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**"There is always a reverse of a medal"**

**A narrative approach to area designations, farming and tourism in Geiranger,  
Western Norway**

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### Summary

This report is a slightly revised version of my master's thesis in Development studies. I approach the interplay between farming and tourism in the Norwegian countryside using narrative and discourse analysis. Geiranger has survived on a combination of farming and tourism for more than a century. However, more recently, the area has been protected as a Landscape Protected Area and obtained World Heritage Status. These designations constitute interesting additional factors affecting the interplay between the sectors.

More specifically, I assess the narratives of different actor groups related to the field I am studying. Furthermore, I compare the identified narratives to each other and link them to broader environmental discourses. The study is done within a framework of political ecology.

**Keywords:** environmental protection, bush encroachment, heritage, farming, narrative analysis



## Preface

This report is a slightly revised version of my master's thesis in Development studies accepted by NORAGRIC, Department of International Environment and Development Studies, at Norwegian University of Life Sciences in Ås.

The period of working with my thesis has of course been challenging and difficult, but more than that it has been interesting, engaging and fun. Without help and encouragements from many people, this would most likely not have been so.

I want to thank my informants, who unselfishly and in confidence have let me into their homes and offices and shared their reality with me. My supervisors, Tor Arve Benjaminsen at NORAGRIC and Karoline Daugstad at Centre for Rural Research, also deserve a sincere thank you for their patience and encouragement. I have been lucky to be received as a colleague at Centre for Rural Research in Trondheim, and I am grateful for the warm welcome and helpful comments. Beate has been a loyal cooperation partner, and Jette, Arne, Jon, Anna, Even, Elin, Frank and Tirill have all made an effort to support me. Thank you.

Marte Lange Vik  
Oslo, August 2008



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## English abstract

In this study I approach the interplay between farming and tourism in the Norwegian countryside using narrative and discourse analysis. The community where I have carried out my study has survived on a combination of farming and tourism for more than a century. However, more recently, the area has been protected as a Landscape Protected Area and obtained World Heritage Status. These designations constitute interesting additional factors affecting the interplay between farming and tourism. More specifically, I assess the narratives of different actor groups related to the field I am studying. These are local farmers, local tourism representatives, World Heritage Management and representatives from local and regional authorities. Furthermore, I compare the identified narratives to each other and link them to broader environmental discourses. The study is done within a framework of political ecology. Critical assessments through the use of narrative and discourse analysis are uncommon in Norwegian rural studies. Application of political ecology theory and methods, such as narrative and discourse analysis, on European settings may offer an important contribution to the development of rural studies.

I have identified two main narratives among the actor groups involved in this study; the marginalisation narrative and the synergy narrative. The marginalisation narrative is put forward by the broad farming sector, from the local farmers to the municipal and county employees working with agricultural matters. This narrative consists of three main arguments: the farming sector and the community are marginalised; the landscapes are threatened by bush encroachment; and local people are disempowered. The synergy narrative is expressed by a complex group consisting of representatives from the tourism sector, the World Heritage Management and officials in environmental matters and planning and development matters. These actors present a win-win narrative, arguing that farming and tourism complement each other in the local community, and that the World Heritage Status positively affects this interplay.

The narratives share central concerns about the viability of the community and environmental values. All groups agree that the environmental values are of great importance for the area, and that these values have been put at risk. The difference between the narratives lies in the understanding of how these values should be preserved. The shared concern for environmental values serves as a nodal point in the narratives, whereas the difference in how they relate to environmental conservation has evolved into social antagonism. The belief in local management practices as environmentally friendly is a characteristic of traditionalist and populist discourses. These discourses reject external regulating interventions. Win-win discourses, however, advocate that external intervention is necessary to sustain environmental values.

## Norsk samandrag

I denne studien undersøker eg samspelet mellom landbruk og reiseliv i distrikts-Noreg ved hjelp av narrativ- og diskursanalyse. I det samfunnet eg har studert, har reiseliv og landbruk eksistert side om side i meir enn hundre år. I nyare tid har området blitt verna som landskapsvernområde og fått verdsarvstatus. Desse statusane er interessante tilleggsfaktorar i samspelet mellom næringane. Konkret nærmar eg meg narrativa til ulike aktørgrupper som er tilknytta feltet eg studerer. Desse gruppene er lokale bønder, lokale reiselivsrepresentantar, verdsarvforvaltinga og kommunale og regionale myndigheiter. Vidare samanliknar eg narrativa med kvarandre og knyter dei opp til breiare miljødiskursar. Studien er gjort innanfor eit rammeverk av politisk økologi. Kritiske tilnærmingar som tar i bruk narrativ- og diskursanalyse er ikkje altfor vanlege i norske bygdestudier. Det kan vere eit viktig tilskot til bygdestudier å nytte teoriar og metodar frå politisk økologi, som til dømes narrativ- og diskursanalyse, i europeisk samanheng.

Eg har identifisert to hovudnarrativ blant aktørgruppene som er involvert i denne studien. Marginaliseringsnarrativet vert uttrykt av landbrukssektoren i brei forstand, frå lokale bønder til landbrukstilsette i kommune og fylke. Narrativet er samansett av tre hovudargument; landbruksnæringa og lokalsamfunnet blir marginalisert, landskapa er trua av attgroing og lokale fastbuande blir overstyrte. Samspelsnarrativet vert uttrykt av ei brei gruppe, samansett av representantar frå reiselivsnæringa, verdsarvforvaltinga og tilsette innanfor miljø-, plan- og utviklingsarbeid i kommunen og fylket. Dette er eit vinn-vinn narrativ som hevdar at landbruk og reiseliv utfyller kvarandre i lokalsamfunnet, og at verdsarvstatusen utgjør ein positiv effekt på dette samspelet.

Narrativa har fleire fellestema omkring miljøomsyn og ivaretaking av ei levande bygd. Alle gruppene er samde om at miljøverdiane i området er veldig viktige, og at desse verdiane er trua. Skilnaden mellom narrativa ligg i forståinga dei har av korleis desse verdiane skal ivaretakast. Det at alle engstar seg for miljøverdiane fungerer som eit knutepunkt mellom narrativa, mens skilnaden i synet på miljøvern har utvikla seg til sosial antagonisme. Trua på at lokale forvaltingspraksisar er miljøvennlege er typisk for det ein kan kalle tradisjonalistiske og populistiske diskursar. Slike diskursar motsett seg eksterne reguleringsinngrep. På den andre sida hevdar vinn-vinn-diskursar at eksterne inngrep er nødvendige for å ivareta miljøverdiar.

## List of abbreviations and translations

Abbreviation <sup>1</sup>	English title	Norwegian title (if original)
AP	Norwegian Labour Party	Arbeiderpartiet
-	County Governor	Fylkesmannen
DA	Department of Agriculture	Landbruksavdelinga
DAEC	Department of Area and Environmental Conservation	Areal- og miljøvernavdelinga
DN	Directorate for Nature Management	Direktoratet for naturforvaltning
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry	Næringsavdelinga
GEM	Global Environmental Management	
GNTL	Geiranger Association for Tourism and Trade	Geiranger Turist- og Næringslag
GS	Geiranger Tourist Transport Association	Geiranger Skysstlag
KRD	Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development	Kommunal- og regionaldepartementet
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature	
LMD	Ministry of Food and Agriculture	Landbruks- og matdepartementet
MD	Ministry of Environment	Miljøverndepartementet
NFU	Norwegian Farmers' Union	Norges Bondelag
NGO	Non-governmental organisation	
NILF	Norwegian Agricultural Economics Research Institute	Norsk institutt for landbruksøkonomisk forskning
RA	Directorate for Cultural Heritage	Riksantikvaren
RMP	Regional environmental program	Regionalt miljøprogram
SLF	Norwegian Agricultural Authority	Statens landbruksforvaltning
SMIL	Special Environmental Measures in Agriculture	Spesielle miljøtiltak i landbruket
SP	Centre Party	Senterpartiet
STILK	Special Measures for the Cultural Landscapes of Agriculture	Spesielle tiltak i landbrukets kulturlandskap
SV	Socialistic Left Party	Sosialistisk Venstreparti
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation	
WHC	World Heritage Committee	
WNF	West Norwegian Fjords	Vestnorsk fjordlandskap

<sup>1</sup> I use original Norwegian abbreviations where such exist.



# 1 Introduction

In this report I will approach the interplay between farming and tourism and how this is affected by nature conservation<sup>2</sup> and World Heritage. The data collection for this study has been carried out in Geiranger, a small community in Western Norway. Tourism and farming have coexisted in Geiranger for more than a century, and both sectors are important to the community. The locals have been handling the interface between these two different sectors for a long time.

More recently however, the Norwegian authorities have entered the stage. First with a wish to protect the landscapes surrounding the village, and later working towards a nomination of the Geiranger fjord and surrounding areas to UNESCO's World Heritage List.

The Landscape Protection Status was approved by national authorities in 2004. It covers mountain areas around Geiranger and the neighbouring valley Herdalen. The areas closest to the farms are left outside of the protected area. Next, together with another area 120 km further south in Norway, the Geiranger fjord and surrounding areas were inscribed on the World Heritage List in July 2005 as 'West Norwegian Fjords'. This was the first, and is presently, the only, Natural Site of World Heritage in Norway. The World Heritage committee states as part of the justification: "Remnants of old and now mostly abandoned transhumant farms add a cultural aspect to the dramatic natural landscape that complements and adds human interest to the area." (WHC 2005:116). The cultural landscapes are thus an important part of the overall impression. So it is important to maintain these landscapes, and farmers are important actors in this maintenance.

Tourism activities in Geiranger started nearly 150 years ago. Since then tourism has grown, both due to the marketing of Geiranger as a tourist destination, and due to a general increase in tourism internationally. Today the village is one of Norway's most visited destinations receiving more than half a million tourists every year. As such, Geiranger has been well known to all Norwegians for a long time.

After Geiranger's inscription on the World Heritage List, the focus on the community in the Norwegian media increased. Various articles in local, regional and national media have reflected farmers' worries towards the Landscape Protection Status and the preserving nature of the World Heritage Status, expressing concerns about the impossibility for renewal and development of the agricultural activities (e.g Syverud 2006; Tandstad 2006). Furthermore,

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<sup>2</sup> In this report, I use the term *protection* when treating the Landscape Protection Status in the Geiranger area, whereas *conservation* is used when talking about area or nature conservation on a more overall level.

increased pollution and smog in the village gained attention from both pollution experts and the tourism sector (e.g. Andersen 2006; Mauren 2006).

My interest was caught during the summer of 2006 because of these news reports of conflicts, problems and pollution. My initial naivety made me overlook the media's eagerness to exaggerate and to paint a pessimistic view. I was intrigued by what I thought was bad handling, bad cooperation or bad management by the authorities, and the indignation I felt on behalf of the farmers was my initial motivation for studying this situation more closely.

I decided to do a stakeholder analysis, to assess the narratives of the different stakeholders concerning the situation they are experiencing. After hearing the news reports, I was left with an impression that some information must have been left out. I wondered what triggered these reactions from the farmers, and started searching for a more in depth assessment of the situation. I found some topical studies from Geiranger, but no one had assessed the complexity of the overall situation, and how it is experienced by the actual key players. Through narrative analysis I hope to shed light on the underlying motivation and arguments that form the background for these 'outcries' presented in the media.

I have decided to focus on the farmers in particular. I have interviewed all the seven farmers that are active today, and those who, for different reasons, have decided to wind up their farms during the last five years. In addition, I have conducted interviews with representatives from the tourism sector, the World Heritage Management and local and regional authorities. All together I have interviewed 26 people.

## **1.1 The objective of this study**

### **1.1.1 Problem statement**

This report will assess the relationship between farming and tourism in the Norwegian countryside. The authorities have presented tourism as "the rural saviour" (Rønningen 2007), and during the last two decades there has been an increasing trend in the Norwegian countryside towards diversification into tourism (Brandt & Haugen 2005). Geiranger is in a special position here. This small community is situated in the Western part of Norway, in the Fjords. Tourism has existed here side by side with farming for more than a century. The experience of Geiranger might have value beyond the borders of this community. I will use narrative analysis as a tool to explore and elaborate the interplay between farming and tourism in Geiranger, and to investigate how this relationship is affected by the more recent approval of a Landscape Protected Area and the World Heritage Status of Geiranger.

### **1.1.2 Research questions**

1. What are the narratives of the different stakeholder groups; farmers, tourism sector, World Heritage Management, and authorities, in Geiranger?

- a) What do the different groups say about farming and tourism and the interplay between these two sectors in the community?
  - b) How do they relate to cultural landscapes?
  - c) How do they experience the Landscape Protection Status and the World Heritage Status?
2. What similarities and contrasts can be found within the narratives of the different actor groups?
  3. Can the various narratives identified be linked to broader discourses?

## 1.2 Rationale

This report is written within the framework of political ecology. Political ecology is a relatively new and emerging field within environment and development studies. I will argue that political ecology can be relevant to this study in two ways. First, research within political ecology is today mainly carried out in developing countries. However, there is now a trend of bringing political ecology "home" (see e.g. *Environment and Planning A* 37(6)). Such studies can contribute to developing the field further. Secondly, political ecology offers a new setting and framework for rural studies in Norway that can provide new perspectives. In particular, the focus on narratives and discourses is an undeveloped approach in Norwegian rural studies. Hence, political ecology is an important contribution to this report and this report can contribute to political ecology.

To support my analysis and discussion, I use empirically based literature found on the topics of diversification of the countryside into tourism, on agriculture as an upholder of cultural heritage, on Norwegian agriculture, on small-scale and large-scale tourism, and on Geiranger. This literature will serve as a tool for structuring of my analysis and discussion. In such a way my findings can complement and build upon earlier studies. Two examples will serve to illustrate this:

Firstly, most of the research done on the relationship between farming and tourism on the Norwegian countryside focuses on how these two sectors interact with each other in small-scale rural tourism. Both obstacles to developing farm-based tourism and how farmers can benefit from tourism by incorporating a tourism business into the farm are assessed. Geiranger is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Norway with more than half a million tourists each season. How this large-scale tourism affects other sectors, such as farming, is another factor that must be examined.

Secondly, not much research has been carried out on the effects of area designations on tourism and farming in the Norwegian countryside. An assessment of how additional factors such as a Landscape Protection and a World Heritage Status affect the interplay between the farming sector and the tourism sector is a relevant supplement to existing research. Most of

the earlier studies concerning these two sectors in Norway do not consider the impact of external factors.

Moreover, on the societal level, there is a general concern among farmers, tourists, authorities and the public in general, about the importance of maintaining the cultural landscapes of Norway in order to combat bush encroachment<sup>3</sup>. The cultural landscapes in the Geiranger area are important in many aspects. They contribute to giving the site a higher touristic value and they are important for the World Heritage Status of the area. Besides, the area has a rich biodiversity. Investigations have discovered the existence of several species that cannot be found this far north elsewhere (Møre and Romsdal county 2004). These special features are upheld partly due to the impact of grazing animals. Because the farmers are the main actors in the maintenance of these cultural landscapes it is important to map and consider their narratives concerning the situation.

### 1.2.1 Limitations

This report is a qualitative assessment. It will not consider quantitatively measurable values in relation to factors such as farming, tourism, Landscape Protection and World Heritage, but rather focus on the personal perceptions around these issues. I will not focus on theories on rural change or on theories on the sustainability of tourism. Both of these areas would be interesting starting points for the study of Geiranger, but it is outside the scope of this report to include all of these aspects. I have therefore chosen a narrower focus on how the Geiranger case relates to the field of political ecology and vice versa. This means a focus largely upon power relations, conservation and control in relation to environmental values. As mentioned, I will also use the empirically based literature from other rural studies done in Norway to complement my own interview data and help structure and analyse the data.

## 1.3 Outline of the report

In *Chapter 2*, I will give an introduction to Geiranger in order to describe the context and background for this study. *Chapter 3* gives an introduction to the theoretical background and definition of concepts that are central for this report. *Chapter 4* will describe the methodology I have used when working on this report. In *Chapter 5*, I present the results of my data analysis, answering the questions 'Which narratives are central to the different actor groups?' and 'What arguments constitute the different narratives?' (Research question 1). *Chapter 6* discusses these narratives, with the aim of discovering commonalities and distinctions in their relation to each other (Research question 2). In *Chapter 7*, I identify the links between the local narratives and broader environmental discourses, thus linking my

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<sup>3</sup> I choose to use the term *bush encroachment* in this report. The equivalent Norwegian notion is *gjengroing*. In this report, the term covers regrowth of infield areas (in-fenced privately owned land close to the farm, cultivated or semi-cultivated pastures) and outfield areas (private or common land, not cultivated or worked on, typically swamps, forests, natural grasslands, mountainous areas) due to fewer grazing animals, and overgrowth of forest areas due to green-house gas emissions from extensive traffic and general climate changes.



study to the broader field of political ecology (Research question 3). Finally, in *Chapter 8 I* offer some concluding remarks.



## 2 Geiranger, the area of study

In this chapter I will describe the setting in which I have conducted my study. In my view, a contextualisation of the data I have collected is a necessary and important step for a better understanding of the environment from which they stem.

I start by giving a short introduction to the topography of the area and the village, and continue with a description of Geiranger historically and today, focusing on the farming and tourism sectors in particular. Next, I describe in more detail the recent processes of Landscape Protection and World Heritage Statuses in Geiranger. Towards the end of the chapter, I briefly describe the political context which is important for the development in Geiranger, and I present, in more detail, an action plan that was published recently. Last, I briefly present the main stakeholders in this study.

### 2.1 Topography

Geiranger is situated in Western Norway. The area from Bergen to Ålesund on the Western coast is characterised by precipitous mountainsides and narrow fjords. The Geiranger village lies at the head of the Geiranger fjord, one of the steepest and narrowest of all the Norwegian fjords. The mountains rise more than 1,000 meters directly from the water surface.

Although the mountain sides surrounding the village of Geiranger are less precipitous than those further down the fjord, they are still steep. There are three areas that are topographically well suited for farming within the community; down by the waterfront (originally two farmlands<sup>4</sup> - Gjørva and Maråk), one smaller 'plateau' about 100 metres above sea level (one farmland - Vinje), and the valleys from 350 to 400 metres above sea level (various farmlands - Flydal, Ørjasæter, Opplendskedalen). The rest of the traditionally farmed areas; Hole, Vesterås, Møll, Grande and Homlong (covering various farmlands) are more scattered, steep and difficult to work and mow for the purposes of hay collection (see Figure 2.1b)

### 2.2 History

Historically, small-scale farms have been operated along the fjord on the small shelves in the mountain sides. These farms have operated without roads, and most often with the fjord as

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<sup>4</sup> The term *farmland* is used with reference to larger areas that the community is divided into by the locals. Earlier each farmland may have been the areas of one farm, but today these farmlands cover the areas of several separate units.

the only gateway to the outside world. They had transport lines and steep paths down to the water front. All these farms were abandoned in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Kjølås 2005).

In the community of Geiranger, too, farming has been the main occupation historically. Traditionally the farms have depended upon diverse activity, combining livestock (horse, cattle, sheep, goat, pig and hen) and crop (fruits, vegetables and grain) production. Although commercialisation of agricultural goods (e.g. milk and butter) started in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, most farms were mainly self-sufficient until after World War II (Lillebø *et al.* 1999).

Communication with areas outside the community was historically carried out using the fjord. On land, transport was mainly done by horse, along paths for pack horses either from the fjord to the valleys or to the community on the other side of the mountain in a north-westward direction. Late in the 19<sup>th</sup> century a road was built, south-eastbound across the mountains from the village. According to one of my sources, this road was originally meant to go from Tafjord, the community at the head of the a fjord further north, but the locals there rejected the plans of a mountain road connecting them with the middle and eastern parts of Norway, and the authorities decided upon an alternative route (pers.comm.<sup>5</sup>). It was thus rather accidental that this road was built to Geiranger. Nevertheless, this road has been of great importance for the development of the tourism industry in Geiranger as it made the site more easily accessible.

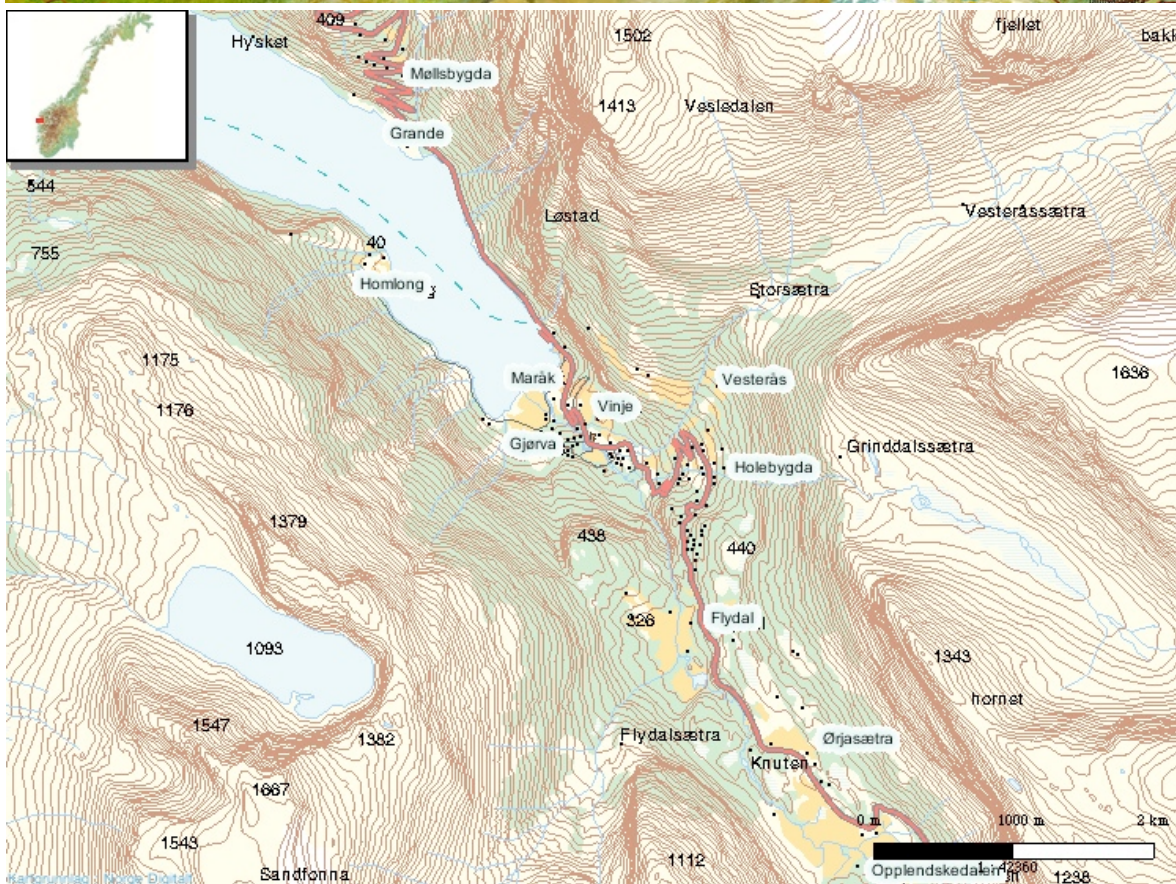
The first cruise yachts entered the Geiranger fjord in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and by 1890 the tourists started to go ashore in Geiranger as a part of the cruises. The farmers organised sightseeing tours by horse to the nearby mountain sides for spectacular views. In 1907 the Geiranger Tourist Transport Association, *Geiranger Skysslag (GS)*, consisting of farmers involved in the transportation of tourists, was founded. GS organised a fair distribution of the sightseeing tours among the farmers. After a few years with horse transport, the association conducted sightseeing tours by car as early as the 1910s (Kjølås 2005; GS 2007). This association also organised the building of the Dalsnibba road, to the peak of highest mountain in the area, linked to the south-eastbound road to the inland areas. After the Dalsnibba road was completed in 1938, the Dalsnibba peak became one of the most popular viewpoints for tourists visiting Geiranger.

During the 1960s, the farming sector experienced hard times in and several farmers considered moving elsewhere. This resulted in several farmers building cabins for rental during the tourist season (pers.comm.<sup>6</sup>). Thus, the diversification of the farming sector into tourism in Geiranger is not a new phenomenon, and has been a coping strategy for the farming sector for several decades. From the 1960s and until today, the number of cabins and rooms for rental to tourists has increased to meet the needs of the constantly growing number of tourists.

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5 Personal communication: Arne Sandnes, Oct 8 2007

6 Personal communication: Tor Hole, July 31 2007



**Figures 2.1a, b:** Maps of Geiranger and its surroundings

**2.1a:** Relief map of the area, covering the Geiranger fjord and the two neighbouring fjords in the World Heritage Site (Source: [www.dgt.no](http://www.dgt.no))

**2.1b:** Map of Geiranger, localising the farmlands and showing where Geiranger is situated in Norway (Source: [www.ngu.no](http://www.ngu.no))

## 2.3 Geiranger today

Today, Geiranger experiences intensified tourism, with around 700,000 visiting tourists per summer season (Holm *et al.* 2007). In this period the community is packed with tourists. Locals describe this period as a time without social interaction. Everyone has enough to do coping with their own guests and activities, and there is no spare time to visit friends and neighbours (Rohde 1998).

This huge market potential has also increased the engagement of external actors in tourism in Geiranger. Hence, not only is the community packed with tourists during these months, but the number of seasonal inhabitants is also vast. Many families who have moved from the community come back during the summer season to run camping sites, cabin rentals, souvenir shops, hotels, etc. In recent years, a couple of enterprises without family connections to Geiranger have also entered the stage, selling adventure mountain tours or fjord trips to tourists.

GS has lately been converted into a limited company under the more recently established Geiranger Association for Tourism and Trade, *Geiranger turist- og næringslag* (GTNL). GTNL has also started a new company called Geiranger Fjordservice AS<sup>7</sup>, which by offering sightseeing tours on the Geiranger fjord complements the offer from GS. Furthermore, members from GTNL have invested private money in the establishment of a new tourist centre, Geiranger Fjordsenter, offering exhibitions on the history, arts and nature of the region.

Outside of the main season, there is only one hotel operating in Geiranger. In mid-September every year, the tourism diminishes and the community reverts to its winter state. The summer inhabitants go back to their homes, and the number of inhabitants is once again reduced to about 250. During the winter season there is much more social interaction among the inhabitants of Geiranger. In this way, the community of Geiranger experiences a yearly cycle where everything centres on the peak of activity during the summer months, and the months from September to May are used first for recuperation from the last tourist season and then for preparation for the next hectic summer season (Rohde 1998).

For the farmers, this intensive tourist season coincides with the busiest period in agriculture, especially the harvesting to make hay. In order to have enough food for the animals during the winter season, the farmers with farmland too steep for mowing by tractor have to mow more or less constantly from June to September. All the farmers in this area are engaged in livestock production. Most of the production today is sheep meat, but there is also some meat and milk production from goats and cattle. All of the farmers send the livestock away to the mountain pastures during the summer months. This is the only possible way to run a farm in the steep hill sides of Geiranger.

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<sup>7</sup> AS is the Norwegian abbreviation equivalent to Ltd. (Limited company)

Still, most of the farmers have cabins or rooms for rent. Thus, it is difficult to fit everything into the timetable for the summer season. Furthermore, most of the farmers have families, and many farmers express feelings of bad conscience over not being able to effectively fulfil their multiple roles as family members, tourist hosts and farmers. In particular, the hectic nature of the summer season in Geiranger affects their ability to meet family needs such as holiday travelling.

Geiranger is experiencing a huge decline in the number of farms. On average, one farm has wound up its production each year during the last 20 years, but between September 2005 and March 2006 three farms wound up, and after that two more have severely reduced their number of animals and hence the productive capacity of the farm. There are various reasons for this. Some farmers have retired without having successors and others have decided to change work for different economic reasons. From a situation with more than 30 operating farms a couple of decades ago, today there are eight farms left in Geiranger. Two of the farmers have less than ten animals during the winter season. One of these is still hoping for better times for farming and a possibility of increasing the number of animals and make farming a main occupation again, the second uses the animals as to manage pastures and prevent overgrowth. Of the rest, five farms are run by locals and the sixth is run by a farmer from the neighbouring community. Five people have farming as their main occupation, and only two of these have farming as their only occupation. No farms are run without other incomes, either from tourism on the farm, tourism outside the farm (hotel) or public service jobs such as teaching, nursing or cleaning. It is a general assumption that many of the year-round inhabitants in Geiranger survive the rest of the year on the incomes from the tourism activity during the summer season.

## 2.4 Landscape Protection and World Heritage

Before I start describing the processes of Landscape Protection and World Heritage Statuses in Geiranger, I will give some introductory comments on the *Nature Conservation Act* and the World Heritage Convention.

The *Nature Conservation Act* forms the background for all area conservation done in Norway since it was adopted in 1970. It states that nature conservation in Norway can be done according to four categories: Nature Reserve, National Park, Landscape Protected Area, and Nature Monument. Of these four categories, Landscape Protection is the one that implies the least restrictions concerning the use of the areas (Lovdata 2008). Except for national parks, the management unit of nature conservation areas is the Environment Department at the County Governor's<sup>8</sup> Office. There have been some efforts during the last decades to decentralise the management of protected areas to a municipality level (Daugstad forthcoming).

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8 The County Governor is the representative of national authorities in the Norwegian counties.

The World Heritage Committee (WHC) is a subdivision of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). The aim of the convention is to motivate the States Parties to preserve their Natural and Cultural Heritage. In order to obtain World Heritage Status, an area or monument has to be protected by national laws. The World Heritage List is managed by the World Heritage Committee. The list has sites inscribed as Cultural Sites or Natural Sites, or a combination of both. When it comes to management of the World Heritage Sites, this responsibility lies with the national States Parties. They have to develop management plans and report the state of the nation's sites every sixth year (Daugstad forthcoming).

The Geiranger-Herdalen Landscape Protected Area (see Appendix 5) was protected in 2004, but the process started 18 years earlier. The area was proposed to be officially conserved by the Ministry of Environment, *Miljøverndepartementet* (MD), in 1986, and it has been subject to two conservation rounds, each with separate public hearings. The County Governor's Department of Area and Environmental Conservation, *Fylkesmannens areal- og miljøvernnavdeling*, was in charge of the process. During the first round, in the public hearing, responses were given from municipal boards, the tourism sector and other actors. Many responses were given as conditions (e.g. "The landscape protection will have to be formulated so that it does not affect business interests."). However, both the municipal authorities and the local representatives from the farming sector expressed their resistance to the proposal, arguing that intervention would affect local development and production, and that the proposal for a Landscape Protected Area was a sign of mistrust of the local management of the areas. This conservation round ended up with a recommendation from the regional authorities to MD to give the area a Landscape Protection Status, according to the Nature Conservation Act (Daugstad *et al.* 2005).

The second conservation round was initiated by the Department of Area and Environmental Conservation (DAEC) at the County Governor's Office in 1993. The aim was to develop a protection and management plan for the area. Moreover, this round intended to include a larger degree of local participation. This time, the local tourism sector was involved in the public hearing, as well as some national NGOs who promoted the opinions of their members. Only the municipal boards changed their views, now expressing support for the Landscape Protected Area, but in general the responses in this round were more focused on how the protection and management plans should be formulated in order to serve the interests of the various actors. In this second round, a council with representatives from both of the municipalities with land areas covered by the Landscape Protected Area, and local business representatives from differing sectors was formed (Daugstad *et al.* 2005). There are different examples of how this council with local representatives could influence the final protection plan. One of the most used examples of such influence is related to the demarcation of the border for the Landscape Protected Area.



The final confirmation of Norway's intention to nominating the West Norwegian Fjords to a World Heritage Status was given by former Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik in 2002. By then it had been planned for some years. The original initiative came from the Nordic Council of Ministers, *Nordisk ministerråd*, in a report on World Heritage in the Nordic countries in 1996 (Daugstad forthcoming). The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) made a visit to the areas in 2004, and sent a nomination of West Norwegian Fjords (WNF) to UNESCO. The West Norwegian Fjords area consists of the Geiranger fjord and surrounding areas in the north (see Figure 2.1), and the Nærøy fjord and surrounding areas further south (see Appendix 5).

West Norwegian Fjords were inscribed on the UNESCO's World Heritage List, Natural site, in July 2005, at the 29<sup>th</sup> session of the World Heritage Committee in Durban, South Africa. The justification for the inscription was as follows:

*Criterion (i): The West Norwegian Fjords are classic, superbly developed fjords, considered as the type locality for fjord landscapes in the world. They are comparable in scale and quality to other existing fjords on the World Heritage List and are distinguished by the climate and geological setting. The property displays a full range of the inner segments of two of the world's longest and deepest fjords.*

*Criterion (iii): The Nærøyfjord and Geirangerfjord areas are considered to be among the most scenically outstanding fjord areas on the planet. Their outstanding natural beauty is derived from their narrow and steep-sided crystalline rock walls that rise up to 1400 m direct from the Norwegian Sea and extend 500 m below sea level. Along the sheer walls of the fjords are numerous waterfalls while free-flowing rivers rise up through deciduous and coniferous forest to glacial lakes, glaciers and rugged mountains. There is a great range of supporting natural phenomena, both terrestrial and marine such as submarine moraines and marine mammals. Remnants of old and now mostly abandoned transhumant farms add a cultural aspect to the dramatic natural landscape that complements and adds human interest to the area. (WHC 2005:116)*

After this inscription, there were several reactions from the different actor groups. Norwegian newspapers and television news pictured representatives from the farming sector shouting about bush encroachment and impossible conditions for farmers, due to restrictions and bad policies (e.g. Osland & Brubæk 2006; Syverud 2006), and from researchers and the tourism sector shouting about pollution due to heavy traffic pressure and bush encroachment (e.g. Andersen 2006; Norderhaug *et al.* 2006). However, a more optimistic viewpoint was expressed by both the tourism sector and local and regional authorities after the inscription, saying that the World Heritage Status implies increased tourism value for the area, and that when the Norwegian state has applied for, and obtained the World Heritage Status, it provides access to money reserves because this implies that the state authorities have taken a special responsibility for upholding of the community and its surroundings.

## 2.5 The political framework

In the Norwegian context, the development of the farming sector in Geiranger is not unique. The entire Norwegian farming sector was subjected to rationalisation and modernisation in the 1960s. From diverse forms of production, most farms did specialise in grain, milk or meat production. This was followed by a period characterised by a decline in the number of farms, strong urbanisation trends, low incomes and strong discontent in the farming sector. In 1975, after demonstrations and protests from farmers, the Norwegian parliament passed a resolution for gradual income increase, *opptrappingsvedtaket*. Among other things, this resolution aimed to raise the incomes of farmers to those of an average industry worker. This led to massive positive social changes in the Norwegian countryside. However, not all outcomes of the resolution were positive. A consequence of an improved agricultural economy was overproduction, which led to a crisis in the beginning of the 1980s. After this, we saw a general neo-liberalistic turn in the political environment, and market adaptation also hit the agricultural sector, with an urge to rationalise the production in order to lower the prices (Almås 2000).

As a result of this neo-liberalistic turn, a number of national trends emerged, including two that are relevant to this report. First, as part of an initiative for the development of rural communities, *bygdeutvikling*, the government stated that rural tourism should be a focus (Almås 2000). Tourism as a central area for focus of the Norwegian government has lately been confirmed in the political platform for the Norwegian government (AP, SV & SP 2005:22, *my translation*) stating:

*Tourism is recognised as a regional business and a business dominated by women, consisting of small and medium-sized enterprises. We will develop Norwegian tourism further and put effort into profiling and branding Norway as a tourism destination.*

Second, the multifunctionality of the agricultural sector has been emphasised. In particular, its significance for social issues and production of common goods are central factors (Daugstad & Rønningen 2004). For this report, the focus on cultural landscapes is important. Since 1990, two separate measures have been in operation. The current Special Environmental Measures in Agriculture, *Spesielle miljøtiltak i landbruket* (SMIL), is an expansion and continuation of the former Special Measures for the Cultural Landscapes of Agriculture, *Spesielle tiltak i landbrukets kulturlandskap* (STILK). These measures offer subsidies for the management and care of important areas and buildings in agricultural landscapes (Skar & Rønningen 2006).

### 2.5.1 Action Plan for Cultural Landscapes in World Heritage Areas

With a national focus on the preservation of agricultural landscapes and the threat of bush encroachment, the World Heritage Council for WNF initiated a project in 2006. The aim of this project was to assess the profitability of farming, and investigate and document the funding necessary to raise the number of grazing animals, and strengthen and maintain the farming sector in the World Heritage Areas. This was thought to contribute to upholding a

viable community with farming practices maintaining the character of the cultural landscapes formed by grazing and mowing especially. All of the involved the counties engaged, with the report for this project being launched in July 2007. After a description of the state of agricultural production, cultural landscapes and economic measures today, a scenario for upholding of the cultural landscapes was presented. Based on this scenario it is argued that more than 6 million kroner is needed to ensure upholding of the cultural landscapes in Geiranger and its surroundings. The money should be distributed into area, grazing, cultural and investment subsidies (Verdsarvrådet & Vega kommune 2007). This report was handed to the government, with encouragement to contribute to all the relevant ministries, among others the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, *Kommunal- og regionaldepartementet* (KRD), the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, *Landbruks- og matdepartementet* (LMD), and the Ministry of Environment, *Miljøverndepartementet* (MD).

## 2.6 Main actors and stakeholders

As all other communities, Geiranger consists of several interlinked groups. For a study like this, aiming to understand some internal dynamics of the community, it can be difficult to set the limits for who I should include in the study. In this section, I present the actor groups I have considered as relevant for this study, also giving some short explanations for why I decided not to include some groups and individuals:

**Farmers<sup>9</sup>:** There are five active farmers left in Geiranger. In addition there are two hobby-farmers who earn their main income from other employment. I have interviewed these seven local farmers, as well as the three farmers who wound up their production during the last five years. In addition, I have interviewed some of these farmers' partners. There is one last farm in the village, which is run by a farmer from a neighbouring community. However, this farmer was not interviewed for this study.

**Farmers' union:** Traditionally various farmers have been listed as members of the Norwegian Farmers' Union, *Norges Bondelag* (NFU). Lately, as the number of farmers in Geiranger has declined, the number of members in this association has also declined. The association still has a local group in Geiranger, but it is not very active. I have therefore not interviewed anyone in particular as representatives from this union.

**Tourism sector:** The tourism sector consists of a wide range of actors. For this report I have focused on those who are year-round inhabitants of Geiranger who operate businesses year-round. Of these, there are four categories. First, there are those who run camping sites, cabin rental or room rental on the farms, as a supplement to farming. Second, there is one hotel owner that runs the only year-round open hotel in Geiranger. Third, there is the Geiranger Association for Tourism and Trade (GTNL) and the three companies associated with this

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<sup>9</sup> The farmers in this study are all small-scale farmers in Norwegian standards. None of them have more than 30-40 animals on a yearly basis, and the average is much lower.

association, Geiranger Tourist Transport Association (GS), Geiranger Fjordservice and Geiranger Fjordsenter. And finally there is the destination company<sup>10</sup> serving the tourism sector of the larger area. I have interviewed all farmers with cabins or camping sites, the hotel owner, two employees from Geiranger Fjordservice and the destination company.

**World Heritage Management:** The World Heritage Management consists of two separate units. One is an administration centre, located in Geiranger, with one employee who is in charge of the management of the World Heritage on a daily basis. This position has been financed as a project by the destination company, but from 2008 this post is paid by the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development (KRD). The second unit is a World Heritage Council that is common to both the northern and southern part of West Norwegian Fjords. This council consists of mayors from the six municipalities concerned, representatives from the authorities of the three counties involved and from two governmental directorates; the Directorate for Cultural Heritage, *Riksantikvaren* (RA), and the Directorate for Nature Management, *Direktoratet for Naturforvaltning* (DN), and finally one representative from the Ministry of Environment (MD). For this study, I have interviewed the local employee, and the head of the World Heritage Council.

**Authorities:** Norway has a three-level authority structure, with municipal authorities as the lowest level, and secondly regional authorities in 19 counties, and at the highest level, the ministries and governmental authorities. All the levels have councils and administrative bodies. For this report, I have interviewed employees in the relevant departments within municipal and county administrative bodies.

**Organisations:** There are two relevant local organisations, first the Geiranger Association for Tourism and Trade (GTNL), and second the Friends of the Storfjord, which is a special interest organisation assisting in repairing and maintaining the abandoned farms situated along the fjord. I consider the general views of the GTNL to be covered by the representatives from the tourism sector, and as such, have not sought them out for interview. I did not enrol the Friends of the Storfjord into this study either, as their specific field of interest is outside of the core topic for this report.

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<sup>10</sup> A destination company in Norwegian tourism sector is a networking company for several tourism sites in an area, working with national and international branding and marketing, and coordination of tourism activities in the area.

## 3 Theoretical framework

In this chapter, I will elaborate the theoretical framework that forms the background for the analysis. I start by giving a short introduction to my understanding of theory through which I will place myself in the theoretical landscape. Further, I will present the field of political ecology, which has inspired this study. Within this field, discourse and narrative analysis is central. The key concepts of *discourse* and *narrative* will also be discussed. This chapter forms the basis for the analysis and discussion of my findings.

### 3.1 Theoretical approach

The aim of this study is to explore how different actor groups perceive and relate to the reality they experience. I do not intend to discover facts about the real world or present any form of applied research. Rather, my objective is to assess how different groups construct different *representations*<sup>11</sup> of a shared reality. This approach is within a social constructivist<sup>12</sup> tradition, believing that social categories are constructed by humans, and that such categories are subject to constant change and redefinition by the people who relate to them in a social setting (Bryman 2004).

In the social constructivist tradition, the reality that is the object of research cannot be treated as separate from human perceptions. Human beings, both persons interviewed for the purpose of a study, and the researcher herself, can only describe their own constructions of reality. Hence, we cannot speak of one common reality, but rather of several coexisting social representations and constructions of reality. To clarify, I find it fruitful to quote Svarstad *et al.* (2008:118). They write:

*In defining social constructivism, we can distinguish between epistemological relativism and ontological relativism. Epistemological relativism implies that we can never know reality exactly as it is. Ontological relativism goes further to argue that reality itself is determined by the observer (Jones, 2002). The former implies that nature is seen as material reality, which exists independently of human thought.*

In this report I accept epistemological, but reject ontological relativism. The focus on narratives calls for a constructivist approach, as narratives themselves are constructions. At the same time, my constructivist standpoint implies that the construction happens at the level of the narratives, not at the level of reality.

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11 The term *representation* refers to interpreted versions of reality. It will be explained later in this chapter.

12 The notions *constructionism* and *constructivism* seem to be used interchangeably in the literature. I choose to use the notion social *constructivism* in this report.

In this study I choose to categorise the social constructions of reality through narrative and discourse analysis. The focus on discourses comes from poststructuralism. Poststructuralist approaches put the focus on language from structuralism into a social context. Rather than focusing on language itself, as the structuralists did, poststructuralists focus on *uses* of language, and how relations, which in structuralism are seen as constituting language, also constitute social constellations (Neumann 2001). Thus, structures (here, language system) which are absolute and permanent in structuralism, become temporary in poststructuralism, as they are in a dialectic relationship to social practices (here, language use) (Jørgensen & Phillips 1999). However, as I will explain in more detail in a later section of this chapter, my focus on agency in the production of discourses is a development of Foucault's poststructuralist approach (Müller 2008).

When it comes to theory generation, I start by introducing Svarstad (2003:10-11) who states that:

*[the] constructivist approach focuses on theory formation, and there is a lack of a strict line of demarcation between science and everyday knowledge. The reason is that any demarcation of social science is itself seen as a result of social processes.*

First, I will draw attention to what Svarstad calls "theory formation". From this, theories are mainly generated by what Svarstad calls "bottom-up approaches" (Svarstad 2003:11). By starting with a categorisation of collected data one aims to generate empirically based theory. This approach is a contrast to positivistic, deductive methods such as the testing of hypotheses. Next, due to this inductive approach, there is a "lack of strict line of demarcation between science and everyday knowledge" (Svarstad 2003:10-11). Science depends on everyday knowledge. Everyday knowledge is constantly negotiated and expanded, and this may offer conditions for new scientific insights. Thus, it is crucial not to create a distance between these two sets of knowledge.

My intention to identify narratives from my collected data material, and link these to discourses, is consistent with such an inductive approach. The main objective of the analysis is to categorise the collected material, to make sense of the components. However, as I will elaborate further in the following chapter, my approach is not purely inductive because of inspiration from grounded theory, which emphasises a constantly iterative process between theory and data (Bryman 2004).

In the following sections of this chapter, I will elaborate on the field of political ecology, which has inspired this work and on narrative and discourse analysis as critical tools within political ecology.

## 3.2 Political ecology

Political ecology is a relatively new field. It emerged in the 1980s and books such as Watts' *Silent Violence* (1983), Blaikie's *The Political Economy of Soil Erosion in Developing Countries* (1985) and Blaikie and Brookfield's *Land degradation and Society* (1987) are considered as the first seminal works in the field. Political ecology has its roots in radical and critical theory. It developed as a reaction to neo-Malthusian demographic explanations of environmental change and as an alternative to broader "apolitical" approaches (Robbins 2004) such as environmental determinism. Bryant (2001) describes the development of the field through a neo-Marxist period leaning on Marxism and dependency theories, focusing on analysis of class and external critique, to a post-Marxist turn in the 1990s. With this turn came a wider theoretical basis and a change of analysis unit to households, states and discourses and internal critiques. This post-Marxist political ecology is theoretically more eclectic, drawing on a combination of neo-Weberian theories, feminism and Foucauldian discourse.

According to Benjaminsen and Svarstad (forthcoming 2009) two different schools of thought can be identified in political ecology. The Blaikie school is theoretically eclectic and empirically based. It has its main roots in the UK. As a critique of what was claimed to be a lack of 'politics' in this school, there was a political turn in political ecology from the mid-1990s. This turn was fronted by the Watts school that has its roots in the US, and has a stronger theoretical and political foundation inspired by Marxism. In turn, the Watts school has been criticised for structural determinism (Vayda & Walters 1999). Despite this political turn in the field, several studies have continued to focus on environmental change.

Drawing on these traditions, political ecologists seek to identify explanations for social and environmental change, by studying these in relation to each other. For instance, Blaikie and Brookfield (1987:17) wrote:

*The phrase 'political ecology' combines the concerns of ecology and a broadly defined political economy. Together this encompasses the constantly shifting dialectic between society and land-based resources, and also within classes and groups within society itself.*

The main argument of political ecologists is that an assessment of environmental change alone implies a reductionist approach. In order to reach a deeper understanding of environmental and social processes, simultaneous and integrated assessments are needed. Although the focus on politics within political ecology is stronger in some circles than in others, there is little doubt that political ecology is, as the name indicates, political. Indeed, Bryant and Bailey (1997:5), who themselves are from the UK, state that political ecology is about "putting politics first" and they treat the environment as politicised. Furthermore, political ecology research often contains explicit political and normative arguments about how policies ought to be formed (Benjaminsen & Svarstad forthcoming 2009). Researchers within the field of political ecology are critical of how scientists tend to assume that they tell an objective story, and thus claim to be apolitical despite various policy implications in the

"truth talks to power" tradition (Blaikie 2001). From this we see that political ecology is part of a constructivist tradition. However, most political ecologists adhere to soft constructivism or critical realism, arguing that there is a true reality, but also that how actors perceive this reality differently is subject to social constructions (e.g. Forsyth 2003). According to Buch-Hansen *and* Nielsen (2005) critical realists claim that there is a true reality and that it is possible to obtain knowledge about this reality. However, all knowledge is fallible. Hence, critical realists do not necessarily claim to possess such knowledge. Going back to my understanding of social constructivism, accepting epistemological while rejecting ontological relativism, this study can be placed within critical realism. As I will describe later, my approach to narratives and discourses is also consistent with critical realism.

As a result of the interdisciplinary and eclectic nature of political ecology, studies done within the field have had several focuses. One example of a central issue within political ecology has been to assess how power relations affect the environment. Blaikie *and* Brookfield (1987) introduced the 'chain of explanation', studying the relationship between land and the land manager at the local level and the actions that occur on a national and international level that impact upon the local level. This approach seeks to discover alternatives to single-factor explanations of land degradation. A central argument is that causes of land degradation are site specific, thus the results from one site cannot be generalised into valid results for all sites that experience land degradation. Another focus within the literature is concerned with how social processes such as conflicts and social movements are influenced by changes in environmental policies (e.g. Peet & Watts 2004; Robbins 2004). Yet another approach has been to assess whether the claimed environmental change in fact occurs (e.g. Leach & Mearns 1996; Adger *et al.* 2001). In this way, political ecology offers a "critical analysis of mainstream views, received wisdom and standard narratives" (Hongslo 2001:19).

Discourse and narrative analysis is an important critical tool in political ecology (Benjaminsen & Svarstad forthcoming 2009). Discourses and narratives are linked to structure and actor analysis, where the discourses constitute the structures, and the narratives are formed by the actors. A central understanding is that discourses are constantly being redefined by the actors forming new narratives, whereas at the same time, the discourses provide a set of conditions for actions and interpretations (Buch-Hansen & Nielsen 2005).

The first two decades of research within this field mainly assessed processes of change in the so-called 'third world'. However, during the last years a trend of bringing political ecology "home" has emerged. The political ecology of "the first world" was discussed in two thematic issues of geographic journals in 2005/06; *Environment and Planning A* 37(6) and *GeoForum* 37(2).

In my view, a political ecology focus in a Norwegian setting may contribute to a strengthening of the critical perspectives within rural and environmental studies. In Norway, much research is supported by the government. Therefore, it may be important to serve the interests of the



government or to pay 'lip service' to perceived government interests in order to secure research grants (Svarstad & Benjaminsen 2003; Tvedt 2005). Consequently, much research done in Norway on Norwegian conditions contributes to the reproduction of existing or mainstream ways of understanding these issues. It might therefore seem easier for a critical researcher in Norway to obtain funds to carry out research in poor countries in the South. The first study that explicitly applied a political ecology approach in a Norwegian setting seems to be Benjaminsen and Svarstad (2008). I have been inspired by this study. Hence, this report is a contribution to political ecology in Northern Europe, using narrative and discourse analysis.

### 3.3 Discourses

In this report, I treat narrative and discourse analysis as two parts of the same process. I regard narratives as central elements of a discourse. In the introduction to these concepts, I start with an elaboration on my understanding of discourses. First, I would like to make clear what the term *discourse* means in this report. I draw upon a social science understanding of the term. Blekesaune and Stræte (1997:12, *my translation*) describe a discourse as "everything included in the process that makes us perceive things around us as comprehensible phenomena".

I choose to adopt the definition by Adger *et al.* (2001:683). They offer a more thorough description of discourses as a truth regime, understood as:

*a shared meaning of a phenomenon. This phenomenon may be small or large, and the understanding of it may be shared by a small or large group of people on the local, national, international or global level. The actors adhering to the discourse participate in varying degrees to its production, reproduction and transformation through written and oral statements.*

The term discourse is used in different settings with different meanings. In order to avoid misunderstandings, I find it useful to mention two common understandings of the term that differ from how I understand it. Both Neumann (2001) and Svarstad (2002; 2003) describe these two understandings as different from how the term is used in the social sciences. First, the linguistic understanding treats *discourse* as a synonym to *text*, implying that discourse analysis is an assessment of how meaning is formed through a combination of sentences. Second, the term *discourse* is used in everyday speech as a "conversation or discussion about a given issue" (Svarstad 2002:67). According to Svarstad, this latter understanding of the word is also applied in some social science studies. However, in this study, I adhere to a social science understanding of the term as defined above.

#### 3.3.1 Discourse analysis

There are different ways of applying discourses in a research project. Jørgensen and Phillips (1999) differentiate between discourse theory, represented by Laclau and Mouffe (1985),

and critical discourse analysis. As part of political ecology within a critical realism tradition, I place myself within this critical discourse analysis approach. I will now elaborate on some of the literature that inspired this research.

I have two main inspirations in my approach to discourse analysis. According to Adger *et al.* (2001), one of the characteristics of discourses is homogeneity in the message conveyed and the expressive means. Thus, they describe discourse analysis as consisting of three elements:

*analysis of regularities in expressions to identify discourses; analysis of the actors producing, reproducing and transforming discourses; and social impacts and policy outcomes of discourses.*  
(Adger *et al.* 2001:684)

This implies a study of claims, claim-makers and the claim-making processes. In this report, I will mainly concentrate on the first element in the analytical approach of Adger *et al.* (2001). However, I will briefly touch upon the two last elements towards the end. I find this approach most useful in the process of linking the narratives from my empirical material to broader discourses.

The second source of inspiration is from Blekesaune and Stræte (1997). I read Blekesaune and Stræte as an empirical and practical application of Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) discourse theory. They define discourse analysis to include an analysis of:

*How elements are articulated into moments in one discourse; the meaning of the ideologies as a nodal point for our understanding; how opponents can be pacified through the construction of social antagonisms; how different actors try to create hegemony for their own meanings"*  
(Blekesaune & Stræte 1997:14, my translation, original emphasis)

In the use of this approach, I will mainly concentrate on the second and third point. This approach is useful for me in the comparison between the narratives I find in the data, and between the discourses these narratives are linked to. I will also comment on the first point when linking the narratives to broader discourses.

However, I will emphasise that this study is not a study about how discourses develop. Thus, I will not treat what Neumann (2001) calls the "dialogic relations" within a discourse. Rather, I will point to how the narratives I identify from the empirical material can be seen as elements of broader discourses. Hence, I apply narrative analysis more than discourse analysis.

Before continuing, I would like to make a comment on my application of the analytical framework of Blekesaune and Stræte (1997). They focus on how these mechanisms work within one discourse. The way I read their report, I find that they treat these concepts in relation to a debate, where different arguments, representing different discourses, are presented. Hence, they apply an understanding of the notion *discourse* more in line with the everyday use as described above. Svarstad (2003) makes a similar comment to the

understanding of *discourse* in the report by Blekesaune *and* Stræte (1997). As I apply a different understanding of discourse, I also use this analytical framework differently. My approach concentrates more on how these mechanisms apply to relations between different discourses. Compared to Jørgensen *and* Phillips' (1999) presentation of Laclau *and* Mouffe's (1985) discourse theory, Blekesaune *and* Stræte's application is an extension of the theory. I find it necessary to make a comment in this respect. Laclau *and* Mouffe (1985) use the concept of nodal points within one discourse. My use of the concept is not in accordance with this understanding as I search for nodal points between the different narratives. However, as a justification, my understanding of discourses is relevant. I understand discourses to be multiple, coexisting truth regimes in the social sphere. Examples of coexisting non-conflicting discourses can be geographical (e.g. European, North-American) and topical (within e.g. fields of environment, medicine, sports). However, there may also be conflicting discourses on one topic. In this study, I assess environmental discourses as expressed through narratives in Geiranger. Geiranger as a geographical setting may thus be seen as the location for a geographical discourse, *the Geiranger discourse*, which implicitly or explicitly relates to other discourses. Within this geographical discourse there are competing environmental discourses. The nodal points I identify serve as nodal points *within* the geographically determined Geiranger discourse, and *between* the competing topical narratives I identify to be part of this geographical discourse. I also argue that these analytical steps are relevant for analysing narratives, as I see narratives as elements of discourses. This will be elaborated in the following section of this chapter.

### 3.4 Narratives

In this report, I treat narratives as elements of discourses. Above, I have described discourse as a truth regime which is characterised by the use of shared expressive means. Narratives can be one of these expressive means. Emery Roe is one of the most influential scholars on narrative analysis within environment and development studies. He presents narratives as adherent to:

*the common definition of a "story". Each has a beginning, middle, and end (or premises and conclusions, when cast in the form of an argument) and revolves around a sequence of events or positions in which something happens or from which something follows.*  
(Roe 1991:288, original parenthesis)

Furthermore, Adger *et al.* (2001) show that narratives often include a cast of actors, such as the archetypes heroes, villains and victims.

Svarstad (2002; 2003) operates with the terms *meta-narrative* (used by Lyotard) as a story that has been accepted and generalised and *story* (used by Rappaport) as an individual account. She compares the contents of these concepts with the contents of a narrative, and finds that narratives partly overlap with both, representing an account that is common for a group of people, but not generalised. Drawing upon these approaches, I use the term narrative in this report.

Roe (1991; 1999) in particular discusses what he calls development narratives. As one example of a central and powerful development narrative, he mentions the tragedy of the commons model as it is formulated by Hardin (1968), starting with the often quoted sentence "Picture a pasture open to all... ". Moreover, Roe (1991) states that some development narratives tend to grow so strong that they are impossible to challenge by presentation of pure scientific evidence. Rather, counter-narratives that are both logical and comprehensible have to be formulated to challenge these powerful narratives. Roe (1999:8) explains the formulation of counter-narratives like this: "If the dominant development narrative asserts that  $(a \rightarrow b \rightarrow c)$ , then the counter-narrative is either  $(\text{not-}a \rightarrow \text{not-}b \rightarrow c)$  or  $(a \rightarrow b \rightarrow \text{not-}c)$ ".

I will distinguish my use of the term *narrative* from other common understandings. Narrative analysis is often understood as analysis of life stories (Bryman 2004). This understanding implies a more comprehensive narrative and with a more complex structure than the one I make use of. Riessman (1993) undertakes a very literal understanding of narratives, treating personal narratives as stories with a plot that come forward in single conversations or texts. I understand this as resembling what Svarstad (2002; 2003) calls *stories*. Thus, this is a less complex approach to narratives than the one I apply.

As a last point, I find it important to comment on one of the problems I find by using a narrative approach. It can hardly be objected that a presentation of reality through a narrative implies a simplification. Moreover, my presentation of different narratives within one environment has to be a simplified version of the complex structures that this environment embodies. In this regard, it is relevant to reintroduce the notion *representation*, which I used in the first section of this chapter. *Representations* are categorised and interpreted versions of reality as we experience it (Riessman 1993). It is natural that these representations are simplified, as humans "perceive only parts of the world, and adjust the parts to previously stored models" (Neumann 2001:32, *my translation*). As a consequence of this, it is important for me to emphasise that in my approach, neither narratives nor discourses are fixed constructions or entities. In line with the understanding of discourses as "everything that is included in the process that makes us perceive things around us as comprehensible phenomena" (Blekesaune & Stræte 1997:12, *my translation*), discourses and narratives are objects of constant change because the boundaries of our understanding are constantly negotiated due to new experiences that make us reconsider our beliefs and perceptions.

Before finishing this chapter, I would like to give a brief summary of my position and approach to discourse and narrative analysis. I support the thought within critical realism that there is a material world outside of discourses, and that true knowledge can be obtained. However, it is outside the scope of this report to evaluate the contents of the identified narratives compared to the material world. I focus on narratives and discourses as representations of reality. Phenomena are attributed meaning through how they are

described, but I do not reject the existence of natural phenomena. Jørgensen *and* Phillips (1999) describe how a flooding river can be given different meanings in different discourses despite that the physical facts about the flood are incontestable. The flood can be described as a meteorological phenomenon due to heavy rainfalls, as an effect of greenhouse gas emissions and climate changes, as an effect of inappropriate policies or eventually as a sign of God's will. I see clear links here to how Blaikie *and* Brookfield (1987), as part of political ecology, express that soil erosion as a natural phenomenon cannot be explained as land degradation without being placed in a social context.

My stance is, as I have mentioned earlier, a development of Foucault's approach to discourses. Müller (2008:327, *parenthesis omitted*) writes:

*Contra agency, poststructuralist thought [i.e. Foucault] de-centers the acting individual and places an emphasis on the structural nature of discourse. [...] Thus Foucault sees subjects as products and not producers of discourses.*

In critical discourse analysis, subjects/actors stand in a dialectic relationship to discourses/structures (Jørgensen & Phillips 1999). Müller (2008) links this agency approach to Laclau *and* Mouffe (1985), thus representing a different interpretation of Laclau *and* Mouffe (1985) than that of Jørgensen *and* Phillips (1999). There are without doubt several different, and partly conflicting, readings of Laclau *and* Mouffe (1985). I choose only to mention these briefly here, and limit my inspiration from Laclau *and* Mouffe (1985) to the application of some of their notions in a critical discourse analysis.



## 4 Methodology

This report is an assessment of how different actor groups understand and present the interplay between farming and tourism. I have chosen Geiranger as the study area for two reasons. First, this is an area where farming and tourism have coexisted for a long time. Thus, it may serve as an example for similar situations in Norway. Second, the recent development with a Landscape Protected Area and a World Heritage Status adds new dimensions to the interplay between the sectors, and how it is represented by the different actors.

In this chapter, I present the methodological tools I have applied during this research project. I describe the process in chronological order, starting with data collection and fieldwork and then progressing to the analysis. Towards the end of the chapter, I briefly discuss my role as a researcher, the concepts of validity and reliability and some ethical considerations in relation to this study. I round off with some final reflections.

As stated in the previous chapter, this study is carried out as part of a constructivist tradition. More specifically I accept epistemological, but reject ontological constructivism. Because of the nature of this study, with the aim of approaching the narratives of different actor groups, I am searching for an assessment of how these groups relate to and evaluate the situation. This assessment requires a qualitative approach. According to Bryman (2004:19-20) qualitative research emphasises "words rather than quantification" and has a "preference for an emphasis on the ways in which individuals interpret their social world". Interpretivistic approaches emphasise that research cannot be value-free as the results always will be filtered through the people involved in the research process. The researcher, and those who are studied, will present their interpretations of the reality (Bryman 2004). To ensure that the social setting in which the research is done is understandable, I therefore make use of contextualisation and *thick description*<sup>13</sup>.

### 4.1 Data collection

All of the data for this study was obtained from qualitative interviews. It has been important for me to consider the farming sector in particular in this report. The field of political ecology has a tradition of focusing on marginalised groups and the power relations they are part of. Although the marginalisation in Geiranger is relative compared to other places, e.g. indigenous people in poor countries, I claim that the farmers in Geiranger are marginalised due to a lack of possibility to influence their own situation, and very difficult conditions.

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<sup>13</sup> The concept of *thick description* was introduced by Geertz and refers to detailed accounts of a social setting (Bryman 2004).

Table 4.1: Categorisation of farms in non-exclusive groups

	Farming status			Diversification into tourism		Area affected by tourism		Mowing <sup>14</sup>		Informants	
	Active	Hobby	Wound up	Yes	No	Low	High	Partly/ All by tractor	Only small devices	Land owner	Partner
Farm 1	X			X			X	X		X	X
Farm 2	X			X			X		X	X	
Farm 3	X			X		X		X		X	X
Farm 4	X				X	X		X		X	X
Farm 5	X				X	X		X		X	
Farm 6		X		X			X		X	X	
Farm 7		X		X			X		X	X	X
Farm 8			X	X		X		X		X	
Farm 9			X		X	X		X		X	X
Farm 10			X		X	X		X		X	

Furthermore, I find that the voices of the farmers are rarely heard in the greater society, compared to the voices of tourism and bureaucracy representatives.

#### 4.1.1 Selection of interviewees

The sampling method that forms the basis for the selection of interviewees for this report is known as snowball sampling (see e.g. Bryman 2004). This is a non-probability sampling method, where the researcher approaches the field through use of 'gateways'. In a study like this, the representativeness of the selection is not a core aspect. The central point is to investigate and assess the experiences and perceptions of individuals. I have made use of two gateways, the Department of Trade and Industry, *Næringsavdelinga* (DTI), in Stranda municipality, and the local group of the Norwegian Farmers' Union, *Bondelaget* (NFU). My initial idea was to get an overview of all the farmers from the DTI and after this use the local group of NFU for recommendations regarding who should be interviewed. In the search, I would 'weigh' the informants' willingness and eagerness to participate in this study heavier than their representativeness. I decided to follow the principle of aiming at theoretical saturation<sup>15</sup> before I left the field.

<sup>14</sup> The differentiation related to mowing is done mostly to describe the terrains and topography of the farming areas.

<sup>15</sup> *Theoretical saturation* refers to the point in the fieldwork where no new insights are gained through conducting more interviews (Bryman 2004).



However, the overview from DTI caused me to change my strategy. This overview showed that Geiranger had 11 active farmers five years ago. Hence, it might be impossible to reach theoretical saturation, at least if I only chose to interview those who wanted to participate. I decided that I would aim to interview all those who had been involved in farming during the last five years. In order to reduce a chance of a gender bias, I also wanted to interview both husband and wife where both parties had been involved in farming. Two of the farms had experienced generation change during the last five years. On these farms I chose to interview the younger generation, those who run the farm and experience the situation today. I succeeded in reaching this goal, and the selection of farmers that are interviewed for this report is thereby complete.

Although the selection is complete, I did find some disadvantages to it. The community of Geiranger is small, and everybody knows everyone. It is a small society. Hence, my informants are not independent of each other as individuals. They talk together and maybe they adopt common opinions and views based on common or others' experiences. The fact that there are several stories told by various people on different farms, contribute to confirm the assumption that people adopt the histories of others.

Despite these limitations, my selection is diverse. It is possible to categorise the interviewees in the farming sector into several different non-exclusive groups: Farms that have been wound up/Actively run farms/Hobby farms, Farms with tourism as side-income/Farms without tourism as side-income, Farms in areas highly affected by tourism/Farms in areas little affected by tourism, Farms where all or parts of the farmland can be mowed by tractor or other four-wheeled devices/Farms where all the farmland has to be mowed by smaller devices (see Table 4.1). All of these factors may influence the views and opinions of the farmers in different ways. The farmers in Geiranger can thus not be seen as a homogenous group. Due to the diversity of my selection it is important that it is a complete selection, as this diversity may complicate the work of reaching theoretical saturation. But as the selection is complete, nobody is left out. Thus, I cannot reach any further theoretically.

I think that if I had done my selection from a wider population, I might have obtained independent statements. On the other hand, to choose from a wider population would imply less focus on the community dynamics and the community as a common frame of reference for all interviewees.

The challenge of dependence between different individuals also counts for the other local actor groups, the tourism sector and the World Heritage Management. Within these two other local groups, the selection of respondents is also achieved by snowball sampling. The advantage of approaching a small community like Geiranger is that everybody knows who I ought to talk to, so even though I did not have a gateway into the tourism sector or the World Heritage Management, I had no problems obtaining relevant names within these groups. As mentioned in the previous chapter, I have interviewed three representatives from

the tourism sector; one hotel-owner, the manager of the destination company and the employee in one of the locally-based enterprises. Furthermore, I have interviewed one employee in the World Heritage Administration of West Norwegian Fjords and the head of the World Heritage Council.

From the authorities, I have chosen to interview representatives from the municipal and county levels. I have chosen three employees in each administration, whose positions are linked to Geiranger and the interplay between tourism, farming and conservation/World Heritage. In all cases, I contacted the person I considered to be most relevant in terms of their experience of the issues, but I gave them the opportunity to refer me to another person whom they considered to be able to provide greater insight into the situation. For example, one person referred me to another employee at the same department, who worked with Geiranger-related matters on a daily basis. In the Stranda municipality, I interviewed the agricultural consultant, the head of the Department of Trade and Industry, and the head of planning and development matters. In Møre and Romsdal County, I interviewed the head of the Department of Agriculture, *Landbruksavdelinga*, one employee of the Department of Area and Environmental Conservation, *Areal- og miljøvernnavdelinga*, and the person responsible for Planning Coordination, *plansamordningsansvarlig*. All of these were employed at the County Governor's Office.

(For an overview over my total selection, see Table 4.2)

#### 4.1.2 Interview style

I have based the data collection on qualitative, semi-structured interviews. According to Kvale (1996), the open-ended questions in semi-structured interviews ensure that the interviewee has an opportunity to lead the conversation into the areas of interest to him/her. This gives the study the openness needed to investigate individual perceptions and experiences.

I used interview guides when I conducted interviews. I developed different interview guides for the different actor groups. With the farmers, the most important actor group in my study, I did two rounds of interviews. For the first round, the guide I used was developed to allow the interviews to be relatively unstructured. I had listed some subject areas I wanted to cover during the interview, and some topics I would pay special interest to under each subject area. This way, I ensured that the interviewees had plenty of space for guiding the conversation into areas where they felt they could contribute. I did not set any limits for the answers, nor for the time allocated for the whole interview. Most of the time this resulted in rich and detailed answers. However, a couple of times, the interviewees had few comments to make in response to my questions. When this happened, I did not push the interviewees any further. It has been important for me to try and relate to the interviewees on their terms, not leading them either way. In my first round of interviews I also did some interviews with couples. Considering the loose structure of these interviews, I found this fruitful, as the spouses then supplemented each other's answers and reacted to each other in a spontaneous way that gave room for further elaboration.

*Table 4.2: Total selection*

	Number of interviewees	Characteristics/Who	Representation
Farming sector	15	All	Individual
Tourism sector	3	Local, year-round inhabitants	Sector and organisations
World Heritage Management	2	Employee and head of Council	WH Management
Municipal authorities	3	Employees in relevant departments/topical fields	Departments/ topical fields
County authorities	3	Employees in relevant departments	Departments

During the second round, the interviews were done in a more structured manner, with ready formulated questions. According to Rubin and Rubin (2005), when a researcher uses a non-confrontational interview style like the one I used in the first round, it can be an advantage to complete this with a more specific second interview. I chose to do it this way for two reasons. First, I wanted to elaborate more on specific topics, and second, I experienced difficulties in formulating good questions at the time of interviewing during the first round. I therefore decided to formulate some questions in advance. I used a list of questions as a guide, often reorganising questions if the conversation touched upon topics in a different order than listed in my guide, or skipping questions if they had already been fully answered. I also often rephrased the questions to gather more information on something the interviewee had already said either in the first interview or earlier in the same session, as a follow-up question. During this second round, I emphasised to my informants that I wanted to meet them individually. This was to ensure that everybody had a chance to tell their story, without being influenced by their partners. My impression is that this combination of two different kinds of interview styles, and meeting first couples and then individuals, has provided rich data.

When I interviewed the interviewees that I only met once, I tried to combine the open structure and questions from the first round with the more specific and closed questions from the second round. Most of the times I felt that I succeeded in combining the more and less structured interview styles, and in several cases, I experienced that these combined interviews gave richer and more detailed answers to the subject than did the combination of two separate interviews. One possible reason may be that these interviews were conducted late in the fieldwork. At that point, I had already obtained much knowledge, so I could more easily start the analysis during the interview, reaching further through follow-up questions (Kvale 1996).

All the interviews were taped, and later transcribed. This was done to ensure that I could focus on paying attention and listening to the interviewees rather than taking notes. Although

transcribing is time-consuming, I still consider this the best way as I would have had difficulties with grasping the contents of the answers if I had to take notes at the same time.

The length of the interviews varied a lot. However, the majority lasted approximately one hour, plus/minus 15 minutes. All except four interviews with the farmers were conducted in their homes. Of the last four, three were conducted in reception areas for cabin rental and the fourth at the farmer's 'off-farm' work place. I met the representatives from the tourism sector, World Heritage Management and authorities at their offices.

### **4.1.3 Fieldwork**

I had two fieldwork periods. The first one was a three-week period in July-August 2007. The intention of this was to experience Geiranger during the tourist season and to get an introduction to the field through an initial round of interviews. In this period, I concentrated on the farming sector. Between the two fieldwork periods, I transcribed the recordings and did a preliminary analysis of the interviews from the first round. This analysis made the basis for the interview guides I used in the second fieldwork period. This period was longer, stretching over seven weeks during the following autumn, from September to November. During this period, I conducted the second round of interviews with the farmers, as well as the combined interviews with all of the other actor groups.

#### **Approaching the field**

Before I went to Geiranger the first time, I sent letters to all the farmers, introducing myself and the project and asking for their cooperation. I had hoped for some responses that would have given me an opportunity to make some initial interview arrangements. However, I did not get any responses from the farmers, so when I first came to Geiranger, I engaged in some background investigations and assessed the number of camping sites, hotels, cafés, restaurants, souvenir-shops etc. I also gathered information about the number of cruise ship arrivals. I found this a good way to start, as it helped me approach the field and begin to understand the some of the attributes of the community I was about to study.

It took some time before I managed to contact the farmers. It was a threshold for me to pass, after having been warned by the municipal authorities that I should not have too high expectations, because many of the farmers might be tired of these kinds of studies by then. There had been quite a few development-oriented and research projects including interviews with Geiranger inhabitants during the last couple of years. However, after a couple of positive responses, everything went more easily. I ended up in a hurry at the end of my first field period, wishing to interview all those who had responded positively. I managed to get things done, but I left the field with chaos in my head, and a strong need for some reflection time.

I wanted to study how the farmers experienced their situation. I can easily admit that I had a one-sided expectation of this situation in advance, telling a story of the 'evil' and exploiting authorities and tourism sector and the poor and weak farming sector. This was the result of

my interpretations of what I had read and heard in Norwegian media. I had a difficult task wiping out my expectations during the first round of interviews. It took some time before I really started listening to what the interviewees said, letting go of my expectations with regards to the answers and could loosen up the structure of the interview.

For me the first period worked mostly as a warm-up session, where I got used to the interview setting and got an impression of the field. This gave me an advantage when I came back for the second period. I had already done a preliminary analysis, and I had a more specific focus for the rest of the interviews.

### **Second period**

During the second fieldwork period, I conducted parts of my fieldwork together with another student who was doing her master's thesis in Geography on the semiotics of how different actor groups describe the cultural landscapes of Geiranger. Our topics had very much in common, and we both considered it to be fruitful to conduct interviews together. This cooperation was also done partly due to the wish of not bothering our informants more than necessary.

My fellow fieldworker had already carried out two interviews at the time I returned to the field. She had already prepared a set of questions, and I therefore decided to utilise her questions which covered the topic of cultural landscapes for my own study. I might have formulated the questions in other ways if I had not done my interviews together with her, but I think she covered the topic well. During the last part of the second period, I did interviews alone again, as my fellow fieldworker had finished her interviews. I kept some of her questions in my guide even though she had left the field.

I did not interview all of the informants from the first round again. I decided that one couple fell outside the scope of this study. They managed some farming areas in the outskirts of the Geiranger village, but they did not own the land, nor did they live in Geiranger. My interview with them during my first fieldwork period represented a very interesting, but also very differing point of view, about how people from outside the village perceive the people from Geiranger and the functioning of the Geiranger community. This would represent a totally different study if it were incorporated in this report. Nevertheless, it was interesting to get their perspective, and although I did not include them in the analysis, they offered new dimensions of the situation.

During this second period, I felt that I started to get a grasp of the totality of the situation I was studying. I am pleased that I decided to split my fieldwork into two separate periods. I believe this gave me a better understanding of the field.

#### **4.1.4 Being two in the field**

The most important advantage of doing fieldwork together with somebody is the value of having someone to talk with along the way. We spent much time after each interview

discussing what we had heard in the interview and other topics that were central to our theses.

Still, I had some frustrations around our cooperation. I felt bound by the structure of our common interviews. As mentioned, my fellow student had already made a set of questions she wished to pose during the interviews, and I decided to let these cover one of the areas in my interview guide. I imagine it would have been easier if we had been less specific about designing the interview questions for our theses specifically. If we both had let go of our individual plans, and made new ones together, I think the field work might have resulted in more specific data material on each sub-topic.

After having finished the field work, and while doing the analysis, I realised that her questions, and her methods of posing them, rarely left the interviewees with sufficient time for developing their narratives. Her wish to study the words the different actors use did not require that the same amount of time be left for the answers. I regret now that I did not reflect more over this at the time that we were doing the interviews. I could have asked her to leave the interviewees with more time to respond to the questions. I therefore feel that the interviews I did alone covered my needs better than the ones we did together.

Still, I find it very valuable to have had these experiences during the fieldwork. They have made me reflect more on my own methods. When we met, we were both describing our own methodology as semi-structured interviews. With the differences in our approaches, she tended to understand my approach as unstructured, and I tended to understand hers as structured. This experience has made me explore and justify more why I did what I did.

We have met at some occasions during the analysis and writing process, which I have appreciated. It feels reassuring to have someone to discuss the field with, someone who has taken part in the same interviews and is working with the same material. Through our discussions I hope to have ensured that the analysis is more reliable than it would have been if I had done everything on my own.

## 4.2 Data analysis

I had several approaches to the analysis before I found an appropriate method to use. I tried different kinds of coding, and different categorisations. In the analysis process I have made the local voices count the strongest. I did initial trials on ten transcripts from the first round and the seven most informative from the second round. All of the informants from these interviews were local actors, from both the farming sector and the tourism sector.

I ended up not coding all statements from each interview. With a total of 36 interviews such a coding process would have been too time-consuming for the scope of this work. Rather, I went through the interviews focusing on identification of the main topics and statements of each interview. This resulted in between two and five topics and statements per interview.

These statements form the basis for the narrative analysis, as I will describe below. First, I will present my overall approach to analysis and theory generation.

#### **4.2.1 Grounded theory**

This study is based upon a grounded theory approach. According to Bryman (2004), there is a close relationship between data collection, analysis and theory in grounded theory. Although this approach by large is a bottom-up approach, generating empirically based theory, it also emphasises an iterative relationship between the different stages, thus making use of both induction and deduction.

I will illustrate my approach by one example. During the analysis I have shifted between assessing my own data, and reading material on related issues. These readings have been helpful for me to understand how I should approach my own data. In turn, my findings are discussed in relation to what I read. Throughout my discussion, I have returned to the identified narratives to 'test' them.

Moreover, in grounded theory, the collected data sets the premise for which theoretical framework and analytical approach is appropriate. In this way, research done within grounded theory is open-ended (Bryman 2004). As described above, I did some trials before I discovered an appropriate method for approaching the analysis. The initial attempts did not yield results. In this way, my approach to analysis has been decided by the data material.

#### **4.2.2 Narrative analysis**

I have presented the understanding of narratives on which I base my analysis in the previous chapter. As previously noted, a narrative is a general representation shared by a group of people. This means that I treat narratives as underlying structures of the accounts, which serve as the motivations for arguments and statements. Starting with the main statements from the interviews, I searched for patterns and commonalities among the statements. In this search, I have treated the groups from the different sectors as inseparable units. Hence, the patterns were traced within the different actor groups. This approach is reflected in my research questions, where I also focus on how the different actor groups relate to different issues.

As mentioned above, I have concentrated on the local voices first, identifying stories common to the individual accounts within the farming sector, the tourism sector, and the World Heritage Management at a local level. In the next step, I used these local stories when I approached the statements of non-local actors (i.e. the authorities' representatives and the head of the World Heritage Council). After some rounds of refinement, comparing the stories of the different groups, I ended up with two main narratives which will be presented in the following chapter.

It is obvious that this analysis implies that the collected data has undergone a process of interpretation. According to Riessman (1993:22) "[n]arratives are interpretive and, in turn,

require interpretation". This calls for an assessment of how I, as a researcher, may have influenced the process.

### 4.3 My role as a researcher

In an interpretative analysis, the background of the interpreter will always play a part. A central question relates to whether my preconceptions have coloured the findings; if I have traced only what I foresaw. I obviously had preconceptions concerning this topic. I have already mentioned how my views were biased when I first started interviewing. However, there have been various surprises along the way, and during both the interviewing and the analysis, I have been forced to reconsider my thoughts about the patterns for which I was searching. This does not mean that I have not influenced the analysis, but I have tried to meet the process with openness, not letting my biases rule the outcome.

During the fieldwork, I undertook a role on the border line of participant observer and qualitative interviewer. I lived in the village for more than two months. This was important for me in order to get a grasp of the community I was about to describe through this report. However, I did not participate in activities in the community outside of the interviews. On several occasions, I stayed behind as a guest, shifting to informal conversations after the interviews were finished. Due to time constraints and other external factors, I had to decline some opportunities to visit respondents after interviews. I did not receive many offers, but I still found it flattering when I was invited. It is possible that more informal settings, participation in farming activities and/or helping out with tourists might have added another dimension to the report. I might have gained more trust. This was an issue I considered during my fieldwork; however, there is no single correct answer as to which method is most appropriate. Ultimately, I am satisfied with the data that I have collected.

The question of participation is also linked to another central issue; balancing the role as fieldworker and friend. I found it challenging to strictly keep the fieldworker and interviewer role when the interviewees open-heartedly shared their reality with me. Questions such as "Where is the line between what I can respond to and what I should only listen to?" and "How much can I share with them about my own views and perceptions?" were part of my never-ending internal discussions. In fear of getting too close and 'going native', I chose rather to keep more distance.

A last issue related to my fieldwork is trust. Due to earlier similar experiences, I expected to gain more trust from my respondents when I returned to Geiranger the second time. However, I did not experience the effect of my return in the openness of answers. One possible reason for this may be that most of the interviewees had been in similar situations many times, and therefore had created an 'interview personality' that was more fixed. Another may be that there were two interviewers in most of the second round.



Also in relation to the analysis process, my role as a researcher is important. As already stated, I draw upon constructivist ideas and apply an interpretative analysis. This standpoint positioning has implications for the presentation of my results. Stake (1995:44) writes:

*Given the intense interaction of the researcher with persons in the field and elsewhere, given a constructivist orientation to knowledge, given the attention to participant intentionality and sense of self, however descriptive the report, the researcher ultimately comes to offer a personal view.*

It is thus left beyond doubt that the argument that this report constitutes accords with my own beliefs and opinions.

#### 4.4 Criteria for evaluating qualitative research

The most frequently used criteria for evaluation of scientific research are the concepts of validity and reliability. They have been developed for evaluation of quantitative research, and their relevance for qualitative studies may be questioned (Bryman 2004, Mason 2002). Nevertheless, these concepts are as significant for qualitative as for quantitative research. In this section I will apply these concepts to this study, by using the terminology from LeCompte *and* Goetz (in Bryman 2004).

The question of validity is related to whether the results respond to the research questions. In much qualitative research, the research questions are more closely linked to the discussion and analysis than in statistics, where, for instance, decision on inappropriate variables can determine the question of validity. Such factors are linked to *internal validity*. On the other hand, *external validity* is related to the issue of generalisation. In some quantitative research, generalisation is determined by the settings in which the study or experiment is done. According to the positivistic tradition, the ultimate aim of generalisations is to find universal laws of nature. From an interpretivist point of view, such universal laws do not exist. Every case or situation needs its own assessment. Hence, the question of generalisation is not as relevant in this study. However, by arguing that the case of Geiranger may have value beyond the community itself, I somehow contradict this non-generalisation approach. In this respect, I would like to draw the attention to Stake's (1995) approach to the issue. He uses the concept "naturalistic generalisation". By this he refers to how knowledge is generalised by everybody. When obtaining new knowledge, people use the set of experiences and knowledge they have internalised to generalise the new knowledge. I find this to be similar to the way I generalise in this report. I draw on earlier studies and my own set of experiences and internalised knowledge when I present the findings of this study in a broader context. By linking my findings to earlier theoretical elaborations, I implicitly claim that they can be compared and thus generalised across time and space.

Reliability can also be divided into internal and external reliability. *External reliability* is related to the replicability of the study. In this respect, it is important for the researcher to be

explicit about what constitutes raw data, and what are her interpretations. In my case, as in the case of social constructivist approaches, there is no raw data. The smallest units I use in my analysis are the transcripts from the interviews, and as noted earlier, they have been interpreted to some degree. On this basis, the question of external reliability is difficult to assess in social constructivism, and perhaps not a relevant consideration. *Internal reliability* in quantitative research relates to the consistency in measurement. On this point I cannot find objections to the importance of the issue in my study. According to LeCompte and Goetz (in Bryman 2004), consistency can be improved by involving several researchers in one study, and checking consistency between them. As noted earlier, I had a fellow researcher working with me during the fieldwork. Through this collaboration we had the opportunity to discuss the interviews right after they were conducted and at some occasions during the analysis and writing processes. Although she has not participated in the same analysis process as I have, I believe that the internal reliability is more assured now than it would have been without her.

Besides this involvement of more than one researcher, I have undertaken some steps aiming to improve the quality of my study. Kvale (2007) relates the question of validity in interview studies to theorising and checking the data. Both of these steps are fulfilled in a grounded theory approach, where the dialectic relationship between the data and the developed theory is emphasised. I have also triangulated (see below) the data and let the farmers confirm the use of quotes in the report through a process of respondent validation. However, according to Bryman (2004) the use of respondent validation for validating findings is contested, and as I will assess in the following section of this chapter, this respondent validation was done mostly for ethical reasons. Lastly, my use of thick description, contextualisation and step-by-step description of the analysis process is done in order to place this study in its setting and make the processes transparent, allowing the reader to evaluate its reliability and validity.

#### **4.4.1 Triangulation**

Triangulation in a study is done to strengthen its validity and reliability. Denzin in Bryman (2004:275) describes triangulation as "an approach that uses 'multiple observers, theoretical perspectives, sources of data and methodologies'".

I have intended to triangulate on two levels in this study. First, at some stages, there were two investigators in the same field. This presented an opportunity to discuss and compare my findings with the ones of my fellow fieldworker. Secondly, I have been to the field on two different occasions, which has given me the advantage of a period with reflection and analytical thinking between the two fieldwork periods, and coming back with a more developed assessment. Furthermore, the first fieldtrip occurred during the intense tourist season, whereas the second was outside the tourist season. These factors give the study an aspect of triangulation in time.

## 4.5 Ethical considerations

The first aspect I find to be relevant ethically is the degree of voluntariness of participation for my informants. It can be argued that participation would have been of a more voluntary character if I, for instance, had put up posters explaining who I was and what my project consisted of, and then asking for responses from those who were interested in participating. By contacting the farmers directly and individually, some of them might have felt forced into a setting they did not appreciate. However, I did not get the impression that this was a common feeling among my informants. By putting up a poster, I would also have run the risk of not reaching out to anybody, or to get a biased selection by not being able to control who did not volunteer. I tried the voluntary response approach through the local group of NFU. But as this gave no result, I decided to contact those I wanted to interview directly on an individual basis.

As mentioned, I tape recorded all the interviews. This presents an ethical issue. Although I always asked permission, some of my informants may have felt intruded upon by the fact that I was recording the interviews. I particularly had this impression on one occasion. However, it is difficult to know whether the informant felt intruded upon by the interview setting as such, or by the recording equipment.

In order to diminish the ethical implications for my informants, I was open about who I am, where I come from, and the purpose of my study. I had no intention of hiding this from anyone involved in the process. Furthermore, I assured them that all information would be treated confidentially. The farmers have also signed a contract and had the opportunity to give their reactions to the quotes I used from their interviews before publishing. However, this was only done with the farmers. I consider the importance of personal data security to be stronger for the farmers than for the rest. The farmers' accounts represent the farmers as individuals, whereas the accounts from the representatives represent the department or organisation. I argue that these impersonal units (departments and organisations) are not as important to protect. Some may react to what can be considered a special treatment of the farmers. It may be seen as a source of error and an easy way out to not respondent validate all quotes.

A last, but not small, ethical issue is the challenge of not making the statements possible to trace back to the informants. I have already touched upon the fact that everybody knows who everyone is in Geiranger. The community is small, and as everybody knows each other, there is a problem of transparency. I have therefore chosen to make all quotes anonymous. The fact that all quotes are translated into English has also contributed to making the quotes untraceable, by wiping out formulations and words that are characteristic or typical for one person or another.

## 4.6 Reflections

While working on this report, I have done a lot of thinking. Most of all, I would describe the process from the start until the end of this study as an intensive learning period. Many things I have done for the first time. And, more than doing a research project for the first time, it is the first time I assess both political ecology and Norwegian rural studies. This process calls for some reflections.

I may be criticised for carrying out large parts of the process of this report without much preparation. I started with an initial naivety, and my attention was caught by some occasional news articles. However, for me this initial curiosity has been an important factor for my motivation. It has been important to make hay while the sun shines, to use a farming metaphor. I feared that the motivation would die if I did too much reading before I entered the field. I also believe that this 'naïve' start has minimised my biases and preconceptions.

This does not mean that there are no preconceptions. Part of the interest I developed concerning this matter was due to a rising indignation in me. This indignation reflects a normative relationship towards the matter. I do not believe I have managed to let go of this bias. However, despite my feelings that the 'bad' authorities oppress the 'good' farmers, and a general belief in local participation and empowerment, solidarity structures, and production of goods rather than services, I have intended to present a nuanced picture overall.

Nevertheless, I feel I could have made some improvements along the way. Although I have gathered rich data, I might have provided a better starting point for the analysis process by elaborating more on narratives and focusing more specifically while I was in the field. During much of the data collection, I have not been clear enough on the purpose of studying only the narratives (i.e. personal representations of the reality) and not the reality as such. Until quite late in the process, I aimed at studying the flow of communication between the different actor groups, hoping to identify bottlenecks for good communication. It took some time before I understood that my contribution should not be to evaluate the actual conditions in the community and address how these conditions could be improved, but rather to focus on the underlying motivations for actions and utterances. A clearer focus on narratives from the start might have led me deeper into what I was looking for at an earlier stage in the research process.

Next, there are several possible objections to my selection. The most obvious critique concerns that my selection is biased, because I have interviewed too many farmers and too few representatives from the other sectors. However, this has been intentional. My objective has been to reflect mostly the views of the farmers, and to contrast these with views from other sectors. I believe that this is reasonable and that I have succeeded in reaching my objective. It was important for me to talk to all farmers, to be able to reflect the variations within this group. While the farmers have not represented anyone other than themselves, I have picked informants in the other groups who represent important departments,

organisations etc. in relation to the interplay between farming and tourism. These other informants are all employees or elected representatives. In this way they are not interviewed as individuals but by virtue of their positions. I would have been pleased to have more representatives from the tourism sector. However, within the limits I set, year-round inhabitants and locals, I ended up with just three.

One group that I have left out is the politicians. This was done merely due to the amount of interviews and transcriptions that their inclusion would generate – particularly given the time limitations of this research. Interviews with local and regional politicians might have been an interesting addition to my selection. Earlier studies done in Geiranger show that local politicians tend to agree with the locals more than with the authorities (Holm *et al.* 2007, Daugstad forthcoming).

In the process of writing up this report, it has been important for me to stay true to my interviewees. The categories and topics that are treated in my discussion chapter are all important and recurring issues in the interviews. In my view, this follows naturally from the fundamentals of grounded theory, where the categories in the analysis are developed from the collected data. However, this may imply that some important topics are not treated explicitly. For instance, power is hardly mentioned in this report because none of my interviewees talks explicitly about power relations. This may seem contradictory to the fact that I am working within political ecology, using discourse analysis, as both of these traditions have power as a central element. Nevertheless, I find that power is treated implicitly in all the interviews, while talking about bureaucracy, participation, and lack of possibility to wield influence. This way, I argue that there is a sound relation between the theory and methodology I use.

#### **4.6.1 Supervision by two supervisors**

During the process of working with this report, I have had two supervisors. Tor Arve has been there through all phases, from the initial research proposal to the finished document. At a seminar in Trondheim in 2006, I discovered that a Centre for Rural Research existed, and I paid them a visit. I was warmly welcomed, and after a chat we agreed that cooperation could be fruitful to both parts. Karoline was assigned to be my supervisor at the centre. She became a member of the project team just before I started the fieldwork.

I was never in any doubt about having two supervisors. First of all, I consider the resources at the Centre for Rural Research to be of high value for this report. For me, the opportunity to use these resources has been a gift. Secondly, when entering into a supervision process, I can only find advantages to having more than one supervisor. Different opinions from different backgrounds serve as a quality check of each other. Concerning the backgrounds, Karoline and Tor Arve are both geographers. I might have gained more interdisciplinary responses if my supervisors were from different disciplines. However, many geographers tend to consider geography alone to be an interdisciplinary field.

One of my initial concerns about having two supervisors was related to how I should react if they disagreed. After two opposing pieces of advice before my second field period I realised how such disagreements were good for my process, as they made me reflect on the choices I made. That said, my general impression is that Tor Arve and Karoline have complemented each other as supervisors. Each of them has their particular strength in relation to this report. Karoline knows my field very well, from having conducted several studies in Geiranger herself, and Tor Arve is an experienced political ecologist, who has been of invaluable importance in relating Geiranger to a political ecology perspective. These fields being new to me, the expertise of my supervisors has been important in giving me many hints on where I could start the search for relevant literature.

Moreover, they approach the task of supervision in two different ways. They comment on different aspects in my texts and they complement each other in the way they respond and approach me as a student. Additionally, they have been a good supervising team for me in the process of writing this report.

As a last comment in this reflection section, I will say it is obvious that I had most time for reflection upon the data collection period. The process of analysis and writing has not been subject to as many reflections. This has two reasons. First, I had more time in general during the data collection period. I stayed in Geiranger for a long time with the purpose of reflecting on the field I was about to describe, and how I should describe it. During the writing process, there has been little time for reflection due to continuous deadlines on chapters and drafts in order to finish the report in time for the submission deadline. Second, the first period is more distant in time, which has given me more time to reflect upon the choices I made, and how things went in this period. The writing process ends just in time for the deadline, thus leaving me with no time for reflection on the document. I hope and suppose that as the phase of writing gets more distant, reflections on this stage also will evolve.

## 5 The narratives

In this chapter I will present the narratives that have evolved out of the collected data. Before I start the presentation, a few introductory comments are necessary.

I will present two narratives that each represent a group from my data material. The narratives I present derive from the data as a whole. All informants in each group have thus not commented on every aspect or point of the narrative, but I present what I feel characterises a group as a whole. This approach to identifying narratives can be seen in relation to Benjaminsen *and* Svarstad (2008:60), who observe:

*[t]he identification of a clear narrative constitutes a main finding of the empirical study. We must, however, stress that we did observe variations between the constructions of various interviewees.*

Within the groups that represent the narratives, there are some differences. On the one hand, I find differences in how local actors and actors that are more distant to the community comment on and relate to the situation. On the other hand, different views and attitudes have to a certain extent been reflected within the groups. This can be due to a number of reasons. I will try and reflect these variations in my presentation.

In the following, I present the two main narratives and the arguments that construct them. I will also elaborate on the internal variations within each narrative.

### 5.1 The marginalisation narrative

The first narrative is promoted by actors in the farming sector. The group behind this narrative consists of both active farmers and farmers who have wound up their farming activity within the local community, and agricultural authorities on the municipal and county level. The narrative goes as follows:

*The Geiranger area is an area with special environmental (natural and cultural) values generated by traditional use of the resources through farming, grazing and hunting. The area is of great importance for tourism because of these values. Farming and tourism have existed side by side in Geiranger for a long time. The relationship between the two sectors has been harmonious, and they have been mutually beneficial to each other. Political strategies have disturbed this relationship by contributing to a continuous strengthening of tourism activities on the one hand, and a continuous weakening of farming activities on the other. The Landscape Protected Area contributes further to this polarisation by locking up access to natural resources and forming the basis for more tourism activity based on the World Heritage Status. More focus on tourism potential and activities*

*attracts external actors. The result is exploitation of the community and the farming sector, and a degradation of the environmental values. The locals are disempowered. It is necessary that the governmental authorities recognise their responsibility to maintain a viable farming sector in order to prevent a collapse of the community. Because agricultural production forms the basis for both tourism and World Heritage, a continuation of the existing development, leading to a disappearance of the farming sector, will undermine the existence of tourism activities and eventually lead to a collapse of the community and a loss of the World Heritage Status.*

This narrative tells a story with a beginning, a middle and an end. More specifically, it has a preconditional state, an intervention and an outcome. In addition to pointing towards a winner, the tourism sector, and a loser, the farming families, this narrative also clearly presents archetypical roles as villains and victims. The victims are the farming families in Geiranger, whereas the national authorities and policy makers represent the villains. These 'villains' have disturbed the equity in the relationship between the tourism sector and the farming sector.

### **5.1.1 Arguments**

There are three main arguments embedded in this narrative. The first focuses on marginalisation, both of the community and the farming sector, the second focuses on bush encroachment and how environmental values are at risk, and the third focuses on how authorities overrule the locals.

#### **Marginalisation**

According to the farmers, marginalisation occurs at several levels. Firstly, they claim there has been a marginalisation of small-scale farming by the demand for rationalisation. Secondly, they claim that the farming sector has been marginalised within the community, by the tourism sector that continuously grows stronger. And thirdly, they claim that Geiranger and other rural and peripheral parts of Norway have been marginalised.

According to the farmers, the most obvious sign that there is a demand for rationalisation in farming today are the economic conditions. The farmers describe a steady increase in costs related to farming during the last decades. The development of incomes, on the other side, has not met this increase. This has made small-scale farming difficult. One farmer says:

*You don't have to go further than to somewhere around 1985, when I had to kill a cow. From the money I got for the meat, I bought a machine for haymaking. And then, in 1998 or so, this machine broke down, and I wanted to buy a new one. But at that time I had to have three cows to buy the same machine. That is when you realise the insanity in this. [...] Costs for machinery are all the way up there, and incomes are down here.*

To meet the economic challenges, rationalisation is necessary. However, in Geiranger, the farming areas are so small, and the land is so steep, that rationalised farming is not possible. Hence, it is not possible to make a living from farming in Geiranger, and the farmers need additional incomes.



For many, the obvious solution to the economic challenges has been a diversification into tourism, either by building cabins for rental or by renting rooms. This development has contributed to a strengthening of the tourism sector, at the expense of the farming sector. The following statement is characteristic:

*Many of those who have small farms here have chosen a diversification into cabin rental and tourism as a side income, so it has become more and more tourism and less and less farming.*

Secondly, there has been a strengthening of the tourism sector by the authorities according to this group. Tourism activities generate added value and employment, and these are important factors for economic growth, which is an important goal for Norway as a country. Therefore, the authorities have regarded the support of tourism activities as being of high value. The combination of putting effort into tourism and overlooking the farming sector makes the situation nearly impossible for the farmers. The fact that tourism is also, to a large extent, based on the cultural landscapes produced by farming activities, makes many farmers express an indignation over how the tourism sector takes advantage of the farming sector:

*They are not very interested in contributing economically to sustain things. The tourism sector is not interested in that. You can say that they have benefited from the job we have done on keeping the nature and the cultural landscapes beautiful. And in a way they make an income from it, because people appreciate it, and they want to come back. But if you consider the farming as such, the people that run the farms don't get much income from the tourists.*

According to the farmers, the marginalisation of the farming sector and the strengthening of the tourism sector are further increased by the Landscape Protection Status and the World Heritage Status. The argument is that the two are intertwined and the process is initiated by the tourism sector and supported by the authorities. Landscape Protection served as a premise for the World Heritage Status. While the Landscape Protection Status limits use of agricultural resources, the World Heritage Status adds tourist value to the region. Hence, the two statuses work in the same direction of marginalising farmers and strengthening tourism.

*Tourism has been very important historically. But when you see the polarisation that happens today, this crystallisation, you clearly see where the money is earned. Without doubt, agriculture is the loser. The tourism sector managed to persuade the authorities about the Landscape Protected Area. And the tourism sector earns the profit, not the farming sector. The World Heritage of UNESCO is nothing more than a disadvantage for us farmers and landowners. The farming sector is going to lose, and the tourism sector will win of course.*

However, in relation to this argument it is important to mention that this argument is a construction. It is documented by several official papers that this initiative first came from the Nordic Council of Ministers (Daugstad forthcoming). Nevertheless, this fact does not alter the experienced polarisation effect.

The last point in the marginalisation argument concerns how Geiranger as a community is marginalised. The main argument in this regard is that Geiranger is a community with few resources and that if it is to survive as a viable community, these resources have to be used fully and locally, without interventions that disturb local utilisation. What is interesting about this argument is that the resources and interventions in focus are mainly connected to tourism activities. Two situations are mentioned in particular. The first, and most commonly expressed, is about how external actors in tourism activities are attracted by the tourism potential in Geiranger. These actors are criticised for entering the stage in the peak season to 'skim the cream' off the market, without offering any social or economic returns to the community. All they leave behind is said to be waste and pollution. The second is about a frustration concerning opening of the road that connects Geiranger to the eastern parts of Norway. This road is closed every winter, and the rush of tourists into the village relies to a large extent on this gateway. It is thus of great importance that this road is opened before the tourism season starts. However, as the authorities have not been able to meet this demand every year, it is considered to be a constraint on the full utilisation of the resources in Geiranger.

In addition to this, the farmers claim that money destined for the community has been wasted. After the designation of Geiranger as a World Heritage Site, Geiranger has gained national attention. This has led to grants for maintaining cultural landscapes. However, there is a joint agreement among the farmers that these grants have been wasted on projects and bureaucracy, without serving the benefits of the community or the farming sector. There is a general mistrust of the management of grants and subsidies. One interviewee says:

*There are many systems that could have been simplified and thereby it could have become better in many ways. The bureaucracy will be getting pretty big, I can tell. Some more efficiency and less links, and this would have worked much better. [...] It is OK that they want to have control over the money, but it could have been more efficient. I see that for every small change we want to make in agriculture, there is a demanding application process. Applications pass through a lot of hands before they get to the right ones.*

Another gives a comment on the management of some specific economic support measures for upholding cultural landscapes formed by agriculture:

*This means that [a great share] of the STILK<sup>16</sup>-resources that are destined for the cultural landscapes of agriculture are put directly into the pockets of a private family that doesn't do any farming activities at all. [...] As long as these are resources that are meant for active farming, they have to be given to the active part of the farming sector. In other cases there is a demand for turnover from the business if you are to receive anything. But in this case they just throw the money around.*

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16 STILK is short for Spesielle Tiltak i Landbrukets Kulturlandskap, Special Measures in the Cultural Landscapes of Agriculture. This subsidy arrangement has been substituted by SMIL. See Chapter 2 for details.

Both of these statements illustrate a general impression that all the good intentions and 'big words' about better times for Geiranger and the farming sector do not yield any results.

#### **Bush encroachment**

The farmers talk a lot about bush encroachment. They express a strong attachment to the areas surrounding the village. These areas have been managed by local farmers for generations, and a continuation of the management and upholding of these landscapes is considered to be part of their pride as farmers. One farmer expresses the attachment like this:

*This farm has been operated for more than 300 years. It is in your blood. There is a very strong solidarity with the land and with what your ancestors have done. [...] You are supposed to continue what generations before you have created. There are a lot of emotions. It lies so deep inside you it is actually part of your identity.*

However, as a result of the marginalisation of the farming sector, there are ever less land areas that are cultivated and used for haymaking, and the number of grazing animals is decreasing continuously. Hence, areas are increasingly subject to natural succession. The farmers stress that a continuation of farming activities is the most important factor in maintaining cultural landscapes.

According to some of the farmers, the Landscape Protection Status also contributes negatively to the upholding of the cultural landscapes, as it constrains the use of natural resources. This constraint affects farming negatively in two ways. First, side-incomes from these resources, such as power production from water, are necessary for many farmers, and second, to a certain extent it undermines the traditional uses of resources that have generated the environmental values. Examples that are used are the management of fishing resources and the cutting of firewood for own use. One farmer sees it this way:

*For several decades farmers have been living here and utilising the resources on the farm and had animals. And now, what you are served is that if you continue to make a living from these resources, you will destroy the nature.*

Furthermore, the extensive tourism traffic in the area leads to heavy pollution and emission of greenhouse gases that further encourages the overgrowth. A couple of farmers also mention the climate change as an encouraging factor for the overgrowth, by pointing towards how the shoots grow faster now than a couple of decades ago, and how new species reproduce themselves. One farmer showed me an aspen shoot that had grown 30 centimetres in less than one month.

#### **Disempowerment**

The farmers stress that, more than anything else, political strategies have led to polarisation between the two sectors of farming and tourism. This implies that forces outside the community decide the development of the community. Hence, the responsibility for the mismanagement of the natural resources and the unequal relationship between farming and

tourism cannot be placed on the locals. The farmers argue that the authorities and the greater society, *storsamfunnet*, have to take their responsibility to maintain Geiranger as a viable community. It seems like most of the farmers do not consider the authorities or broader society as something they can wield influence over, rather they talk about these forces as something external to themselves:

*If the politicians do not start to realise where we are headed and that they want a change, I do not see much of a future. I think that the politicians, who are sitting in Oslo, must be future-oriented, and decide what they want this country to look like. How will it look in 5-10 years? They have to take a stand. But it seems like there is little perspective.*

When talking about the management of natural resources, the process preceding the protection of the Landscape Protected Area is given much attention. As described in Chapter 2, the second round of this process was a participatory round, where all the stakeholders had a chance to give their opinion on the proposal (Daugstad *et al.* 2005). However, many of the farmers experienced that their responses were overruled by the authorities:

*Everybody received a letter as part of the official hearing, with encouragement for us to participate. It took quite a long time, and you were supposed to get a chance to give your opinion and protest and everything. But in the end it was done exactly the way they had planned it from the start. They did not take any opinions into consideration; it was done mostly because they wanted it to seem like a democratic process.*

Another says:

*I tended to experience that they heard us, but still they did as they wanted. The representative from the county Department of Environmental Conservation set the standards. They did not go any further than they had planned in advance. At least, that is the way I feel about it.*

Furthermore, several farmers argue that the management of the protected area is unfavourable to the environment. The locals have managed the area for generations by their use of the resources. Hence, they argue that protection is misunderstood. One farmer says:

*The conservation takes place in an office where they do not know what they are doing. The best way to manage an area is to use it. That is my opinion. [...] Many species are at risk when the grazing stops.*

Another common opinion is that a good management of the resources is the interest of the farmers and the locals. One couple talks about it like this:

Female: *What is the reason for the protection of the land that we run and have kept and upheld during all times? Why do they have to protect it when we have done this job?*

Male: *We, the owners of the land, are presumably those with most interest in keeping it beautiful and maintaining it.*

All of these statements show a great deal of resistance towards rules and regulations set by the authorities. At the same time they advocate that local participation would be positive.

Before I continue the chapter, it is important for me to mention one last thing, despite the fact that it may seem contradictory to what has been written earlier. Not one single farmer expresses a totally opposing relationship between the two sectors, farming and tourism. Rather, a point stressed by many is that the sectors complement each other, and that tourism has been important for Geiranger. The condition for a mutually beneficial relationship, however, is that the tourism sector stays small-scale.

## 5.2 The synergy narrative

The second narrative is advocated by a broad group of actors. Representatives both from the tourism sector, the World Heritage Management, and officials in environmental and planning and development matters support this narrative. Although there are some differences as to how the narrative is expressed by local representatives from the tourism sector and the representative from the Department of Area and Environmental Conservation at the county level, I still argue that they all are advocating the following synergy narrative:

*The Geiranger area holds excellent environmental values. These values attracted the first tourists to the area, and they still form the basis for tourism activities. The fact that the area has been designated as a World Heritage Site is the ultimate confirmation that these values are of great international importance. Tourism has been the most important sector in Geiranger for a long time. Although farming constitutes an important contribution, Geiranger would not have been what it is today without tourism. Because of the importance of environmental values for tourism in the area, it is crucial to preserve these values. Through the inscription of Geiranger on the World Heritage List, the Norwegian authorities have committed themselves to ensure future maintenance of these values, and bush encroachment has been placed on the agenda. These are both factors that contribute positively to the sustenance of both tourism and farming within the community.*

In this narrative, both the tourism sector and the farming sector are presented as winners. The tourism sector also plays the part as the hero, but the narrative does not tell us of villains or victims. As will be described further in Chapter 7, this narrative is a typical win-win narrative.

### 5.2.1 Arguments

This narrative contains two main arguments. The first concerns how tourism and farming fulfil and enforce each other as sectors, and the second is concerned with how the World Heritage status contributes to a continued positive coexistence of the two sectors.

#### **Mutual benefit**

There is a common agreement within the group presenting this narrative, that there is a positive relationship between tourism and farming. While tourism relies on farming, and the maintenance of beautiful green cultural landscapes through grazing and haymaking, tourism

on the other hand provides necessary incomes and added-value to the community. One interviewee with personal connections to the community shares his view about the relationship between the two sectors:

*Up till 1940 transportation [of tourists] was a very important side income for many farmers. Many may not have managed so well without this. But that period ended, and tourism started to grow again in the 50s. That was when it became popular to build cabins. By then the transportation was not very interesting economically in Geiranger anymore. Then it turned towards bed rental. This accelerated in the 60s and 70s. So there has always been cooperation between farming and tourism.*

By this he sets the historical framework for these synergy effects. And he continues by describing the actual situation and some criteria for these synergies to continue:

*It is important that the land is worked. Especially if the World Heritage values are to be sustained, you have to illustrate how the community has worked with some small-scale farming activities. It is part of the history. Farming today is more or less as it has been for several hundred years. So if there is a wish to illustrate this, someone has to live on a certain number of the small farms and have animals and maintain the landscapes. Hence, it would be tragic for tourism if all these landscapes were overgrown.*

This account expresses the complexity of the relationship, and how the synergy effects are dependent on the functioning of several factors. The way I read these statements, tourism and World Heritage are most heavily weighted. Nevertheless, farming has its role to fulfil as well. A representative from the municipality administration agrees when he expresses how tourism relies on active farming in the community today:

*I have worked in the municipality for many years, and I have followed the development in Geiranger, including the way Geiranger is sold as a tourist destination. One of the main selling points in Geiranger is the cultural landscapes. And it is claimed that a degradation of the cultural landscapes is one of the worst threats in Geiranger concerning the sales value it has as a tourist destination. I consider farming to be one of the most important elements to sustain if Geiranger is to continue to be as attractive as it is to tourists today, because the cultural landscapes are mainly maintained by farming activities.*

The interviewees of this group argue that it is because of this combination of farming and tourism that Geiranger has become what it is today. Hence, it is important to maintain both these sectors to ensure the future existence of the community in Geiranger. This is why the World Heritage Status is so important.

#### **World Heritage Status as the saviour**

Above, I have explained how the relationship between farming and tourism is considered to be of mutual benefit. Hence, for Geiranger to remain a viable community, future activity in both of these sectors is important. There is, however, a general common concern that the farming sector is at risk because of the difficult economic situation in farming.

Although Geiranger and surrounding areas are inscribed on the World Heritage List as natural heritage, the cultural landscapes are claimed to have played an important role in the inscription. Some even argue that the cultural landscape qualities were the decisive factor:

*[T]he cultural landscapes [...] seem to have been the most important criterion for Geiranger to enter the list. [...] It was stressed that this is one of the areas where you still have cultural landscapes that are almost intact.*

Hence, a threat to these cultural landscapes also implies a threat to the World Heritage Status. Because the World Heritage Status is given to Norway as a nation, it is argued that the maintenance of the cultural landscapes is in the interest of the nation. According to this, it is argued that the Norwegian authorities have committed themselves to contributing to the upholding of these landscapes in order to keep the status.

In particular, one project is mentioned when it comes to the maintenance of cultural landscapes. The four counties of Møre and Romsdal, Sogn and Fjordane, Hordaland, and Nordland, together with Norwegian Agricultural Economics Research Institute, *Norsk institutt for landbruksøkonomisk forskning* (NILF) and the World Heritage Council recently made an assessment of the profitability in farming in World Heritage areas (Verdsarvrådet & Vega kommune 2007). This project ended in an action plan and a recommendation to the authorities on what is needed to save the farming in these areas, in economic terms (see Chapter 2). There is a common optimism that this recommendation will yield results.

Furthermore, if these economic resources are granted on the basis of this project, this is only due to the World Heritage status, according to the argument. One interviewee from the World Heritage Management says:

*I would say that if we reach acceptance for the general idea in the action plan, it is solely because of the World Heritage Status that we could reach this. Without the World Heritage Status this would not have been possible. It wouldn't have been possible to plant an idea like this without being able to say that we are such a unique area in Norway.*

## 5.3 Internal variations

There are some variations within both narratives. In this section I will describe these variations, treating the two narratives separately.

### 5.3.1 The marginalisation narrative

I find three aspects where there is variation within the marginalisation narrative. First, there is a difference as to how this narrative is expressed at a local level by the farmers, and how it is expressed by the agricultural authorities. In general, the authorities express a more optimistic attitude towards bureaucracy and official management than the locals do. I do not find this difference in attitudes very surprising. However, I still think that it is worth mentioning. What is most interesting in this respect is that the representative from the municipal

agricultural authorities tends to take a stand somewhere between the local farmers and the county authorities. Whereas the county authorities express optimism towards the World Heritage Status, and the possibilities it brings for new grants and subsidies to the farming sector, the municipal authorities focus on the negative implications of the Landscape Protection Status rather than the possibilities within the World Heritage Status. In the municipality they also seem to share the frustration of the farmers towards the waste of economic resources in projects and bureaucracy, although one of the representatives interviewed admits that the municipality has initiated some of these projects itself.

Second, there are diverging views on how harmful the tourism sector is to the farming sector. In particular, the farmers that come from farms where a substantial part of the total incomes comes from tourism express a more positive attitude towards tourism, and they stress how the two sectors strengthen each other. All of them have decided to keep some grazing animals because of the important contribution these animals make to the general impression the tourists get. These farmers sell their own cultural landscapes themselves, whereas the farmers on the farms without much income from tourism feel exploited by the tourism sector.

Last, not all farmers are all pessimistic towards the World Heritage Status. Because of the recently finished *Action Plan for Cultural Landscapes in the World Heritage Areas* (Verdsarvrådet & Vega kommune 2007) (see Chapter 2), some farmers express a certain optimism. However, the majority of those who are optimistic in relation to whether these financial resources will be granted, at the same time express a concern that farmers outside the World Heritage area will benefit more from these 'World Heritage subsidies' than farmers in Geiranger, thus contributing further to the marginalisation of Geiranger as a community.

### **5.3.2 The synergy narrative**

There are some internal variations within this narrative too. As with the marginalisation narrative there is also a discrepancy between the interviewees from the local community and the authorities. The locals, from the World Heritage Management and tourism, focus upon the marginalisation of rural and peripheral communities. They stress how important it is that the authorities take action to facilitate the full utilisation of the resources locally. The importance of a regular opening of the mountain road in time for the tourist season is particularly important according to the interviewees. Another possible action that is mentioned is restricting the possibilities for external actors to enter the tourism market only in the peak season, thus profiteering without yielding any returns to the community. It is argued that if action is not taken and the need for local utilisation of the resources is not met, the tourism sector in Geiranger will not survive. The authorities' representatives do not mention this in their interviews.

Furthermore, there is dissonance on how strict the environmental protection ought to be. The Department of Area and Environmental Conservation at the county level advocates a



stricter protection of the land areas than the other interviewees in the group formulating this narrative. Locally, there is a common focus on the potential synergy between farming and tourism, and that this interplay ought not to be disturbed. Locals from tourism and the World Heritage Management argue that the Landscape Protection Status is a necessary "evil" for obtaining the World Heritage Status and the benefits that follow this status. However, the representative from the Department of Area and Environmental Conservation at the county level argues that the Landscape Protection Status itself is beneficial to the farmers:

*I believe that the Landscape Protection Status affects the farming sector positively, because it is precisely within the qualities that lie in the Landscape Protection Status that the agriculture, the primary industry, has its future. If you didn't have this quality brand to consider and defend, I think the horizon would have been much darker. I cannot see that the Landscape Protection Status has negative implications for farming, but I see plenty of positive elements related to it.*

Based on this last section, it is clear that there are some overlaps between the two narratives. In the following chapter, I will discuss the narratives in relation to each other, focusing on similarities and differences within them.



## 6 Comparing the narratives

In the previous chapter, I presented the narratives identified from the collected material. With reference to the research questions, the presentation in the previous chapter is an answer to the first question (What are the narratives of the different stakeholder groups; farmers, tourism sector, World Heritage Management, and authorities, in Geiranger?). In the following two chapters, I will concentrate on responding to the last two research questions which focus on the relation between the two narratives. I will also put them into a broader social context, and link them to different environmental discourses.

The connection between the narratives in this study and broader discourses is the topic of the next chapter. In this chapter, I focus upon the similarities and contrasts in the two narratives. This chapter aims to respond to the second research question: What similarities and contrasts can be found within the narratives of the different actor groups? While addressing the similarities and contrasts in the narratives, I will focus on some central topics that have come forward during my interviews.

As mentioned, the identified narratives are representing a group as a whole, although the individuals in the group express the various aspects differently. Hence, not all interviewees from one group have identical views. A categorisation of accounts into two narratives like this is a simplification. In the statements and interviews that form the basis for the identification of these narratives there are no clear-cut boundaries. Rather there is a continuum of statements and views within and between the narratives. I do not wish to draw strict and categorical lines in a complex set of views and opinions. In this section, I will assess the two narratives in relation to each other. In this assessment of similarities and contrasts, I will use the notions of *nodal points* and *social antagonisms* from Laclau and Mouffe (1985) as presented by Blekesaune and Stræte (1997).

### 6.1 Farming and tourism

The first area that is central for this discussion concerns the interplay between farming and tourism. From the last chapter we have seen that the narratives relate differently to this interplay. The most obvious difference is how the marginalisation narrative focuses on the importance of farming, and how the synergy narrative focuses on the importance of tourism in the community. Moreover, interviewees especially within the marginalisation narrative tend to keep their distance from tourism. Although the large majority of them derive income from tourism activity, only three interviewees from two farms clearly state that they are a part of the tourism sector. I find that this shows how social antagonism has been created between

these two sectors. Blekesaune and Stræte (1997:15, *my translation*) describe the constructions of antagonisms like this:

*We often find that different interest groups' presentations of political opponents have few nuances, and that the opponent's arguments are presented as more extreme than they really are. Through these constructions of social antagonisms the plurality of the political arena is often reduced to simplified friend and enemy representations. It is exactly this reduction that leads to the creation of black-and-white perceptions of the world.*

When farmers who rely on income from tourism feel a need to distance themselves from the tourism sector, I argue that this can be seen as a result of a reduction of reality, which has led to a friend-and-enemy representation. Thus you cannot identify yourself as both a farmer and a tourism agent. You have to choose one identity.

This differentiation is not as clear at the individual level in the synergy narrative. There may be various reasons for this. One is that none of the tourism agents are farmers, so they do not need to draw this line on a personal level. However, it is still evident that the synergy narrative argues that tourism is the most important sector for Geiranger. It is clear in the formulated narrative, and there are various individual statements making clear that Geiranger's continued existence as a viable community depends on tourism.

If we put this difference aside, we can see from the elaboration of internal variations in the previous chapter that not all farmers are equally categorical in their critique of the tourism sector. Although I do still argue that there is an enemy construction between the two sectors, especially from the side of the farming sector, I have found a discrepancy as to how harmful the tourism sector is pictured to be. Those who themselves have a large share of their incomes from on-farm tourism activity are likely to be less negatively directed towards other tourism activity. This is natural because these farmers experience the positive trade-offs from the combination of farming and tourism. This may indicate that there are some similarities in the views within the groups that are representing the two narratives.

However, there is one hidden factor that may play a central role here. For many of the interviewees, the difference between small-scale and large-scale tourism is of crucial importance. I find that those who are advocating the synergy narrative do not make this distinction on a qualitative level. They talk about both types, and see both as natural and important parts of the tourism sector in Geiranger. Those who advocate the marginalisation narrative tend to talk about the tourism industry or the large hotels when they address the tourism sector. And the fact that almost all of those who are involved in small-scale tourism refuse to define themselves as actors in the tourism sector, can be seen as an indication of how important it is to make this distinction for those who are in the farming sector.

As I have mentioned in the previous chapter, in Geiranger, representatives from the farming sector, many of whom also are small-scale tourism agents, blame the tourism sector for not being willing to contribute to sustain a viable farming sector in the community. This

distinction between small-scale and large-scale tourism actors has parallels in other studies done on Norwegian tourism destinations. Daugstad *and* Ruderaas (1997) describe a negative attitude directed in the opposite directions, from large-scale tourism agents towards small-scale agents in the Røros area. Using the terminology from Daugstad *and* Ruderaas (1997), the large-scale tourism agents (described as the tourism sector) in Geiranger can be accused of being "free riders", presenting and benefiting from cultural landscapes as part of the tourism product without offering economic returns to the farmers who produce or uphold these landscapes. One farmer with a small tourism enterprise says:

*One time, it was asked how much the tourism sector is willing to pay for the maintenance of the cultural landscapes. Zero. In all times, the farming sector has produced cultural landscapes, and the tourism sector has sold them. In other circumstances, it would have been reported as a theft. [...] I could never tell my cabin guests "You give me 500 kroner and then you can go and eat as much as you'd like at the hotel".*

In Røros<sup>17</sup>, the large-scale actors blame the small-scale actors for not taking their part in the costs related to the marketing of the region or specific destinations. They benefit from the economic efforts of the large-scale actors on making the area an attractive tourist destination without offering anything in return. I find these two situations to be comparable, although the negative attitudes in these situations are going in opposite directions. In Geiranger, the small-scale tourism actors blame the large-scale actors for not 'paying their way', whereas in Røros, the large-scale actors blame the small-scale actors for being free riders. In my view, it is particularly interesting that the negative attitudes come in opposite directions in these two studies. I find that this strengthens the idea that there is social antagonism between these two groups, because it is clear that both groups have contributed to the creation of this antagonism. Later in this chapter, I will present some examples where social antagonism is created more from one side than from the other side.

There is one considerable difference between these two situations. In the Røros report the confrontation line is drawn between small-scale and large-scale tourism agents. In Geiranger there is an additional factor; the farming sector is also integrated in the confrontation, taking the side of the small-scale tourism agents. However, I will argue that there is little reason to differentiate between small-scale tourism agents and the farming sector in Geiranger. There are two reasons for this. First, the vast majority of the farms that participated in the study have additional income from small-scale, on-farm tourism activities. Second, the interviewees from these farms define themselves as farmers. Hence, they form a group with a common identity. This implies that these two sectors are integrated and that drawing a line between them would be an artificial separation.

In relation to this, I also find it worth pointing towards the Soria-Moria declaration (platform for the Norwegian government 2005-2009). In this declaration, the focus on tourism and development of the tourism sector in rural areas is stated clearly (AP, SV & SP 2005). This

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<sup>17</sup> Røros is another famous tourist destination in Norway.

focus on tourism as "the rural saviour" (Rønningen 2007) in Norway can be seen as a threat to farming activities, which may contribute to strengthening social antagonism between the two groups. This is evident in the interviews with farmers in Geiranger. They express the feeling that in rural communities like Geiranger, the tourism potential is considered to be the future orientation - not the farming activities. To gain strength as farmers it is thus important to formulate and deploy a group identity.

With regard to this group identity as farmers, there is one paradox. It would seem probable that rather than using a common identity it would be important to build a group with a shared focus and a common fight. In this way, it would be easier to confront the tourism sector with some claims considering economic support for the upholding of cultural landscapes. However, this does not seem to be the situation. Rather, the farmers seem to operate more on an individual level, building an individual position rather than supporting and strengthening each other. Indeed, some of my interviewees among the farmer cohort stress that there is a lack of group mentality within this group, and that there is no shared focus within the farming sector.

As I also mentioned in the last chapter, there are no farmers that express a totally opposing relationship between farming and tourism. This may seem contradictory to the enemy construction between the sectors that I have outlined above. However, I want to stress that the condition which is set by the farmers for a friendly relationship between these two sectors is that the tourism sector stays small-scale. This is coherent with the group constructions relating to social antagonism as outlined above, and it points towards a question of interests rather than the tourism sector as such. The focus on profit in the tourism industry and the urge to attract as many tourists as possible can be seen as contesting more traditional farming values and a solidarity mentality between farmers. Several farmers express concern about how the values of farming are contested. The value of farming and identity of farmers will be discussed in a later section in this chapter.

Following on from this, there is another aspect that is worth mentioning. The two narratives recognise the importance of both farming and tourism in Geiranger. There is no disagreement about the question of whether these two sectors play and have played important roles in the development of the community. This is surprising if we relate to the antagonism that has been constructed. However, both narratives have the same departure point, describing how these two sectors have co-existed in a mutually beneficial relationship. This shared starting point can be seen as a nodal point in the two narratives. Blekesaune *and* Stræte (1997) discuss how nodal points rely on ideological backgrounds. I choose to apply a wider understanding of the notion than the one Blekesaune *and* Stræte (1997) apply. In this situation I will argue that instead of an ideology, the background for this nodal point is a shared experience. The social antagonism must thus have been created in recent times. From the view of the farmers the negative impacts from tourism on farming started when the tourism sector grew stronger than the farming sector.

Hence, social antagonism is not constructed between farming and tourism as such and neither it is based on the fact that both sectors have played important roles in Geiranger. Rather there is an argument about which sector is most important for the community. In other words, both groups recognise the importance of both sectors, but instead of arguing that the existence of both sectors is crucial for Geiranger, they favour one over the other, creating an enemy relationship between the sectors.

In the following sections, I will discuss different aspects that may contribute to or influence the relationship between these two sectors.

## 6.2 Landscape Protection and World Heritage

When it comes to considering the topics of Landscape Protection and World Heritage, the two narratives also differ a lot. Briefly, the marginalisation narrative argues that protection and heritage constrain farming activities and contribute to increasing the gap between the two sectors. The synergy narrative, on the other hand, argues that World Heritage is an important step towards ensuring the existence of Geiranger in the future. These two attitudes towards protection and heritage are close to opposites. In the following, I will try to identify the reasons for these different approaches.

Farming activities have long and strong traditions in the area. The farmers of today are in charge of the management of a form of heritage from their ancestors. Traditionally, every single farming unit has been managed individually, both in the infield<sup>18</sup> and outfield<sup>19</sup> areas. It has been the responsibility of the farmers to balance the level of use in a sustainable manner, and still produce enough to feed the family. A protection status of an area is often regarded as a restriction of the sovereignty of the farmers, and a threat to agricultural use of the area (Daugstad *et al.* 2000). I find this to be the case in Geiranger as well. Many farmers express concerns about the possibility to develop their areas as they want, or have to, in order to maintain a living from the farm. Combined with the argument from the farmers that farming is the most important sector in ensuring Geiranger as a viable community in the future (see elaboration in previous section), such restrictions are perceived as unfavourable for the community. Following the same argument, an increased gap between the tourism sector and the farming sector, due to the protection and heritage statuses, is equally unfavourable.

On the other hand, the representatives from the tourism sector and the World Heritage management argue that the protection and heritage statuses are positive factors for the community. According to these interviewees, tourism is the rural saviour of Geiranger. Tourism has brought new incomes to the community, and made it possible to make a living

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18 In-fenced privately owned land close to the farm, cultivated or semi-cultivated (pastures).

19 Private or common land, not cultivated or worked on, typically swamps, forests, natural grasslands, mountainous areas.

although the income from farming has decreased during the last decades. Hence, as the World Heritage Status can be used in the advertisements of Geiranger as a tourist destination, it contributes positively to sustaining Geiranger as a viable community.

What I find most noteworthy in these two different attitudes and lines of argument is how they emphasise different aspects of the total situation. The representatives from the tourism sector and the World Heritage Management, arguing that the statuses have positive impacts on the community, tend to stress how the World Heritage Status is a decisive factor for a positive outcome for all actors. On the contrary, the representatives from the farming sector, arguing that the statuses are unfavourable, tend to emphasise the restrictions that are implied in the Landscape Protection Status. To a certain extent it is also argued that the World Heritage Status acts as a strengthening of the restrictions implied in the Landscape Protection Status. However, the most common remark on the World Heritage Status is that it is irrelevant for the farming sector, and considered to be a project of the tourism sector.

This can be seen as another instance of social antagonism that is constructed between the two narratives. Both sides emphasise the factor that fits their argument, distancing themselves from the other side. Moreover, as I described in the previous section, in a situation of social antagonism the arguments of the opponents are often pictured to be more controversial than they are in reality. I find this to be the case in relation to Landscape Protection and World Heritage. The main argument in relation to these statuses concerns the conflict between conservation interests and user interests of the land areas. This conflict of interests is not a new phenomenon. As mentioned above, area conservation plans are often met with scepticism by the farmers who are concerned about their interests as landowners.

Daugstad *et al.* (2005) describe how the farming sector on all levels has emphasised how important it is that the Landscape Protection Status in Geiranger does not compromise user interests. It is stressed that continued use of the area plays a more important role for maintaining the values of the area than conservation. In particular, small-scale hydroelectric power plants are mentioned as one example of actions that should be possible despite the Landscape Protection Status. This is given much importance because power production can be an important side-income for farmers. In my interviews, hydro-electric power production is a central topic. Several farmers have applied to start power production from waterways on their land. So far none of them have had their applications approved. In relation to this question, I find clear examples that the arguments of the different groups are presented in extreme versions.

When talking about energy production and the resistance experienced from the authorities, several farmers overstate the arguments of the tourism sector. I have been presented with arguments from farmers saying that the opponents of power production argue that such production will drain the waterways and eventually stop the flow of tourists into Geiranger, because of the loss of spectacular waterfalls due to the drainage. When talking with the



tourism sector and the World Heritage Management, what I was presented with was instead a worry towards how power production will affect the waterfalls and that this may affect the overall tourism value of the area if it starts to conflict with the criteria for the World Heritage Status. On the other hand, those who advocate that a stricter management of environmental conservation is necessary in order to maintain the environmental values tend to exaggerate the wish among farmers to start power production, making examples from some of the most iconic waterfalls in the area. These have never been suggested as possible resources for power production.

To concretise further how the arguments are distorted when they are presented, the following example serves as an illustration. One of my local respondents in the tourism sector has this comment about hydroelectric power production:

*[I] am not against power production. I have stated that clearly. But we have to try and find a 'golden' way that is acceptable to all. And everybody has to adapt to utilise the natural resources we have got. That is my view. Some opponents of development of power production are very restrictive, but I find that as long as we need electric power, it may be all right to search all possibilities to find a solution so that the waterfalls don't dry out. We cannot develop to the extent that we lose the waterfalls. That won't work. Then we will lose the main business in the community, the tourism.*

From this statement it is clear that this respondent fears that a draining of waterfalls will affect the tourism sector negatively. However, it is also clearly stated that it is necessary to search for possibilities, and for all actors to adapt and negotiate. From this, what I am presented with from the side of the farmers is that the tourism sector totally opposes development of watercourses because then Geiranger will lose all tourism. I find that this is a distortion of the actual statement as it is presented from the tourism sector. A more nuanced presentation from the farmers would be that they experience resistance towards power production, and that they find the reactions from the tourism sector are exaggerated because they do not consider the power production plans to be of such dimensions.

I find that the construction of social antagonisms related to the Landscape Protected Area started during the initial process. According to Daugstad *et al.* (2005), there were disparities in how the different views were understood by the different actor groups. Some of the actor groups consider that the conflict level related to the protection of the area is much higher than what is described by the conservation authorities. This supports my finding that groups tell different stories of their opponents' arguments and views, which lead to the construction of social antagonism.

However, also regarding the question about conservation or use of land areas, I find that there are some similarities in the two narratives. Some interviewees from the group advocating the synergy narrative express more liberal attitudes towards the strength of the environmental protection than the general attitude. For some of the local representatives, regardless of which sector they represent, it is clear that the most important focus is to sustain

Geiranger as a viable community. These local respondents advocate different overall narratives, but they all emphasise that the protection plan for the Landscape Protected Area has to be adapted to ensure the livelihoods in the community. Some interviewees stress that in situations where some simple steps can be taken to ensure farming activities in the community in the future, one should assess the possibilities to take these steps, that every case requires individual assessment, and that it is important that all sides show flexibility. This is illustrated by the statement from the tourism representative above, who stated that everybody has to adapt in order to find a 'golden' way that is acceptable to all. Hence, there are opponents of strict and rigorous protection plans in both narratives.

As I have mentioned in the previous chapter, the County Governor's Department of Area and Environmental Conservation advocated a strong environmental protection, arguing that the farming sector should base its future existence on the values embedded in the conservation statuses. This department is also the only one that uses the Landscape Protection Status itself when arguing about the common positive effects. The rest of the synergy proponents argue that the World Heritage Status is the decisive factor for the positive development.

In this regard, I find it necessary to comment on the qualitative difference of Landscape Protection and World Heritage. As I mentioned in Chapter 2, the appointment of a Landscape Protected Area in Geiranger was a precondition for the designation of the area as a World Heritage Site. Thus, the World Heritage Status can be assigned to areas that are conserved by the standards of the *Norwegian Nature Conservation Act, Naturvernloven*, and this status builds on the conservation status. This means that the World Heritage Status itself does not imply further restrictions on the area. All the restrictions are embedded in the management plan for the Landscape Protected Area, and the World Heritage Status is solely an additional status that is assigned to the area (Møre and Romsdal county 2005). Furthermore, the Landscape Protected Area is the least strict form of conservation referring to the Nature Conservation Act. Although the processes of appointment of the Landscape Protected Area and the designation of the World Heritage Site have been overlapping and intertwined in the case of Geiranger, it is important to differentiate between these different roles of the two statuses.

Hence, when the representative from County Governor's Department of Area and Environmental Conservation argues that the Landscape Protection Status is favourable to the community and the farming sector, he argues that the restrictions in themselves have positive social and environmental impacts. This contradicts the rest of the interviewees who express optimistic attitudes towards the statuses directing their optimism towards the possibilities embedded in the World Heritage Status because this implies an increased responsibility of the government authorities to secure these values for future generations. My argument is that although both the probable positive effects of the World Heritage Status and the probable negative effects of the Landscape Protection Status are used for what they are worth by either

narrative, in general there is a common understanding that the restrictions are linked to the protection status and the possibilities are linked to the heritage status. I find this agreement over the roles of the statuses as a common understanding worth mentioning. However, I do not consider this agreement as a nodal point for the two narratives due to the difference in how the statuses are used by the proponents and the opponents.

Extending this issue some more, I find another area where the two narratives have similar approaches to the question about land use and conservation. In the previous chapter, I described how some interviewees who advocate the marginalisation narrative express certain optimism towards the World Heritage Status and how it can have positive influence. This optimism is centred on the action plan that resulted from the project on the profitability in the farming sector (Verdsarvrådet & Vega kommune 2007). This action plan is a central factor for optimism also among interviewees who advocate the synergy narrative. Hence, I will argue that this action plan can be described as a nodal point for the proponents of the two different narratives. It constitutes a factor that is the centre for a shared optimism from both groups in this study.

In this respect, I feel obliged to repeat that some farmers meet their own optimism about the action plan with scepticism about the fairness of the distribution of financial support related to this plan. More specifically, this scepticism is related to two aspects. First, there is a claim that farmers living outside the World Heritage Area, in the border areas, will benefit more from these 'World Heritage Subsidies' than farmers in Geiranger. This claim is put forward due to the action plan showing that much of the grazing subsidies will be granted to farmers in the border areas who have grazing areas inside the World Heritage Site. The reason why these farmers will be granted so much is that they have more grazing animals, and the subsidies are calculated by number of animals (Verdsarvrådet & Vega kommune 2007).

Second, there is a general mistrust as to whether financial support from the authorities will benefit local farmers, due to experiences regarding the wasting of money in bureaucracy and projects. I will assess this form of scepticism and defiance more in detail in a later section of this chapter.

### **6.3 Bush encroachment and cultural landscapes**

The question about bush encroachment and cultural landscapes has strong links to the Landscape Protection and World Heritage Statuses. Neither of the narratives mentions these questions explicitly, but they are embedded in the environmental values that lie at the core of the arguments that underpin the narratives. This is the one area where there is total agreement: Bush encroachment should be combated in order to save the cultural landscapes. As described earlier, Geiranger is inscribed on the World Heritage List as natural heritage. However, the importance of the agricultural values to the look of the

landscape is emphasised by all interviewees. Hence, the common interest to prevent these landscapes from overgrowth can be seen as a nodal point between the two narratives.

It is no surprise that the farmers express concern about how bush encroachment threatens the cultural landscapes. As I have described earlier, the farmers have a strong attachment to the land they live on. On a general level, they put much pride into the maintenance of areas that their ancestors have managed and passed on to them. I find it more surprising that the representatives from the other groups of interviewees, the tourism sector, the World Heritage management, and the authorities, share this concern with the farmers. These groups share the concern of bush encroachment emphasising how important cultural landscapes are for the overall impression of the environmental value of the area. Cultural landscape concerns have gained much attention in Norwegian agricultural policies in recent decades (Daugstad & Rønningen 2004), and this may have affected how people outside the farming sector relate to these landscapes. Daugstad (2008) describes that this awakening among the tourism sector towards the importance of cultural landscapes has evolved during the last decade. In the same period, several studies on farming as an upholder of cultural heritage have also been undertaken (e.g. Daugstad *et al.* 2005; 2006).

Although there is a joint agreement among my interviewees on the importance of cultural landscapes, this does not mean that there are no disputes over this question. The bush encroachment is already happening, and when so much emphasis is placed on the maintenance of cultural landscapes, it is natural to direct the focus towards strategies for maintaining these landscapes. It is this question where there is debate in relation to upholding these cultural landscapes. In brief terms, the debate relates to whether such landscapes should be maintained by farming activities or if 'gardening' is sufficient. This debate is also linked to the identity and pride of the farmers, which will be dealt with in a later section of this chapter, but here I will elaborate on the difference between the two approaches without entering into the field of farmers' identity. Daugstad *et al.* (2006:70, *original quote and parenthesis*) describe this difference:

*A core question in the discussion of agriculture and cultural heritage is "active versus passive": how cultural heritage is (positively and negatively) influenced by active farming, defined as an operating agricultural system based on economic profit from the production of food and fibre. The difference between active and passive farming is not clear cut, but a farm run as a museum with the purpose of documenting land use systems for visitors would be perceived as passive.*

In this study, I find three important aspects relating to this question. The first concerns the purpose of the maintenance of these landscapes. Traditionally these areas have been mowed for use of the hay in agricultural production, such as fodder for the animals. However, as the number of animals has decreased the last decades, the need for hay has also decreased. Therefore, the steepest and most difficult areas have not been mowed during the last years. From this situation, another suggestion has arisen; mowing areas for the purpose of making the landscapes look good. Hence, the purpose is either production of food and fibre, as

described by Daugstad *et al.* (2006), or the production of beautiful scenery. These two purposes can be linked to different landscape values identified by Jones (1993). The production of food and fibre implies an economic value embedded in the landscapes. As I have mentioned earlier, this is also linked to the identity of the farmers, thus implying an identity value in the landscapes. The production of beautiful scenery, on the other hand, is related to recreational and aesthetic values.

Regardless of the purpose, there are three means, which can be applied to achieve the objective of maintaining the cultural landscapes. Either, the areas can be mowed by use of motorised devices, or they can be mowed manually, or the maintenance may be done by grazing animals. Both motorised and manual mowing may be done either as haymaking or as landscape care. However, it is a general view among my interviewees that grazing animals are part of an agricultural production, thus implying that if 'gardening' takes over the landscape care, there will be no more animals in the area. The 'gardening' suggestion is that as more areas are left without mowing because of the decreasing need for hay in the farming sector, the areas where mowing with motorised devices is possible should be mowed in order to take care of the landscape. In order to prevent a misconception of this debate, I find it necessary to emphasise that although this is a debate, the large majority of my selection agree that motorised mowing of these areas is insufficient for the maintenance of them and the values they embed today. Only one representative from the tourism sector de-emphasises the importance of animal production and grazing stating that the tourism sector will find solutions to the problem of bush encroachment.

The second aspect is also linked to animal production. One of the motives for protecting the areas in Geiranger as a Landscape Protected Area was the rich biodiversity. This rich biodiversity has evolved due to animal grazing of the areas. The grazing animals have kept the vegetation low, providing a lot of sunlight to the soils, and at the same time ensured flow of natural fertiliser to the soils. The result of grazing, combined with favourable climatic conditions, is that several species are found in this area that elsewhere only exist further south (Møre and Romsdal county 2004). Hence, the question about farming or landscape gardening is not only linked to the purpose of mowing but also to the quality of the maintenance of these landscapes. The general concern is that what Jones (1993) calls the "intrinsic ecological values" of the landscapes will be lost. The importance of this aspect is not opposed by anyone in my selection; on the contrary, several interviewees in all groups mention the upholding of a rich biodiversity explicitly as very important.

The following quote is representative for how many farmers express their worries about landscape values in a broader perspective. Without mentioning the landscapes values explicitly, one of the farmers expresses the situation like this:

*I think it would be very sad if all the animals disappear, if you cannot see the lambs jumping around in the fields in the spring time. You lose something that cannot be valued in money. You lose something that lies inside you. [...] We lose more than I think we can*

*imagine. The entire community, and all those who visit us. Even though I contribute to it myself, I think it is sad.*

The third aspect that is relevant in this discussion is the question of whether one should focus on maintaining cultural landscapes of the infield areas or if both infield and outfield areas should be in focus. This is not discussed much, but some interviewees mention that the outfield areas have already been "lost" to the bush encroachment, so there is no need to focus on these areas. The argument is that climate changes increase the natural regrowth, and this cannot be hindered by increasing the number of grazing animals. The assumption that some areas in Norway are lost to bush encroachment is common, and supported by various studies (Olsson *et al.* 1998; Olsson & Rønningen 1999; Bryn & Daugstad 2001). What I find interesting in this regard is that none of the interviewees explicitly mention the link between the unfightable bush encroachment in the outfield areas, and the threat to the biodiversity in the same areas. Rather, the threat to the biodiversity is only mentioned in relation to the number of grazing animals, despite the fact that the impact on the biodiversity is the same whether the bush encroachment happens due to climate changes or decrease in number of grazing animals. Hence, both bush encroachment and biodiversity are only linked to the number of grazing animals, not directly to each other. I find this to be an overemphasis on the importance of animal production.

The obvious step now would be to identify where social antagonism is constructed in this discussion. However, I will argue that there is no social antagonism concerning cultural landscapes and bush encroachment. As mentioned in the beginning of this section, this is the only area where there is a total agreement that bush encroachment should be combated in order to prevent overgrowth of the cultural landscapes. Above, I have briefly discussed three areas where there are disagreements over how, why and to which extent the cultural landscapes should be maintained. This discussion has shown that there is disagreement on this issue, too. In contrast to the two previous issues (Farming and tourism / Landscape Protection and World Heritage), however, I find no exaggeration in the arguments from either side leading to constructions of friend-and-enemy relations concerning bush encroachment. It could be argued that social antagonism between agricultural production and landscape gardening has been constructed, because the emphasis on motorised mowing is exaggerated by some interviewees. Nevertheless, I do not find enough consistency within the different groups in this report to label this a social antagonism.

To the contrary, it is my belief that the common concern of all groups considering the bush encroachment is a nodal point between the narratives. It serves as a shared issue in which all parts are engaged.

In relation to previous studies on agriculture and cultural heritage, these findings constitute a confirmation of studies done on this relationship in Norway. Compared to most other countries, the majority of Norwegian farming activities are small-scale, and generally there is and has been a strong focus on multifunctionality of farming and agricultural production of

common goods (Daugstad *et al.* 2006; Daugstad 2008). Hence, the discussion about maintenance of cultural landscapes is not new in a Norwegian context. However, studies done in Norway in general constitute a supplement to international studies on this relationship. Daugstad *et al.* (2006) describe the ambiguous role of agriculture in relation to cultural heritage. In an international perspective, farming constitutes both a caretaker of and a threat to cultural heritage. Large-scale agricultural production and modernised methods for land use may imply a threat, but on the other hand, agricultural production through generations has created cultural landscapes. Thus, a continued production based on the same principles may be crucial to preserve these landscapes. As described above, most farming activities in Norway are small-scale, and Geiranger is no exception. In Geiranger, in particular, the possibilities of rationalisation are limited because of the difficult topography.

An interesting point in this regard is linked to how the valuation of landscapes differs in different parts of the world. In Norway, the cultural aspects of landscapes are emphasised, and often subject to protection as in Geiranger. The multitude of studies done on cultural heritage and agriculture is an illustration of this (e.g. Daugstad *et al.* 2006). According to Benjaminsen *and* Svarstad (2004) this stands in contrast to conservation practices in Africa, where "colonial conservation policies", favouring the idea of wilderness, are maintained. Indeed, Benjaminsen *et al.* (2008) elaborate how different species have been reintroduced to a newly established national park in South Africa aiming to recreate 'wilderness'. This fortress approach to conservation implies that actors from former colonial powers set the standards for the conservation of landscapes according to their norms. These standards downplay the culturally affected landscapes in Africa, arguing that agricultural practices lead to environmental degradation such as desertification and deforestation. On the contrary, in Norway, cultural landscapes are considered to be of great environmental significance, e.g. to preserve biodiversity. Moreover, their small-scaled production, and diversity are perceived as aesthetically attractive and considered to be tourist friendly (Daugstad 2008). While in Norway, bush encroachment is perceived as land degradation, in Africa, the opposite process, deforestation is considered to be environmentally harmful. Hence, while a cultural landscape with no trees is generally seen to be associated with important positive values in Norway, in Africa, such a landscape is often thought to be a visible step towards environmental disaster.

## 6.4 Local participation and bureaucracy

So far, the topics I have explored have been concerned with discussions between groups representing the two different narratives. In general, the instances of social antagonism I have presented seem to have been constructed between proponents of one narrative and proponents of the other, although I have shown that the separation line between the two narratives is not absolute, and in some cases, proponents of the first narrative sympathise with attitudes embedded in the second. This last topic considering the comparison of the narratives is of another character. Rather than drawing a conflict line between the two

different narratives, the question of local participation and bureaucracy is found within each of the narratives.

As described in the previous chapter there are differences in how the various narratives are expressed by locals and authorities. In the marginalisation narrative, the locals express more scepticism towards bureaucracy and official management than the authorities do. In the synergy narrative, the locals add an additional factor, concerning marginalisation of rural and peripheral parts of Norway. They argue that policies have to be formulated so as to ensure maximum utilisation of the tourism resources within the community. In particular, this is related to the opening of the southbound mountain road. Furthermore, in the previous sections of this chapter, I have tried to show that the discussions around conservation or use of the land areas, and bush encroachment and cultural landscapes also include an element of a local desire for influence on how rules and policies are made. The Landscape Protection Status is seen as a restriction of sovereignty over individually owned land. Several farmers claim their right to continue the management of land areas that have been managed by their families throughout the generations. One farmer also argues that when their sovereignty is taken from them, at least the farmers should receive economic compensation for the areas that are restricted.

An example of scepticism towards the management of the protected area is found in a quote used in the previous chapter, from a farmer stating: "The conservation takes place in an office where they do not know what they are doing". Blekesaune *and* Stræte (1997) report a similar finding in their analysis of the discussion around the interface between wild carnivores and agricultural activities in Norway. They present different ideologies that influence the management of carnivores in relation to the farming sector. Concerning ideologies connected to private businesses they identify an egalitarian liberalistic business ideology and an expert-oriented agriculturally technocratic business ideology. I find that these ideologies correspond with attitudes and views presented in my study. The liberalistic business ideology is found among the local farmers. Blekesaune *and* Stræte (1997:39, *original emphasis, my translation*) write:

*Representatives from the ideology often show much scepticism towards the management of carnivores and "clerks who make silly plans"<sup>20</sup>, and the carnivore bureaucrats are often criticised for claiming their own interests at the expense of the democratic decisions they shall consider. [...] The business oriented ideology builds on liberalistic and democratic ideologies; at the same time it is critical to the power of the public bureaucratic expertise.*

This corresponds with the scepticism found among my interviewees from the farming sector. Blekesaune *and* Stræte (1997) have also placed the Norwegian Farmers' Union, *Norges Bondelag*, to which some of my respondents belong, within this ideology.

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20 *Original footnote*: "the quote is taken from an article in Namdal Arbeiderblad 10.12.93"



On the other hand, Blekesaune *and* Stræte (1997) present the agriculturally technocratic business ideology, found among agricultural authorities, as an example of a social democratic regulating economy. In the carnivore debate, the agricultural authorities have shown a strong willingness to regulate. In this report I find it more precise to talk not only about an agriculturally technocratic ideology, but rather an expert-oriented technocratic ideology as such. The regional authorities in general, and the Department of Area and Environmental Conservation in particular, express a strong belief in top-down regulation mechanisms. Such mechanisms can regulate usage and conservation of an area, for example through restricting power production from waterways on private land, or regulate agricultural production, for example through the distribution of support mechanisms to some areas like in Special Environmental Measures in Agriculture, *Spesielle miljøtiltak i landbruket* (SMIL), and the Regional Environmental Program, *Regionalt miljøprogram* (RMP).

Although I argue that both agricultural and environmental regional authorities represent a technocratic ideology, there are differences in the orientation of the different departments towards management of the resources. Both groups are proponents of expert knowledge as the basis for management and policy-making, but I find that the environmental department has a more absolute attitude to the expertise, promoting conservation for the sake of conservation, whereas the agricultural department expresses a stronger orientation towards including the interests of farmers in the process. One example of this is the approach the agricultural department has toward the debate around conservation and use of land areas, arguing that the aim should be to combine expert knowledge to meet the needs of the farmers. This finding corresponds with a finding by Sagør *and* Aasetre (presented in Blekesaune *and* Stræte (1997)), who describe the agricultural authorities as client-oriented and the environmental authorities as profession-oriented. This may be a contributing factor to the local farmers' stronger opposition towards the environmental authorities than towards the agricultural authorities. Another contributing factor may be that the farmers feel a stronger attachment to the agricultural department, considering the employees to be "their own" bureaucrats.

Through the discussion in the first sections of this chapter, I have shown examples of how social antagonisms are created more from the local farmers than from any of the other groups. I argue that this is a sign of a defiant attitude of the farmers. I find that in the interviews with the farmers, there is a strong urge to define groups in constructions as 'us' working against or meeting resistance from 'them', without further definition of the categories. One of the farmers says:

*Yes, they came here and talked with us, and we wanted to have the [Landscape Protection] boundary moved further uphill, but they were careful not to do that.*

Throughout the interviews, these groups are never more clearly defined than 'us', the farmers in Geiranger, and 'them', the authorities. I argue that this urge to talk about 'us' and 'them' is connected to the construction of social antagonisms. Like I argued in the beginning of this

chapter, the construction of 'them' may be read as an indication that 'we' need something to oppose to. In the construction of social antagonism, the definition of friends and enemies is a central factor. If we relate this to what I wrote about cultural landscapes and bush encroachment in the previous section of this chapter, this is one of the reasons that I choose not to label this discussion as social antagonism. In this discussion I find no expressed needs to define friends and enemies, 'us' against 'them'.

In this process of defining 'us', local farmers, and 'them', other groups as the tourism sector, farmers outside Geiranger or the authorities, there is a paradox. As I mentioned in the first section of this chapter, the group mentality among the farmers is not very strong. The farmers seem to act on an individual level rather than as a group fronting common interests and views. I found this lack of group mentality surprising, thinking that it would be beneficial for the individuals to gather in a group because a group gains more power than an individual in a discussion. However, drawing on the analysis by Blekesaune *and* Stræte (1997), this is not unique in Geiranger. They find that this individual orientation is common within the Norwegian Farmers' Union. As representatives for the liberalistic business ideology the union and its members tend to focus on individual rights and needs. Anyhow, this individual orientation among the farmers indicates that the 'friend constructions' may be just as readily be constructed as the enemy constructions. There are no clear-cut boundaries between friends and enemies, like the impression that is given throughout these discussions.

I started this discussion by arguing that I find a defiant attitude among the farmers. I will now try and explain this statement. As we have seen earlier, the farmers utter strong opposition against the restrictions that the Landscape Protected Area implies, and other regulations that affect private sovereignty in farming activities. There are probably several reasons for this opposition. One of the reasons I identify is a lack of quality information from the authorities. One farmer describes this:

*I remember when the process with the Landscape Protected Area started. At that time we got a letter saying that something is happening that will end up in a Landscape Protection Status in the area you live. We even got a map where all of Geiranger was coloured orange or something. It was kind of a shock, for even back then we knew what a Landscape Protected Area implied considering restrictions [...] and everything. So the initial part of the process was very unfortunate.*

In the previous chapter, I also mentioned scepticism towards the management of economic resources that were destined to ensure a viable farming sector in Geiranger. Many farmers share the concern that the money does not benefit the farmers locally, but rather disappears into the bureaucracy mill and projects. According to the farmers, two projects<sup>21</sup> in particular have consumed a lot of money the last few years without yet yielding any long-term results. These economic factors also contribute to creating mistrust towards authorities and

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21 Both of these projects concerned management strategies for future development of the cultural landscapes, however one project was initiated by the local group of the Norwegian Farmers Union, and the second started after a political initiative.

bureaucracy, and an argument for more local participation in decision making processes. This scepticism towards the authorities' ability to make suitable decisions for the local community is also linked to the argument about the marginalisation of rural and peripheral parts of Norway. This argument is shared by both the farmers and the representatives from the tourism sector. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the tourism sector pays special attention to the opening of the southbound mountain road in time for the tourist season each year, and how external actors benefit from the tourism potential in Geiranger during the peak season. They claim that there is a lack of willingness among the authorities to facilitate for a viable tourism sector in Geiranger. This also contributes to the general mistrust to authorities in the local community.

This discussion about the decision-making processes is not unique to Geiranger. Blekesaune *and* Stræte (1997) find a similar discussion in the carnivore debate. Although the topics that are centre for discussion differ, there are similarities in the statements made in these discussions. Blekesaune *and* Stræte (1997:45, *my translation*) find that these conflicts also have their backgrounds in the different ideologies:

*It is quite natural that there are social and cultural conflicts in the carnivore policies when the legitimate foundation for decisions is solely based on the knowledge of the biological expertise.*

As a follow-up to this question about economic resources, it is relevant to mention the claim about economic compensation for areas that are restricted in the Landscape Protected Area. This claim was already set as a requirement for protection of land areas during the second round of hearings, before the Landscape Protected Area was a fact (Daugstad *et al.* 2005). As I have presented earlier, this demand still persists from some of the farmers, more than five years later, but it yields no reactions among the authorities. When a demand persists for a long period like this, without being taken into consideration, I do not find it very surprising that this contributes to growing distrust and a defiant attitude.

Another factor that is central in relation to this defiance is the identity of the farmers. They describe a change in the role of agriculture, from food production to landscape production. This change also affects their identity, whether they are food producers or landscape providers. A representative from the county describes the change like this:

*Farming and farmers have to adapt so that their main livelihood is not food production, but rather as nature managers of an area.*

Several farmers say that they experience this shift as a devaluation of farming and farmers. From a situation up until one or two generations ago where farming activity and food production was considered one of the most important occupations in the society, and where farmers took great pride in their work, the change in validation of farming activity today is vast. Although landscapes always have been an important part of the farmers' life and they

express a strong attachment to the land, the commercialisation of these areas is described as alienating. One couple expresses the devaluation of farmers like this:

*It is a very arrogant attitude from the authorities. They expect that there are some old men around and that everything will run in the old groove, without salary. Today, there are 3-4 farmers left to do the same job as more than 30 men did earlier. That doesn't work. We have had enough. There are limits to how far idealism can stretch. It isn't right that just a few people do a job to ensure that everyone else to have something to look at.*

I find that this reflects a feeling on the part of farmers that they are being taken for granted by the authorities, although these same authorities have forced through this changed role of farming. Problems concerning the change of identity as farmers are found in other studies as well. Rønningen (1999:133) finds that "Many felt landscape management agreements were 'taking the pride out of farming'", and Daugstad (2005:8) finds that "to shift from the role of farmer to a tourist entrepreneur or landscape provider is problematic for many farmers". However, I find that there is a difference between the identity of farmers in Geiranger, and how it is described by Daugstad (2005). In Geiranger, I find that there is an understanding among the farmers, that the role of a farmer also includes providing cultural landscapes to a certain extent. Thus, the identity conflict in Geiranger is rather a fight to not only be identified as a landscape provider, but also to gain credit as food producers. Only a few farmers in Geiranger totally reject identification as landscape workers. One reason for this may be that farming and tourism have coexisted for a long time in the community. Most of the farmers are also tourist hosts and the necessity to balance these two identities may be something they are used to.

In a study of different farmer identities, Vik (2005) identifies six stereotypes. Although it is a generalisation to put all farmers in Geiranger within one of these categories, I will argue that the main attitude in Geiranger resemble the exit-farmer. Vik (2005:45, *my translation*) describes the exit-farmer like this:

*One can talk of a category of farmers characterised by a combination of a high degree of wear on capital (i.e. they do not want to invest either in buildings or machines and tools), and unwillingness to recommend to their offspring that they take over the farm.*

Returning to the defiant attitude which was the starting point for this discussion of the identity of the farmers, I find that those who have managed the shift of identity and, to a larger degree, accepted their role as landscape providers, are not as hostile toward the authorities.

Before moving on, there is one last aspect that I find it necessary to comment on. In this section I have shown how the farmers show sceptic and defiant attitudes towards the authorities. However, this is a paradox related to their call for responsibility among these same authorities to find measures that can diminish the differences between the farming sector and the tourism sector and thereby strengthening the farming sector. I find one possible reason for this. As I will describe in the following chapter this defiant attitude is part

of a traditionalist view, arguing that local people manage their resources better if they are left alone. However, in Geiranger the local people are not left alone. Perhaps a feeling of helplessness or lack of influence on their own situation leads to a call for help to public bodies, either to strengthen farming activities, or to regulate the influence by tourism and external actors.

Based on the discussion of this last section, it could be argued that the narratives presented in this report have drawn artificial separation lines between the groups representing each narrative. Another alternative narrative construction could have separated representatives from the authorities from the locals. Recalling my understanding of discourses, as outlined in Chapter 3, this differentiation of locals from the authorities, may reflect the local *Geiranger discourse* as opposed to the bureaucracy discourse or the discourse of the authorities.

However, I find that the different representatives of the various authorities do not advocate a common narrative or discourse. As an example, I find differences in how the agricultural authorities relate to the issues discussed in this report, and how the authorities for nature conservation relate to them. Nevertheless, this possible critique makes it important for me to stress once more that there are no clearly defined lines between groups based on attitudes in my material. I have done the separation based on which sector the different interviewees belong to, and I have treated the sector groups as inseparable units. In this work, I have concentrated on questions like 'Which attitudes are presented in the interviews done with the farmers?' or 'Which narrative is expressed by the representatives from the tourism sector?' In some cases these pre-defined groups have been difficult to handle as single units because different attitudes have been presented within each group. In these cases, I have in the last two chapters tried to show how these internal variations are expressed and how they relate to attitudes presented in other groups.

In the following chapter, I will present two different environmental discourses, and argue that the two narratives presented in this report each belong to one of these two discourses. I consider the possibility of linking the narratives to these broader discourses to be a sign that the separation line I have drawn between different groups in my material in the process of identifying narratives is reasonable.



## 7 Environmental discourses

In the previous chapter, I have discussed some central issues that have come to the fore during the interviews. In this chapter, I concentrate on the arguments in the two narratives, as presented in Chapter 5. The aim of this chapter is to link the narratives to broader environmental discourses. Thus, a main argument is that what I have found in this study in Geiranger also has importance and validity outside this small community. In linking my narratives to broader discourses, I draw upon Benjaminsen's *and* Svarstad's (2008:56) critique of Lyotard. They write:

*In a postmodern absence of grand narratives, Lyotard sees small narratives at work everywhere. The contents of these narratives are negotiated locally. However, contrary to Lyotard, we argue that studies of local conflicts can reveal that there are underlying patterns in local constructions that are widely shared at a national as well as at a global scale.*

Examples in the previous chapter have shown that similarities between my findings in Geiranger and other studies undertaken in Norway or internationally can be found. These similarities support the idea of broader discourses. In this chapter, the focus will be on identifying underlying universal issues such as environmental values, power and sustainability embedded in the arguments, and show how these can be found in other narratives and discourses.

Before I start the discussion, I will elaborate a bit more on the presented narratives as wholes, and how narrative analysis is linked to discourse analysis. With reference to Roe's (1999) description of narratives and counter-narratives, I consider the two narratives I have identified to represent counter-narratives to each other. They represent two opposing interpretations or constructions of the situation. Both narratives have a similar starting point in describing Geiranger as an area with unique values, and a historical mutually beneficial relationship between farming and tourism in the community. They consider the recent changes in this relationship, the factors that have influenced the changes, and end up with two opposing future scenarios. As I described in Chapter 3 if one narrative has the structure  $a \rightarrow b \rightarrow c$ , then one alternative structure for its counter-narrative is  $a \rightarrow b \rightarrow \text{not-}c$ . This structure is not expressed explicitly in the two narratives, but I will argue that these structures are embedded implicitly in how the two narratives relate to each other. The focuses in the narratives on fundamental issues such as environmental values and social sustainability are opposing. Given the set of conditions in the narratives, the marginalisation narrative presents a crisis-scenario while the synergy narrative presents a win-win scenario. Based on this, I will relate the two narratives to two different discourses.

Considering the link between narratives and discourses, I described narratives as one example of expressive means within a discourse in Chapter 3. Blekesaune *and* Stræte (1997:13, *my translation*) write that:

*Following discourse analysis no phenomenon can be perceived by humans before it has been constructed into something meaningful through a discourse.*

Narratives are one way of putting phenomena into meaningful settings, thus making *elements* into *moments* like one of the points included in the construction of a discourse (Blekesaune & Stræte 1997). In this way narrative analysis and construction can be seen as a first step in discourse analysis. On this background I will, in the following two sections of this chapter, show how I find the marginalisation narrative to be part of a traditionalist discourse and the synergy narrative to be part of a win-win discourse.

## 7.1 Traditionalist discourse

Starting with the arguments presented in Chapter 5, we see that the narrative of the farmers consists of three main arguments. These focus on marginalisation, of the farming sector and of the community, on bush encroachment, and on the disempowerment of locals.

I will here start by discussing bush encroachment. Embedded in this argument, there is a focus on how the environmental values are at risk. As described earlier, the farmers express a strong attachment to the areas, and to how the landscapes surrounding Geiranger have been managed through generations. Furthermore they describe how the regulations that have come during the last decades and the increase of tourism in Geiranger have negative implications for the environment.

These findings correspond with the findings done by Benjaminsen *and* Svarstad (2008:57) on opposition to dog sledding in Gausdal. They write:

*Opponents of dogsledding express a strong attachment to the landscape and traditional uses of Vestfjellet, and they portray dogsledding as an activity with negative environmental impacts. We believe this to be an example of the application of an argument often used constituting an element of a rural traditionalist discourse.*

The farmers in Geiranger describe the traditional management of the natural resources as the 'best' way to manage the areas. Thus, a viable farming sector is crucial in order to maintain these values, and restrictions or obstacles on farming activities will eventually lead to bush encroachment and environmental degradation. This coherence between the arguments in Gausdal and Geiranger shows that although these are separate situations that concern different cases, there are commonalities as to what aspects and issues and underlying questions that are raised in the two different places. This can be seen as an indication that these questions and issues have national relevance.



This link between traditional systems and environmentalism is not unique for Geiranger. In a study on European agri-environmental policies, Rønningen (1999:133) finds that "[m]ost farmers stressed they farmed in a very environmentally friendly way", and Benjaminsen *and* Svarstad (2008:57) write:

*We believe that the case of the opposition to dogsledding in Gausdal points to a strategy of narrative construction that may be widespread, in which traditionalist arguments are presented as environmental arguments.*

This link between traditional management systems and environmentalism is also confirmed as evident in Geiranger by Holm *et al.* (2007:60, *my translation*). They find that locals consider "maintenance of environmental qualities [...] as a kind of "effect" of an economically and socially sustainable system". Considering that this strong linkage is made by the farmers, it is important to assess these issues in relation to each other. As I have explained above, the farmers do see the environmental values as being at risk. Following this, it is interesting to assess whether they evaluate the system to be economically and socially sustainable.

Relevant here is the argument that focuses on marginalisation. The marginalisation argument has three sub-arguments; small-scale farming is marginalised by demands for rationalisation, the farming sector is marginalised in Geiranger, and rural and peripheral parts of Norway are marginalised. Of these three, the two first are relevant here. The third is more relevant in relation to power, which is discussed below.

Immediately, we can see that one of these sub-arguments also has relevance outside of Geiranger. The demand for rationalisation and higher efficiency in the farming sector exists both at a national and international level. It concerns a question of economic sustainability in the countryside. Economic sustainability of the farming sector is also the concern of the other argument, although this argument addresses the situation in Geiranger. Nevertheless, the question about how farming activities are marginalised by tourism activities is not unique for Geiranger. In Norway, farmers have been encouraged to diversify into tourism (e.g. AP, SV & SP 2005), and several studies that have been conducted confirm the fact that farming is the losing party in this interplay (Brandt & Haugen 2005). Returning to the argument from Holm *et al.* (2007), this lack of economic sustainability within the farming sector implies a threat to environmental values.

Although the link is not as explicit in this argument as the one concerning environmental values, the marginalisation argument also has its parallel in the Gausdal study done by Benjaminsen *and* Svarstad (2008). One of the arguments in the dog sledding oppositional narrative is that traditional economic activities are threatened. Benjaminsen *and* Svarstad (2008:54) find that:

*[[l]ocal people claim that traditional economic activities, such as mountain farming, are difficult to sustain today due to economic and political factors at the national and international level.*

With reference to the accounts presented in Chapter 5 on the marginalisation of farming, I find several similarities. Both narratives stress the economic conditions, and I believe that the political factors that were mentioned in Gausdal may, besides the demand for more efficiency, be extended to include and compared to restrictions implied by environmental conservation, as in the case of Geiranger.

Conservation is a central aspect also in relation to power. The third argument in the marginalisation narrative concerns how local people have lost the power to make decisions regarding the development of their community. As presented earlier, a growing bureaucracy, and the special case of the Landscape Protection process, is argued to have negative influence.

The question about the establishment of protected areas is a common issue in Norway. During the last decades, a great effort has been put into protection of areas (Daugstad & Rønningen 2004). In the same period many studies have assessed the success of the community-based approach to conservation processes. Not all studies show promising results on the participation of locals in these processes (Daugstad *et al.* 2005). Furthermore, assessments of local management of conserved areas show that local management is not always successful (Daugstad *et al.* 2006). Nevertheless, the rhetoric of the farmers in this study is that local management is good, but the implementation of local participation has failed. The carnivore debate, too, shows similar arguments about local voices being overruled by urban values (Blekesaune & Stræte 1997).

Furthermore, also considering this aspect, there are similarities in the dog sledding opposition narrative from Gausdal. Benjaminsen & Svarstad (2008) find that the local farmers in Gausdal also feel powerless and marginalised by the bureaucracy.

To summarise, I find that there are many similarities between my findings in Geiranger, and findings from other studies in Norway. On particular topics, such as the debate around participation in conservation processes and the economic conditions and political focus of farming, I find many studies that support my findings. Moreover, there are several striking similarities between the narratives in Gausdal and Geiranger.

On an international level, I also find several commonalities. Svarstad *et al.* (2008:120) identify a traditionalist discourse relating to biodiversity, arguing that "local actors are capable of managing biodiversity and other natural resources in appropriate ways, if they are given the opportunities". Furthermore, Adger *et al.* (2001) identify similar global environmental discourses on desertification and deforestation, arguing that external intervention has disturbed the sustainable management systems of local people. Although Adger *et al.* (2001) name these discourses as 'populist' they have much in common with the traditionalist discourses. Benjaminsen *and* Svarstad (2008) also treat these discourses as parallels.

However, there is one difference. As I mentioned at the end of the last chapter, the farmers in Geiranger do not reject all external influence. Although they express resistance towards powerful external forces restricting farming activities, at the same time they call for support mechanisms that can strengthen the farming sector. This differs from other traditionalist narratives as identified by Adger *et al.* (2001:703). They write: "Local and traditional knowledge is seen as a provider of sustainable practises, and local people will therefore be better off when left alone". Nevertheless, as I described in the previous chapter, the feeling of helplessness among the farmers in Geiranger may contribute to this contradiction, and I find the similarities in other arguments to be of more importance than this difference.

If we assess the rhetorical devices, in terms of the casts of actors, the parallels between the different narratives are even more evident. The clearest similarity is found among the victims in the narratives from Geiranger and Gausdal, and the populist discourses identified by Adger *et al.* (2001). In both the Norwegian narratives, the victims are the local farmers. In the populist discourses, the victims are the local poor. Whereas the populist discourses define local people as heroes, due to their sustainable practices and local knowledge, the narrative from Geiranger identifies no heroes. However, if I were to search for a hero in the marginalisation narrative in Geiranger, the local people, also including local representatives from the tourism sector and the World Heritage Management, are closest to such a role. As for the villains, I have identified them to be policy makers and the governmental authorities in the marginalisation narrative in this study. In Gausdal, Benjaminsen *and* Svarstad (2008) identify the dog sledders and the bureaucracy as the villains in the traditionalist narrative, and Adger *et al.* (2001) identify the villains to be powerful external actors such as colonial powers or international institutions in the populist narrative. Although the villains are exemplified differently in the two Norwegian narratives, I find that both governmental authorities and the bureaucracy are examples of powerful external actors. The dogsledders, on the other hand, may not be as powerful, but the farmers in Gausdal describe a strong alliance between the dog sledders and the bureaucracy; "We call it comradeship, but in the south<sup>22</sup> they call it corruption" (Benjaminsen & Svarstad 2008:56), giving the dog sledders more power.

## 7.2 Win-win discourse

The synergy narrative consists of two main arguments. The first is that there is a mutually beneficial relationship between farming and tourism, and the second is that the World Heritage Status contributes to the positive development of Geiranger. I have already labelled this narrative a win-win narrative. Hence, it should be no surprise that I link this narrative to other win-win narratives constructing a win-win discourse.

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22 *Original footnote:* "The term used here was Syden, which literally means the South, but it is a common term used for countries with a warm climate and beaches, which are used as holiday destinations for Norwegians (e.g. the Mediterranean countries, the Canary Islands, the Caribbean, Thailand)."

The first element that is central in this win-win perspective is the mutual benefit between the two sectors. This argument is supported by several official documents in Norway. For instance, The Ministry of Agriculture and Food (LMD 2004, *my translation*), states:

*The agricultural and tourism sectors are in many ways interdependent. The tourism sector demands products from agriculture, such as beautiful well-managed cultural landscapes, cultural heritage monuments and sites, and special food products, and agriculture offers both commercial products and common goods as cultural heritage and cultural landscapes. The tourism sector in rural areas is particularly dependent on a viable agricultural sector. Rural tourism is important for employment in rural areas, and the activity contributes to more diversity and variation in the overall tourist experience.*

Several studies and reports also points to beneficial relationship between tourism and traditional rural activities as a general assumption among different groups in the society, depicting tourism as the rural saviour (NOU 1990; Kaltenborn *et al.* 2003; Innovasjon Norge 2006).

A parallel win-win narrative can be found in Gausdal. Without further assessment in their study Benjaminsen *and* Svarstad (2008:59) find that:

*a competing win-win narrative, which is presented by local bureaucrats, politicians and mushers, argues grosso modo that dogsledding is an environmentally harmless activity, which can bring local income through dogsledding safaris.*

The next argument in the synergy narrative concerns the positive role of the World Heritage Status in relation to sustaining Geiranger as a viable community into the future. This argument is also supported as a general assumption. Holm *et al.* (2007:56, *my translation*) state that:

*In contrast to other designation processes where areas are conserved by the Nature Conservation Act [...], a World Heritage Status is considered to be a potential for economic development.*

Earlier in this report, I mentioned the *Action Plan for Cultural Landscapes in the World Heritage Areas*. This action plan is the result of a common initiative from the authorities of three different areas connected to two World Heritage Sites in Norway. I consider such a common initiative an indication that the argument of the positive role of a World Heritage Status has relevance outside Geiranger. Recently, the positive role of this status is also confirmed by the Norwegian agricultural authorities who have granted a considerable amount of money for the maintenance these cultural landscapes, through the tools outlined in the action plan (SLF 2008).

Besides these examples showing that the arguments of this win-win narrative can be also recognised outside Geiranger, there are other parallel win-win narratives concerning other environmental topics. Svarstad (2002:72) identifies a win-win narrative concerning bio-prospecting both in Norway and internationally. The message in this narrative is:

*Bio-prospecting provides opportunities for a super win-win situation. Benefit opportunities are generated for conservation, for development in the source countries, for local providers of genetic resources and knowledge, for new medicines for patients and for profit for the industry. However, it is recognised that institution building in the source countries is a basic prerequisite.*

There is another interesting similarity between the win-win narrative in this study and the bio-prospecting win-win narrative found by Svarstad (2002; 2003). As stated above, the bio-prospecting narrative recognises that there is a prerequisite for the win-win situation. Thus, the win-win situation will appear only on certain conditions. In the findings in this study, the World Heritage Status constitutes this prerequisite for the win-win situation. Without this status, what would have been left in Geiranger is the Landscape Protected Area, and as I have stated earlier, the general argument among those who advocate the win-win narrative is that the restrictions implied in this status have negative effects in themselves, but that these negative effects are wiped out by the positive outcomes of the World Heritage Status. Only the regional Department of Area and Environmental Conservation, argues that the Landscape Protected Area in itself is positive.

Furthermore, Adger *et al.* (2001) also identify similar discourses to this win-win discourse on an international level. They label them as global environmental management (GEM) discourses.

As the focus of this chapter is to link the narratives to environmental discourses, I consider it to be necessary to comment on the question about environmental values in the synergy narrative. This narrative, like the marginalisation narrative, claims that the environmental values in Geiranger are of great importance and that they have been put at risk. Hence, the difference in these narratives is not found in how they relate to the environmental crisis. Rather, what differs in the narratives is how they relate to the role of the Landscape Protected Area and the designation of World Heritage Status to the area. As we have seen, for the proponents of the synergy narrative, these statuses, as examples of external intervention, are depicted as positive and as representing the core of the win-win situation. This is consistent with how Adger *et al.* (2001) describe the GEM (here labelled as win-win) discourses. One of the main common features of these discourses is the argument that external intervention, as regulations or the transfer of capital, is presented as the solution to environmental challenges such as deforestation and desertification.

Also regarding these discourses, I find similarities in the cast of actors among the different narratives. Most obvious is that win-win narratives do not identify villains or victims. Rather, there is a focus on the definition of heroes. In the synergy narrative in this study, the actors in the tourism sector are the heroes. In the win-win narrative identified by Svarstad (2002), both the bio-prospectors and the local poor are heroes.

Compared to the GEM discourses identified by Adger *et al.* (2001), there is one main difference. Most of the narratives within those discourses are not win-win narratives, but rather crisis narratives, depicting vicious circles considering the interplay between natural resources, environmental values and society. These crisis narratives have an opposing outcome to the win-win narratives. The reason why I still choose to consider them as two variations of the same is their common message. According to Svarstad (2002:83) the GEM discourses:

*are based on development optimism and a faith in the opportunities for conservation and local benefits. [...] [They] aim at combining targets of environmental protection and economic development.*

Hence, when I draw the link between the synergy narrative and the GEM discourses, this is based on similarities in the messages that are conveyed rather than similarities in the expressive means, such as the casts of actors. However, win-win narratives and discourses have also been linked to GEM discourses in other settings. In their study, Adger *et al.* (2001) also identify a win-win discourse related to one of the environmental issues they assess, and this discourse is categorised as a GEM discourse.

As a summary of this last chapter, I conclude that there are some striking similarities found between the narratives in this study, other narratives and broader environmental discourses. However, it can always be argued that a categorisation like the one I have made here is a simplification. My conclusions may therefore be contested by others, who may find the differences more striking than the similarities. Furthermore, I have chosen to see the narratives in a framework of studies conducted within political ecology. Other fields within social sciences may also provide frameworks describing other discourses that have as many similarities with my narratives as the ones described here. Hence, the analysis presented here is not necessarily the only logical possibility.

## 8 Concluding remarks

In this study, I have used narrative analysis as a tool to assess the relationship between farming and tourism in Geiranger, a small community in Western Norway. More specifically, I have focused upon the interplay between these sectors, and on how this interplay is affected by two key area designations: Landscape Protected Area and World Heritage Status. The research has been carried out as a study of actors and their narratives. I have made use of qualitative methods such as open-ended interviews and grounded theory. The analysis of narratives and discourses is done with reference to political ecology, which has also inspired the approach that I have used.

Among the interviewees, from the farming and tourism sectors locally, the World Heritage Management, and the municipal and county administrations, I have identified two main narratives: The marginalisation narrative is advocated by the overall farming sector, from the local farmers to the municipal and county employees treating agricultural matters. This narrative consists of three main arguments; the farming sector and the community are marginalised, the landscapes are threatened by bush encroachment, and local people are disempowered. The local farming families are presented as the losers, whereas tourism is perceived to be the winning party. Similarly, bureaucracy is the villain, while farmers are the victims.

Behind the synergy narrative, on the other hand, stands a broad group consisting of representatives from the tourism sector, the World Heritage Management and officials in environmental, planning and development matters. These actors present a win-win narrative, where the farming and the tourism sectors and the environment are all presented as winners. The arguments are that farming and tourism complement each other in the local community, and that the World Heritage Status positively affects this interplay. This narrative only identifies one character, a hero, which is the tourism sector.

The narratives share central concerns about the viability of the community and on environmental values. All groups agree that the environmental values are of great importance for the area, and that they have been put at risk. The difference between the narratives lies in the conceptual understanding of how these values should be preserved. Conservationists argue that environmental conservation, in this case the Landscape Protected Area, will in itself save these values, whereas the farmers consider such conservation to be a part of the threat. All representatives from all levels of the farming sector argue that use of the area is the crucial factor in preserving the environmental values. In other words, the farmers consider the current development - with Landscape Protection Status, a strong tourism sector and the change of focus on cultural landscapes from side products to main products

of agriculture - as detrimental to the environmental values. The shared concern for environmental values serves as a nodal point in the narratives, whereas the difference in how they relate to conservation has evolved into social antagonism.

Furthermore, there is a dimension of local opposition to regulations and bureaucracy in both narratives. The marginalisation narrative, advocating a general pessimism, is most pessimistically expressed at the local level, while the synergy narrative, advocating a general optimism, is most optimistically expressed by the county administration representatives.

This difference in how the narratives relate to external intervention is important in the process of linking these narratives to broader environmental discourses. Several studies on narratives and discourses present findings similar to those presented in this study (e.g. Adger *et al.* 2001; Benjaminsen & Svarstad 2008; Svarstad 2002; 2003; Svarstad *et al.* 2008). On the one hand, traditionalist and populist discourses advocate that local management practices are environmentally friendly, and therefore do not need regulation, while on the other hand, win-win and GEM discourses advocate that external intervention is necessary to sustain environmental values.

With reference to the introduction, one of my initial questions concerns how additional factors such as a Landscape Protected Area and a World Heritage Status affect the interplay between the farming sector and the tourism sector. There is no straightforward answer to this question. However, findings from this study indicate that actors use such factors for what they are worth in their arguments. As for this case, the combination of these two area designations on the one hand implies restrictions through the protection, and on the other hand possibilities are implied in the heritage status. I find that the farming sector, opposing regulations, focuses on the restrictions that lie in the Landscape Protection Status, whereas the tourism sector rather focuses on the possibilities for growth and grants implied in the World Heritage Status. However, in this study, these factors have to be seen in relation to each other. The processes leading to these designations were simultaneous and intertwined, and none of my local respondents differentiate explicitly between the two statuses. My findings can therefore not answer this question in relation to one of the two factors. Hence, assessments of how an area conservation status alone affects a relationship between farming and tourism may complement the findings in this study.

Another question I hoped to shed light on concerns the motivation and arguments that form the background for such out-cries presented in the media during the summer of 2006, which highlighted the conflicts and problems that occurred due to the Landscape Protection and World Heritage Statuses, as well as pollution from tourism. This has not been the most central question in this report, and a full answer to this would also require a consideration of media theory and methodology. A tentative answer, however, could be that when people feel powerless, the media is an effective channel to gaining attention. Furthermore, crisis accounts such as those presented in that period easily fulfil the criteria of the media. Skogen



*et al.* (2008:124) assess how crisis narratives<sup>23</sup> "fill important functions for people who otherwise feel powerless" in relation to powerful forces. Hence, marginalised people, crisis narratives and the media affect each other, forming a reinforcing circle.

In this report, I have used narrative and discourse analysis as tools to approach social and environmental issues. Narrative and discourse analysis is used as an assessment of actors and structures in political ecology. Hence, political ecology has been most influential in terms of these tools in this report. However, issues raised in this report are also central issues in other political ecology studies. Traditionalist opposition to development and modernisation, and its associated optimism, is addressed by several political ecologists, often incorporating issues such as marginalisation and conservation (e.g. Robbins 2004; Benjaminsen & Svarstad 2008; Svarstad *et al.* 2008) as was the case with the current study. Moreover, assessment of conflicts over ideas and material goods can highlight the dominant processes and actors in a given field (Benjaminsen & Svarstad forthcoming 2009).

The complexity of the backgrounds of the actors in the group that advocates the synergy narrative may be considered an indication that this narrative advocates the dominant attitude in society. The external pressure concerning rationalisation of the farms, the focus on the production of cultural landscapes and the stronger preference of the tourism sector are all parts of the same political paradigm. This paradigm emphasises commodification and profit. The marginalisation narrative in this report stands in opposition to and challenges this dominant attitude.

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<sup>23</sup> The term used by Skogen *et al.* (2008) is demonic rumours. This kind of rumours share many characteristics with crisis narratives.



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## Appendices

## Appendix 1: Limitations and further assessments

This study has been a purely constructivist approach to assess the interplay between farming and tourism in Geiranger. It is meant as a contribution to knowledge which complements earlier studies carried out in Geiranger and in the Norwegian countryside. Few studies have focused on narratives in Norway, and I find that intentions of getting 'under the skin' of attitudes and views of different actor groups may constitute a considerable factor in the assessment both of rural changes and developmental changes in general.

However, my approach has its limitations. By studying accounts from one case at a given moment, I cannot say much about how the narratives embedded in these accounts work to strengthen or alter existing discourses. An assessment of factors influencing the development of discourses, and how actors and structures mutually influence each other in the production of narratives and discourses, across time and space, would be an interesting continuation. This will require the assessment of more than one case over a longer period of time. Critical assessments of the interplay between policies and discourses have been carried out by political ecologists at a global scale and in other countries, but assessments of such relationships in a Norwegian setting will be an interesting contribution.

A less strenuous task would be to approach single factor influences to farming and tourism. This could focus merely upon a conservation status – or a designation of World Heritage Area to an area that has already been protected according to the Nature Conservation Act. These are questions I have not been able to answer in this report because the two statuses are to a large degree considered as intertwined in Geiranger.

I want to emphasise that discourse and narrative analysis are important tools in environment and development studies. The combination of agency and structure is fundamental in such analyses, involving a wide range of actors. Furthermore, a focus on narratives and discourses may bring to the fore important ethical and cultural issues. As a last comment, I would like to encourage colleagues to continue assessments within political ecology in Norwegian settings. Such critical stances are important not only when approaching developing countries. Through applying the same methodology and theoretical basis in studies done in different parts of the world, we can reach new insights.

## Appendix 2: Interview guides

### 2.1 First period

#### 2.1.1 Interview guide farmers

Opening questions

What is your name?

Can you tell me about the farm?

How have the farming activities developed during the last 10-15 years? (to active farmers)

How did the farming activities develop during the last 10-15 active years? (to ex-farmers)

Do/did you have additional sources of income besides farming?

How do you share the work? (to active farmers)

For what reason did you wind up? (to ex-farmers)

#### **Tourism**

(What are the narratives of the farmers concerning the increase in tourism?)

How does/did tourism in Geiranger affect you as a farmer?

Fields of importance for follow-up questions:

Climate/Environment

Competition between sectors: Confrontations?

The role of farming changes: Food production vs. cultural landscapes

#### **World Heritage**

(What are the narratives of the farmers concerning the inscription on the World Heritage List?)

How did you experience the process of nomination and inscription on the World Heritage List?

What experiences do/did you have of changes after Geiranger obtained World Heritage Status?

In what way do/did these changes affect your everyday life?

Fields of importance for follow-up questions:

Protection/Development

Authorities ↔ grass root

### **Closing**

How do you consider the possibilities for future farming on this farm? (to active farmers)

What is necessary to ensure a viable farming sector in Geiranger?

Could you imagine restarting the activity on this farm? (to ex-farmers)

Do you have any additional comments?

Thank you for using of your time to participate in this interview.

I hope I can contact you again for a second interview

### **Useful phrasings**

Can you tell me about \_\_\_\_\_? Can you describe \_\_\_\_\_?

## 2.2 Second period

### 2.2.1 Questions from fellow field worker

Is farming important in Geiranger? What would Geiranger have been like today without farming?

Geiranger is inscribed on the World Heritage List as Natural Heritage. What do you consider to be the role of cultural landscapes in the status?

Has the World Heritage Status led to smaller or greater possibilities for economic development? For whom?

Do you feel responsible for the maintenance of cultural landscapes?

Do you feel pride in the World Heritage Status?<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> My fellow field worker had some more questions in her guide, but I left these out when conducting interviews alone

### 2.2.2 Interview guide for follow up interview with farmers

#### **Farming**

On which basis do you choose to continue farming? (to farmers)

What do you think are the main reasons behind the choice of continuing farming for those who do?

Some express melancholy and feelings of a bad conscious over not upholding traditions. How do you react to that?

Several farmers mention that when some farmers wind up this influences more to do the same because their colleagues disappear. What are your experiences?

Do you think there is any difference between running farms in the areas highly affected by tourism and areas where there is less tourism?

Does tourism affect the attitudes of the farmers?

#### **Landscape Protection**

How do you see the relationship between conservation and use in the management of landscapes in Geiranger?

Some mention that the protection can lead to depopulation because it restricts development. What do you think?

#### **Actor groups**

Several people stress that there are conflicting interests between different groups involved in the situation in Geiranger. Do you meet resistance from anybody? Who?

Do you consider yourself to be part of the tourism sector in Geiranger?

What would Geiranger have been like today if it had not been for the tourism?

*Questions from fellow field worker inserted here*

#### **Closing**

The term 'viable community' is often used. What does this term imply to you?

Is Geiranger a viable community?

### **2.2.3 Interview guide tourism representatives**

#### **Opening questions**

Can you describe this enterprise/organisation? History? Fields of interest?

Can you describe what you consider to be the characteristics of the relationship between farming, tourism and World Heritage in Geiranger?

#### **Farming**

What relationship do you have to the farmers in Geiranger?

Is farming important for the tourism sector?

What will be the consequences of a collapse of the farming sector in Geiranger? Is it realistic? Who is responsible for preventing such a collapse?

#### **Questions from fellow field worker inserted here**

#### **World Heritage/Landscape Protection**

What has been the role of tourism sector/ your enterprise/ organisation in the process of inscribing Geiranger on the World Heritage List?

What does the World Heritage Status mean to Geiranger?

The World Heritage Status rests on a Landscape Protection. Do you see any problems considering these two statuses in Geiranger? Power production?

Some mention that the protection can lead to depopulation because it restricts development. What do you think?

#### **Actor groups**

Several people stress that there are conflicting interests between different groups involved in the situation in Geiranger. What is your comment?

Do you/your enterprise/organisation meet resistance from anybody? Who?

How is the relationship between the community of Geiranger and Stranda municipality?

Do you think it would have been easier if Geiranger were closer to the municipality centre?

#### **Closing**

The term 'viable community' is often used. What does this term imply to you?

Is Geiranger a viable community?

What would Geiranger have been like today if it had not been for the tourism?

#### 2.2.4 Interview guide with World Heritage representatives

##### **Opening questions**

Can you tell about the World Heritage Council/World Heritage Project? History? Cooperation? Work?

Can you describe what you consider to characterise the relationship between farming, tourism and World Heritage in Geiranger?

##### **Farming**

What relationship does the World Heritage management have to the farmers in Geiranger?

Is farming important for the World Heritage Status?

What will be the consequences of a collapse of the farming sector in Geiranger? Is it realistic? Who is responsible for preventing such a collapse?

*Questions from fellow field worker inserted here*

##### **World Heritage/Landscape Protection**

Can you describe the process of inscribing Geiranger on the World Heritage List? Initiatives? Local support?

What does the World Heritage Status mean to Geiranger?

The World Heritage Status rests on a Landscape Protection. Do you see any problems considering these two statuses in Geiranger?

How do you consider the relationship between conservation and use in the management of landscapes in Geiranger? Power production?

Some mention that the protection can lead to depopulation because it restricts development. What do you think?

##### **Actor groups**

Several people stress that there are conflicting interests between different groups involved in the situation in Geiranger. What is your comment?

Does the World Heritage Management meet resistance from anybody? Who?

How would you describe the relationship between the community of Geiranger and Stranda municipality?

Do you think it would have been easier if Geiranger were closer to the municipality centre? (only to the local WH representative)



**Closing**

The term 'viable community' is often used. What does this term imply to you?

Is Geiranger a viable community?

What would Geiranger have been like today if it had not been for the tourism?

### **2.2.5 Interview guide with municipal authorities**

#### **Opening question**

Can you describe what you consider to be the characteristics of the relationship between farming and tourism in Geiranger, and how the World Heritage Status affects it?

Is farming important to Geiranger?

#### **Farming**

What will be the consequences of a collapse of the farming sector in Geiranger? Is it realistic? Who is responsible for preventing such a collapse?

What would Geiranger have been like today without farming?

#### **World Heritage**

Can you describe the process of inscribing Geiranger on the World Heritage List?

What was the role of the municipality in the process?

What does the World Heritage Status mean to Geiranger?

Has the World Heritage Status led to smaller or greater possibilities for economic development? For whom?

Do you feel pride in the World Heritage Status?

Geiranger is inscribed on the World Heritage List as Natural Heritage. What do you consider to be the role of cultural landscapes in the status?

#### **Landscape Protection**

The World Heritage Status rests on a Landscape Protection. Do you see any problems considering these two statuses in Geiranger?

Some mention that the protection can lead to depopulation because it restricts development. What do you think?

#### **Actor groups**

In a large municipality like Stranda, what do you do to ensure the interests of all the local communities?

What role does Geiranger play in Stranda municipality?

Several locals stress that money granted to the Geiranger area disappears in bureaucracy and projects, without serving any good to the community, despite promises and big words. What is your comment? Will grants ever benefit local farmers?

In different ways it is expressed that there are conflicting interests between different actor groups involved in the situation in Geiranger. What is your comment? Do you meet resistance?

**Closing**

What would Geiranger have been like today if it had not been for the tourism?

The term 'viable community' is often used. What does this term imply to you?

How do you work to ensure Geiranger to be a viable community?

## 2.2.6 Interview guide with county authorities

### **Opening questions/Farming**

Can you tell me about how the county/your department has been involved in processes in Geiranger?

Can you describe what you consider to be the characteristics of the relationship between farming and tourism in Geiranger, and how the World Heritage Status affects it?

Is farming important to Geiranger?

What will be the consequences of a collapse of the farming sector in Geiranger? Is it realistic? Who is responsible for preventing such a collapse?

What would Geiranger have been like today without farming?

### **World Heritage/Cultural landscapes**

Can you describe the process of inscribing Geiranger on the World Heritage List?

What role did you/the county/your department have in the process?

What does the World Heritage Status mean to Geiranger?

Has the World Heritage Status led to smaller or greater possibilities for economic development? For whom?

Do you feel pride in the World Heritage Status?

Geiranger is inscribed on the World Heritage List as Natural Heritage. What do you consider to be the role of cultural landscapes in the status?

What responsibility does the county have concerning maintenance of the cultural landscapes in Geiranger?

### **Landscape Protection**

The World Heritage Status rests on a Landscape Protection. Do you see any problems considering these two statuses in Geiranger? How do you see the relationship between conservation and use in the management of landscapes in Geiranger?

Some mention that the protection can lead to depopulation because it restricts development. What do you think?

**Actor groups**

In different ways it is expressed that there are conflicting interests between different actor groups involved in the situation in Geiranger. What is your comment? Do you meet resistance?

What role does Geiranger play in Møre and Romsdal county?

Several locals stress that money granted to the Geiranger area disappears in bureaucracy and projects, without serving any good to the community, despite promises and big words. What is your comment? Will grants ever benefit local farmers?

**Closing**

What would Geiranger have been like today if it had not been for the tourism?

The term 'viable community' is often used. What does this term imply to you?

How do you work to ensure Geiranger to be a viable community?

## Appendix 3: Correspondence with the local farmers

### 3.1 Presentation letter (before first field period)

July 6 2007

To all farmers in Geiranger

Hi!

I am a student at University of Life Sciences in Ås (former Agricultural University of Norway). I have just started working on my master's thesis. I focus on how farmers in Geiranger experience the situation, with a growing tourism sector, and the World Heritage Status.

Related to this work, I hope to get in touch with farmers in the area. Both those who are active farmers today and those who have wound up the farming activities during the last years are interesting as partners for cooperation and conversations. Data for the thesis will mostly be collected through interviews.

In addition to interviewing farmers, I will interview people from the tourism sector and the municipal administration about their view on the interplay between the two main sectors in the community.

The interviews I carry out will be analysed with the aim of identifying narratives in the accounts. The objective for the thesis will be to find out how the communication is between the different groups, which views the different groups have on the situation and what factors that possibly restrain the flow of communication.

All the collected data will be treated with confidentiality, and quotes appearing in the thesis will be made anonymous.

There are not many farmers left in the community of Geiranger. Therefore, I hope that the majority of you will agree to participate in this research. I want to talk to women as well as men, so if both spouses are involved in the activities on the farm, I would be pleased to talk to both of you. I plan to stay in Geiranger for some weeks between mid July and mid August. I will contact all of you by telephone when I arrive in the area.

#### A short introduction:

I am 28 years old and have grown up in Ålesund. I have little experience working with farmers in Norway. My interest for farming has evolved through several years of cooperation with peasants in different Latin-American countries. After my first period in Latin-America, I started working in 4H in Møre and Romsdal, as project coordinator for a mobilisations

project. I have also cooperated with the central unit of Norwegian Smallholders' Association related to some projects they have engaged in Latin-America.

I am now a student in Development studies at UMB in Ås. The choice of topic for my thesis is not a traditional choice for students in Development studies. Nevertheless, the emerging situation in Geiranger is highly relevant in a development perspective. Corresponding situations on farming and tourism emerge in many local communities in different parts of the world, and although all situations are unique it is interesting to study them in all parts of the world to reach a broader perspective.

If you have questions, or wish to contact me for other reasons, I am available on e-mail: xxxxx@online.no, or on cell phone: xxx xx xxx.

Yours truly,  
Marte Lange Vik

### 3.2 Second letter (before second field period)

September 6 2007

To all farmers in Geiranger

Hi!

First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to thank for your kind cooperation in the first part of my research. I have interviewed the grand majority of you once, but some remain. I hope it will be possible to meet all of you when I return to Geiranger by the end of this month.

Earlier, I have told some of you that I thought I would be back in Geiranger by September 20. Due to an important seminar in Oslo September 21-23, I will now come to Geiranger September 25. I have not set the date for my return to Oslo, but I suppose I will stay in Geiranger/ Ålesund until I feel that I am finished with the interviews/ data collection.

Several times this summer I interviewed couples together. This was fortunate in the initial interviews. Nevertheless, in this next round I want to talk to each person alone. I hope there are no objections to this.

In addition to your interviews, I will this time also interview representatives from the tourism sector, the municipality, the county and other relevant actors. If you have suggestions on whom I ought to talk to, I would be pleased to receive a hint.

If you are going away for a longer period between the end of September and the end of October, I hope you will contact me. I am available on e-mail: xxxxxx@online.no, or cell phone: xxx xx xxx

Lastly, I want to inform you that I have been contacted by a girl, studying in Bergen, also planning to do field work for her master's thesis in Geiranger this autumn. We plan to do as many interviews as possible together. In this way we wish to save you from having to set aside time more than once to talk with us. We are pleased for your cooperation. It is of high value to us.

Yours truly,  
Marte Lange Vik



### 3.3 Respondent validation

April 22 2008

Hi name(s).

First of all I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for letting me interview you while I was in Geiranger last autumn

The deadline for my thesis is approaching. I have picked out some quotes from your interviews. These quotes are attached to this letter. I would like you to read through the quotes and approve my use of them in my thesis. The approval will happen by you being passive. If you have objections to the use of these quotes in the thesis, I ask you to contact me by May 1.

Before you move on to read the quotes, I would like to inform you that

- The quotes will be translated into English in the thesis.
- The quotes will be anonymised, so they cannot be traced back to you.
- Quotes from interviews will always be taken out of context. Also in the attachment to this letter, the quotes are taken out of the context in which they were uttered, and in which they are placed in the thesis. Alone, they may appear more controversial than they will appear in the thesis. A quote will never be placed all alone, and I do my best to give a presentation that is as nuanced as possible in total.
- This time I have picked out more quotes than I will use. It is therefore not necessarily the case that all the quotes I have picked out will appear in the finished thesis
- Where (...) is written in the quote, I have taken out one or more words to shorten the quote. The words I have taken out have not altered the contents of the quote.

If you want to change some words or add something short to the quotes to make them more nuanced, I ask you to write a proposal for me. I will, if necessary, contact you when I have received the proposal.

I hope you do not have objection to the quotes I have picked out.

Finally, I want to congratulate you all with last week's grant from the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. I hope the money will serve the best for Geiranger.

Regards from Marte Vik  
e-mail: xxxxxx@online.no  
cell phone: xxx xx xxx

3.3.1 Letter to the farmers whom I do not quote:

April 22 2008

Hi name(s).

First of all I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for letting me interview you while I was in Geiranger last autumn

The deadline for my thesis is approaching. I have picked out some quotes from the interviews I did in Geiranger. None of the quotes I have picked out are from your interviews. Nevertheless, I wish to emphasise that all the interviews have contributed to form the basis on which I lean when I write the thesis. I do my best to give a presentation that is as nuanced as possible in total.

Finally, I want to congratulate you all with last week's grant from the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. I hope the money will serve the best for Geiranger.

Regards from Marte Vik

### 3.4 Participation contract

#### CONTRACT BETWEEN

.....NAME(S)..... (O) AND MARTE LANGE VIK (S) CONSIDERING PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH FOR MASTERS' THESIS.

By signing this contract the above mentioned parties agree on the following:

- O will be interviewed by S as part of the data collection for S's master's thesis at the University of Life Sciences
- The interviews, and their transcripts, will only be used in this study. If situations appear where they are relevant also for other studies, O will be contacted to consider approval of further use of the information.
- All collected data will be treated with confidentiality, and made anonymous as soon as possible.
- The interviews and the transcripts will only be accessible for S and her supervisors (Tor Arve Benjaminsen at UMB and Karoline Daugstad at the Centre for Rural Research)
- S is granted permission to publish all or parts of the interviews in her master's thesis.
- O has/have the right to listen to her/his/their own interviews or look at the transcriptions or analyses of them at any moment.
- Before publishing the masters' thesis, S will present quotes from the interviews done with O, for O to approve them.

Geiranger, .....date.....

-----  
(O)

-----  
Marte Lange Vik (S)

## Appendix 4: Introduction letter to authorities

October 23 2007

Hi name.

I am a student at the University of Life Sciences (UMB) in Ås. I am now doing field work for my master's thesis where I focus on the interplay between farming, tourism and World Heritage in Geiranger. I have conducted several interviews in Geiranger, in all sectors, and now the turn has come to interview local and regional authorities on how they experience the situation in Geiranger, about the interplay between tourism, farming and World Heritage is, and how it influences the community and the different sectors.

I am writing to you hoping for an interview either with you or with the person at your department who best can give an opinion on this. I hope that you (or the representative from your department) can meet me for an interview next week or the following week, between October 29 and November 9. (...) I suppose the interviews will last approximately 1,5 hours.

Yours truly,

Marte Lange Vik

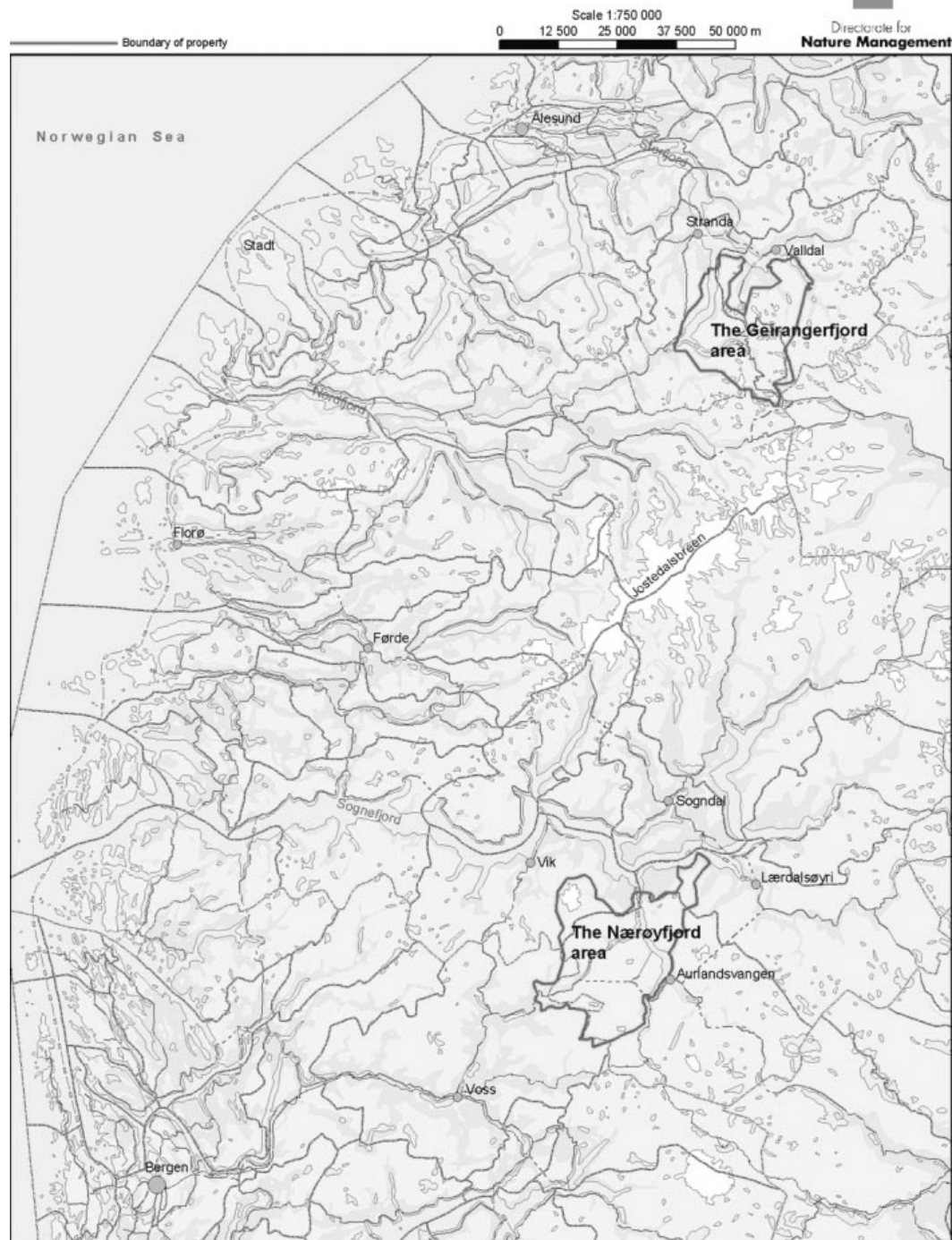
tel: xxx xx xxx

## Appendix 5: Maps of designation areas

Map I: World Heritage Site, West Norwegian Fjords<sup>25</sup>

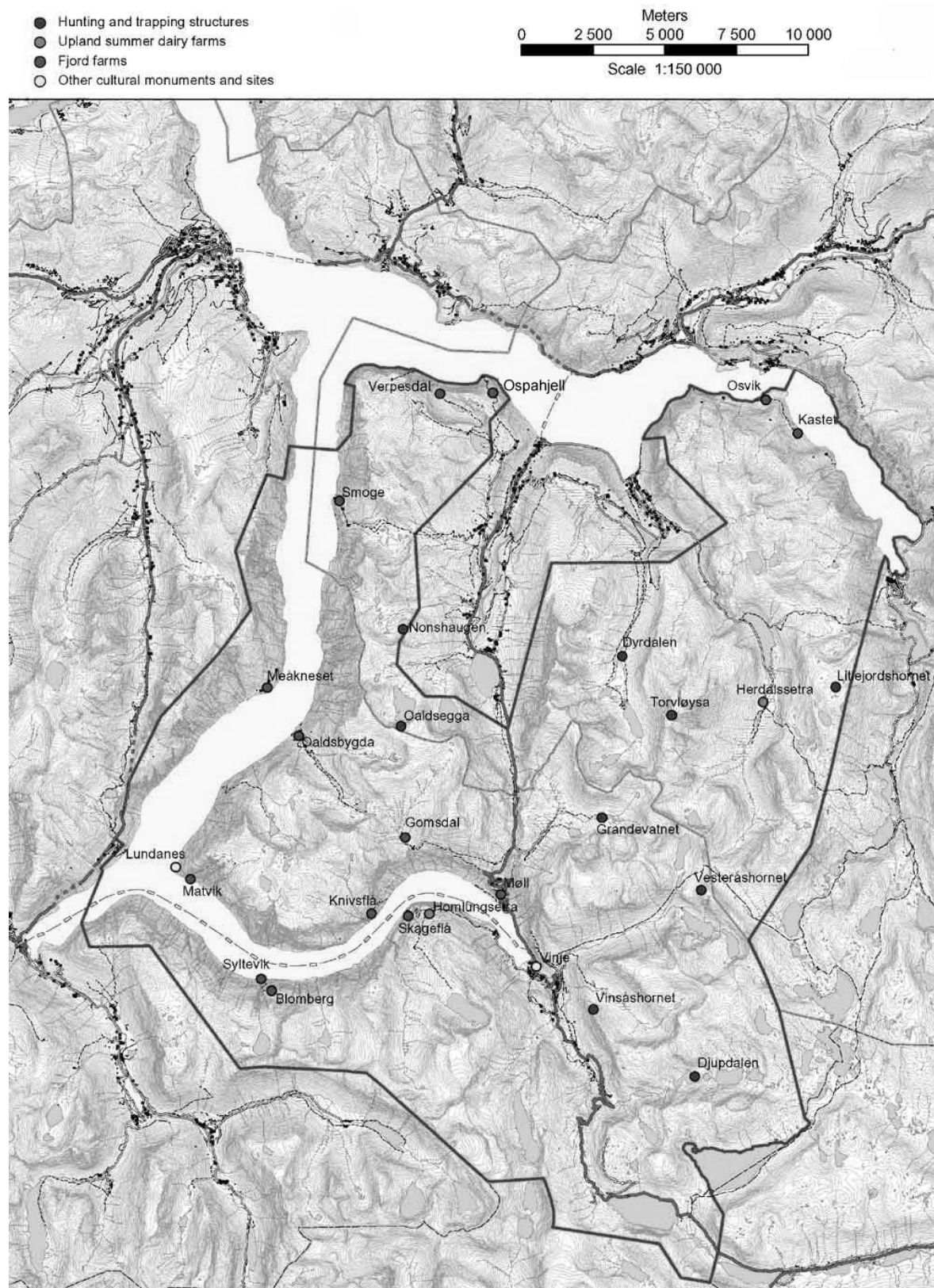
### Location of the Geirangerfjord area and the Nærøyfjord area

The West Norwegian Fjords - a serial nomination to the World Heritage List (January 2004)



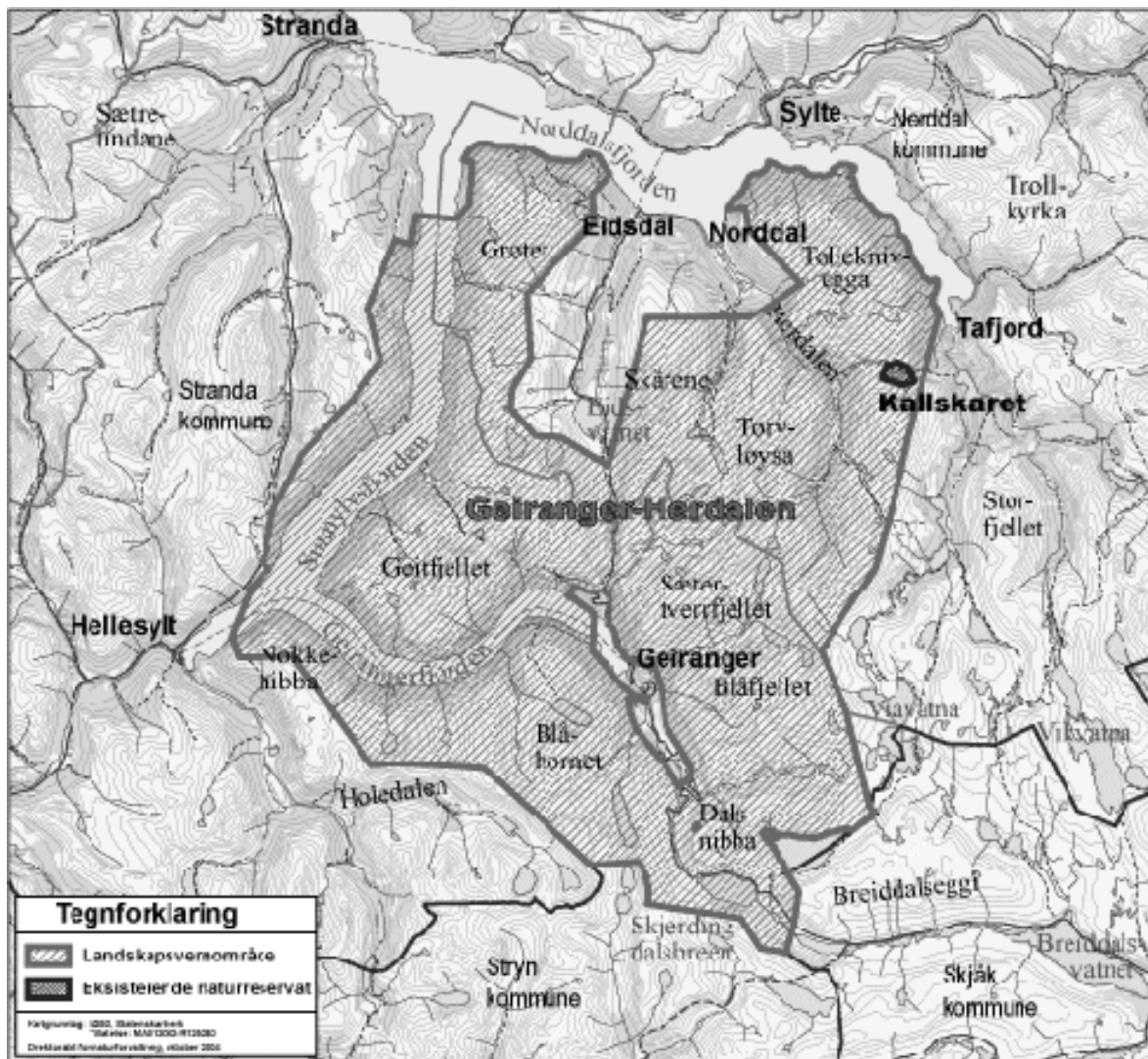
<sup>25</sup> Source: verdensarv.com

Map II: World Heritage Site, West Norwegian Fjords, Geirangerfjord area<sup>26</sup>



26 Source: verdensarv.com

Map III: Geiranger-Herdalen Landscape Protected Area<sup>27</sup>



<sup>27</sup> Source: [www.regjeringen.no](http://www.regjeringen.no)