



**Snow Magic Transnational Workshop 2
Sorsele, Sweden
19-21 February 2006**

REPORT



www.snowmagic.nu



1. Introduction

The first Snow Magic transnational workshop was held in Mývatn in February 2005 on the theme “Snow and landscape”. See report on www.snowmagic.nu.

The venue chosen for the second workshop on “Snow and people” was Sorsele in Swedish Lapland. The third workshop will take place in Rovaniemi in February 2007 and will focus on “Snow and technology”. Beside the main topic, each workshop touches several other important issues for the project as snow techniques, products and services, marketing...

The choice of February 19th as the first day of this second workshop was made in order to experience some of the Snow Magic activities organised during the week-end at Nalovardo Ski Centre in cooperation with the students from the Mountain Guide College of Storuman and Lapplandskåtan running the Ski Centre, 15 km outside Sorsele. On Thursday 16th, many activities had already been proposed to more than 200 pupils and students from Storuman.

2. Participants

See attached list of participants.

3. Kick off at Nalovardo Ski Centre, Saturday 18 February

At the evening arrival of the Finnish and Icelandic delegations, a slide show was presented on Saturday evening by the Mountain Guide students on a snow wall of the Snow Castle they



had built for the Snow and Ice Event in Nalovardo. The pictures, taken during their two years training, illustrated the environment all year round in Northern Sweden and typical outdoor activities. The hot drink, music and candles created a nice atmosphere despite the cold evening.

4. Snow and Ice Event at Nalovardo Ski Centre, Sunday 19 February

Sunday was organised as a study visit day with the possibility to experience various Snow Magic activities offered to all visitors by the Mountain Guide students in the frame of the Snow and Ice Event.

The following activities were organised: Big Air (snow board competition by the pupils from the Snow Board High School of Tärnaby), the very popular Ice Climbing on an outdoor ice wall, Snow Safaris with skis or snow mobiles, Ice Sculpting, Snow Fun (animations for children in the Snow Castle), down-hill skiing and snow board courses.

After such a cold and intensive day, the Snow Magic participants could get warm and relax in the swimming pool and sauna in Sorsele and finally enjoy local specialities at the dinner at Nalovardo Ski Centre.

5. Workshop at Ammarnäs Ski Centre, Monday 20 February

After about one hour travel (90 km) upstream along the Vindel River, the participants arrived to Ammarnäs and could have a quick look at two famous features of this mountain village:

“Lappstaden” (the Sami village where Sami people used to gather for religious ceremonies and markets) and “Potatisbacken”, the potatoe hill where local people grow delicious almond potatoes despite the high location.

A) Lectures and dialogue

After each lecture, there were questions and a short dialogue about the presented topic.

1) “Experience in Local Resource Management” by Urban Berglund, Tourist Entrepreneur, Ammarnäs

See attached Power Point presentation “Ammarnäs Style - Urban B.ppt”



Urban Berglund and **Marita Norin** run a tourism business called “Vindelåforsens Stugby” (meaning cottages by the rapids of the winding River). They offer in particular training and retreat.

According to Urban, the **potatoe hill** is a symbol for **local management** in Ammarnäs: “These potatoes shouldn’t grow here, but they manage and so do we”. He reflected about some of the historical and geographical local features: Sami people who have met settlers for 200 years, the location of Ammarnäs in the Vindel Mountain Nature Reserve, the biggest in Europe (550 000 km²), created in order to preserve the Sami culture and the diversity of habitats, the little local population (200 inhabitants), the Vindel River, protected from hydroelectric exploiters for the benefit of habitats and fishing.

With this in background, Urban wondered if it is a **new dawn** for Ammarnäs we see or if it is **the sun setting** and “how can a village manage without managers”.

In order to face the problems, local management is carried out thanks to a “samråd” (kind of Icelandic “ting”) where people talk until they reach a solution. That is the “Ammarnäs Style”.

The first step is **integration** which is a co-consultative process between the different parts that constitute the whole (the two Sami associations, the companies and the land owners) where everybody learn from each other, make propositions and come to a decision thanks to consultations and dialogue.

In a second step called **governance**, the decision is communicated to interested parties and all, through negotiations, come to an agreement.

Development is the last step, which is fairly new and consists in finding the right end user.

2) “Yule Lads project – Innovation and co-operation” by Jóna Matthiasdóttir, Snow Magic Project Assistant, Mývatn area

Jóna presented the side project of the **Yule Lads** that emerged after noticing the difficulty to rely on snow and ice in wintertime. In cooperation with local companies, it was decided to use the **13 brothers**, kind of Santas, living in **Dimmuborgir**, their parents and the black Christmas cat, as a tool, a symbol for the promotion of the whole area.



Small handcraft figures were made and used on backgrounds from the Mývatn area to produce **postcards** and **photos**. New **outfits** were made, one being presented during the lecture by Ólöf Hallgrímsdóttir, and used by two actors and local people to produce a one minute video and make visits to the warm bath, to schools, kindergartens, Vogafjós Cowshed Café, etc. They stayed at Dimmuborgir every day during the Advent between 1 and 3 pm and over 900 people came to meet them. This is **just the beginning**, said Jóna since many new ideas are arising like Elfs and magical events, like a planned happening on Easter 2006, walk on Good Friday, blessing in the church, a 45 km ski walk next day, a concert or a play, an exhibition about winter time, more advertising, etc.

Snow Magic Mývatn participated at the **Christmas Exhibition** organised in Rovaniemi with one “real” Yule Lad, handicraft and other promotion material and is now a partner of **Christmas Cities** together with United Kingdom, France, Austria, Spain, Japan, China.

3) "Experience Triangle - How to create true Experience Products?" by Sanna Tarssanen, Project Manager, LCEEI, Rovaniemi

See attached slide presentation "Experience Products - Sanna T.pdf"



Sanna explained that after Ice Age, Stone Age, Iron Age, Industrial Revolution, came the Image Society. But it is not enough anymore and that's why we are now in what can be called the **Experience Economy** that started in the 90s in the USA.

That is what **Lapland Centre of Expertise for the Experience Industry (LCEEI)** works on, one of several centres in Finland working on specific fields and coordinated by the government. LCEEI aims at collecting and transforming knowledge, developing tools and services for the benefit of tourism companies, with the overall objective of creating employment. The main working fields are design, Internet and digital media, tourism as well as culture and entertainment industry. LCEEI uses a network with in particular Universities and Polytechnics. The purpose is to help companies to offer **meaningful experiences** which are defined as “multisensoral, positive and comprehensive emotional experience that can lead to personal change of a subject person”, a very subjective concept that can not be produced with absolute certainty.

A very important tool for developing and analysing experience products and developed by LCEEI is the “Experience Triangle” model. It represents the elements of experience and the levels of customer's perception. It is used to help companies to create and develop more attractive products.

B) Study visits

In the afternoon, after lunch and the climbing of the mountain on the modern “pisten bully” two visits were made at **Ammarnäs School** and **Ammarnäs Naturum**.

A visit at the **local school** and the **library** was organised by **Angelica Sjöström** and 5 of the 16 pupils and the participants could experience how things are organised for them, including distance learning (e.g. Emilie learning the Sami language using the computer).





In **Naturum**, financed by the Swedish Environment Agency, we were told about the Nature Reserve by **Ludmilla Wieslander**. She presented the exhibition that appeals to the different senses through modern tools to deliver information. Beside the exhibition, Naturum is a place where visitors can book activities like guiding and find books and brochures.

After these two visits, it was time for departure back to Nalovardo.

C) Snow Magic evening

At 6.30 pm, a cocktail was offered by Sorsele River Hotel at the Snow Magic Igloo on the icy Vindel River in Sorsele. That was the occasion to see one result of the successful Snow Magic cooperation with the hotel since the igloo is used mainly for foreign incentive groups during the winter season. Inside the igloo, the snacks (served on the ice bar and made of local specialities) and a drink in ice glasses as well as the reindeer skins on the floor and the coloured lighting under the ice bar and ice tables, contributed to create a magical atmosphere.



After the cocktail a dinner (Sorsele Buffet) was served by **Annika Nilsson** at “Hembygdsgården” (old village house) in Sorsele which gave a genuine frame reinforced by the quality of the food made of local products.



6. Workshop at Nalovardo and Sorsele, Tuesday 21 February

A) Steering Committee and Project Team meeting

The partners agreed to have the third transnational workshop in February 2007 instead of December 2006 to avoid the hectic high season in Rovaniemi. As it would be too long until this event, it was decided to organise an extra meeting in August in Rovaniemi that would help the partners to keep up the project speed.

On the proposition of Gunnar Jóhannesson and in order to prepare Snow Magic’s future after the project will end, the partners also decided to share experiences and outcomes in relation to objectives (benchmarking) both locally and transnationally and make propositions for Snow Magic in the future.

B) Lectures and dialogue

1) Rural development - Experience of local involvement; case of Vanttauskoski, by Marita Ulusoy, Rural Developer, Rovaniemi



Marita Ulusoy works for the city of Rovaniemi in an **information point** in the village of Vanttauskoski. She is also a chairman of a village association (9 villages, 9 200 inhabitants) and has been working with many EU projects.

We were introduced by Marita about development activities in rural parts of Rovaniemi (especially in the region of Yläkemijoki) in how to involve people in the activities, positive and negative aspects and problems of the process and the involvement in international activities.

A **Snow Rally Race** on a lake and a **Middle Age Market** have been developed, a project “**Village Roads in Finland**” has been carried out, many activities are proposed like hiking, canoeing, biking, snowmobiling, etc.

The project “**Promoting Rural Development**” in 2000-2002 co-financed by ESF-funding made it possible to propose courses in computer skills or entrepreneurship, to create an information and service office that is pilot in electronic communication, both for local people and visitors. Seminars were carried out and cooperation organised with the University of Lapland.

Through LEADER+, 7 companies and village societies have been involved in the creation of an **elf-school**, managed by a headmaster and two elves, proposing activities and happenings for families. Beside that, a special happening is organised in June with a meal made of flower flour and there is a market for local products.

Other results of the rural development actions are a tourist map, a website, a leaflet for each company, a fair in Helsinki.

Finally Marita presented the involvement of the village Vanttauskoski in the Snow Magic project that started three weeks before this workshop. People, mainly parents, made figures and animals in snow, a labyrinth, slides, lanterns, etc and a happening will take place on March 3rd.

2) “Tourism and farming – a successful combination” by Ólöf Hallgrímsdóttir, Manager of Vogafjós Cowshed Café, Mývatn

The Mývatn area has about 200 000 visitors every year, mainly from abroad, who come to enjoy the fantastic environment, mostly in the summertime. Ólöf’s **guesthouse** is fully booked from June 20th to August 20th. She runs a **farm** in the third generation with her family and her brother and his family. They have 140 sheep, 16 cows and a new **cowshed**. They gave up their first idea to make people pay for the entrance, the visit and the possibility to learn how to milk a cow. Another idea arose that happened to be very successful. Connected to the cowshed they built a **café** where you can see the cows in the cowshed through big windows and they serve home made food like mozzarella cheese, black bread baked 24 hours in the ground, smoked trout or smoked lamb meat.



When Olöf's husband lost his job, instead of seeing him leaving the farm to work far away, they decided to build a guesthouse. They imported two log houses from Estonia with 10 rooms each and a bathroom.

One special event that attracts many visitors is when sheep are gathered from the mountain with horses, sorted and marked.

Vogafjós Cowshed Café is co-operating with other local tourism companies do develop their businesses. Together they decided to keep the companies open during the week-ends of the Advent. This was a success with 60-80 visitors coming.

Olöf is also already working on the idea of opening a **farm shop** in order to sell home-made products.

C) Summary of TNW

After further discussion following Olöf's presentation, the participants went to Sorsele River Hotel for lunch that was followed by a summary of TNW.

Some **feed-back** was given about the workshop and Snow Magic activities in Sorsele. It was in particular pointed out the successful Snow Magic management and co-operation in the area despite big distances and the good choice of the ice wall, the slide show in the snow castle and the ambitions and possibilities in general to test new things.

After the summary of TNW, **Agneta Isaksson**, manager of Sorsele River Hotel since October 2005, informed us about the activities the hotel is focusing on to attract clients:

- car testing on ice ; preparing tracks on the ice for car and component companies, leading to many new jobs
- events by offering packages in which visitors, mainly Germans and Austrians, can learn how to drive cars on ice (the hotel offers 20 cars), experience dog-sledging, snow mobiling and other winter activities and have a cocktail in the igloo. Agneta is satisfied with the good cooperation with Snow Magic and is eager to contribute to the development of the ice wall concept as well.

With these targets in focus, winter is the high tourism season and the objective now is to raise the number of guests the rest of the year by promoting nature, watercourses, the great opportunity to experience the loneliness and the wilderness. The hotel has 34 rooms and capacity for up to 60 guests.

Before the last study visits, the Finnish delegation left Sorsele.

D) Study visits

1) Winter Test and Event Site at Färjstället, Sorsele

Guide: **Agneta Isaksson**, Manager Sorsele River Hotel

Agneta showed us the different tracks for car testing and for the events. The latter are prepared just before the arriving of the foreign guests. Agneta emphasized the high level of control to prepare and check the tracks.



2) Snow Fun Arena in Blattnicksele



Bert Efraimsson, Sten-Sture Zakrisson, Åke Nilsson and Björg Sjögren, members of the Snow Magic Blattnicksele Team, presented the Snow Arena and offered coffee and tea by the open fire. The magnificent arena has been constructed for the “**Blattnicksele Winter Festival**” and has been used with success for a “Power Event” on March 11th and a “Family Event” on March 18th, including a pub and dance on the ice under the open sky. Pupils from the **local school** made several snow sculptures at the entrance of the arena.



Back to Sorsele, there was an extra visit at the Tourist Office, managed by **Ingrid Nordenström** and also including the Inland Railway Museum, and to the local artist **Gilbert Högländer**, “Gille” and his exhibition at his home.

The workshop finished with a dinner at Nalovardo Ski Centre and the departure of the Icelandic delegation, some of them going to Rovaniemi to visit the Christmas Exhibition and continue discussing about their cooperation in the network Christmas Cities.

7. Conclusion

Thanks to all involved for sharing an interesting workshop and a pleasant stay in Sorsele, Swedish Lapland.

Welcome all to the next workshop in Rovaniemi, Finnish Lapland, in February 2007.

Annex 1

List of participants

Rovaniemi, Finland

Marika Lindroth	Snow Magic
Erkki Kautto	Snow Magic
Sanna Tarssanen	Experience Institute
Marita Ulusoy	Information point of Vanttauskoski

Mývatn/Húsavík, Iceland

Jóna Matthíasdóttir	Snow Magic
Gunnar Johannesson	Snow Magic
Ólöf Hallgrímsdóttir	Vogafjós Cowshed Café
Sigríður K. Þorgrímsdóttir	Institute of Regional Development
Birkir Fanndal Haraldsson	Local artist and photographer

Sorsele/Ammarnäs/Blattnicksele, Sweden

Hélène Marlot	Snow Magic
Leopold Sjöström	Snow Magic
Björn Holgersen	Snow Magic
Melker Sjöström	Snow Magic
Daniel Jonsson	Snow Magic
Björg Sjögren	Snow Magic
Göran Olsson	Lapplandskåtan
Erika Olsson	Lapplandskåtan
Gunilla Forsvall	Ammarnäs Skidcenter
Kenneth Johansson	Ammarnäs Skidcenter
Mona Johansson	Ammarnäs Skidcenter
Arne Brandell	Ammarnäs Skidcenter
Urban Viklund	Vindelåforsen Stugby
Marita Norin	Vindelåforsen Stugby
Ann-Katrin Vinka	Lapplandsafari
Ludmilla Wieslander	Naturum, Ammarnäs
Helena Ifrig	Ammarnäs fjällens Islandshästar
Roland Wermelin	Municipality of Sorsele
Sonja Näsström	Mayor, Sorsele
Ingrid Nordenström	Sorsele Tourist Office
Agneta Isaksson	Sorsele River Hotel
Bert Efraimsson	Blattnicksele
Sten-Sture Zakrisson	Blattnicksele
Åke Nilsson	Blattnicksele