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# Regenerative tourism: A bibliometric analysis

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## Abstract:

**Purpose:** Despite regenerative tourism representing a beacon of hope to fight the problems faced by today's humankind, its multidisciplinary essence and fragmentation hinder the identification of major thematic areas for upcoming researchers. Therefore, the present study aims to systematically review the relevant literature on regenerative tourism.

**Methods:** The literature was revised by adopting a bibliometric protocol. Web of Science and Scopus were employed to access pertinent publications, and Biblioshiny was used to track publication and source evolution and impact, main countries and affiliations' production, authors' relevance, productivity, collaborations, perform content, thematic, and co-citations analyses.

**Results:** The literature on regenerative tourism has recently grown, fostered by rising interest due to the COVID-19 crisis. Attention in the field is still limited to a few main players, requiring an expansion in geographic and academic discipline terms. Thematic areas and their level of development were identified, assessing some relevant topics as fairly unexplored, especially concerning mindset change.

**Implications:** This study offers inferences for future researchers and practitioners, employing literature summarizing, main sources and author identification, as well as gap detection, limiting its results to dual database record retrieval, as well as limited scope or search.

**Keywords:** tourism research; regenerative tourism; conscious tourism; bibliometrics.

**JEL Classification:** L83, Z32, Z1

**Biographical note:** Lariza Corral-Gonzalez is a Ph.D. student in Management and Marketing at the Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla (UPAEP). Her research interests are in the areas of tourism marketing, social marketing, and consumer behavior. Judith Cavazos-Arroyo is a full professor of the Business School at the Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla (UPAEP). Her research interest and expertise are in the area of Social Marketing. Josefa García-Mestanza is a full professor and Vice-Dean of Practice and Business Cooperation at the Faculty of Tourism at Malaga University. Her research interests and expertise are in the areas of tourism innovation, service quality, and entrepreneurship. Corresponding author: Josefa García-Mestanza (jgm@uma.es).

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Contemporary society faces numerous great challenges which require a significant transformation of the status quo to commence advancements toward resolving. Aggrieving the situation, traditional mass tourism has been pointed out as a generator of problems due to its brutal and egotistical misuse of people and natural resources with the sole purpose of generating economic benefits (Krippendorff, 1987). This critical situation has been underlined by the United Nation's (2019) Sustainable Development Agenda, raising interest in alternative practices within different arenas, including the

tourism industry (Becken, 2019; Dwyer, 2018; Han et al., 2009; Han and Stoel, 2017; Line et al., 2016).

A couple of decades ago, sustainable tourism was proposed as an alternative practice that would help solve some of the predominant issues with traditional mass tourism (Krippendorff, 1987). Nonetheless, sustainability has been deemed insufficient to counteract the great problems faced by humankind (Bellato et al., 2023a, 2022b; Chassagne and Everingham, 2019; Liu, 2003). Consequently, new tenders have appeared, advancing the schemes of sustainability into more resourceful plots, usually catalogued within the broader concept of conscious travel (Pollock, 2012). One of such new contenders is regenerative tourism, which attempts to offer more holistic and enduring solutions that promise to improve

the forecasts of humanity by employing touristic activity as a driver for holistic, substantial, and positive development (Ateljevic et al., 2016; Ateljevic, 2020). Consequently, it is believed that such an area of knowledge must be furthered if a positive and substantial change is desired, promoting paradigm changes that spread into the different areas involved in such an important and ubiquitous activity.

Due to the relative newness of regenerative tourism as a line of research, as well as its multidisciplinary essence (Bellato et al., 2022, 2023a), a mapping of the structure and development of literature within the area of investigation is required to properly understand its current state, as well as to identify expanses of further research (Allen et al., 2009). Bibliometrics, as a technique for systematic literature review, has been stated to be useful for the uncovering of emerging trends, identification of main actors, and the exploration of the structure of current literature, as well as the building of strong bases for the advancement of the field of knowledge in relevant manners by supplying a clear overview of the current state of the literature and the identification of research gaps (Donthu et al., 2021). However, to this date and to the best of our knowledge, no bibliometric analyses have been performed on this line of research. Therefore, bibliometric analysis as a quantitative approach to systematic review was conducted to investigate the knowledge domain of regenerative tourism.

It is believed that this study will be of use to stakeholders in different ways. First, researchers will have a clearer view of the current state of the line of literature, helping them reach the most relevant sources and pieces of research, and identifying areas of opportunity. Furthermore, it will help interested parties gain an overview of the field, facilitating the development of initiatives that follow such characteristics, and gaining arguments for the promotion of this sort of tourism.

With this in mind, this paper has the following structure. First, a literature review describing the origins of the line of research and attempting a delimitation of what constitutes regenerative tourism is presented. Second, the methodology for the conveyance of the present study is described. Next, findings are presented and discussed. Then, the implications, conclusions, and limitations are provided.

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## 2 LITERATURE

### 2.1 from sustainability to conscious tourism

Krippendorf (1987) acknowledged the many negative repercussions of touristic activity, recognizing the economy's dynamics being based on the control of a few at the cost of the many, accompanied by a propensity to misuse and abuse the environment with the justification of economic growth. Consequently, the scholar offered a set of proposals, which received the name of sustainable tourism, in an attempt to reconcile the ever-growing activity and its impact on the environment, the economy, and society (Krippendorf, 1987). Thereafter, different interested parties furthered and championed the concept of sustainable tourism, advocating it would help conciliate economic interests with social and environmental values (e.g., Clarke, 1997; Garrod and Fyall, 1998; Postma et al., 2017; Weaver, 2007). However, despite the high expectations it fashioned, sustainability has been

assessed as inadequate due to the misappropriation it generated as a way to perpetuate damaging practices (Bellato et al., 2022, 2023), and the insufficiency of its focus on doing less harm (Chassagne and Everingham, 2019; Liu, 2003). This rising scepticism gave birth to new proposals attempting to promote a paradigm shift by addressing fundamental problems instead of limiting the damage of current practices (Ateljevic, 2020; Becken, 2019; Chassagne and Everingham, 2019; Spyridou, 2019; Cheer, 2020; Dwyer, 2018; Živoder et al., 2015). Those novel proposals have been classified under the term "conscious travel" (Pollock, 2012). Conscious travel has been described as a new mindset of how tourism activity is to be perceived, having the power to transform the industry for the better by addressing the root problems of its operating model by becoming a social movement and creating new business models that generate holistic positive net benefits (Pollock, 2012).

### 2.2 Regenerative tourism

Building upon conscious travel proposals, as well as a line of regenerative development advances from different fields of knowledge, regenerative tourism combines Western science and indigenous knowledge, aiming to transform the environment and society where it is implemented positively (Bellato et al., 2022, 2023a; Hes and Coenen, 2018; Matunga et al., 2020). The purpose of this new model is to integrate local communities, environmental processes, and tourism practices to improve the general well-being of all stakeholders, promoting an all-inclusive harmony and net benefit that replace the negative customary practices of traditional mass tourism and their inherent adverse consequences (Bellato and Cheer, 2021; Bellato et al., 2022, 2023a).

The term 'regenerative' has been described as the creation of the appropriate conditions for life to endlessly replenish itself, constantly morphing into new forms at the same time conditions evolve (Hutchins and Storm, 2019). Due to the newness of the line of research, a common definition is yet to be reached. Even so, most academics concur that regenerative tourism must present an ecological outlook and approach tourism with a positive transformation intention, generating favourable effects that propitiate a virtuous cycle of regeneration based on the endemic potentials, as well as harnessing a reciprocated association amongst all stakeholders, adapting and evolving as needed (Ateljevic, 2020; Bellato et al., 2022, 2023a; Chambers and Buzinde, 2015). It also represents a turn in the way we comprehend, approach, and undertake travel and tourism (Dredge, 2022).

Consequently, the scope of action needed to implement such a model of tourism activity is considered to be wide and in want of a multidisciplinary approach (Bellato et al., 2022, 2023a; Dredge, 2022). Both, natural and social sciences, must act in harmony and avoid the forfeiture of the original intention of regenerative tourism as happened with sustainability, which has been argued to have become only an empty fad word, losing its original intention (Bellato et al., 2022, 2023a; Chassagne and Everingham, 2019).

When a system, such as an organization or an industry, aims to mimic nature's regenerative characteristics, a wide set of elements, inputs, outputs, and externalities need to be taken into account (Hutchins and Storm, 2019). Notwithstanding the advantages such a paradigm change might bring, such a

shift comes with a certain degree of challenge as the existing systems reinforce themselves and embedded values and beliefs prove difficult to change (Dredge, 2022; Spyridou, Polyzos, and Samitas, 2023). According to Dredge (2022), the redesign of the tourism industry requires efforts from three different expanses: systems change or redesign, mindset shift that moves towards a collaborative mentality, and practice that broadens the boundaries. Even when the importance of those areas has been recognized, it is still unclear how advanced the state of the literature on those fundamental areas currently stands.

Additionally, as regenerative tourism is said to be highly dependent on endemic characteristics and indigenous knowledge (Ateljevic, 2020; Bellato et al., 2022, 2023a), it is considered relevant to recognize the diversity of system models that have been successfully employed and studied. Furthermore, when the rapid growth of a multidisciplinary research field occurs, the information load can become unclear and convoluted. In such cases, as is the situation of the regenerative tourism line of research, systematic literature reviews are important for classifying, analysing, and summarizing the academic output of the area of knowledge to assess the state of the field, as well as identifying research gaps (Linnenluecke et al., 2020).

### 3 METHOD

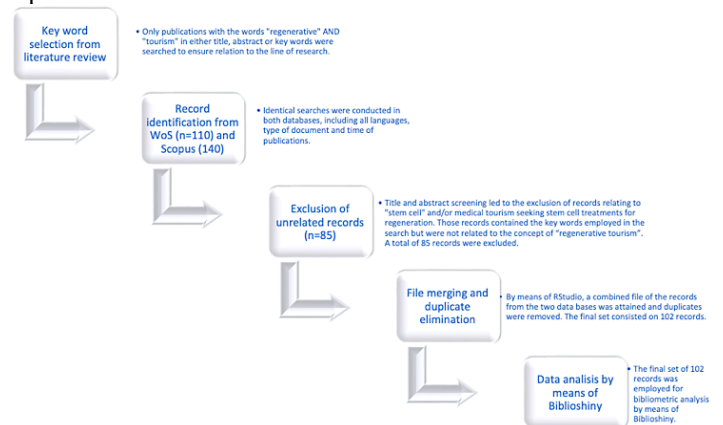
As this paper aims to revise the development of regenerative tourism literature, a bibliometric analysis was conducted to study the publication trends, authors, countries of origin, and main languages, as well as leading research themes within the line of research, enabling the unfurling of developmental nuances of academic research in the field of regenerative tourism. With this purpose in mind, Clarivate's Web of Science (WoS) and Elsevier's Scopus (Scopus) were employed to obtain the data for the study, as they represent the major databases and citation indexes for general-purpose scientific literature, including journal articles, conference proceedings, and books. Furthermore, it has been stated WoS presents a wider coverage of natural sciences and engineering, while Scopus presents an enhanced coverage of the social sciences (Mongeon and Paul-Hus, 2016). As of July 1st, 2023, the date of data collection, there are over 21,000 peer-reviewed journals covered by Web of Science, tracking diverse disciplines with over 1.9 billion cited references and over 85.9 million records (Clarivate, 2023), as well as 27,950 peer-reviewed journals, 1.8 billion cited references and over 90.6 million records being tracked by Scopus (Elsevier, 2023). Consequently, it is considered that combining both data sources may result in richer results, especially considering the previously mentioned multidisciplinary essence of the line of research.

The methodology employed for the selection of the publications to be analysed by this study was the following (Figure 1). The publications were identified by running a search inquiry employing the words "regenerative" AND "tourism" within the title, abstract, and keyword fields (topic). The search word selection was based on the literature review, and aimed at the selection of publications strictly relating to this novel proposal of tourism model. Neither the type of document nor time of publication were conditioned,

and publications in all languages were included. The inclusion of all languages was decided as English versions of titles, abstracts, and keywords are customarily available, preventing possible problems with the analysis of documents not originally written in the English language. A total of 110 publications matched the search criteria in Web of Science and 140 in Scopus. Nevertheless, due to criteria similarity and to ensure congruence, 37 publications relating to "stem cell tourism" were discarded from the WoS results and 48 from the Scopus results, as such records discussed topics relating to patients traveling in search of stem cell regenerative therapies. Files were then merged and duplicates were eliminated (n=63) by employing RStudio (Version 2023.06.0+421), an integrated development environment for the programming language R, commonly employed for data import, access, transformation, and analysis, among other uses.

The merge and duplicate elimination yielded a total of 102 records remaining to be analysed using Biblioshiny, a web interface for Bibliometrix, a package for the R statistical programming language for quantitative research in scientometrics and bibliometrics (Aria and Cuccurullo, 2017), which was employed for the performance of some of the most commonly used analyses carried out in bibliometrics, including timespan of publications, top publishing sources, key source identification by Bradford's law, source local impact, scientific production by country, publication languages, document local citations, author relevance, productivity and local citations, collaboration networks, most relevant affiliations and their production, as well as content, thematic and co-citation analyses.

Figure 1. Flow diagram of identification and screening of publications



A full counting algorithm was employed to calculate the number of publications and citations per author, meaning that a full weight of one for each co-author was assigned. Local citations and impact were employed as they directly measure the relevance of the author and publication within this specific line of research, uncovering the citations coming from within a research field, establishing connections and similarities between them, and enabling a more detailed examination of the research line. However, a problem related to citation as a measure of relevance is that recent work that has not had the chance to be cited is overlooked, notwithstanding its significance (Zupic and Čater, 2015). Additionally, the Leiden algorithm was employed for

network analyses, such as thematic mapping and co-citations, as it has been pointed to yield better results for group identification (Traag et al., 2019).

## 4 FINDINGS

### 4.1 Publication trends and sources

A collection of 102 publications was found to relate to regenerative tourism, with the first article amongst the set being published in the year 1996. However, academic interest did not boom until 2020, when the number of publications started to expand. Out of the set of 102 publications, 63 were articles, 10 were early access articles, 9 were reviews, 8 were book chapters, 7 were proceeding papers, 3 were conference papers and 2 consisted of editorial material.

The first publication found to relate to regenerative tourism was "Creating place identity through heritage interpretation" written by David L. Uzzell (1996), where heritage tourism was priced for promoting the introduction of regenerative and conservation programs into declining urban, industrial, and rural areas. The second publication was not available until four years later and was titled "Rural tourism on the Croatian Islands-Sustainable development and regenerative strategies" (Kombol, 2000), aiming for a solution through the combination of tourism, agriculture, and fishing industries. These two first publications represent an incipient ambition to employ diverse practices, such as heritage tourism and primary activities, to revitalize despoiled regions by taking advantage of endemic resources. Table 1 displays the article publication trends during the previous 28 years, showing the recent interest in this area of investigation.

Table 1. Number of publications per year

Publication Year	Number of Publications
1996	1
1997	0
1998	0
1999	0
2000	1
2001	0
2002	0
2003	1
2004	0
2005	2
2006	0
2007	3
2008	0
2009	0
2010	2
2011	1
2012	0
2013	1
2014	1
2015	1
2016	0
2017	1
2018	0
2019	4
2020	8
2021	13
2022	36
2023	26

A total of 67 sources were found to have publications regarding regenerative tourism, with most of them (n=60) having issued only one publication within the field as of the

date of data collection (July 1st, 2023). Journal of Tourism Futures was found to have the greatest number of publications within the area of investigation (n=14), with its complete output being published in 2022.

Table 2. Core sources by Bradford's Law

Source	Rank	Number of Publications	Cumulative Publications
Journal of Tourism Futures	1	14	14
Sustainability	2	11	25
Tourism Geographies	3	6	31
Journal of Sustainable Tourism	4	4	35

The core sources according to Bradford's Law of diminishing returns and scattering were four (Table 2), with the set having published 34% of the entire 102 records (n=35). These four sources are, therefore, the most productive periodicals for this specific line of research, which according to Bradford's Law, are the leading sources of information to consult when it comes to regenerative tourism and likely to be of utmost interest to researchers in the discipline.

The most cited sources by the set of 102 publications analysed in this study, also known as local citations (Table 3), were the Journal of Sustainable Tourism and Tourism Geographies, which makes them the most influential sources for this area of knowledge, besides being part of the core sources by their level of productivity (Table 2).

Table 3. Source local impact

Sources	No. of Local Citations
Journal of Sustainable Tourism	151
Tourism Geographies	115
Annals of Tourism Research	101
Tourism Management	96
Sustainability	85
Current Issues in Tourism	41
Journal of Tourism Futures	38
Journal of Travel Research	38
Tourism Management Perspectives	31
Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism	30

### 4.2 Languages, countries, and affiliations

Four languages were found to have been employed to publish within this line of research, with the clear dominant language being English, finding over 94 percent of the publications analysed (n=96) being in that language (Table 4). The other languages employed were Spanish, French and German.

Table 4. Publication languages

Language	Number of Publications
English	96
Spanish	4
French	1
German	1

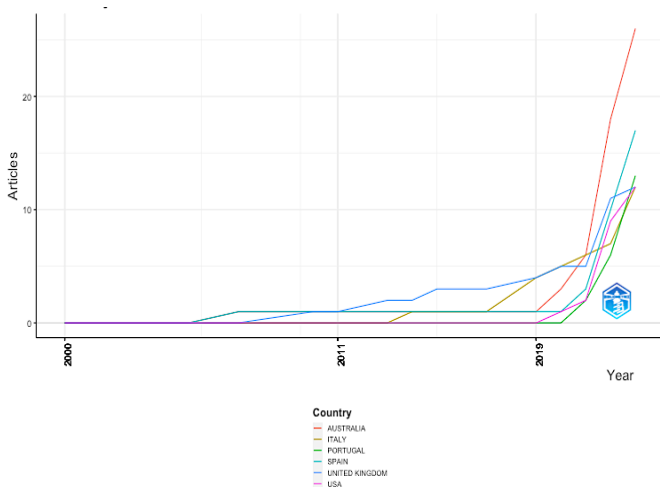
Thirty-eight different countries presented production within the line of research. With a set of twenty-six affiliations, Australia was the most prolific country within the area of investigation, followed by Spain, which showed seventeen

affiliations contributing to the field of inquiry. A list of the ten most productive countries can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5. Top publishing countries

Country	Country Affiliations
Australia	26
Spain	17
Portugal	13
Italy	12
UK	13
USA	12
China	11
New Zealand	11
Netherlands	9
Germany	8

Figure 2. Top six countries' production over time



As can be seen in Figure 2, just recently (2021), the top four producing countries surpassed the UK as the leader in the area of knowledge. In addition, countries like Malaysia (four publications in 2023), Saudi Arabia (four publications in 2023), Pakistan (two publications in 2023), Indonesia (one publication in 2023), Bangladesh (one publication in 2023), Turkey (one publication in 2023) and the United Arab Emirates (one publication in 2023) just recently entered this field of knowledge. This development shows how, apart from growing production from hegemonic participants, new players are entering the field, widening the understanding and supplying new perspectives for this line of research. Nonetheless, several countries for whom tourism is an important economic activity have not entered the area of knowledge, as is the case of many Latin American countries. Out of the thirty-eight yielding countries, nineteen have shown international collaboration. Figure 3 shows the links of association between the most connected counties, with a clear path of collaboration running between the UK and Australasia. Within those collaborating countries, Australia excelled by the greatest number of both, countries it has collaborated with (n=14) and publications done in international collaboration (n=23), clearly leading international collaboration within the field (Table 6).

Figure 3. Map of collaboration between countries

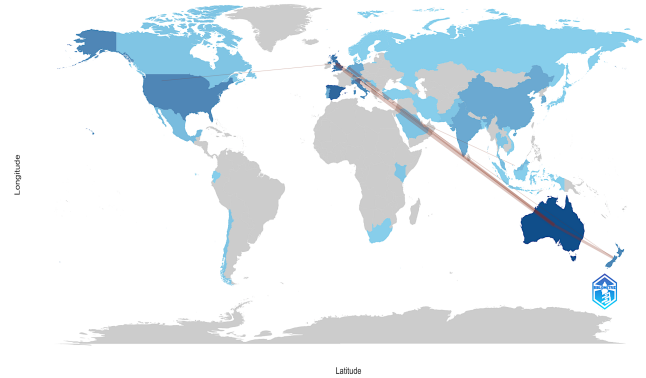


Table 6. International collaborations by country

Country	Number of Countries it has Collaborated With	Number of Publications Done in Collaboration
Australia	14	23
UK	12	16
USA	7	7
New Zealand	7	7
Netherland	6	7
Germany	6	6
Korea	4	4
Belgium	4	4
China	4	4
Malaysia	3	4
Spain	3	3
Saudi Arabia	2	2
Canada	2	2
Thailand	1	1
Portugal	1	1
Mexico	1	1
India	1	1
Ecuador	1	1
Pakistan	1	1

Furthermore, Swinburne University of Technology was the most prolific affiliation to date, followed by the University of Tasmania, University of Girona, Woosong University, and the Institute for Tourism (Table 7). As tourism plays a relevant role in the economy of the countries where those affiliations are based (e.g. Australia's tourism contribution to GDP in the 2021-22 financial year was \$35.1b according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2022), it seems rational that academic and research institutions attend to novel ideas on this central area of interest.

Table 7. Most relevant affiliations

Rank	Organization	Country	Articles
1	Swinburne University of Technology	Australia	4
2	University of Tasmania	Australia	3
2	University of Girona	Spain	3
2	Woosong University	South Korea	3
2	Institute for Tourism	Croatia	3
3	Griffith University	Australia	2
3	Jilin University	China	2
3	Monash University	Australia	2
3	Universidad Rey Juan Carlos	Spain	2
3	Universidade de Lisboa	Portugal	2

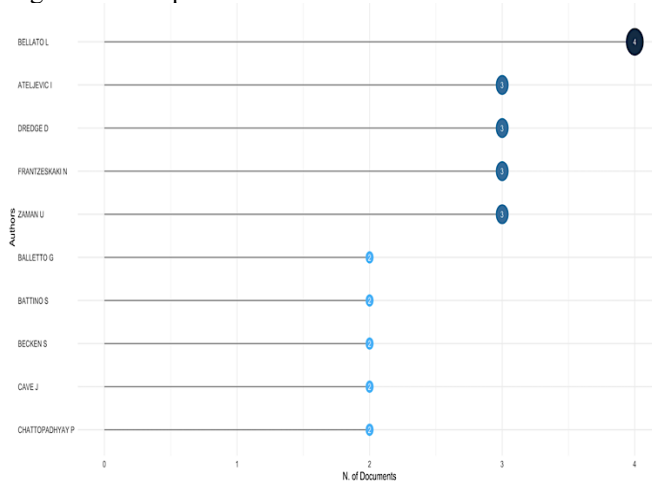
4.3 Authors, leading publications, and citations

The compound of 102 documents was written by 270 different authors. Among them, 32 were creators of single-authored documents, and there was an average of 2.88

authors per document. The average age of the publications was 3.21 years, and there was an average citation per document of 9.392.

If a full counting algorithm is employed, Loretta Bellato (based in Australia) is the most prolific author to date within this line of research, reaching a total of four articles, followed by Irena Ateljevic (based in Croatia), Dianne Dredge (based in Australia), Niki Frantzeskaki (based in The Netherlands) and Umer Zaman (based in South Korea). For a list of the ten most productive authors see Figure 4.

Figure 4. Most productive authors.



Likewise, if a full counting algorithm is employed, the most locally cited author was Dianne Dredge (n=24), followed by Jenny Cave (n=20) and Irena Ateljevic (n=19) (Table 8). Nonetheless, when the authors' impact is taken into account, it is Loretta Bellato who attains better results. Table 9 shows the most relevant authors ranked by H-index, which comprises a single indicator that measures quantity and impact of the scientific output of a researcher (H number of publications that have been cited H number of times) (Hirsch, 2005).

Table 8. Most locally cited authors

Author	Local Citations
Dredge, D.	24
Cave, J.	20
Ateljevic, I.	19
Bellato, L.	14
Bakas, F.	10
Vinagre de Castro, T.	10
Duxbury, N.	10
Frantzeskaki, N.	10
Silva, S.	10
Becken, S.	7

Other indicators of author's local impact are also shown in Table 9, such as m-index, which displays h-index per year since first publication (Hirsch Buela-Casal, 2014), as well as the g-index, which is the unique largest number such that the most cited 'g' number of articles received together at least 'g<sup>2</sup>' citations (Egghe, 2006), therefore, the four most cited articles of Bellato (g=4) reached at least 16 citations (g<sup>2</sup>).

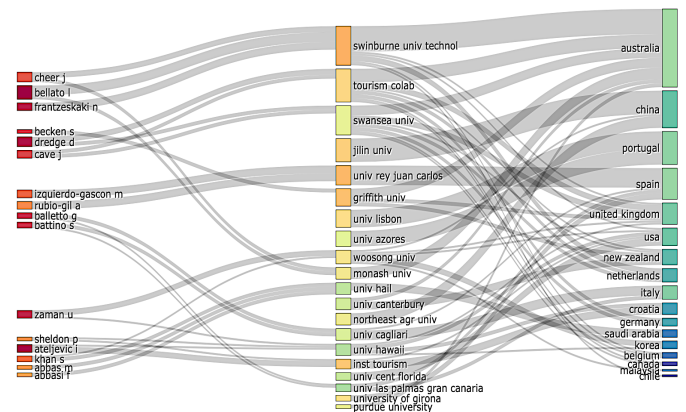
Table 9. Authors' local impact

Author	H-index	g-index	m-index	Total citations	Number of publications	Starting year
Bellato, L.	3	4	1.000	26	4	2021
Dredge, D.	3	3	0.750	91	3	2020
Cave, J.	2	2	0.500	85	2	2020
Dezio, C.	2	2	0.500	8	2	2020
Frantzeskaki, N.	2	3	1.000	18	3	2022
Matunga, H.	2	2	0.500	18	2	2020

As of July 1st, 2023, Ateljevic's (2020) (n=17), Cave and Dredge's (2020) (n=17), Duxbury et al. (2021) (n=10), Becken (2022) (n=7), and Bellato et al. (2023) (n=7) were the most locally cited documents within the set, making them the most influential publications in the area of knowledge. Ateljevic's (2020) was also the second most globally cited publication (n=116), only surpassed by Hall (2009) (n=169). Additionally, those top five most locally cited documents represent 54% of the 107 local citations (n=58) as well as 26.5% (n=253) of the 959 global citations reached by the 102 publications studied. Therefore, these publications constitute the fundamental literature for the line of research.

Only 32 of the 102 publications were single-authored, yielding a total of 70 publications made in collaboration. The Co-Authors per Articles index was 2.88, calculated as the average number of co-authors per article regardless of how many appearances the same author has had. Nonetheless, even when most of the publications were not made in isolation, collaboration still tends to be limited. By observing Figure 5, which shows the relationship between authors (left field), affiliation (middle field), and country (right field), it can be noted that there is a tendency for collaboration between authors from the same affiliation. For instance, Bellato, Cheer, and Frantzeskaki, close collaborators, are all affiliated with Swinburne University.

Figure 5. Three-Fields Plot. Authors, affiliation, and country.

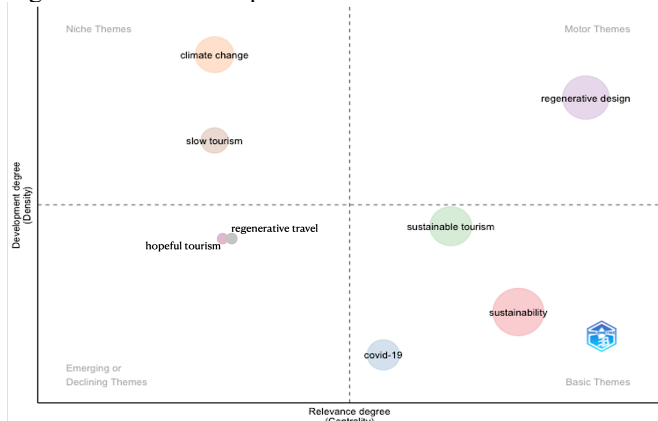


#### 4.4 Content analysis

Keyword analysis and thematic evolution queries were performed to detect the main research topics of the field. To avoid deviant results, keywords inserted in the search query (regenerative\* AND tourism \*) were removed. Author's keywords were employed as the quality of keywords plus is affected when data from WoS and Scopus are merged.

The main keywords identified were "sustainability", with 10 occurrences, followed by "covid-19" and "sustainable tourism", with 8 occurrences each. This initial analysis indicates an association between the spike in research within this line of investigation and the difficulties caused by the Covid-19 originated pandemic.

Figure 6. Thematic map



Thematic mapping (figure 6) recognized eight keyword clusters, whose density and centrality were used for their mapping in a two-dimensional diagram. This plot is helpful for analysing themes according to the quadrant in which they are placed: (1) upper-right quadrant: motor-themes; (2) lower-right quadrant: basic themes; (3) lower-left quadrant: emerging or disappearing themes; (4) upper-left quadrant: very specialized/niche themes.

The clusters were automatically labelled by the software as the keyword with the highest occurrence as: “sustainability”, “covid-19”, “sustainable tourism”, “regenerative design”, “climate change”, “slow tourism”, “hopeful tourism” and “regenerative travel”.

Motor themes appear in the upper-right quadrant, having high centrality and density, therefore considered well-researched and important, driving the research within this area of knowledge. The “regenerative design” thematic cluster was located within this quadrant, which focuses on proposing alternative schemes for the modelling of touristic undertakings. Not surprisingly, this theme was the only one located in this quadrant, indicating the relative newness of the area of knowledge, hence, most themes are not yet well-researched, but are expected to migrate there from other quadrants shortly.

Basic themes have high centrality and low density, which ponders them as important and not yet sufficiently developed for the research field. The thematic clusters of “sustainable tourism”, “sustainability” and “covid-19” were located in this quadrant, which categorizes them as important and not yet sufficiently developed for the field of research. The “sustainable tourism” thematic cluster seems to be journeying towards the motor quadrant and focuses on the conceptualization and potential of sustainable tourism.

Emerging or declining themes appear in the lower-left quadrant, presenting low centrality and density, hence considered not well-developed with marginal importance. Within this quadrant, the clusters of “hopeful tourism” and “regenerative travel” are located. The “regenerative travel” theme seems to focus on the practice of regenerative tourism and the different forces that impact such practice. Nonetheless, the newness of the theme limits the scope of its attention.

Lastly, in the quadrant of niche themes, the “climate change” and “slow tourism” thematic clusters are located. These themes are considered to have marginal importance for the

line of research. The “climate change” cluster seems to focus on a shift towards a more resilient and less damaging industry, proposing alternatives to traditional tourism.

5.5 Co-citation analysis

Co-citation analysis counts the number of times two documents are cited together in the source articles, in this circumstance, the set of 102 papers. The analysis identified four clusters of co-citation, one of them being entirely separated from the other three. The main publications of each cluster can be found in Table 10.

Cluster number one, drives the research within the area of knowledge. This cluster is the largest, comprising 21 publications, and is the only one whose main elements belong to the set of 102 publications being analysed. Cited by many of the publications within the set, the most relevant documents within this cluster are Ateljevic (2020), Cave (2020), and Duxbury (2021).

The other three clusters mostly include publications outside of the examined set and constitute the basis for the development of different thematic clusters. The second cluster comprises ten articles. Cited by publications such as Bellato et al. (2022), which belongs to the sustainability thematic cluster, the main publications within this set focus on the bids for transforming the tourism industry.

The third cluster comprises fourteen articles and mostly focuses on alternative practices that aim to go beyond sustainability. Cited by articles such as Mathisen et al. (2022), which belong to the climate change thematic cluster, the publications within this set mostly focus on environmental management and the need for alternative paradigms.

The fourth cluster, comprises only three publications, all belonging to the same author, which were cited by documents such as Xu et al. (2023), and concentrates on scientometric and bibliometric analyses.

Table 10. Clusters’ publications.

First Author	Title	Year	Cluster
Ateljevic, I.	Transforming the (tourism) world for good and (re)generating the potential 'new normal'	2020	1
Cave, J., & Dredge, D.	Regenerative tourism needs diverse economic practices	2020	1
Duxbury, N., Bakas, F. E., Vinagre de Castro, T., & Silva, S.	Creative Tourism Development Models towards Sustainable and Regenerative Tourism	2021	1
Reed, B.	Shifting from 'sustainability' to regeneration	2007	2
Pollock, A.	Conscious travel: Signposts towards a new model for tourism.	2012	2
Higgins-Desbiolles, F., Carnicelli, S., Krolikowski, C., Wijesinghe, G., & Boluk, K.	Degrowing tourism: Rethinking tourism	2019	2
Matunga, H.	Tino rangatiratanga and tourism in Aotearoa New Zealand	2020	3
Dwyer, L.	Saluting while the ship sinks: the necessity for tourism paradigm change	2018	3
Mang, P. and Reed, B.	Designing from place: a regenerative framework and methodology	2012	3
Chen, C.	Searching for intellectual turning points: progressive knowledge domain visualization.	2004	4
Chen, C., Dubin, R., & Kim, M. C.	Orphan drugs and rare diseases: A scientometric review (2000–2014).	2014	4
Chen, C., Hu, Z., Liu, S., & Tseng, H.	Emerging trends in regenerative medicine a scientometric analysis in CiteSpace.	2012	4



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## 5 DISCUSSION

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This article conducted a bibliometric analysis of the emerging field of regenerative tourism with the purpose of reviewing the state of literature within the line of research and attend the research gaps addressed in the literature review, particularly focusing on viewpoint diversity, due to the high dependence of regenerative tourism on endemic characteristics (Ateljevic, 2020; Bellato et al., 2022, 2023a), as well as the state of literature regarding the three key areas pointed by Dredge (2022) as crucial for the redesign of the tourism industry: systems change, mindset shift and practice.

Throughout the publication search in Web of Science and Scopus, its posterior deputation and combination, which yielded a total of 102 publications, and further analysis by means of Biblioshiny, a recent upsurge in academic literature relating to this topic was noticed, specifically from 2020 to date, with 81% of publications under this line (n=83) being done since. The quantitative analysis of the sample has assisted to reach a string of conclusions that will be detailed below.

Our research findings display the structure of regenerative tourism research, which is considered to be a facilitator for the immersion in the field of new researchers, as well as for practitioners in search of guidance, by supplying a guide for literature exploration. Initially, a core set of sources was identified, which comprised the Journal of Tourism Futures, Sustainability, Tourism Geographies and Journal of Sustainable Tourism. Additionally, a collection of main publications was recognized, as well as a set of central authors, led by Dianne Dredge, Loretta Bellato, Jenny Cave, and Irena Ateljevic, among others. Furthermore, a set of eight thematic clusters was identified, namely “regenerative design”, “sustainable tourism” “sustainability”, “covid-19”, “regenerative travel”, “hopeful tourism”, “climate change” and “slow tourism”, as well as their theoretical ascendancies. As mentioned before, an association between the expansion of literature within the line of research and COVID-19 originated crisis was detected, which might come as no surprise due to the great impact the emergency had on the tourism industry (Abbas et al., 2021; Škare et al., 2021). Nonetheless, the attention regenerative tourism has received has not been evenly allocated throughout the world, still limited to a few main players such as Australia and the UK, with many other regions where tourism represents a key activity being uninvolved with academic research related to this line. As regenerative tourism has been stated to be highly dependent on endemic characteristics and potentials (Ateljevic, 2020; Bellato et al., 2022, 2023a; Chambers Buzinde, 2015), widening the context might enhance the proposed frameworks for regenerative tourism edification, especially by considering diverse indigenous knowledge and practices (Bellato et al., 2022, 2023a; Hes and Coenen, 2018; Matunga et al., 2020).

Notwithstanding its contributions, it is acknowledged this paper has a series of limitations that must be stated, such as the use of only two databases instead of a wider combination of sources of information, which would provide greater publication coverage. Even so, it is believed that Web of Science and Scopus offers a large collection of documents that are representative of the population. Likewise, the use of

wider search terms could enlarge the sample of documents. Nonetheless, the selected terms were chosen to keep the focus of the study, omitting works not directly related to the field.

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## 6 CONCLUSION

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This paper presents the evolution of regenerative tourism as a field of research, highlighting the most relevant authors, institutions, sources, and countries, as well as the most significant research themes, documents, and references. This study is useful to researchers and other interested parties in regenerative tourism as it provides an insightful and comprehensive overview using bibliometric methods, serving as the basis for further research in this field.

As the line of research is relatively new, future studies can enrich the research line in multiple directions, including the amelioration of regenerative tourism development frameworks by extending the exploration to varied geographical and cultural settings, including diverse indigenous knowledge and practices. In addition, it is considered important to include diverse fields of knowledge, such as marketing and consumer behaviour, expanding the understanding concerning mindset change towards regenerative tourism by increasing the knowledge about entrepreneurs' and locals' outlooks, as well as the tourism consumers' perspective regarding this sort of practices. Even when it appears academic interest has been awoken by recent adversities, consumers' interest is yet to be assessed, which constitutes a major research gap. Additionally, as the need for a paradigm change has also been established, ways to promote and incentivize entrepreneurship and consumption towards this new path must be identified.

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## 7 IMPLICATIONS

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As for theoretical implications, when evaluating the three areas necessary for the redesign of the tourism industry pointed out by Dredge (2022), it was found that the systems change expanse was the only one being addressed by a well-researched theme, the “regenerative design” cluster. The “regenerative travel” theme seems to attempt to cover the practice area. However, its emerging state bounds the scope of its coverage, requiring further attention to harness the redesign of the tourism industry. The mindset shift area doesn't seem to be explored by any of the current research themes, representing an important gap in the state of literature. On the other hand, the managerial implications of these results consist of supplying access to key information for the design of new business models for entrepreneurs, as well as industry development guidelines for chambers or other governmental institutions, that are grounded on the basis of regenerative tourism, as well as guidelines for their implementation and the overcoming of the obstacles that might present on the journey towards a more sustainable industry.

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