While differences between people with varying levels of WxS were often small, minor effects of weather on tourist experiences and behavior have also been found in other studies (Denstadli et al., 2011; McKercher, Shoal, Park, & Kahani, 2015). But it is exactly this complex, nuanced and ephemeral role of weather that needs further explanation and, thus, deserves continuous attention.

For example, it can be questioned which levels of Weather Salience are advantageous in the tourism context. While, overall, respondents attributed relatively much importance to weather in terms of noticing weather changes and taking the weather into account in their daily planning, higher levels of WxS indicate stronger sensitivity, thus potentially being more influenced by the weather. In terms of holiday satisfaction, this can go both ways (for example, higher enjoyment or stronger disappointment), making temperate climates with changeable weather particularly tricky. On the other hand, higher levels of WxS can result in higher adaptive capacity, both psychologically and behaviorally, which can be beneficial in terms of safety and awareness when the weather becomes extreme (Jeuring & Becken, 2013). In the context of climate change and increase of weather extremes, this might indeed be a relevant point (Gössling et al., 2016). Similarly, lower levels of WxS can make people

numb, indifferent about or ignorant towards (changes in) holiday weather, which could enhance unrealistic expectations about and unawareness of both favorable and dangerous weather conditions.

In any case, the results seem to indicate that positive perceptions about domestic tourism in The Netherlands benefit mostly from Weather Salience levels that are not too low, but not too high either. However, when it comes to enhancing the overall attractiveness of domestic tourism in temperate climates, a main challenge for tourism businesses lies in the anticipatory imaginaries about weather in never visited destinations and, particularly, stereotyped ideas about the assumed familiar climate and weather of the home country and region. As the manager of one of the camping grounds on which tourists were approached stated, “when the guests are here, they deal with any type of weather. But it is at home where the weather affects their destination choice, between a vacation in The Netherlands or abroad”. Thus, understanding the complexity of destination choice decisions could benefit from taking into account the role of personal significance of the weather. Therefore, destination branding campaigns building on positive Word-of-Mouth and citizen participation (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017) could profit from knowledge about the way weather shapes imaginaries of attractiveness among local residents, both positively and negatively.

Among people who actually chose to go on a camping vacation in The Netherlands, potentially bad weather seems to have little effect on satisfaction. This is in line with other studies' findings (Gössling et al., 2016; Lohmann & Kaim, 1999). Given that Steiger, Abegg, and Jänicke (2016) found that first time visitors are more sensitive to rain compared to repeat visitors, the lack of perceived negative impact of weather can be explained by a more extensive knowledge about the local environment and climate. Another explanation might be found in the lower expectations people have of the weather in The Netherlands, which would align with a

study on tourists in Norway (Denstadli et al., 2011). This could also explain why people staying in a tent experienced more positive influences from the weather than people staying in a caravan: when the weather is good, increased exposure to weather has a beneficial effect, while staying in a caravan/motorhome limits the potential of enjoying good weather and from behind the window of a caravan inclement weather might even look extra bad.

From a tourism management perspective, the results point to a need for destination marketing organizations and tourism entrepreneurs to think not only of providing physical facilities (e.g., bad weather attractions like museums or indoor swimming pools) that provide alternatives for outdoor vacation activities during inclement weather. In addition, providing a realistic image of likely weather conditions at destinations in temperate climates might be essential too. However, Gössling et al. (2016) concluded that branding places by using bad weather is not a good idea and stated in turn that “[weather] events are negotiated individually, in the context of a specific situation and opportunities to adapt” (p.8). Therefore, another option might be to enhance behavioral and psychological coping with various weather types, as it can strengthen tourists' sense of control about the way they deal with their vacation weather. This way, by bearing in mind the dimensions of Weather Salience, (marketing) strategies could explicitly take into account the very personal relation people can have with the weather. This can also help mitigating the impact of weather variability on the increasingly ad-hoc vacation decision making behavior that signifies the contemporary –and particularly the domestic– tourism market (Hamilton & Lau, 2004; Ruddy & Scott, 2016). We see a task here for tourism entrepreneurs (with support of regional authorities), who are often most knowledgeable about the local circumstances and microclimates.

This paper has shown that weather conditions can –particularly among people with higher levels of WxS– enhance the experience of being

away from home. This is an important result, since it demonstrates that weather can contribute to experiences of otherness and escape, or to a sense of (un)familiarity. Similar results were found in an earlier study (Jeuring & Peters, 2013), but weather differences appear to be perceived on the high spatial resolution of a small country like The Netherlands. In terms of specific weather features, our findings align with Lohmann and Kaim, (1999) to the extent that wind was the most noticed weather factor by tourists in northern Germany. However, in using a comparative approach, our study moves beyond the conventional measure of absolute weather experiences as employed in various other studies (Hewer et al., 2015; Lohmann & Kaim, 1999; Ritty & Scott, 2014).

Both type and number of weather related differences between home and destination appeared to vary on a small geographical level, pointing to a potential relevance of the weather for experiences of otherness in proximity of people's everyday environment. Furthermore, the construction of meaning about places through comparison (e.g., between home and destination) that can occur on the very local level, shows a potential for capitalizing on microclimates within tourism destinations. Hereby, our study could trigger a rethinking of the hegemonic narratives about climate and weather that shape and are shaped by the tourism industry. Climate and weather often have been contributing to a holistic narrative of the home-away binary, hereby in turn contributing to tourism being a business of travel to sunny and warm places, far away from the mundane, boring, cold and rainy home. But in order to do justice to the importance and attractiveness of domestic tourism in temperate climates, and to the individual micro level on which weather experiences take place, a counter narrative of microclimates, individual level coping and near-home attractiveness seems both promising and necessary.

A number of suggestions for future research can be made. Measurement of Weather Salience and its dimensionality could be further

explored in various tourism contexts. For example, this study's findings could be placed in context of domestic and international tourism of Dutch residents by using larger sample sizes or even a representative sample of the Dutch population. In doing so, differences between WxS levels might be larger than found in this study, since not only the specific segment of camping tourists would be considered. Also, extending beyond camping accommodations and data collection during different types of weather conditions (besides sunny summer weather with above average temperatures) could provide a broader context for interpretation of the findings. This way, too, environmental conditions become more strongly embedded in the research methodology (Lohmann & Hübner, 2013), an aspect of tourism climatology research that deserves more attention. The role of weather in destination choice could be studied further in terms of how weather expectations and experiences affect choosing for a domestic vacation or a destination abroad. Particularly a temporal perspective that takes into account how perceptions change over time could be a useful approach.

Finally, the weather as signifier of otherness and (un)familiarity deserves further attention. For example, future (qualitative) research could get an in-depth perspective on different types of otherness and unfamiliarity that is induced by various weather conditions. A better understanding of weather experiences in terms of otherness and familiarity would be an innovative and thus far hardly explored aspect of how weather affects tourism.

This study aimed to further the understanding of the role of weather experiences in a domestic camping tourism context. Employing a quantitative approach and situated in The Netherlands, the findings of the study contribute to the knowledge about the highly local and contextual impact of weather on people's lives. It can be concluded that Weather Salience, as it is capturing the psychological attunement to weather and

weather changes, has a significant but complicated influence on the outdoor tourist experience, even when holidaying domestically and in relative proximity to home.

In exploring the potential contribution of WxS in a domestic tourism context, this study's findings form a basis for further research on the role of Weather Salience in other tourism settings. More generally, the weather should be maintained as a relevant topic for tourism academics and local stakeholders that is best studied in specific, local contexts, for example that of domestic tourism. By contributing to a better understanding of domestic tourist experiences and of associations between people's everyday life and vacation destinations, tourism climatology research highlights the subjective, spatial aspects of the weather. Hereby tourism climatology can become even more strongly embedded in the geography of tourism.

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