

**BUSINESS DRIVEN ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION IN
AGRICULTURAL BASED TOURISM MICRO-CLUSTERS
IN NORWAY AND AUSTRALIA**

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STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

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This thesis is the result of several rewarding years of research and reflection in two countries, languages and cultures. Australia and Norway are intertwined in my personal and professional experience through marriage, residence and work and is the basis for my interest in gaining a deeper understanding of how two different contexts influence environmental behaviour and perceptions.

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ABSTRACT

The inherent complexity in finding consensus solutions to global environmental issues, such as climate change and loss of biodiversity has led groups of businesses and communities to self-organise and voluntarily pursue collective environmental action. While there is frustration over the slowness of the global decision-making process relating to the environment, there is a realisation that environmental effort will be based on pragmatic assessments of shorter-term value-adding benefits for businesses and the local community. Thus, environmental behaviour is expected to be influenced by contextual and institutional factors across countries and regions, leading to differences in how environmental sustainability is perceived, how businesses and communities pursue environmental action and how environmental actions and programs are assessed.

This research has examined two agricultural based tourism micro-clusters and their efforts towards addressing environmental sustainability: The Greening of Lovedale in the Hunter Valley wine area, NSW Australia; and the Vikebygd Landscape Park in the Hardanger fruit growing region of Norway. Both areas are located in prime tourism destinations, attracting tourists to an aesthetically beautiful landscape for the consumption and purchase of regional agricultural produce (grapes and wine, apples and cider).

The study used a combination of cluster theory, institutional theory and the natural resource based view of the firm to analyse contextual, institutional and value-adding factors that impact on small businesses' environmental behaviour within each case study region. Data was gathered using an identical mixed methods approach in the two regions and included a survey of small business owners and semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders who have direct and indirect links with the respective micro-clusters.

Differences in regulatory, social normative and cultural cognitive institutions in the two countries were shown to have had an impact on environmental attitudes and activities. In turn, this provided an understanding of the differences in barriers and drivers and value-adding perspectives for environmental action by the small businesses in the respective clusters.

Contributions of this study include the examination of businesses' and micro-clusters' environmental behaviour in different contexts. The research has provided applied and policy contributions in the area of environmental policy for small business and micro-clusters, suggesting that, while market based instruments are useful for large businesses, these rarely provide enough incentive for small businesses to effectively pursue environmental action. The concept of sustainable destinations where community,

businesses and local authorities collaborate to create a greener destination may be a model for developing supporting policies for environmentally committed clusters of small businesses. Through clustering and sharing resources and information, small businesses can overcome the barriers of knowledge and motivation that they face in incorporating sustainability programs into their business plans.

The limitations of the study are linked to the selection of the case studies, the micro industries and countries included, and the constraints imposed by a cross sectional study. Future research could examine the differences in internal and external pressures between small and large businesses in different industries, and undertake examinations that track industry actions through time. The future of environmental policy lies in triggering both the social normative and cultural cognitive pressures to pursue collective environmental action as well as providing value-adding incentives for small businesses to reduce their environmental impact.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND NORWEGIAN TERMS

AAA	Australian Automobile Association
ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AGM	Annual General Meeting
AGWRC	Australian Grape and Wine Research Corporation
APVMA	Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority
AWBC	Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation
Bioforsk	Norwegian Institute for Agricultural and Environmental Research
CFI	Carbon Farming Initiative
CSG	coal seam gas
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DEBIO	Official Organic Certification Organisation in Norway
DAFF	Commonwealth Department of Fisheries and Forestry
DCCEE	Commonwealth Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency
DIT	Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure and Transport
ENTWINE	Environmental Management System for Australian Grape-Growers and Wineries
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GREEN GLOBE	International Environmental Certification for Global Accommodation Providers
GLOBAL-GAP	Global - Good Agricultural Practice

HCR-CMA	Hunter Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority, NSW
HVPA	Hunter Valley Protection Alliance
HVWIA	Hunter Valley Wine Industry Association
ISO	International Standardisation Organisation
KLIF	The Climate and Pollution Agency, Norway
KRD	Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, Norway
KSL Matmerk	Norwegian Agricultural Quality System and Food Branding Foundation
LMD	Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Norway
LCC	Lovedale Chamber of Commerce
LVA	Lovedale Vignerons Association
MD	Ministry of Environment, Norway
Miljøfyrtårn	Eco-lighthouse Certification Organisation, Norway
NABERS	National Australian Built Environment Rating System
NHD	Ministry of Trade and Industry, Norway
NCE	Tourism Norwegian Centre of Expertise, Fjord Tourism Cluster
NGI	Norwegian Geotechnical Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OED	Ministry of Oil and Energy, Norway
OH&S	Occupational Health and Safety
OIV	International Wine Organisation (Organisation Internationale du Vin)
PID	Hunter Wine Country Private Irrigation District
R&D	Research and Development
SSB	Statistics Norway
Svanen	Stiftelsen Miljømerking - Nordic Ecolabel Foundation
UNCED	United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission For Asia and the Pacific
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
VLP	Vikebygd Landscape Park
WBCSD	World Business Council for Sustainable Development
WFA	Winemakers Federation of Australia
WGGA	Wine Grape Growers' Australia
WRAA	Wine Restructuring Agenda