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Massey University

**From Film Tourism to Sustainable Contents Tourism in New Zealand:
The Essential Role of Stakeholder Collaboration**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for

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Abstract

Contents tourism refers to the tourism generated by stimulating tourists through media works, which is an innovative form of tourism that can enhance tourism attractiveness and increase the number of off-season tourists, in line with New Zealand's tourism strategy. From the perspective of sustainable tourism and based on stakeholder theory, this study aims to identify the status of contents tourism in New Zealand and analyse its feasibility for further development. While contents tourism has begun to emerge in New Zealand, it has received little academic or industry attention, mainly focusing on film tourism. Through semi-structured interviews, the researcher highlighted that New Zealand has abundant potential contents tourism resources and advantages, which have yet to be developed and recognised by stakeholders. Meanwhile, most of the current contents tourism destinations lack competitiveness and are unsustainable. Therefore, this study attempts to extend New Zealand's film tourism research to the field of contents tourism and provide insights into exploring sustainable forms of contents tourism by identifying the four components of sustainable contents tourism. Finally, this study suggests the core role of stakeholder collaboration in sustainable contents tourism, divided 16 types of stakeholders, and designed a process diagram of co-development for sustainable contents tourism to provide reference for tourism practices.

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One of my expectations for this research is that it could contribute to the development of contents tourism and encourage more excellent works, just like *BanG Dream!* It has become a harbour for many people's hearts and a source of spiritual sustenance. I also hope that the contents tourism industry and tourism products will become more mature, so that everyone could reach the intersection of reality and art depicted in their beloved works through contents tourism – the holy land in their hearts.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

In recent years, contents tourism has grown increasingly popular among tourists worldwide, becoming a new form of tourism promotion and a way to enhance tourism attractiveness. Contents tourism refers to tourism stimulated by popular culture from various works such as movies, TV shows, comics, Japanese anime, novels, music, games, dramas, literature and art, photography, religion, etc., which means that the focus of contents tourism is not on carrier forms, but on the specific contents of narrative, characters, and locations (Graburn & Yamamura, 2020; Seaton & Yamamura, 2015; Yamamura & Seaton, 2020). As mentioned by Nofiyanti et al. (2018), cyber literature, literary works, novels adapted into movies, and other media that describe tourist destinations have aroused readers' curiosity about Indonesia, and certain works have greatly increased the number of tourists coming to Indonesia. The case of Indonesia suggests that mentioning tourist destinations through different media works can play a role in attracting tourists, and this type of tourism stimulated by various media works is precisely the gradually emerging contents tourism studied in this thesis.

Contents tourism is a new opportunity for the development of the tourism industry. Like general tourism research that focuses on economic benefits, scholars have also revealed the positive significance of contents tourism in increasing the number of tourists and promoting business development (Hernandez Perez, 2019; Ishida, 2021; Matsuyama, 2022; Nagano & Yamamoto, 2022). For example, Matsuyama (2022) mentioned manga and anime *Love Live! Sunshine!!* increased the number of tourists in Numazu City, Japan by over

300,000 in one year. Hernandez Perez (2019) also explained that the rapid development of tourism and service industries in the coastal areas of Croatia is inseparable from the global success of the TV series *Game of Thrones*. Therefore, in terms of economy, contents tourism activities can increase the number of tourists, drive the development of tourism and commerce.

Although contents tourism has initially emerged in New Zealand (NZ), it has not yet been noticed by people. In NZ, research on contents tourism mainly focuses on film tourism (e.g., Buchmann et al., 2010; Carl et al., 2007; Polianskaia et al., 2016; Tudor, 2015), while other types of contents tourism were only briefly mentioned (e.g., Conrich & Youngs, 2010; Fresno-Calleja, 2020; Leotta, 2024). Similarly, the findings of this study indicate that contents tourism other than film tourism has emerged in NZ, but they have not yet received much attention from tourism stakeholders. However, Graburn and Yamamura (2020) stated that the development of modern media and information has led to the diversification of work forms, which means that contents tourism containing multiple types of works has a broader perspective than film tourism in understanding complex modern tourism. Therefore, this study attempts to extend NZ's film tourism research to the field of contents tourism, aiming to draw attention to the opportunities beyond film within contents tourism that have yet to be widely noticed.

However, NZ's contents tourism industry faces challenges in maintaining long-term operations and may have negative impacts on the environment and residents. Although film tourism can play a good role in promoting tourism, its positive impact usually fades over time

(Leotta, 2024; Li et al., 2017; Mitchell & Stewart, 2012). Mitchell and Stewart (2012) analysed the impact of films on the number of tourists from multiple countries, and the data showed that the third *Lord of the Rings* significantly increased the number of tourists to NZ within two years, but then decreased. Leotta (2024) mentioned that after the popularity of *The Lord of the Rings* disappeared, there were still tourists, but the films *Whale Rider* and *The Last Samurai* only briefly increased the number of tourists to the destinations, and soon there were almost no tourists left. Furthermore, fans of *The Lord of the Rings* left garbage during their travels, generating noise, and causing mountain climbing accidents, exacerbating social governance pressure and causing dissatisfaction among residents (Tzanelli, 2020). Therefore, contents tourism in NZ is still in its early stages: not only is research limited to film tourism, but most of NZ's film tourism is difficult to sustain in the long term or has negative impacts.

The research question for this study is: What is the form of sustainable contents tourism? In order to alleviate the negative impacts of contents tourism and promote its long-term development, this study combines contents tourism with sustainable tourism. According to the World Tourism Organization (2024) and the United Nations (2021), sustainable tourism is tourism that maximises the economic contribution of the tourism industry, enhances its attractiveness and quality, while minimising negative impacts. However, scholars argued that there is still a lack of unified measurement standards for determining whether the tourism industry has achieved sustainable tourism (Liu, 2003; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2023; Saarinen, 2015). To improve this issue, Rasoolimanesh et al. (2023) reviewed literature in the field of sustainable tourism and introduced relevant research on sustainable tourism indicators (STIs).

This study attempts to apply STIs to the field of contents tourism and promote the exploration of sustainable contents tourism indicators, that is, to answer what kind of contents tourism is sustainable.

After reviewing relevant literature, the important role of stakeholder theory in sustainable tourism was identified, while studies focusing on stakeholders in the field of contents tourism remain limited. To answer research questions, the study focuses on tourism practitioners with experience in contents tourism, sustainable tourism, and stakeholder engagement through purposeful sampling, exploring their understanding of the role of stakeholders in sustainable contents tourism. The study invited 8 managers and experts from NZ tourism businesses and institutions to participate in semi-structured interviews. The collected data was then transcribed and subjected to thematic analysis to further explore the status and sustainable forms of contents tourism in NZ.

Key findings from thematic analysis indicate that although NZ has abundant contents tourism resources, it lacks effective development and management, resulting in limited destination competitiveness. By investigating the current situation of contents tourism, this study has listed the tourism resources in NZ derived from content works, attempting to expand the research on NZ film tourism to the field of contents tourism. Based on research data, four components of sustainable contents tourism have been identified, promoting the exploration of sustainable tourism indicators in the field of contents tourism. Consistent with previous literature, the study also supports the importance of stakeholders in sustainable tourism. Furthermore, the research findings indicate the core role of stakeholder collaboration

in sustainable contents tourism, filling the gap in stakeholder theory research in the field of contents tourism. Based on these findings, this study developed a sustainable contents tourism process diagram to provide reference for innovation in the NZ tourism industry and sustainable development of contents tourism.

This chapter outlines the research topic, important concepts, research objectives, and research contributions. The research background and stakeholder theory are first introduced, followed by an explanation of the significance of contents tourism and the gaps in related research to introduce the motivation and value of this study. The next parts outline the research objectives, research questions, and research contributions. Finally, the chapter concludes with an overview of the thesis structure.

1.1 Research Background

Tourism is one of the important industries in NZ. Statistics New Zealand (2024) reported that although it has not yet recovered to pre COVID-19 levels, the overall contribution of NZ's international tourism industry to NZ's total exports of goods and services reached 11.4% in 2023. Before the pandemic, this proportion was even higher. According to The World Bank (2021), in 2018, NZ's international tourism revenue accounted for 18.83% of its total exports, compared to several developed tourism countries such as Australia at 14.47%, the United States at 9.52%, France at 7.92%, Italy at 7.87%, and Japan at 4.87% during the same period. In addition, the report of New Zealand Institute of Economic Research (2020) shows that prior to COVID-19, the direct and indirect employment rates in

the tourism industry accounted for 14.4% of all employment in NZ. All these data indicate that the tourism industry is an important component of the NZ economy.

As a country where tourism accounts for a large proportion of the economy, NZ recognised the importance of sustainable tourism. Tourism New Zealand is a Crown entity under the NZ government, responsible for tourism promotion and developing, implementing, and promoting tourism strategies (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, 2024). Sustainable tourism is repeatedly highlighted in Tourism New Zealand's latest statement of intent (Tourism New Zealand, 2024a), annual report (Tourism New Zealand, 2024b), and the government's tourism strategy (Department of Conservation, 2019). Similarly, the Care for New Zealand (2024) team, composed of Tourism New Zealand, local government and other organisations, proposed Tiaki Promise as a fundamental guideline for tourism enterprises and tourists, emphasising responsible and sustainable tourism. Tiaki is a Māori word that means "care" or "protect", and it also represents the principle of managing the relationship between environmental resources and humans in Māori culture, ensuring the sustainability of human communities (Hatton et al., 2017; Hellmann, 2023).

However, the development and utilisation of NZ's tourism resources still need improvement, and contents tourism brings opportunities. The latest statement of intent from Tourism New Zealand pointed out that the seasonality of tourism in NZ is very significant, with the peak tourist season in December, January, and February being crowded with vacationers, which poses challenges to the environment and infrastructure of NZ, while the remaining longer off-season means idle resources (Tourism New Zealand, 2024a). Therefore,

Tourism New Zealand (2024a) plans to seek new tourists who may be more inclined to travel to NZ during off peak seasons. Coincidentally, contents tourism aligns with the NZ's statement of intent, providing an opportunity to promote sustainable tourism: the travel motivation of contents tourism tourists is mainly influenced by the works, and they tend to prioritise finding the attractions described in the works (Chan, 2007; Hernandez Perez, 2019; Okamoto, 2015; Seaton & Yamamura, 2015), rather than being more inclined to search for suitable seasons like vacationers. Another strong evidence is that according to Tourism New Zealand (2023), over half of Chinese tourists participate in NZ's film tourism during the off-season. This means that through reasonable guidance and management, especially by mentioning off-season attractions in the design of content works, contents tourists will be more likely to visit NZ during off peak seasons. Moreover, NZ tourism strategy highlights the need to enhance tourism attractiveness to promote sustainable tourism, which can be achieved through industry innovation and regional storytelling. (Department of Conservation, 2019). In line with this, various works can become carriers of regional storytelling, which means designing unique works and developing corresponding contents tourism is also an innovative method to enhance tourism attractiveness.

Movies and other works not only allow people to learn about NZ, but also directly become incentives for consumers to travel to NZ for contents tourism. Studies showed that 95% of international tourists visiting NZ knew that NZ is one of the filming locations for the movie *The Lord of the Rings*, and 9% of tourists said they came to NZ because of the popularity of *The Lord of the Rings* (Leotta, 2024; Macionis & O'Connor, 2011; Tourism New

Zealand, 2023; Mohsin, 2008). Typical contents tourism cases triggered by movies such as *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* can also be found in NZ, and there are already several related studies in the field of film tourism in NZ (e.g., Buchmann et al., 2010; Carl et al., 2007; Polianskaia et al., 2016; Tudor, 2015). The development and research of film tourism means that tourism stakeholders, such as tourism practitioners and tourism business managers, may already understand and have experience in operating film tourism products. The findings of this study also support this point. The interviewees from NZ not only participated in film tourism, but also demonstrated a strong understanding of contents tourism, with a few even starting to operate contents tourism businesses other than films. As a result, the literature on NZ film tourism and the experiences of participants in the contents tourism industry provide a foundation for exploring the form of sustainable contents tourism.

1.2 Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory is one of the research themes in the field of tourism, which is used to explain and promote sustainable tourism. Mahajan et al. (2023) reviewed the development of stakeholder theory and summarised that the term "stakeholder" was proposed by Stanford Research Institute in 1963, and Freeman's 1984 book *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach* marked the formal introduction of stakeholder theory into the field of strategic management. Freeman's seminal work emphasised that managers should pay attention not only to company owners and shareholders, but also to other stakeholders when formulating, implementing, and monitoring strategies (Freeman, 2010). According to Mahajan et al. (2023), the stakeholder theory is a theory of organisational management and business ethics

that holds that organisations must consider the multiple benefits of different stakeholders to achieve organisational goals, and groups and individuals who can influence or be influenced by the organisation can be considered stakeholders. Based on this theory, if an organisation wants to achieve its goals, it needs to consider the interests of stakeholders. In the tourism industry, scholars defined stakeholders as any group or individual who could influence the development of tourism in a region or be affected in tourism (Byrd, 2007; Freeman, 2010). On this basis, scholars argued that sustainable tourism is tourism that strikes a balance between the economic, environmental, and social needs of all stakeholders affected by tourism (Buckley, 2012; Hall et al., 2015; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2023). This viewpoint further emphasises the significant role of coordinating the various needs of stakeholders in sustainable tourism. Other scholars directly claimed that sustainable tourism development cannot be achieved without the participation of stakeholders and collaboration among diverse types of stakeholders (Byrd, 2007; Gursoy et al., 2010; Var & Gunn, 2020). From the above literature, it can be concluded that studying how contents tourism can achieve sustainable development requires attention to stakeholders.

Stakeholder collaboration is considered one of the important ways to promote sustainable tourism. Byrd (2007) stated that studying tourism stakeholders requires attention to two aspects: who are the stakeholders and how they participate in tourism, among which stakeholder collaboration is considered the most beneficial way to promote sustainable tourism. In recent years, tourism research has also increasingly focused on stakeholder collaboration, and scholars have discussed how stakeholder collaboration can promote

sustainable tourism (e.g., Fodness, 2017; Ishida, 2021; Leotta, 2024; Paunović & Jovanović, 2017; Var & Gunn, 2020). As a result, to explore sustainable forms of contents tourism, this research focuses on stakeholders, including identifying potential stakeholders in contents tourism and analysing how they collaborate to promote sustainable development of contents tourism.

1.3 Research Justification

Contents tourism is consistent with NZ's tourism strategy, which can enhance tourism attractiveness and balance the distribution of tourist flow between off and peak seasons. The Sustainable Development Goals and the NZ government's tourism strategy require the tourism industry to enhance its attractiveness through innovation (Department of Conservation, 2019; The World Tourism Organization, 2024). As mentioned earlier, contents tourism, a new type of tourism, can sometimes attract a large number of tourists and has a positive impact on tourism and economic development (Hernandez Perez, 2019; Ishida, 2021; Matsuyama, 2022; Nagano & Yamamoto, 2022). Moreover, the tourist motivation of contents tourism is not the same as holiday tourists, and they are more likely to visit NZ during the off-peak season, which aligns with the future priorities outlined in the NZ's tourism strategy and the statement of intent (Department of Conservation, 2019; Tourism New Zealand, 2024a). This means that contents tourism is a new innovative way to develop the tourism industry and is beneficial for achieving NZ's tourism strategy.

However, the current NZ contents tourism, which mainly focuses on film tourism, still has disadvantages and shortcomings, and most of them are unsustainable. Although scholars

have described the negative issues of contents tourism, there is a lack of discussion on how to promote more sustainable contents tourism. Previous literature indirectly discussed the contributions of contents tourism to sustainable tourism from a community perspective, such as by bringing together various types of stakeholders to promote local community development (e.g., Ishida, 2021; Nagano & Yamamoto, 2022). They focused on the positive significance of contents tourism for economic and regional development. However, there is still a lack of literature that directly links contents tourism with sustainable tourism. The existing literature related to contents tourism in NZ only describes negative phenomena that exist in film tourism, with few attempts to solve the problems (Beeton, 2006; Pannett, 2018; Tzanelli, 2020). For example, Tzanelli (2020) described the tourist behaviours of *The Lord of the Rings* fans as an unpopular culture and discussed its negative impact on tourist destinations. In short, benefits and negative impacts of contents tourism have gradually been identified, but there is still a lack of discussion on ways to reduce the negative impacts or how to make contents tourism more sustainable.

In summary, contents tourism, as a new form of tourism, is becoming increasingly popular among tourists worldwide. It is in line with NZ's tourism strategy, which can enhance tourism attractiveness and increase off-season tourists, bringing opportunities for the development and innovation of NZ tourism. At present, contents tourism has emerged in NZ, but due to the lack of awareness of contents tourism, it may lead to NZ missing potential opportunities for tourism development. In addition, the rapid disappearance of popularity and negative impacts of contents tourism have led to unsustainable cases in NZ, but there is still a

lack of research to overcome these negative impacts. Therefore, it is necessary to link the concepts of contents tourism and sustainable tourism in NZ to address the negative impacts of contents tourism and make it a positive driver for future tourism development.

1.4 Research Objective and Questions

Considering the above situation, this study aims to analyse the feasibility of contents tourism in NZ and alleviate its negative impacts. This requires first exploring the current situation of contents tourism in NZ and what kind of contents tourism is sustainable. Due to previous studies declaring the important role of stakeholders in sustainable tourism (Byrd, 2007; Gursoy et al., 2010; Var & Gunn, 2020), this study focuses on how stakeholder engagement makes contents tourism more sustainable. To conduct this research, the primary research question is: What is the form of sustainable contents tourism? To better answer this question, it can be divided into the following three sub-questions:

1. What is the status of contents tourism in New Zealand?
2. What kind of contents tourism is sustainable?
3. What role does stakeholder collaboration play in sustainable contents tourism?

1.5 Research Contributions

This study aims to explore the forms of sustainable contents tourism. By collecting the experiences and perspectives of managers and experts in the tourism industry, this study obtained first-hand data on contents tourism in NZ, contributing to existing knowledge and future tourism practices.

Previous research in NZ mainly focused on film tourism. This study first investigated the current situation of contents tourism in NZ, identified its abundant contents tourism resources and advantages, and suggested expanding film tourism research to contents tourism research.

Secondly, this study combines sustainable tourism research to address the issue of insufficient attention to sustainable tourism in contents tourism research. It attempts to use STIs, the SDGs, and the NZ government's tourism strategy as standards to identify the four components of sustainable contents tourism and explain what kind of contents tourism is sustainable. Offers additional insights for exploring sustainable forms of contents tourism.

Furthermore, this research suggests the application of stakeholder theory in the field of contents tourism and identifies the core role of stakeholder collaboration in sustainable contents tourism. It identifies and categorises 16 types of stakeholders involved in contents tourism and supplements the literature on tourism stakeholder participation. By delving into the roles of stakeholders in NZ contents tourism, the study ultimately designed a process diagram of sustainable contents tourism, providing a reference for stakeholders to participate in contents tourism.

In summary, this study highlights the key role of stakeholder collaboration by exploring the status of the NZ contents tourism industry, identifying the sustainable components of contents tourism, categorising stakeholders, and developing a sustainable contents tourism process diagram. This study not only attempts to fill the gap in the literature on sustainable tourism and stakeholder collaboration in the field of contents tourism but also

provides innovative approaches and practical references for the sustainable development of tourism in NZ.

1.6 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis consists of six chapters: introduction, literature review and theoretical framework, methodology, findings, discussion, and conclusion. Each chapter builds on the previous one to address the research questions:

The first chapter is an introduction, which first introduces the research background, key concepts, and related theories. Subsequently, it analyses the research justification, proposes research objectives and questions, and summarises the research contributions.

The second chapter is a literature review and theoretical framework. It first introduces the methods of literature search and review, then reviews relevant literature, constructs important concepts and theoretical foundations, identifies and discusses previous research gaps, and develops the theoretical framework of this study.

The third chapter is methodology, which describes the research paradigm of this research and introduces the methods of data collection, data analysis, improving research quality, and enhancing research ethics in this study. Meanwhile, it provides a detailed description of the procedure of data collection and analysis.

The fourth chapter summarises the findings of this research, firstly introducing the details of the participants, secondly summarising the process of generating the research themes, and then highlighting the important findings under each theme by citing the discussion content of the participants. Including 3 main themes and 10 sub themes.

The fifth chapter links the research findings with theories and discusses the consistency of the research results with previous research and their contribution to the research gap. Subsequently, this study develops a process diagram based on the findings and theoretical framework, providing a reference for the development of sustainable contents tourism. Finally, it answers the research questions and offers suggestions for the stakeholders.

The sixth chapter is the conclusion of this research. It first reviews the research design, then summarises the key findings of this research, and finally discusses the limitations of this research and provides suggestions for future research directions.

Chapter 2 Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Overview

This chapter presents five bodies of literature: contents tourism, destination competitiveness, film tourism, sustainable tourism, and stakeholder theory, all of which are important components of this study. The literature review first outlines the relevant research on contents tourism, including the origin and definition of contents tourism, the differences between contents tourism and cultural tourism, the activities and cases of contents tourism. The second part reviews the research on destination competitiveness, focusing on the importance of tourism resources and products in tourism research. The third segment discusses the research gap in NZ's contents tourism: although various cases of contents tourism have been mentioned in the literature, relevant research mainly focuses on film tourism. The fourth part reviews sustainable tourism research both internationally and in NZ and identifies gaps in sustainable tourism research within the field of contents tourism. The final section introduces the theoretical framework that guides this study, with a focus on stakeholder collaboration in stakeholder theory.

2.2 Literature Search and Review Method

In order to define the scope of the literature, an initial exploratory search was conducted first. Search sources included electronic databases such as Google Scholar, Science Direct, JSTOR, Google Books and Massey University Library. The following keywords were used in the search:

1. Contents tourism, film tourism, literary tourism, anime pilgrimage, cultural tourism

2. Destination competitiveness, tourism resources, tourism products, tourism activities

3. Sustainable tourism, sustainable development goals, sustainable tourism indicators,

New Zealand tourism

4. Stakeholder theory, stakeholders, stakeholder collaboration, collaboration

These keywords were searched separately and in combination to identify references with keywords appearing in any data field to the greatest extent possible. This study aims to expand NZ film tourism and combine sustainable tourism with contents tourism to fill the gaps in relevant literature. Therefore, the first step is to include case studies of film tourism and contents tourism, as well as literature analysing the impact of sustainable tourism on the tourism industry, to enhance the relevance of references and research topics.

After the initial search to develop the research question, further and ongoing literature searches and reviews were conducted throughout the entire research process, gradually shaping the scope and focus of this study, with a particular focus on references that analyse the role of stakeholder theory in sustainable tourism.

2.3 The Development of Contents Tourism

The Japanese government first noticed the special tourism activities that anime or other works stimulate fans, and proposed the concept of contents tourism, viewing a wider range of works as tourism resources and opportunities for the development of the tourism industry. Since the 1990s, there have been several similar concepts such as "Seichi-junrei", otaku tourism and the anime pilgrimage, which refer to the tourism of visiting holy land for pilgrimage (Matsuyama, 2022; Okamoto, 2015). Matsuyama (2022) declared that this holy

land is not a religious site, but a special term used by fans to refer to places that appear in their favourite works, but these works mostly only include Japanese anime, manga, and games. During this period, Graburn and Yamamura (2020) pointed out that as early as the 1990s, the term "content" becomes common, meaning information disseminated through media, typically referring to movies, TV dramas, novels, comics, games, music, and so on. This means that content can refer to works with a wide range of forms. In 2005, the Japanese government officially introduced the concept of contents tourism for the first time in an investigation report issued by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT), the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), and the Agency for Cultural Affairs (ACA). They defined contents tourism as tourism stimulated by popular culture, which cultivates a unique destination atmosphere and image by using the narrative and themes of works as tourism resources to attract fans to visit (Graburn & Yamamura, 2020; MLIT, METI, & ACA, 2005). According to MLIT, METI and ACA (2005), contents tourism is an extension of concepts such as Seichi-junrei, but its purpose is to further include a wider range of works as tourism resources to develop the tourism industry. Okamoto (2015) also mentioned that Seichi-junrei, film induced tourism, literary tourism, and other forms of media induced tourism are all included in contents tourism. Graburn and Yamamura (2020) suggested that previous related research fields (such as film tourism) have focused on specific media (such as movies), but just as media and information are diverse and highly developed today, content is often used for multi-used by multiple media simultaneously. They concluded that one of the characteristics of contents tourism is the inclusion of multiple media, which

has great potential in understanding the complex new phenomena of modern tourism. In short, contents tourism has developed from various specific media induced tourism. Broadly speaking, any type of tourism stimulated by works can be called contents tourism, and contents tourism is of great significance for studying the complex tourism phenomena and tourist behaviours induced by various contemporary media.

Since both the works and content belong to cultural creation, cultural elements often appear in the experience of contents tourism. Therefore, research on contents tourism often involves cultural tourism, but the types of activities in contents tourism are more diverse. As Yamamura and Seaton (2020) commented, because contents tourism is also known as popular culture tourism, its concept may be easily confused with cultural tourism (Yamamura & Seaton, 2020). The difference between cultural tourism and contents tourism lies in their different focuses. Cultural tourism emphasises that tourism resources and experiences are related to culture, while contents tourism emphasises that tourism motivation is related to the content of the work (Chen & Rahman, 2018; Graburn & Yamamura, 2020; Matsuyama, 2022; Reisinger, 1994; Richards, 2018). Richards (2018) stated that cultural tourism involves tourists' experience, learning, and practice of destination historical sites, human lifestyles, creativity, and daily culture. This means that in cultural tourism, tourism resources, and tourists' experiences at tourist destinations are closely related to culture. Scholars also emphasised that tourists in cultural tourism tend to focus on cultural experience activities in tourist destinations (Chen & Rahman, 2018; Reisinger, 1994). In contrast, contents tourism is driven by content, and tourists' main travel motivation is based on their love for the work or

the stimulation of the content in the work. There are no restrictions on the tourism resources and experiences of contents tourism, which can be related to culture, natural scenery sightseeing, leisure vacation, exploration, etc. (Graburn & Yamamura, 2020; Matsuyama, 2022). For example, contents tourism includes both fan activities such as hiking and sightseeing at Mount Ngauruhoe to appreciate the natural scenery of Mount Doom in *The Lord of the Rings* (Tzanelli, 2020), as well as fans of the manga *Ge Ge Ge no Kitarō* participating in the "Yōkai Jazz" cultural tourism experience at the Jazz Festival in Sakaiminato, Japan (Greene, 2016). Indigenous tourism, especially Māori tourism, is one of the typical cultural tourisms in NZ. Puriri and McIntosh (2019) discussed the development of Māori family tourism and explained that Māori tourism activities focus on tourists' cultural experiences, incorporating Māori worldview, culture, and knowledge into tourism products or experiences. According to previous literature, Māori tourism is clearly cultural tourism as its tourism resources and tourist experiences are closely related to culture. If a work mentions Māori culture or related destinations and stimulates fans to visit, then the tourism activities triggered by the work can be considered as contents tourism, since the tourist's travel motivation is closely related to the content or work. In summary, tourists in contents tourism want to visit the tourist destinations mentioned in various works due to their stimulating contents, and the specific types of tourism resources and experience activities in those destinations are diverse and unrestricted.

Contents tourism activities are diverse and complex, which can include sightseeing, experience, or any other activity, often without a fixed template. The cases and studies of

contents tourism are now widely present around the world (Chan, 2007; Graburn & Yamamura, 2020; Hernandez Perez, 2019). Graburn and Yamamura (2020) introduced the development history of contents tourism, its cross-cultural global impact, and similar developments in other countries. Chan (2007) conducted interviews to study cases of tourism induced by Korean TV dramas such as *Winter sonata*, *Jewel in the Palace*. Most participants stated that they were attracted to the beautiful scenery in Korean TV dramas and went to Korea for tourism, with a few tourists specifically visiting the filming locations of the dramas to confirm what they saw in the dramas. Sugawa-Shimada (2015) mentioned that fans of video games and anime *Sengoku BASARA* and *Hakuoki* connect characters in the work with historical prototypes to build a belief and travel to historical sites related to their favourite characters with the belief. Sugawa-Shimada also conducted field investigations and analysed tourist notes, explaining that fans can feel the presence of their favourite warrior's spirit at the site through this belief, thus connecting the work, reality, and themselves. Hernandez Perez (2019) discussed the interaction between national image and contents tourism and argued that many tourists to the United Kingdom are attracted by famous British characters in Victorian literature and other types of theme fantasy literature. Hernandez Perez stated that Harry Potter and Sherlock Holmes have made Britain romantic and charming, and many tourists are inspired by the beautiful natural scenery created by the movies to visit beautiful rural areas, and gardens in Cotswold. Although the activities of contents tourism are often different, the above case also indicates a commonality, that is, tourists' travel activities are often closely related to the content of the original work. Therefore, this also means that both the

development of contents tourism and academic research need to pay attention to the content and creators of the original work. Considering this aspect, a beneficial approach to developing contents tourism is to strive for the participation of creators/copyright holders, which will also be explained later.

2.4 Tourism Destinations Competitiveness

It is necessary to pay attention to the status of the tourism industry in the research destination when conducting tourism research. Huang et al. (2023) summarised that a tourism destination is the primary region and environment where tourism activities occur. Identifying the status of the tourism industry in destinations and understanding which performances meet tourists' expectations is crucial for many tourism studies (Huang et al., 2023; Rašovská et al., 2021). This study is the first to be conducted in NZ, not limited to film tourism, attempting to expand into the field of contents tourism. In light of the lack of data and literature on contents tourism in NZ, it is necessary to have a preliminary understanding of the current situation of the industry locally. This is also the source of the first research sub-question, which is "What is the status of contents tourism in New Zealand?"

The destinations competitiveness is usually used to evaluate the current situation of a tourism destination. However, there is currently no unified standard or model to determine competitiveness. Rheeders (2022) directly suggested in the research implications that measuring the competitiveness of tourism destinations is a powerful tool for analysing the current situation of destinations for researchers and stakeholders. The competitiveness of tourism destinations is also a popular topic in tourism research, and competitiveness is crucial

for the success, prosperity, and maintenance of market share of destinations (Cronjé & du Plessis, 2020; Mazanec et al., 2007; Mior Shariffuddin et al., 2023; Weaver & Lawton, 2014). Cronjé and du Plessis (2020) regarded tourism competitiveness as a key factor for the success of tourism destinations, describing it as the ability of the entire tourism destination to increase tourist spending. Mior Shariffuddin et al. (2023) reviewed the literature on tourism destination competitiveness over the past few decades and pointed out that due to the complex factors affecting destination competitiveness, a unified standard measurement model has not yet been formed. They summarised that scholars focus on two internal factors when measuring destination competitiveness, believing that internal management and destination resources affect competitiveness. This means that the competitiveness of a destination can be evaluated by identifying its tourism resources and the management of these resources by its stakeholders.

Tourism resources and products are not only elements to evaluate tourism competitiveness, but also fundamental components of tourism. Weaver and Lawton (2014) described that tourism resources are features of a destination regarded by tourists as attractions, while tourism products are the products of the combination of tourism resources and the tourism industry. Rheeders (2022) mentioned that natural and cultural resources may bring significant advantages to tourism destinations, and the appropriate use and effective management of tourism resources can help develop tourism products that enhance the competitiveness of the destination. This indicates that tourism resources are the foundation for the realisation of tourism products, activities, and even the tourism industry, and tourism

products reflect the level of development and management of tourism resources by the tourism industry. This also means that exploring the current situation of tourism destination requires identifying the tourism resources and products of the destination.

In summary, as mentioned earlier, the concept of contents tourism in NZ has not yet been popularised, and related research and data are still limited to film tourism. In order to identify the current situation of NZ's contents tourism industry, in addition to combining literature from neighbouring fields such as film tourism, it is also necessary to collect data from the contents tourism field to better measure the competitiveness of tourism destinations. Mior Shariffuddin et al. (2023) mentioned that the sources of data for measuring destination competitiveness include the views of tourists and tourism providers. Therefore, the researcher chose to interview tourism industry managers and experts related to contents tourism, namely a portion of high-level tourism providers, to identify NZ's contents tourism resources and products. To measure the current competitiveness of NZ's contents tourism destinations and further analyse their future potential and existing problems.

2.5 Film Tourism in NZ

Contents tourism is not only gradually becoming popular around the world but has existed in NZ for a long time, influencing the shaping of NZ's tourism image. Mark Twain's travelogue *Following the Equator*, German landscape novelist Lark's novel *The Land of Long White Clouds*, film *The Piano*, postcards and landscape paintings from the NZ tourism government have gradually made people realise that NZ has beautiful scenery and unique culture and have made them aspire to visit NZ (Conrich & Youngs, 2010; Fresno-Calleja,

2020; Leotta, 2024). Conrich and Youngs (2010) introduced that many of the earliest international tourists to NZ were attracted by travel guides and various promotional souvenirs (such as postcards) produced by the NZ government's tourism department. Later, missionaries, explorers, and authors from around the world went to NZ to further promote and advertise NZ's scenery through landscape painting and travel writing. This indicates that the origin and early development of international tourism in NZ were both driven by media content promotion. Fresno-Calleja (2020) explained that Sarah Lark's NZ trilogy and other landscape novels aimed at the European market, successfully selling well in Europe by incorporating elements of liberalism, imperial romance, and Victoria. At the same time, Fresno-Calleja mentioned the success of NZ landscape novels, which portrayed the unique culture and scenery of NZ as an exotic destination, making NZ an ideal tourist destination in the eyes of European readers. This demonstrates the positive role of the content of the work in shaping the image of the tourist destination. Leotta (2024) directly examined the development of film tourism in NZ, mentioning that the filming locations of *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Hobbit*, *Whale Rider* and *The Last Samurai* were visited by many tourists after the film was released, and further highlighted that the NZ government is trying to strengthen collaboration with film producers to seek long-term development of the tourism industry. Li et al. (2017) mentioned that *The Lord of the Rings* increased inbound tourists in NZ by 50%. They used econometric modelling to conclude that *The Lord of the Rings* added 214,811 international tourists and generated approximately US\$771.8 million in international tourism between 2013 and 2014. In short, novels, movies, landscape paintings and other works not

only shape the tourism image of NZ but also play a role in promoting NZ tourism and its development.

Although there are indeed phenomena of contents tourism in NZ, research on the field of contents tourism in NZ is still limited. Most of the previous literature on contents tourism in NZ focused on film tourism (Buchmann et al., 2010; Carl et al., 2007; Polianskaia et al., 2016; Tudor, 2015). Buchmann et al. (2010) focused on the experience of tourists in NZ tourism stimulated by the movie *The Lord of the Rings*, explaining that movie tourists hope to establish a connection with virtual works but seek reality experiences. Buchmann et al. analysed that a real place (a movie location) can help tourists develop, cultivate, and articulate their understanding and beliefs about movies. In this place where reality and movies blend, tourists can feel as if they are in the hyperreality world of movies, bringing the most satisfying and reality travel experience. This study demonstrates that if there are real-life filming locations in movies that tourists can reach, it can enhance their movie tourism experience. Carl et al. (2007) conducted empirical research on the tourist experience of *The Lord of the Rings* with tourism operators. They explained that discovering the scenery in movies at the destination, tour guides introducing the details and stories of movie production, tourists reenacting movie actions, and attempting to shoot and recreate movie scenes can all blur the difference between reality and movies, giving tourists a surreal "realistic" experience. Carl et al. emphasised that the more perfect the representation of hyperreality in film tourism, the better the experience for tourists. This study further demonstrates that if movie tourism destinations can recreate movie scenes and make tourists feel like they are in a movie world,

it can enhance their experience. Tudor (2015) suggested that the reason for helping NZ film locations attract tourists are the active promotion by the government and marketing experts, as well as the additional attention given to filming locations by celebrity statements and video diaries from actors and filming teams. This highlights the importance of stakeholder involvement in promoting and advertising film tourism. Polianskaia et al. (2016) also affirmed the positive significance of the involvement of Tourism New Zealand and film creators in NZ film tourism and suggested that investing in filmmakers is more effective than investing in traditional advertising to promote tourist destinations.

In short, there is already a phenomenon of contents tourism in NZ, where works from various mediums have been involved in shaping NZ's tourism image and promoting the tourism industry. However, in NZ, literature in the field of contents tourism is more focused on film tourism and lacks tourism triggered by other types of works. Related research on film tourism includes how to develop film tourism, improve tourists' travel experience, and illustrate the promoting role of films in NZ's tourism industry. It also mentions the positive significance of stakeholder participation in film tourism.

2.6 Sustainable Tourism and Indicators

Despite the lack of a universally accepted definition, sustainable tourism has attracted increasing attention in the field of tourism. Although the economic significance of tourism has always been widely recognised, in recent years people have become increasingly concerned about the limitations of tourism development and its impact on nature and human society, as well as how to achieve long-term and sustainable development (Hall, 2019;

Rasoolimanesh et al., 2023; Saarinen, 2015). Fennell and Cooper (2020) defined sustainable tourism as tourism that maintains vitality indefinitely while protecting the well-being and living environment of present and future people and argued that sustainable tourism can minimise the negative impacts of tourism to the greatest extent possible. This emphasises that sustainable tourism can be maintained in the long term and demonstrates that sustainable tourism is a solution to alleviate the limitations and negative impacts of tourism development. Scholars and organisations have also commented that sustainable tourism is a type of tourism that has positive impacts on multiple aspects, including the protection of tourism resources and the environment, achieving tourism performance and sustained economic growth, meeting the development needs of host communities, and meeting the tourism needs of tourists (Hardy et al., 2002; Saarinen, 2015; WTO, 2005). Therefore, sustainable tourism also considers the interests of multiple parties, emphasising both strengthening protection and meeting demand to promote development. Meanwhile, people argued that sustainable tourism is rooted in the SDGs (Fennell & Cooper, 2020; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2023; World Tourism Organization and United Nations Development Programme, 2017). It is reflected in maximising the economic contribution of the tourism industry, enhancing its attractiveness and quality, while minimising negative impacts (The World Tourism Organization, 2024; United Nations, 2021). In summary, sustainable tourism can be summarised as tourism that promotes economic and social development while protecting the environment, meets the needs of stakeholders, can be maintained in the long term, and is in line with the SDGs.

There are still issues with film tourism in NZ, and linking sustainable tourism with contents tourism may become a potential solution. As mentioned earlier, although contents tourism has many positive impacts, scholars have noticed that its popularity sometimes dissipates quickly and can only promote an increase in the number of tourists to the filming location in the short term (Leotta, 2024; Li et al., 2017; Mitchell & Stewart, 2012). Mitchell and Stewart (2012) analysed tourist data from film tourism in NZ and Australia and concluded that the contribution of film tourism to tourist numbers typically does not exceed 2 years. Leotta (2024) mentioned that the movie *Whale Rider* and *The Last Samurai* only brought visitors to NZ in a short period of time. Leotta further stated that the NZ government is aware of this issue and hopes to strengthen collaboration with film creators to promote the long-term development of the tourism industry. Even though the NZ government hopes that the contribution of films to NZ's tourism industry can be sustained for a long time, there is still a lack of relevant research to explore how to achieve this goal. For the long-term development of film tourism or contents tourism, it is necessary to pay attention to sustainable tourism. Although there are still differences in the concept and definition of sustainable tourism, there is a broad consensus that if the tourism industry wants to maintain long-term development, it needs to implement sustainable tourism practices (Fodness, 2017; Liu, 2003; Saarinen, 2015). Even Fodness (2017) claims that sustainability is a fundamental principle in tourism development and management. Hardy et al. (2002) also emphasised that sustainable tourism is a goal that all forms of tourism and all tourism enterprises should achieve.

To verify the importance of sustainable tourism, there are many studies on sustainable tourism worldwide (e.g., Dodds, 2007; Paunović & Jovanović, 2017; Maxim, 2016).

Paunović and Jovanović (2017) revealed the reasons why mountain tourism in Germany can achieve sustainability through interviews with individuals involved in tourism development in the German Alps region. Including the community and stakeholders investing substantial funds, time, and energy to continuously adjust and reform the tourism business, raising stakeholders' awareness of sustainable tourism through signage, consultation, and communication, developing and encouraging tourism practitioners to adopt sustainable development indicators to guide tourism development, creating a network platform that coordinates various stakeholders, and ensuring that all processes of providing services benefit different types of stakeholders. This case emphasises the participation and collaboration of stakeholders in sustainable tourism.

There is also research on sustainable tourism in NZ (e.g., Baird et al., 2018; Becken, 2005; Saarinen, 2015). The research of Saarinen (2015) demonstrated that if tourism companies in the Otago Peninsula of NZ want to maintain and expand their tourism business, they must not only meet social needs but also protect natural tourism resources. Saarinen concluded that companies that successfully balance the limitations of development and protection are better able to achieve long-term and sustainable tourism business. It is also worth noting the concept of overtourism, which has been frequently mentioned in research on sustainable tourism in NZ in recent years (e.g., Apse et al., 2020; Aston et al., 2023; Insch, 2020). Overtourism is a new term used to describe the old problem of an excessive number of

destination tourists causing various negative impacts on the local community, thereby excessively reducing the quality of life of residents and the quality of tourist experience (Aston et al., 2023; Dodds & Butler, 2019). Apse et al. (2020) stated that there are currently many research reports on residents' dissatisfaction with the tourism industry, with overtourism being the main opposition in NZ. Inch (2020) revealed the prominence of issues related to NZ's overtourism and ensuring sustainable tourism in the news media through searches of major newspaper databases and search engines. Inch also mentioned that NZ's Tiaki Promise to involving tourism operators, tourists, and residents in implementing environmentally friendly, culturally respectful, and safe tourism practices is an important measure to reduce the risk of overtourism and promote sustainable tourism and can serve as an inspiration for other countries to learn from. It can be noted that in the field of sustainable tourism in NZ, there is a significant focus on alleviating overtourism and protecting the environment and residents' interests.

Although sustainable tourism has received attention from many countries and scholars, there are still cases where sustainable tourism has not been given enough attention in practice. Maxim (2016) investigated the status of the development and implementation of sustainable tourism policies in the city of London and stated that the UK government regards the implementation of sustainable tourism principles as important in the rhetoric of its policy agenda. However, few local authorities have taken proactive actions for sustainable tourism, which has led to social and environmental issues being placed in a secondary position. Maxim also mentioned that sustainable tourism has received little attention in the context of

urban tourism and has been largely overlooked by the academic community. However, as Elliott (2012) emphasised, the most of the world's population will live in cities in the future, and cities need to meet so many of people's needs that they are the core of achieving sustainable development goals. Therefore, tourism activities within the city also need to pay attention to sustainability. Moreover, the case studies of Numazu City, Sakaiminato, and Kannonji City demonstrate that a considerable amount of contents tourism occurs within cities, and some of them appear to be sustainable for long-term development (Greene, 2016; Matsuyama, 2022; Zhu & Yu, 2020). This means that contents tourism may contribute to the development of urban tourism. According to the Tourism New Zealand (2023) tourism market reports, natural attractions are the top reason for international tourists to visit NZ. Other studies also mentioned that the phenomenon of overtourism in NZ mainly occurs in areas where natural landscapes are located rather than cities (e.g., Apse et al., 2020; Insch, 2020; Tzanelli, 2020). Therefore, by further studying the sustainable forms and principles of contents tourism, this can also provide references for how urban areas can promote sustainable tourism, while alleviating the pressure of overtourism in NZ's natural tourist attractions by attracting more tourists to urban areas.

Although sustainable tourism has been extensively studied, there is still no definitive consensus on what kind of tourism is truly sustainable. Scholars still argue that the concept and standards of sustainable tourism are vague, making it difficult to define what kind of tourism achieves sustainable development (Liu, 2003; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2023; Saarinen, 2015). Weaver and Lawton (2014) emphasised that there must be monitoring standards to

measure whether a destination has a sustainable tourism industry, including environmental, socio-cultural, economic, and other relevant indicators. In order to provide standards for achieving sustainable tourism, Rasoolimanesh et al. (2023) summarised relevant research on STIs, mainly including the relevance of the STIs to the SDGs, governance, stakeholders involved, and the distinction between subjective and objective indicators, to measure the sustainability of tourism. They highlighted the importance of governance in ensuring sustainable tourism, summarising that governance includes policy formulation, evaluation, monitoring, and implementation as positive interventions in tourism, which are not discussed extensively in sustainable tourism literature. STIs provides the main reference basis for guiding this study to determine what kind of contents tourism is in line with sustainable tourism. Based on qualitative research methods, this study mainly focuses on subjective indicators from interview participants, exploring the roles of governance and stakeholders in sustainable contents tourism.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

In this study, stakeholder theory serves as a theoretical framework to describe the stakeholders of contents tourism and elucidate the role of stakeholder collaboration in sustainable contents tourism. While identifying stakeholders is essential for both tourism research and practice, there remains ongoing debate over which specific stakeholders should be included in the tourism industry. Byrd (2007) emphasised that, for collaboration and even sustainable tourism to be successful, it is necessary to first determine who the stakeholders are when making tourism decisions or conducting tourism research. In the field of tourism,

according to the definition of tourism stakeholders, stakeholders include any group or individual that may affect the development of tourism in a region or be affected by tourism (Byrd, 2007; Freeman, 2010). Obviously, the definition of tourism stakeholders only outlines a broad and imprecise scope, and further research is still trying to identify the specific stakeholders involved in the tourism sector. Scholars' research summarised that stakeholders in tourism may include communities, residents, businesses, non-governmental organisations, etc. (see e.g., Byrd, 2007; Duarte Alonso & Nyanjom, 2017; Freeman, 2010; Poudel et al., 2016). Byrd (2007) stated that stakeholders should include those who have not yet emerged and summarised that stakeholders may include individuals or groups who may visit the area now or in the future, existing or future residents, business owners, and government officials.

There is a lack of literature in the field of contents tourism that mainly discusses stakeholders, but certain specific stakeholders have emerged prominently within contents tourism studies. Matsuyama (2022) identified the stakeholders involved in the contents tourism triggered by *Love Live! Sunshine!!* in the Uchiura district of Japan as including fans, content creators, local chambers of commerce, and businesses. The study concluded that the development of contents tourism in Uchiura was mainly driven by content creators. Similarly, studies on contents tourism, although not focusing on stakeholders, also mentioned that the joining of copyright owners/creators of works can promote destination business collaboration and the development of contents tourism (Matsuyama, 2022; Nagano & Yamamoto, 2022; Zhu & Yu, 2020). For instance, Zhu and Yu (2020) mentioned that the producer of the anime and movie *Yuki Yuna is a Hero* has partnered with The Kannonji City Merchants' Association

to promote the city of Kannonji as a destination, and to create experiential activities related to the work in the local area, selling anime souvenirs and providing speciality dining services. They argued that this case of stakeholder collaboration revitalised the regional economy, allowing businesses and residents to understand and welcome tourists, and allowing tourists to immerse themselves in the world of anime works as much as possible. This demonstrates that the collaboration between copyright holders/creators and businesses can coordinate and meet the needs of various stakeholders, which is consistent with Rasoolimanesh et al.'s (2023) view that sustainable tourism is tourism that balances the needs of stakeholders. Graburn and Yamamura (2020) stated that commercial and governmental stakeholders have played a driving role in the development of contents tourism. In short, the stakeholders of contents tourism may not only include tourists, communities, residents, businesses, and non-governmental organisations, but also content creators or copyright owners.

In addition to identifying stakeholders, the participation and collaboration of tourism stakeholders is another research focus for scholars. Many previous literatures on contents tourism and sustainable tourism have recognised stakeholders and have mentioned the importance of valuing stakeholders and involving them in tourism development and operation (Byrd, 2007; Buckley, 2012; Hall et al., 2015; Ishida, 2021; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2023). Others further emphasised the need for strengthened collaboration among stakeholders (Brooks & Champ, 2006; Fodness, 2017; Ishida, 2021; Leotta, 2024; Paunović & Jovanović, 2017; Var & Gunn, 2020). The research of Brooks and Champ (2006) revealed that in unmanaged tourism activities, stakeholder groups find it difficult to reach consensus, leading

to issues such as division, chaos, and unsustainability within the tourism industry. Brooks and Champ introduced cases where law enforcement agencies in the Colorado's Front Range, USA, were unable to keep up with the increasing number of tourists and population, making it difficult to manage local recreation, resulting in an increasing number of conflicts between landowners, recreational operators, tourists, and residents. They further elaborated that to reach consensus, government leadership and management are needed, and it is necessary to identify all stakeholders and their viewpoints as much as possible. The process of identifying stakeholder viewpoints requires intervention, and successful intervention requires the collaboration of stakeholders (Brooks & Champ, 2006; Fodness, 2017; Nyanjom et al., 2018). Byrd (2007) also discussed the application of stakeholder theory in tourism research, stating that stakeholder collaboration is one of the most effective ways to involve stakeholders in solving tourism industry problems. This indicates that to resolve the differences among tourism stakeholders, stakeholder collaboration needs to be considered. According to Nyanjom et al. (2018), stakeholder collaboration in tourism is a complex process in which multiple stakeholders, with different perspectives, abilities, and interests, coordinate, communicate, and make joint decisions to promote the achievement of goals and tourism development. This definition explains that the purpose of collaboration among tourism stakeholders is to achieve goals and promote tourism development. Fodness (2017) further explained that building relationships among stakeholders to work together is key to addressing sustainability issues, including inclusive communication and collective action among all stakeholders. This perspective considers the specific ways in which tourism

stakeholders collaborate as potential key means to promote sustainable tourism. The research of Ishida (2021) also demonstrated that collaboration among stakeholders across different types and tourism sectors can build a collaborative governance network, which has a positive impact on promoting the sustainability of contents tourism. All of these indicate that to promote sustainable tourism, stakeholders cannot be treated as isolated individuals and need to work together.

Based on the previous literature on the importance of sustainable tourism and stakeholder collaboration, they provide important ideas for exploring sustainable contents tourism forms in this study, which leads to one of the main questions of this study: how to achieve sustainable contents tourism through stakeholder collaboration. The case of German mountain tourism remains important here. In this study, stakeholders formed organisations from bottom to top, established collaboration forums and institutions, and then continued to integrate stakeholders from top to bottom to further strengthen collaboration among stakeholders, ultimately enhancing long-term sustainable development of German mountain tourism (Paunović & Jovanović, 2017). This demonstrates the sustainable tourism collaboration form among stakeholders in general tourism. In terms of contents tourism, the stakeholder collaboration form between NZ film tourism and Japanese contents tourism also provides important insights. Leotta (2024) gave examples of how the producers of the films *Whale Rider* and *The Last Samurai* collaborated with the Tourism New Zealand to promote tourism to the filming locations. In these cases, the Tourism New Zealand also provided partial funding for film producers to use the international influence of the film to promote

filming locations in NZ, and several tourism companies and a few residents in the filming locations participated in the construction of the filming locations and cooperated to establish relevant travel groups. This describes forms of collaboration among various stakeholders in NZ film tourism. In addition, the literature on contents tourism in Japan also discussed stakeholder participation and collaboration forms. The sustainable form of collaboration between Japanese anime copyright holders, chambers of commerce, tourism enterprises, and residents for destination promotion, renovation of tourism infrastructure, design of tourism products, and provision of characteristic tourism services not only benefits enterprises and residents but also provides tourists with rich tourism products and experiences (Zhu and Yu, 2020). Furthermore, Matsuyama (2022) also introduced two forms of contents tourism. The first form is for the creators of the works to authorise the certain stakeholders in the region after creation, that is, to provide copyright and materials (such as pictures required for making promotional posters, posters, and souvenirs) to tourism businesses in exchange for payment, supporting the implementation of contents tourism in a certain place. The second form is direct pre collaboration between creators and regions, that is, after reaching an agreement with the destination in advance, targeted content creation can be carried out. All of these indicate that there are extensive and diverse collaboration forms among stakeholders in both general tourism and contents tourism, which can provide reference for promoting sustainable tourism.

In summary, previous studies have discussed the importance of stakeholder collaboration in the tourism industry and analysed forms of collaboration in tourism,

attempting to demonstrate its positive reference for sustainable tourism. A few forms of collaboration were also briefly mentioned in contents tourism research. However, there is still a lack of empirical research on sustainable forms of contents tourism and whether stakeholder collaboration is conducive to promoting sustainable contents tourism. Further research is needed to explore and expand the feasible forms of sustainable contents tourism, which is also one of the purposes of this study.

2.8 Conclusion

This literature review identifies research gaps in the field of contents tourism in NZ. Although tourism literature mentioned that various media works had influenced NZ's tourism image, scholars only focused on film tourism research. The review highlights the significance of exploring the status of destinations for tourism research and identifies that the current situation of contents tourism in NZ is still a research gap. The literature on destination competitiveness provides theoretical support to fill the research gap and guide the exploration of NZ's contents tourism resources and products.

The relevant literature on sustainable tourism provides an opportunity to explore the form of sustainable contents tourism in NZ. Studies and cases on sustainable tourism have demonstrated the positive contributions of sustainable tourism in minimising negative impacts on the tourism industry, promoting economic, environmental, and resident well-being, and attempting to use sustainable tourism indicators to illustrate what kind of tourism is sustainable. However, there is a lack of literature on the combination of contents tourism and sustainable tourism in NZ, which remains a research gap. By focusing on sustainable

tourism, this study aims to identify the components of sustainable contents tourism, offering additional insight for exploring indicators of sustainable contents tourism, mitigating the negative impacts of contents tourism.

Through literature review, this study identified the potential impact of stakeholder theory on sustainable contents tourism. Despite extensive literature support that stakeholder participation and collaboration are essential components of sustainable tourism, there is still a research gap. The relevant theories and knowledge have not yet been applied to the field of contents tourism. The stakeholder theory serves as a theoretical framework to guide this research, providing theoretical support for exploring sustainable forms of contents tourism, which runs through all three themes of this research.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Research Design Overview

This chapter presents the research methodology for this research. This study is qualitative research based on pragmatism, collecting data through semi-structured interviews and conducting abductive thematic analysis on the data.

This study aims to explore sustainable forms of contents tourism. To better achieve the research objective, the study adopts purposeful sampling and pilot studies to improve the data collection design and enhance the correlation between the samples and the topic, thereby improving the quality of the data. NVivo program and grounded theory techniques are employed to improve coding procedure and enhance the rigor of data analysis processes. Moreover, the study applies methodological integrity to improve research quality, while using pseudonyms and consent forms to minimise ethical risks.

3.2 Research Paradigm and Approach

This study aims to solve research problems rather than pursuing a single philosophical position, therefore adopting a pragmatist paradigm to allow flexibility in research design to analysing complex contents tourism phenomena. The focus of pragmatism is on solving practical problems rather than philosophy and paradigms, believing that research methods are merely means to solve problems (Bryman, 2008; Morgan, 2014; Ramberg, 2004). Bryman (2008) argued that scholars had invested too much energy into paradigms, which may have overlooked solving practical problems, while pragmatism emphasised that there is no best method, only the most appropriate method, alleviating the long-standing opposition between

different paradigms. Morgan (2014) also stated that pragmatists are more flexible in accepting quantitative, qualitative, or mixed research applications than abstract philosophical beliefs, focusing on why specific research methods are used. This study follows the research paradigm of pragmatism, which means that it is question driven, and the selection of methods and theories is aimed at better answering research questions by balancing cost and utility. Both quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research approach were included in the initial research design considerations of this study. However, after identifying literature gaps and the background of NZ tourism industry, and determining the research question, the most advantageous research approach and methods were chosen to solve the research problem.

This study employs a qualitative research approach to ensure the richness and depth of data. In NZ, not only is there a lack of relevant data and research on contents tourism, but even its concept is rarely known making it difficult to collect quantitative research data. Even though the concept of contents tourism is not yet widespread in NZ, as discussed, there are already cases of contents tourism. Significantly, qualitative methods can analyse the impact of individuals on the generation and development of problems, revealing the essence of social phenomena (Alasuutari et al., 2008; Bradbury-Jones et al., 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). These mean that tourism stakeholders have already been exposed to contents tourism in practice. Focusing on their personal characteristics and experiences can better analyse the roles of stakeholders in contents tourism, thereby exploring the relationship between stakeholder collaboration and sustainable contents tourism. Therefore, qualitative methods are suitable for this research, not only makes it easier to carry out data collection but also

helps to explore in depth how stakeholder collaboration can promote sustainable development of contents tourism.

In addition, Bradbury-Jones et al. (2014) claim that one of the advantages of qualitative methods is the ability to flexibly apply theory and technology to improve research quality. Thus, this research will also adopt methodological integrity to guide the design and implementation of the study, while adopting various techniques and methods such as semi-structured interviews, thematic analysis, and grounded theory to improve the quality of the research.

3.3 Data Collection Methods

The richness and quality of raw data are important for research quality. Levitt et al. (2017) stated that the data needs to be rich to support discovery, and when high-quality data that supports the topic is discovered in the analysis, it can improve the fidelity. Due to the importance of rich and high-quality raw data for research, this study used semi-structured interviews to obtain as much information as possible from respondents and selected high-quality samples through purposeful sampling. Pilot studies were conducted to validate and improve the applicability of data collection procedures.

3.3.1 Semi-structured Interviews

Bell et al. (2019) mentioned that semi-structured interviews only require preparing important questions in advance, rather than asking questions in a fixed order. This means that semi-structured interviews can not only obtain data related to the topic but also improvise follow-up questions based on participant responses to obtain more information (Bell et al.,

2019; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Kallio et al., 2016). Therefore, in the context of insufficient research and practice on contents tourism, this study uses semi-structured interviews to collect data more flexibly and comprehensively.

Semi-structured interviews require a certain degree of prior research in the research topic area, as interview questions are based on existing knowledge and information, and interview guidelines need to be formulated before interviews (Kallio et al., 2016; Turner, 2010). Moreover, Levitt et al. (2017) suggested that data collection methods should be aligned with the characteristics of participants. Therefore, scheduling formal interviews with participants in advance and providing interview guide can make the process more serious and professional, making it easier to gain their attention and active assistance.

Interview guide is a list of questions or brief prompts related to the research topic to be asked in semi-structured interviews, which may not be strictly followed during semi-structured interviews (Bell et al., 2019; Kallio et al., 2016; Turner, 2010). Bell et al. (2019) mentioned that interview guide has a focus on research questions, a logical but flexible thematic sequence, and providing interview guidelines to research participants can enhance the reliability of research. Therefore, preparing an interview guide can guide the interview to be relevant to the topic and help improve the logical and procedural reliability of the interview, which is essential for this study.

In previous literature reviews, scholars have mentioned the important role of stakeholder collaboration in contents tourism and sustainable tourism (Ishida, 2021; Leotta, 2024; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2023; Var & Gunn, 2020). To explore the form of sustainable

contents tourism, the interview guide was based on research sub-questions and the three themes from the literature review: contents tourism, sustainable tourism, and stakeholder collaboration. The final research guide sent to participants include interview process tips, key term explanations, and 22 main questions.

3.3.2 Purposeful Sampling

Sample selection is crucial for the quality of qualitative research (Coyne, 1997; Levitt et al., 2017). Coyne (1997) also emphasised that researchers should select sampling subjects based on research objectives. Due to the limited popularity of contents tourism in NZ, ordinary people may lack experience and find it difficult to understand related concepts. It is necessary to select samples with a high level of understanding of the tourism industry to obtain effective data to answer research questions. Therefore, purposeful sampling is needed instead of random sampling in this research.

Purposeful sampling that requires selecting research subjects with relevant professional knowledge related to the research topic (Marshall, 1996; Suri, 2011). Based on the requirements of purposeful sampling, this study will purposefully select experts from tourism companies and institutions as samples. Furthermore, Levitt et al. (2017) mentioned that collecting data from various sources, including cross background and long-term engagement sources related to research objectives, can enhance the utility of research. Therefore, this study selected samples from different organisations operating different tourism businesses. For example, the organisations to which the samples belong include but are not limited to destination operators, travel website, tour operator and tourism company.

One sub-question of this research is what kind of contents tourism is sustainable, which requires participants to have experience and understanding of sustainable tourism. This means that choosing organisations that support sustainable tourism is more likely to obtain effective samples and data. Significantly, Qualmark is an official grading system launched by Tourism New Zealand to promote responsible and sustainable tourism. Businesses that have obtained Qualmark certification have a high level of expertise in sustainable tourism (Carasuk, 2011; Insch, 2011; Tourism New Zealand, 2025). As a result, the initial samples were selected from approximately 2000 Qualmark holders.

Then, in order to further increase the probability that participants have relevant experience or ability to answer interview questions, as well as to improve the correlation between the sample and the three research sub-questions. This study developed a grading criterion to select more suitable organisations. The criterion ranked organisations based on their participation in three aspects: contents tourism, sustainable tourism, and stakeholder collaboration, to sort and select the organisations most relevant to the research topic. Table 1 explains how to determine the score of an organisation in three aspects, and if none of them meet the criteria, the score is zero. To receive as many responses as possible, forty potential interview organisations with the highest total scores were selected by comparing the grading criterion with the information displayed on the websites of Qualmark holders.

Table 1. Score of Relevance between Organisation and Topic

Aspect \ Score	3 Points	2 Points	1 Points
Contents tourism	Have relatively mature contents tourism products or take contents tourism as the main business.	Have tourism products related to contents tourism.	There is a clear, unique story or content that serves as a potential resource for contents tourism development.
Sustainable Tourism	Demonstrate details of sustainable tourism efforts being implemented or provide relevant data.	Describe or emphasise concepts related to sustainable development, sustainable tourism, environmental protection.	Post icons for Sustainable Development Goals, Sustainable Tourism, Tiaki Promise, Qualmark or other programmes that promote sustainable tourism
Stakeholder Collaboration	Clearly display multiple tourism stakeholders they collaborate with or introduce and promote tourism information/products/services of other stakeholders.	Mentioned that they have collaborative relationships with other tourism stakeholders.	

In addition, participants may recommend useful potential candidates, namely snowball samples (Marshall, 1996; Suri, 2011). During the interview, one participant strongly recommended another participant, noting that the latter was highly enthusiastic about contents tourism. In the subsequent interview, the researcher found that this snowball sample indeed had a high level of understanding of the contents tourism industry and provided important data.

3.3.3 Pilot Studies

A pilot study is a small-scale preliminary trial and investigation conducted before initiating full-scale study, which is a key component of good research design and can increase

the likelihood of research success (Bujang et al., 2024; Majid et al., 2017; Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2002). Bujang et al. (2024) mentioned that pilot studies are mainly aimed at testing the applicability of research tools and reducing the waste of resources caused by research design flaws during formal research. Majid et al. (2017) also stated that pilot studies allow researchers to adjust interview guide based on the results of pilot studies, which greatly improves the quality of interview guide. Therefore, the researcher conducted two pilot studies before conducting the formal research to improve the design of the interview guide.

According to Majid et al. (2017), the characteristics of pilot participants should be as similar as possible to those of the main study participants. As a result, the researcher used the initial interview guide to interview an international tourism marketing specialist and a local tour group manager in NZ. Both participants have experience in contents tourism and have shown a strong interest in it. They not only actively participated in the interview process but also provided suggestions for improving the interview guide. After the pilot studies, the researcher discussed the results with the researcher's supervisors and found several flaws in the design of the interview questions. With the help of the supervisors, the researcher revised and added research questions and completed the final interview guide (see Appendix A).

3.3.4 Interview Procedure

Due to the potential samples being dispersed across NZ, the full-scale study provided participants with two options: face-to-face interviews and online Zoom meetings. The researcher sent invitations to the email addresses of 40 potential interview organisations identified earlier, together with an information sheet (see Appendix B) detailing the

background and nature of the research. After further contacting organisations interested in participating in the research, a list of participants to be interviewed was determined. The researcher sent a consent form (see Appendix C) and the interview guide to the participants and discussed the interview time. During this process, the email conversation provided participants with an opportunity to ask questions and confirm the interview procedure. Once the participant filled out and submitted the consent form, an interview would be scheduled.

Participants were informed that they have the right not to be recorded or to turn off the recording upon request, but all participants were willing to record during the interview process. Therefore, before starting the interview, the researcher informed again that the interview would be recorded, and after obtaining consent, the recording device was set up and turned on.

During the interview, the researcher followed the interview guide and began by expressing gratitude to the participants. After introducing the matters needing attention, research background, and key terms, the researcher recorded background information about the participants and their organisations. Afterwards, the researcher asked questions in sequence based on the three themes of contents tourism, sustainable tourism, and stakeholder collaboration in the interview guide. During this step, researcher often used prompts to guide conversations, requesting further explanation or clarification for respondents' simple answers such as "yes" or "no". Sometimes, new questions were added based on participants' descriptions, or questions that had already been asked were linked to new questions for discussion.

Finally, the researcher asked general questions and confirmed with the respondents whether there were any questions they wanted to re answer or if they wanted to discuss more content. It is worth noting that many respondents did review previous questions or discuss new topics at this step, disclosing more effective data. After the interview, the researcher reiterated research information and precautions, confirmed follow-up contact information, and expressed gratitude to the interviewees.

3.4 Data Analysis Methods

Data analysis plays a crucial role in academic research, even determining the success of a study (Alhassan et al., 2023; Bhatia, 2017). Bhatia (2017) mentioned that data analysis can turn chaotic data into clear and easily understandable forms. This research is based on abductive theme analysis to transform the collected complex dataset into three clear main themes: contents tourism status, components of sustainable contents tourism, and forms of stakeholder collaboration. The researcher used NVivo and memo writing to achieve this step, which also referred to tools of grounded theory.

3.4.1 Abductive Thematic Analysis

Theme analysis is a method of identifying, analysing, and interpreting qualitative data by constructing meaningful themes, which is becoming increasingly popular in qualitative research (Clarke & Braun, 2017; Nowell et al., 2017; Thompson, 2022). Clarke and Braun (2017) pointed out that thematic analysis has strong flexibility and can analyse almost any type of data, including interviews and emerging methods.

However, although inductive approach and thematic analysis have the advantage of flexibility, they also lead to inaccurate conclusion and bias, while the combination of abductive approach and thematic analysis enhances the rigor of the research process (Haig, 2005; Nowell et al., 2017; Proudfoot, 2023; Thompson, 2022; Tomasella, 2022). Nowell et al. (2017) criticised that the flexibility of thematic analysis may lead to a lack of coherence in the themes and make it difficult for novice researchers to conduct rigorous thematic analysis. Other scholars claimed that applying abductive reasoning to thematic analysis could effectively improve rigor (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Thompson, 2022; Tomasella, 2022). This study has multiple sub-questions, including multiple core concepts such as contents tourism, sustainable tourism, and stakeholder collaboration. The diversity of concepts means that the research content is relatively complex which may lead to the lack of coherence between themes as scholars had criticised before. Therefore, the researcher adopted abductive thematic analysis to enhance the correlation between different themes and the rigor of data analysis.

The modern concept of abduction can be traced back to the American philosopher and scientist Charles Sanders Peirce, which is a form of reasoning that involves the generation and evaluation of hypotheses and theories (Haig, 2005; Olsen & Gjerding, 2019). Haig (2005) summarised that abductive reasoning systematically described how to first discover empirical facts and then construct theories to explain these facts. Olsen and Gjerding (2019) claimed that abduction was a research strategy to the same extent as induction and deduction and was a reasoning method applicable across all sciences. The applicability of abduction in

scientific research is also the reason why it can be combined with thematic analysis. Scholars summarised abductive thematic analysis as a thematic analysis tool that combines abductive reasoning, which can collect rich understanding from participant narratives and enhance the theoretical generalisability of findings (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Thompson, 2022). The 8-step guide developed by Thompson (2022) succinctly demonstrated the process of abductive thematic analysis, providing a reference for other researchers to conduct data analysis.

Another noteworthy aspect is that Tomasella (2022) also introduced and affirmed the applicability of abductive thematic analysis to tourism industry research. Therefore, balancing applicability, cost, and practicality, this study used abductive thematic analysis for data analysis.

3.4.2 NVivo

Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) can help qualitative method researchers efficiently organise, analyse, and explore data (O'Kane, 2020). NVivo has become one of the most popular CAQDAS among researchers due to its ability to handle a variety of data, comprehensive functionality, and good visualisation capabilities (Dhakal, 2022; Niedbalski & Ślęzak, 2024; O'Kane, 2020). Dhakal (2022) introduced that NVivo is a CAQDAS program that can be used to classify, organise, and analyse qualitative data, which helps improve the quality of research. Niedbalski & Ślęzak (2024) demonstrated through research that NVivo helps in coding, categorising, and constructing theoretical models, saving researchers' energy and time.

Given the need for coding in this study, as well as NVivo's outstanding performance in qualitative research data analysis, the researcher used NVivo 14 to assist with data analysis.

3.4.3 Tools of Grounded Theory

Grounded theory was originally developed by sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss as a series of research design methods aimed at generating new theories from data, which should be "grounded" in the data rather than relying on existing theories (Bell et al., 2019; Birks & Mills, 2015; Glaser & Strauss, 2017; Willig & Rogers, 2017). Birks and Mills (2015) mentioned that grounded theory can guide research to improve rigor, especially in data analysis. Obviously, referring to grounded theory is beneficial for improving the design of data analysis. However, Willig and Rogers (2017) mentioned that the complete grounded theory requires researchers to go back and forth between data collection and analysis, such as collecting data, analysing the data through open coding, and then returning to the field to collect more data. They further pointed out that it may be difficult to fully implement grounded theory under time or resource constraints, resulting in researchers being unable to expand and refine their analysis. Therefore, considering the high time cost of conducting a complete grounded theory study, the researcher mainly drew on the data analysis techniques of grounded theory to improve the rigor of this research, rather than designing grounded theory as the overall method.

The methods and tools of grounded theory include open coding, concurrent data generation, memo writing, theoretical sampling, constant comparative analysis, theoretical

sensitivity, axial coding, and selective coding (Birks & Mills, 2015; Glaser & Strauss, 2017; Willig & Rogers, 2017). The three coding techniques (open coding, axial coding, and selective coding), constant comparative analysis and memo writing have been widely used in qualitative research and are also the main techniques adopted in this research. Willig and Rogers (2017) also stated that applying the three coding techniques, constant comparative analysis and memo writing techniques can systematically integrate data into research findings. However, scholars criticised that the applicability of the three coding techniques allowed many researchers to use them, but many of them did not explain the coding process and directly produced results (Alhassan et al., 2023; Thompson, 2022). Alhassan et al. (2023) expressed concern about the confusing data analysis process of researchers and emphasised that the coding process should be more transparent. Based on these criticisms, the coding steps will be shown below to make the data analysis process of this research more transparent.

In short, this study used the three coding techniques, constant comparative analysis and memo writing techniques based on grounded theory to make the data analysis process more rigorous and the research findings more systematic.

3.4.4 Coding Procedure

Birks and Mills (2015) mentioned that a memo is a written record of the thoughts of researchers conducting grounded theory research, and the content of the memo writing will ultimately transform into findings. Willig and Rogers (2017) stated that memo writing requires an explanation that the choice of labels is reasonable. Therefore, the researcher wrote

a memo during the data analysis process to better derive research findings. The researcher's work in memo writing included documenting why data was divided into selected labels and recording writing inspiration for the subsequent findings and discussion section.

The constant comparative analysis of grounded theory requires continuous comparison of events, code, coding, and categories during the data analysis process, and continuous improvement of coding until the theory is integrated (Birks & Mills, 2015; Glaser & Strauss, 2017; Willig & Rogers, 2017). Willig and Rogers (2017) emphasised that constant comparative analysis can ensure that coding can identify common features of data, classify them into the same labels, and refocus on differences in the data to identify any emerging categories. In view of this, the researcher adhered to constant comparative analysis throughout the entire data analysis process. The researcher continuously compared new data, labels, and categories with previous ones in each round of coding. Through continuous comparison, the researcher not only assigned different labels to their corresponding categories, but also sometimes changed the previous ones or added new categories. This continuous comparison and analysis have improved the quality of the coding in this research, better reflecting the information in the data and minimising the loss of important information.

The following steps have been the process undertaken by the researcher in abductive thematic analysis to derive thematic codes and systematic understanding of data:

Step 1: Transcription

Stuckey (2014) mentioned that transcription is the process of transcribing interview recordings into written form, which is the first step in qualitative data analysis. Due to time

constraints, more and more scholars are outsourcing transcription, but they need to listen to recordings again to check accuracy (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021; Thompson, 2022). Adeoye-Olatunde and Olenik (2021) mentioned that digital applications such as Zoom and Dragon have transcription capabilities. In order to quickly generate written interview texts without interfering with subsequent interviews, this research used Zoom software to transcribe recordings. After each transcription, the researcher corrected transcription errors by re listening to recordings to compare the transcribed text and recording content, to improve transcription accuracy.

Tomasella (2022) also reminded that to make researchers recall the interview content as much as possible and improve the accuracy of transcription, the transcription work should be completed as soon as possible. Therefore, the transcription and the first re listening of the recording was completed within two days after the end of each interview. Therefore, the researcher completed the transcription of the recording and the first re listening within two days after each interview.

Step 2: Open Coding

Open coding is often used as the first round of coding, with the main task of labelling important words or paragraphs that are useful for the research topic with descriptive labels and identifying concepts or key ideas in the data (Alhassan et al., 2023; Birks & Mills, 2015; Willig & Rogers, 2017). Alhassan et al., (2023) pointed out that similar concepts in the data are grouped together into a higher-order concept called category. Categories were also initially generated during the open coding stage, grouping labels with similar concepts

(Alhassan et al., 2023; Willig & Rogers, 2017). During this process, the researcher referred to open coding techniques and performed the first round of coding on all data.

The researcher first imports the transcribed text into NVivo and reads it word for word and sentence by sentence in NVivo. During the reading process, the researcher selected data related to the research topic and meaningful to the study and used NVivo's coding function to create descriptive labels. At the same time, constant comparative analysis was continuously conducted, and based on the content described by the labels, categories were initially created, and labels with similar concepts were moved to the corresponding categories. In the end, the researcher created 338 labels and referenced 661 of the original data in total. Four higher-level categories were created, namely "contents tourism", "sustainability", "collaboration", and "interview participants". Fifty-five subcategories were created, such as "tourism activities", "environmental protection", "benefits", "high quality", etc.

Step 3: Axial Coding and Development of Themes

Axial coding is the second round of coding process, which improves the categories that appear in open coding and integrates them into high-order analysis categories by comparing their relationships (Alhassan et al., 2023; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Willig & Rogers, 2017). Birks and Mills (2015) mentioned that the second round of coding includes two methods: developing new categories by linking sub-categories or merging multiple categories together. In the coding process of the axial coding, the researcher used both methods simultaneously. For example, the first type: the researcher compared categories "tourism activities", "tourism destinations", and "content works", and create new category

"tourism resources". The second type: the researcher compared categories of "tourism can be maintained", "remain unchanged for a long time", and "exist for a long time", then merge them into the category "exist for a long time".

During the axial coding process, key factors that can answer research questions are gathered, and sub themes and themes begin to emerge after deepening the understanding of the correlations in the data (Thompson, 2022; Tomasella, 2022). The researcher used constant comparative analysis to continuously compare categories and research questions, as well as the correlations between categories, repeatedly thinking and gradually deepening understanding of the connections between data. Thompson (2022) also emphasised that categories must have a certain frequency of being mentioned before becoming a theme. The researcher then continuously deepened the understanding of the data and improved the categories, while focusing on the categories mentioned multiple times by the interviewee. As a result, twelve main themes were preliminarily designed, such as "attitudes towards contents tourism", "tourism resources", "understanding of sustainability", and "benefits of stakeholder collaboration", all of which were mentioned by nearly all respondents. Forty-two sub themes were also designed, including "positive attitudes", "focusing on film works", "rich content works", and "extensive collaboration", most of which were mentioned by more than half of the respondents.

Moreover, Tomasella (2022) mentioned that themes are key broad concepts for answering research questions, and in axial coding, researchers should start thinking about the correlations between code, themes, and themes at different levels, which allows researchers to

go beyond simple descriptions and begin theorising. Therefore, in this step, researchers closely compared the correlations between research questions and themes. For example, the researcher found that the main theme "tourism resources" was very beneficial for answering the sub-question 1 "what is the status of contents tourism in New Zealand", as shown by the sub theme "focusing on film works" under the main theme "tourism resources". The sub theme "focusing on film works" also has an inconsistent relationship with the "rich content works" under another main theme "understanding of sustainability". This difference highlights the current situation of insufficient content in NZ's contents tourism and can be further linked to the sub theme "extensive collaboration" to explain a way to overcome this deficiency. These inconsistent correlations also demonstrate the close connection between the main themes "tourism resources", "understanding of sustainability", and "benefits of stakeholder collaboration", revealing the embryonic form of a sustainable contents tourism. During the data analysis phase, the thoughts of the researcher through constant comparative analysis were also recorded in the memo, serving as inspiration for subsequent chapters and the cornerstone of theoretical research findings.

Step 4: Selective Coding and Refining Themes

Selective coding is an advanced and final round of coding aimed at theoretical integration, identifying core categories that encompass other categories, and integrating categories (Alhassan et al., 2023; Birks & Mills, 2015). Tomasella (2022) also stated that at this stage, it is necessary to check and improve all sub themes and themes, and the effectiveness of themes is mainly reflected in the fact that the themes are more abstract and

more comprehensive. Therefore, in the final round of coding, the researcher repeatedly checked all sub themes and main themes, and compared the correlations between theme and theme, as well as themes and data, again through constant comparative analysis. The researcher continuously abstracted themes into more general ones and continued to merge themes with similar concepts to further enhance the comprehensiveness of the themes. For example, the original themes "attitudes towards contents tourism", "rarely mentioned", and "advantages" were abstractly integrated into the sub theme "limited competitiveness".

Thompson (2022) also mentioned that in abductive thematic analysis, themes should be memorable phrases that readers can quickly identify and clearly capture the correlation between the theme and the research question. Especially in terms of main themes, the researcher adhered to this design principle of abductive thematic analysis. The researcher continued to compare themes and three research sub questions, integrating the 12 main themes identified during the axial coding into 3 main themes, and improving the way of expression to allow readers to see the correlation between each theme and the research question immediately. In addition to the 3 main themes, the researcher ultimately integrated 10 sub themes, all of which will be presented in detail in the section 4.3 on themes.

3.5 Research Quality

The method of evaluating research quality is crucial for achieving high-quality qualitative research, but it is difficult to find an absolute standard (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Bryman, 2016; Levitt et al., 2017). Finlay (2021) emphasised that thematic analysis should be conducted in a rigorous manner, which can be achieved by combining it with other

research methods such as grounded theory. However, scholars also mentioned that the mixing of methods may lead to confusion and affect the quality of research, which means integrity is important (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Finlay, 2021; Levitt et al., 2017). Braun and Clarke (2021) also expressed concerns about the lack of integrity in thematic analysis research. These concerns about integrity and demands for evaluating the quality of qualitative research have led to the emergence of methodological integrity (Finlay, 2021). As mentioned earlier, this study adopted methodological integrity to improve research quality. In summary, the advantage of adopting methodological integrity is that it allows the researcher to use grounded theory methods to guide data analysis and improve the rigor of this research, while maintaining integrity and avoiding confusion.

Methodological integrity is a series of principles and processes for achieving high-quality qualitative research, emphasising fidelity to subject and utility in achieving goals, and requiring researchers to have objectives, data collection, features, and analysis that are interrelated and all related to the topic (Levitt et al., 2017). It can promote the overall relevance of the entire research process to the topic and improve the credibility and effectiveness of this research.

According to methodological integrity, an important requirement of fidelity to subject is adequate data, which focuses more on the quality of samples rather than quantity (Levitt et al., 2017). Scholars stated that an appropriate sample size in qualitative research could fully answer research questions and did not necessarily require a particularly large number of samples like in quantitative research. (Birks & Mills, 2015; Levitt et al., 2017; Marshall,

1996; Suri, 2011; Young & Casey, 2019). Young and Casey's (2019) research results indicated that a minimum sample size range of 6-9 could fully answer research questions, and certain research even required a minimum sample size of only 4-6. They further advocated for obtaining reliable results with smaller sample sizes while maximizing resource savings. This means that a small sample size is sufficient to achieve the research objectives in qualitative research. Meanwhile, due to factors such as cost, the lack of popularity of contents tourism, and the fact that people have not yet recognised contents tourism in NZ, it is clearly difficult to find experienced or knowledgeable participants in contents tourism in NZ. Therefore, this study initially estimated that selecting 8-10 tourism enterprise managers with a relatively small number but a clear understanding of the industry through purposeful sampling may provide high-quality research data for this study.

Levitt et al. (2017) stated that the adequacy of qualitative research data does not depend on the number of participants, but on the quality and adequacy of information, emphasising the consideration of data sources related to the topic. Therefore, the researcher carefully designed a purposive sampling method and established criteria for the organisations to which the samples belonged (see Table 1), with the aim of improving the quality of the samples and their relevance to the topic. The researcher also made effort to increase the sample size, so initially 40 potential interview organisations were contacted based on the selection criteria. However, due to the NZ tourism season, most organisations refused to participate citing busyness. Although 11 organisations showed interest in participating, only 8

ultimately participated in the study due to factors such as scheduling and lack of confidence in interviews.

Although this study only had 8 samples in the end, it still has a high sample quality, mainly manifested in two aspects: rich data volume and close relevance to the research topic. Benefit from the carefully designed purposeful sampling methods in advance, each sample had high quality, and each participant provided rich and high-quality data. On the one hand, participants were immersed in the interview and voluntarily extended the interview time to share and discuss more content. The interview time ranged from 36 minutes to 71 minutes, with an average of 57 minutes. Far exceeding the originally designed duration of 30-45 minutes which had been validated as feasible in two pilot studies. This demonstrates the participants' high level of knowledge and understanding of the research topic, allowing them to share more information. On the other hand, the coding results also indicate that rich information was collected from the participants. Open coding generated 338 labels, with a total of 661 references to the original data. This means that despite the small sample size, this study still obtained a rich data volume.

Birks and Mills (2015) mentioned that in open coding, new data is only applicable to existing categories of code, which means achieving theoretical saturation of categories. Willig and Rogers (2017) also explained that theoretical saturation occurs when new categories cannot be identified from the data. In the coding stage of this study, a phenomenon similar to theoretical saturation also occurred. When performing open coding on the seventh sample, nearly no new categories are generated. All new labels from the eighth sample can be

adapted to existing categories without generating new ones. According to relevant research on theoretical saturation, in this study, when coding the 7th and 8th samples, the data can be included in the generated categories, indicating that the 8 sample sizes have made the categories and themes structures relatively well-developed and can answer research questions (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021; Bell et al., 2019; Birks and Mills, 2015; Glaser & Strauss, 2017; Willig & Rogers, 2017). This means that the sample size of this study has obtained sufficient effective data to achieve the research objectives, meeting the fidelity to subject requirements of methodological integrity.

As mentioned earlier, in addition to fidelity to subject, another requirement for improving research quality through methodological integrity is the utility in achieving goals. One of the principles for achieving the utility in achieving goals is to enhance the coherence among findings (Levitt et al., 2017). The coherence means that the findings obtained from analysis should be interrelated, and using models or charts to display the interrelationships between research findings can enhance coherence (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Levitt et al., 2017). As mentioned earlier in axial coding and development of themes, the researcher has considered and explained the correlations between different themes, and have found that findings are interrelated, which will be discussed in detail later. In the later discussion section, the researcher further developed a sustainable contents tourism process diagram, using the figure to more concisely demonstrate the connections between findings (see Figure 2).

Levitt et al. (2017) also pointed out that if there are inconsistent findings in the research and the researchers explain how differences within findings relate to each other, it will enhance the coherence between the findings and utility. As mentioned in the previous axial encoding, the researcher found many inconsistencies like "focusing on film works" and "rich content works" and provided further explanations for these differences. These efforts have improved the coherence and the utility in achieving goals of this research.

In summary, the two principles of methodological integrity, fidelity to subject and utility in achieving goals, were put into practice in this study, effectively improving the quality of the research.

3.6 Research Ethical Considerations

Before conducting the research, the researcher developed a research proposal and evaluated the potential ethical risks associated with the research and thoroughly discussed these risks with the supervisors. Afterwards, the researcher submitted an ethics application to the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (MUHEC) and filled out a risk assessment questionnaire. The MUHEC is an institution of the university that ensures that staff and students act ethically in their work. Finally, the research proposal and ethics application were approved and considered low risk, with Ethics Notification Number 4000029489 (see Appendix D).

The main risk identified is privacy issues during interviews. Stahl (2005) emphasised the inevitable connection between qualitative research and ethics and emphasised the importance of valuing the dignity and privacy of research subjects. Wiles (2012) suggested

that researchers could use anonymous processes and pseudonyms to conceal the true identities of participants, protect their personal information, and prevent accidental disclosure of confidential information. Therefore, the researcher fully discussed privacy related issues with the participants, informed them of the content and information to be disclosed, asked about the information they wished to hide, and used pseudonyms to hide their personal identities.

In addition, Drolet et al. (2023) mentioned that participants should be respected, including their right to informed consent. Therefore, due to the need for recording the interviews in this study, in order to respect the right to informed of the participants, they were notified in advance and all participants' consent was obtained. The researcher not only sent consent form (see Appendix C) to the participants in advance but also solicited recordings before each interview and continued the interview process only after obtaining their consent.

3.7 Conclusion

In summary, this study is qualitative research based on pragmatism, and the design and method selection of the research are aimed at better answering the research questions. The researcher designed several sampling criteria to purposefully select high-quality samples and collect as much data as possible through semi-structured interviews. Two pilot studies were conducted prior to the interviews to validate and improve the applicability and effectiveness of the research design. The researcher used the abductive thematic analysis to analyse and interpret research results. During this process, NVivo was used to assist in data

processing, and grounded theory tools such as three coding techniques, constant comparative analysis, and memo writing were employed to enhance the rigor and quality of the research.

Chapter 4 Findings

4.1 Overview

The researcher conducted 8 effective interviews, ranging from 36 minutes to 71 minutes, with an average of 57 minutes. As mentioned in the section on research quality, participants voluntarily extended the interview time to share more information, undoubtedly providing rich data and becoming a solid foundation for findings. This chapter presents the findings from the semi-structured interviews and data analysis. Finally, three main themes and eleven sub themes were identified to help answer the research sub-questions and further address the main research questions. With the coding of data and continuous comparative analysis, key themes in interviews gradually emerge, and inconsistencies in the data also arise, providing a source for analysing the differences between the current situation of the contents tourism industry and sustainable contents tourism.

The beginning of this chapter introduces the participants and their organisations, as well as their relevance to the research topic. Afterwards, three main themes and corresponding sub themes of this study were introduced, and a table was used to visually display the frequency of themes mentioned by participants. This chapter uses three sections to describe the themes, providing detailed descriptions of key data and complex content, and citing participants' original words as references. The final section summarises the research findings of this chapter.

4.2 Participant Details

Table 1 lists the background information of the participants and their organisations, which was first obtained from the website of the interviewee's organisation and email contact with the organisation and was verified again during the interview. The participants of this study are either managers of organisations or professionals in the tourism industry, with a high level of understanding of the tourism industry. Scholars also point out that the quality of research will be improved when the samples are closely related to the research topic and objectives (Coyne, 1997; Marshall, 1996; Suri, 2011; Willig & Rogers, 2017). Benefiting from the purposeful sampling design, the samples collected in this research are closely related to the topic, and all participants had contents tourism experiences or participated in contents tourism business. At the same time, all participants are involved in at least one of sustainable tourism or collaborative work.

The third column in Table 2 indicates the relevance between participants and the research topic, where Con, Sus, and Col respectively refer to contents tourism, sustainable development, and collaboration. The appearance of Con in the table indicates that the participants have had experience in contents tourism or have participated in contents tourism business, and Sus or Col represents that the participants have been involved in sustainable tourism or collaboration work. In addition, researchers mainly use pseudonyms to anonymise participants and protect their information, which is necessary for research ethics (Wiles, 2012). Therefore, the names of participants in the table are replaced by numbers.

Table 2. Participants' Profile and Organisational Roles

Participants	Role	Relevance to the Topic	Organisation Type	Interview Length (minutes)
Participant 1	Community Engagement & Sustainability Coordinator	Con/Sus/Col	Contents tourism Destination Operator	71
Participant 2	Managing Director	Con/Col/Sus	Tourism Company	45
Participant 3	Chief Executive Officer	Con/Sus/Col	Tourism Company	49
Participant 4	Operations Manager	Con/Sus/Col	Travel Website	68
Participant 5	Visitor Services Manager	Con/Col	Local Council Institution & Destination Operator	69
Participant 6	Senior Marketing	Con/Col	Tour Operator	69
Participant 7	Managing Director	Con/Sus/Col	Tourism Company	36
Participant 8	Inbound Manager	Con/Col	Travel Agency	50

As shown in Table 1, most participants are managers of tourism organisations, and all participants have more than two aspects of experience or work background related to the research topic. Research subjects with backgrounds related to the research topic are more likely to answer interview questions, provide effective information, and improve research quality (Levitt et al., 2017; Marshall, 1996; Suri, 2011). Additionally, tourism managers are more likely to have a good professional background, knowledge reserves, and industry experience in tourism (Petkovski, 2012; Weaver & Lawton, 2014). These indicate that the samples in this study have a high correlation with the research topic and possess high quality. In the interview, each participant provided rich and effective data, which also demonstrated the quality of the sample and the success of the sampling method.

4.3 Themes

The interviews mainly focused on three main sections, which were closely related to three research sub questions. The main purpose of the first section is to identify the current situation of contents tourism in NZ, which is largely absent from existing literature and materials, and to understand participants' understanding and attitudes towards contents tourism. In this section, participants were invited to explain their understanding of the definition and prospects of contents tourism, share existing and potential tourism resources and operators of contents tourism in NZ, and discuss the advantages, disadvantages, and impacts of NZ's contents tourism. If the participants were involved in contents tourism business, within the scope of not touching on commercial confidentiality, the researcher discussed the contents tourism business and operating conditions with them.

The second section is mainly aimed at exploring what kind of contents tourism is sustainable. By discussing the principles, measures, and impacts of sustainable tourism with participants, the researcher identified their understanding of sustainable tourism. At the same time, participants shared the unsustainable performance and solutions of contents tourism in NZ and summarised the forms of sustainable contents tourism.

In the third section, to infer the role of stakeholder collaboration in sustainable contents tourism, participants were first asked about the stakeholders in contents tourism, as well as their partners, collaboration experiences, etc. In this stage, the researcher guided participants to discuss the differences between stakeholder collaboration in contents tourism and general tourism collaboration, while verifying the general collaboration theory and

exploring the special collaboration mechanisms of contents tourism. The information shared by participants also revealed the significant impact of stakeholder collaboration on sustainable tourism, as well as obstacles and solutions to collaboration.

The active and generous sharing of participants in the interviews provided a rich source for data analysis and the formation of themes. Table 3 lists the themes in the order corresponding to the research sub-questions, to visually demonstrate the key findings of this study and their connection to the research questions.

Table 3. Overview of Themes, Code Frequency and Code Mention

Themes	Number of Participants Mentioned	Number of Total References Mentioned
Contents tourism Status	8	291
Abundant Tourism Resources	8	132
Limited Competitiveness	8	121
Positive and Negative Impacts	6	38
Components of Sustainable Contents Tourism	8	100
Extensive Collaboration	8	29
Destination Conservation	8	27
High-Quality Tourist Experience	7	27
Active Governance and Management	6	17
Forms of Stakeholder Collaboration	8	188
Broad Stakeholder Engagement	8	83
Far from Easy to Achieve	8	63
An Essential Component	8	42

4.4 Contents Tourism Status

Based on the interview results, the current situation of contents tourism in NZ can be divided into the following three sub themes.

4.4.1 *Abundant Potential Tourism Resources*

Only a small number of participants briefly mentioned NZ's beautiful natural environment and described it as a contents tourism resource. They claimed that these natural resources were the foundation of content creation and tourism products. When it came to tourism resources, all participants were more focused on discussing the works depicting NZ, the relationship between Māori culture and contents tourism, as well as the unique contents tourism activities.

Works and Destinations

The participants mentioned 11 categories of contents tourism related works in NZ, as well as NZ tourism resources that have great potential to be included in the works. All participants mentioned *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. Six participants mentioned Hobbiton, the filming location of *The Lord of the Rings*, as a typical contents tourism destination with mature and successful tourism products. Participant 6 mentioned that Hobbit Village is so popular because it relies on multiple Lord of the Rings series works to attract fans:

"They are more using these film fans of The Lord of the Rings to do these things ... It's always been hot, and everyone still talks about The Lord of the Rings in Hobbiton." –

Participant 6

In addition to *The Lord of the Rings*, participants also mentioned 9 other movies filmed in NZ, such as *the Piano*, *Mission Impossible*, and *the Chronicles of Narnia*. Multiple participants stated that there are more movies filmed in NZ, but they cannot recall them at the moment. Five participants were certain that books also mentioned regions of NZ, such as the book *Owls Do Cry* mentioned by Participant 4, which is set in the Otago region.

In addition, eight other types of works were mentioned, such as video game *Civilization VI*, TV show *Where Are We Going, Dad*, short video *Epic NPC Man*. These works have attracted fans to travel to NZ, but the number of participants mentioning each type of work in the interview did not exceed 2.

A total of 22 NZ contents tourism destinations related to the previous works were mentioned by participants (see Table 4), such as Hobbiton, Clyde township, and Glenorchy. In addition, participants also mentioned the existence of blogs, history, music videos, and photography works that describe NZ and attract tourists, but they did not recall specific cases of works and corresponding destinations.

Table 4. Works Related to New Zealand and Their Corresponding Destinations

Works	Types	Destinations
<i>The Lord of the Rings</i>	Film	Hobbiton, Glenorchy, Weta Workshop, Queenstown, Hairy Feet Waitomo, Tongariro, Mount Sunday
<i>Mission Impossible</i>	Film	Glenorchy, Rees Valley
<i>Only Cloud Knows</i>	Film	Clyde township
<i>Power Rangers Dino Charge</i>	Film	Auckland Botanic Gardens
<i>Mulan</i>	Film	Ahuriri Valley
<i>The Chronicles of Narnia</i>	Film	Coromandel, Cathedral Cove
<i>The Last Samurai</i>	Film	Taranaki
<i>The Piano</i>	Film	Karekare Beach
<i>Whale Rider</i>	Film	Kaikoura
<i>Wolverine</i>	Film	Glenorchy
<i>Owls do Cry</i>	Book	Oamaru and Otago area
<i>The Garden Party</i>	Book	Hamilton Gardens
<i>Civilization VI</i>	Video game	Milford Sound
<i>Where Are We Going, Dad</i>	TV show	Rotorua
<i>Epic NPC Man</i>	Short video	Howick Historical Village
Sculpture in the gardens	Sculpture	Auckland Botanic Gardens
Māori myths and legends	Māori culture	Pounamu Pathway, Southern Alps

Māori Culture

Four participants noted that NZ's unique Māori culture was also a potential contents tourism resource. Participant 4 mentioned that *Moana* has successfully driven Pacific tourism by depicting Polynesian indigenous stories, and Māori culture can also generate great appeal:

"Another type of contents tourism that we see rising is indigenous storytelling ...

Moana made by Disney, showcasing the Pacific very strongly. So, Māori culture being very Polynesian as well, could garner this kind of attraction." – Participant 4

Tourism Activities

Seven existing contents tourism activities were mentioned by seven participants, such as visit scenes from contents, characteristic catering, and play a character from the work. In addition to existing contents tourism resources, most participants stated that NZ also has many tourism attractions such as delicious food, Māori cultural experiences, and unique landscapes, which are potential contents tourism resources but have not yet been mentioned by well-known works.

4.4.2 Limited Competitiveness

Advantages

Seven participants noted that NZ's contents tourism has advantages and certain competitiveness. For example, six participants mentioned that NZ has excellent tourism resources such as beautiful natural scenery and unique culture. Four participants stated that the current film-based contents tourism in NZ is of high quality and high profit, and is loved by international tourists, bringing high economic returns to NZ. Four participants explicitly stated that there are many good works in NZ that are potential advantages of contents tourism.

Inadequate Content Development Efforts

Six participants stated that contents tourism requires a more diverse range of genres, and focusing solely on film tourism is a disadvantage of NZ contents tourism. Three participants emphasised that NZ is overly dependent on *The Lord of the Rings*. Participant 7 expressed concerns about the future of contents tourism in NZ:

"There is not much contents tourism in New Zealand mentioned just now. The most famous one is The Lord of the Rings Trilogy. How long can the Hobbit or The Lord of the Rings be popular? No one really knows ... This movie has been made for so many years. Maybe our next generation has never seen this movie. So why are you still coming, right?" –

Participant 4

Participant 4 mentioned that NZ has great video game works, but also stated that these works have not yet been linked to tourism:

"We do have some really great video games and board games made in New Zealand ... We have the Path of Exile. It's New Zealand, right? It's made right here. But how do you kind of tie that in with New Zealand?" – Participant 4

Meanwhile, Participant 4 also noted that NZ's Māori culture is strong, but its international marketing and visibility are limited:

"We have such a strong culture. The Māori culture is definitely a highlight ... But it's rarely sold internationally. So, I think that's a miss." – Participant 4

Participant 1 also regards Māori culture as an important contents tourism resource, but currently its dissemination medium is myths and legends, lacking well-known writers and writers who produce Māori works:

"Contents tourism might extend to. Of course, Māori myth and legend ... Māori culture is a very big tourism resource ... New Zealand is such a young country. We don't have that massive background of really well-known authors ... They don't write it down as often."

– Participant 1

Low Visibility

The concept of contents tourism itself has a low level of popularity. Four participants discussed the popularity of contents tourism in NZ and all gave negative comments. They noted that contents tourism is still an academic term, rarely mentioned, niche tourism, and has not been discovered by the tourism industry. Three participants further pointed out that NZ is conservative and tends to be slower in accepting new things and concepts, as mentioned by Participant 3:

"New Zealand is probably very slow in recognizing the opportunity that comes with contents tourism ... The Lord of the rings was so big that created a wonderful opportunity ... But I don't think we realize that there are other films or other opportunities where that could happen. I just think we're maybe a little risk averse." – Participant 3

Underdeveloped Contents tourism Industry

Although few people have heard of contents tourism, all participants have observed that contents tourism products and activities already exist in NZ. According to Participant 2, Glenorchy, a filming location of *The Lord of the Rings*, once had contents tourism products that were relatively successful. Affected by the COVID-19, it has stopped the operation of contents tourism products and has had zero income since then:

"The Lord of the Rings has a big scene in Glenorchy. But all the scenes and items have been removed. Only an empty hillside now ... Before the pandemic, Glenorchy had activities and scenes related to The Lord of the Rings to promote this attraction. We also help them promote, and the effect is very good ... After the epidemic, this attraction and The Lord

of the Rings were closed. So, for now, the filming location of The Lord of the Rings in Glenorchy, zero income." – Participant 2

This case illustrates that tourism development can fully utilise tourism resources to create mature tourism products, but without development or tourism products, even if the destination has tourism resources, it is difficult to generate value. However, all participants are convinced that the current development level of NZ's contents tourism industry is very low. The current attractiveness of contents tourism in NZ needs to be improved, as mentioned by all participants. Except for the film tourism mentioned earlier, six participants expressed that the current contents tourism products are quite boring. In describing the contents tourism activities in NZ, they noted that tourists can only experience homogeneous and basic contents tourism activities or entertainments. For example, visit scenes from content works, and taking photos, while other types of activities are very rare. Participant 2 directly pointed out that contents tourism is almost always about sightseeing and photography:

"New Zealand contents tourism is almost the same ... For example, in the movie, Only Cloud Knows. That there is a chair in Mission Bay. We will provide our guests with a tour guide to take them and have them sit over there. Take photos. They will also think that this chair is the one that the Only Cloud Knows. In that movie. So many people may take photos. There is nothing else, and no souvenirs for sale." – Participant 2

Another factor that affects tourism attractiveness is the information gap. Participant 8 emphasised that it is difficult for tourists to find contents tourism attractions or products,

which was also acknowledged by all participants in subsequent interviews. Participant 8 shared his and other tourists' difficult experiences when searching for attractions:

"In the third book of The Lord of the Rings, there is a white city, which is the capital of mankind. It's very attractive ... Its background is against a mountain range and the desert. This is the place where it really exists in New Zealand. So, I, including many fans, want to check in here ... There is only one website, which is the Tourism Bureau of Canterbury, and it will give you a very vague description of which highway, when you see a hotel and then go back. Which direction to go and how long will it take you to see this place. It's not marked on the map at all, so it's hard to find." – Participant 8

Six participants attributed the low-level nature of NZ's contents tourism industry to collaboration barriers and a lack of investment. Four participants commented that contents tourism may require high investment, leading people to be unwilling to collaborate. Other participants mentioned incomplete laws, infrastructure constraints, and dependence on suppliers, which increase the cost and risk of collaboration. Participant 4 criticised that stakeholders may have to first collaborate with major copyright companies before entering the contents tourism industry:

"A lot of it is in the hands of big corporations, right? So, if they want to promote anything to do with the Lord of the rings they have to work with. Whoever is the right holder, right? Which I don't know if it's like Amazon at the moment, or the Tolkien estate or Lionsgate cinema, or anything like that. So, I think it's all about like manoeuvring." –

Participant 4

Participant 4 and other participants further discussed this control phenomenon in subsequent interview questions related to collaboration and noted that reaching collaboration with large companies is difficult for many stakeholders.

Unsustainable

Six participants discussed the current unsustainable aspects of contents tourism in NZ. Four participants mentioned that works are easily to losing popularity, and three participants mentioned the issue of over-tourism. Participant 4 described the phenomenon of rapid popularity of contents tourism in the short term, followed by rapid loss of popularity afterwards:

"It comes with fad, you know. I mean, it's like, if it's in fashion, everybody's going to want to go and then boom! Then, it dies down ... It's worth highlighting is the short lifespan of some specific works ... It's going to be trending. And then it's not trending ... That can be ultra popular. And you're like, I've got a product on my hand, and then it's like dies instantly."

– Participant 4

A few participants also mentioned that the current contents tourism in NZ is expensive and opportunistic. Excessive pricing may make tourists unwilling to revisit. The uncertainty of policies, suppliers, copyrights, and risks leads to a high degree of contingency in the success of contents tourism, which may prevent long-term stable development.

4.4.3 Positive and Negative Impacts

Four participants discussed the negative impacts of contents tourism, mainly focusing on over-tourism. They mentioned that attracting a large number of tourists in a short period of

time may have adverse effects on the environment, local communities, and tourism experience. Although little is currently known about the NZ contents tourism industry, its competitiveness is limited, and it may lead to over-tourism, seven participants still affirmed that the future of contents tourism is bright. Participant 5 expressed interest in contents tourism and viewed it as an opportunity from a professional perspective:

*"I am very interested in contents tourism. I used to work for * (a tourism department of the NZ government), and I've been involved in * (another government department) in my past life. So, I do have an interest ... So as a professional. Certainly, I think there is opportunity for us in the future. Our obstacle is just not having the capacity to be able to support research ... We're too small when we've got so many other things to have to deliver operationally and we don't have the time. So again, I've got this new person coming in. If there are partners, we can collaborate with that can help with that. Then we will look at it."* –

Participant 5

The institution to which Participant 5 belongs is already operating a small portion of contents tourism business but cannot support further research. If there are collaborators, Participant 5 will consider suggesting expanding the contents tourism business. In the retrospective section after the formal interview, the researcher asked what other unresolved issues exist in contents tourism. Participant 3 expressed regret again that the potential of contents tourism has not yet been discovered by NZ:

"I think a lot of the potential problems is around local government and central government, not recognizing the opportunity that lies within contents tourism, and that may

be no fault of their own. It might be just simple ignorance that they just don't know ... So, once again, education and communication would certainly help." – Participant 3

Attract Tourists

Six participants further analysed the positive effects of contents tourism, and all agreed that it can significantly attract tourists. For example, Participant 2 mentioned that the movie *Only Cloud Knows* has increased the number of Chinese tourists in Clyde, NZ by dozens of times:

"For example, if there were no Only Cloud Knows, if there were no such film. Few Chinese people or, more precisely, people outside New Zealand know Clyde. Even if you drive by you won't know. So now people are stopping because of this movie ... The flow of people before and after this movie, you will find that it is definitely dozens of times more than before, which is my conservative estimate." – Participant 2

Four participants directly emphasised that contents tourism has increased NZ's international recognition, allowing NZ to attract more international tourists. For example, Participant 1 mentioned that the success of *Hobbiton* has made it the first destination that many international tourists think of when they mention NZ:

"Probably more internationally recognised, like a lot of people when they think of traveling to New Zealand. Hobbiton is one of the first places they think of." – Participant 1

Increase Financial Income

Five participants discussed the economic significance of contents tourism, stating that it has brought significant funds, wealth, and employment opportunities to NZ, driving

economic development. Participant 4 mentioned that Hobbiton has brought many tourists to Matamata, NZ and has become the main source of local economy:

"It's more garnering a little bit more engagement, and you know, like Hobbiton gets about like half a million visitors annually. Right? So, you know, speaking about like the economy of Matamata. That's a major part of it, right?" – Participant 4

Participant 5 emphasised that contents tourism is not only related to the tourism industry, but also to the film industry, economy, and more job opportunities:

"The Lord of the Rings came along from the film industry. It brought a lot of money into New Zealand, brought attention on New Zealand, being a place to make films. And so, it wasn't just about the tourism element. It's about the economy and boosting economy. And I know that Auckland, you know, with Screen Auckland. They sell themselves on the fact that you know they're bringing economy and job opportunities to Auckland." – Participant 5

Improve Tourist Experience

Three participants discussed the positive impact of contents tourism on improving the tourist experience. Two participants mentioned that contents tourism can help explore new tourism resources and assist people in developing more potential activities. Participant 4 stated that they sometimes mention potential tourism resources in the guide and associate them with content works:

"We don't have much extra contents tourism on our website per se, right? But we do mention when there are some items ... For example, when there is something like, untapped potential like music, food, art, indigenous culture. We'll mention it ... For example, there is a

book by Janet Frame, called Owls Do Cry ... And so, its setting is in Oamaru and in the Otago area ... We would mention that, you know, in Oamaru or Otago travel guide." –

Participant 4

Participant 5 mentioned that movies showcase more beautiful things in NZ and encourage the tourism industry to develop these resources into tourism products:

"It's really a really valuable opportunity for people to be including into their main tourism product anything that is showing people the beauty of New Zealand, which is what everyone sees in the film productions." – Participant 5

A small number of participants noted that contents tourism increased tourists' choices, bringing them more travel activities and novel travel experiences, which even nonfans of the work could enjoy. Participant 4 mentioned that even if tourists are not fans, contents tourism provides a wider range of choices, and fellow tourists may also be aroused in interest, thereby extending the entire group's travel time in NZ:

"And for tourists as well, I think it just is an easy add on to be able to have like, this thing is from this movie or from that stuff. One of your members in your family might have heard it, even if you didn't ... It has the potential to widen what people do. Again, having a wider offering and being able to pick the interest of the kid at the back, the wife on the side, the husband, whoever in your party ... Whoever your party members are traveling. if we can pick their interest in wide different areas, that means we can also encourage them to stay longer in New Zealand." – Participant 4

In addition, a few participants also discussed the benefits of contents tourism, such as high business profits, reduced advertising and marketing costs, reduced carbon footprint, and promotion of sustainable tourism. It is worth noting that, except for three participants who expressed that they would consider participating in or expanding their contents tourism business if conditions permit, participant 8 clearly stated that they will continue to expand their contents tourism business soon.

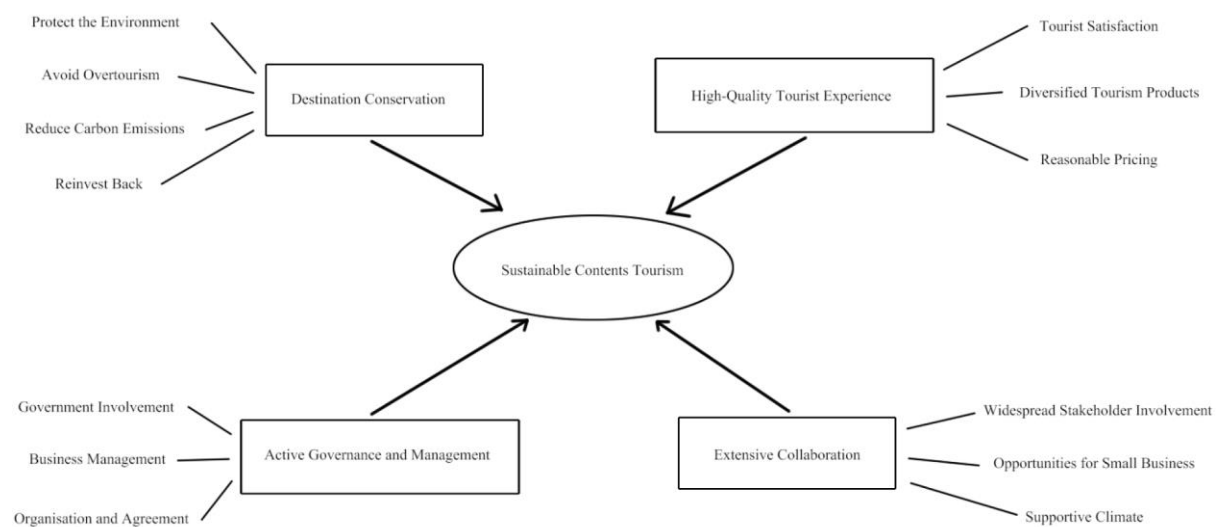
4.5 Components of Sustainable Contents Tourism

In the second theme of the interview, sustainable contents tourism, all participants demonstrated a relatively comprehensive understanding of sustainable tourism. They shared the sustainability measures of their organisation, and their understanding of sustainability and sustainable tourism. Most participants noted that sustainability is very important, with over half of them claiming that sustainability means everything and is the basic principle for all types of tourism. The researcher and participants had extensive discussions on what sustainability means, the unsustainable performance of contents tourism in NZ, what kind of contents tourism is sustainable, how NZ can promote sustainable development of contents tourism, and what challenges it will encounter.

Finally, the researcher organised the sustainability performance mentioned most frequently by participants into four sub themes, which answered the second research sub question, what kind of contents tourism is sustainable. The data was organised into four components of sustainable contents tourism, providing supplements and references for determining whether contents tourism is sustainable tourism and how to make contents

tourism more sustainable. Figure 1 is a diagram of the components of sustainable contents tourism, listing all the components that will be described in this chapter. Among them, extensive collaboration is the most core component for enhancing the sustainability of contents tourism.

Figure 1. Components of Sustainable Contents Tourism



4.5.1 Destination Conservation

During the interview, all 8 participants discussed protecting the environment or tourism resources of tourism destinations, and when it comes to sustainable tourism, most participants first think of keywords such as environmental protection, over-tourism, or carbon footprint. The researcher and participants identified four manifestations of destination conservation during the discussion and described them in this section.

Protect the Environment

Six participants directly emphasised the need to protect the environment in order to achieve sustainable contents tourism. They mentioned that the most important significance of protecting the environment for contents tourism is to maintain tourism resources and products, enable future generations to experience contents tourism, and encourage more people to participate in contents tourism, thereby promoting the continuous progress of the contents tourism industry in the long term.

Six participants discussed the specific requirements for sustainable contents tourism. Three participants stated that although the concept of sustainability is well-known, people still lack awareness of protecting the environment, so good education and publicity are still necessary. Participant 3 mentioned that they found in the statistical data that people have a cold attitude towards environmental protection and suggested that education may be helpful:

"The biggest challenge is apathy. So, we are doing what we think is right. But we think that most of our clients don't care ... Most people, a lot of people don't care about environmental protection or climate change. They don't care about the future ... That's just the kind of demographic that we deal with ... For them they're looking with a very short-term pair of glasses ... I think empathy is going to be our biggest problem. Education would help."

– Participant 3

Participant 3 also noticed that the core of contents tourism lies in the content and fans of works. Therefore, Participant 3 linked the content with environmental protection and

suggested that special events related to works could be organised to encourage fans and tourists to participate in environmental protection:

"Maybe it could be by way of action. It could be planting a tree. It could be painting a wall. It could be doing some kind of an activity around that content or works which make creates something better for the next people that are coming. It means that they become an active participant of that overall contents tourism." – Participant 3

In addition, nearly all participants mentioned that protecting the environment cannot be achieved without strengthening management and collaboration, which will be further discussed in the subsequent collaboration theme.

Avoid Overtourism

The issue of over-tourism was raised by five participants. As mentioned earlier, they all noted that over-tourism is the most common problem in contents tourism. They all discussed the phenomenon that sudden popularity of works can easily lead to over-tourism. Participant 8 explained that the sudden popularity of a work can bring in a large number of visitors, and the destination may not be able to cope due to insufficient reception capacity, resulting in damage to the local environment:

"There's also the possibility of overtourism. When a place suddenly becomes, a hotspot can lead to a flood of people in a short time. Because New Zealand has always had a problem, which is its size here and its reception capacity is not particularly strong. When a place suddenly goes viral because of a suddenly popular work, and tons of tourists rush in, it

just can't handle it. At the same time, it may also have some impact on the local environment, including some wildlife."

As a member of contents tourism destination operators, Participant 1 also expressed concern about over-tourism and the current situation where reception capacity is limited by resources:

"Always the issue of how do we deal with all the people that come then? With overtourism, of course, being something, we do need to consider, because we only have so many resources. If too many tourists come in a short time, it can really mess with the local environment." – Participant 1

Therefore, 5 participants suggested that sustainable contents tourism should focus on avoiding over-tourism. They proposed initiatives, such as controlling the number of tourists, balancing tourist flow through reservations, and enhancing tourist reception capacity through strengthening infrastructure construction and collaboration.

Reduce Carbon Emissions

Four participants mentioned carbon footprint and carbon emissions. They discussed the relationship between carbon emissions and climate change and noted that planting plants could offset carbon emissions. A few participants mentioned that planting trees is the responsibility of tourism operators, and their organisations are actively planting more plants or participating in relevant fund organisations for carbon sequestration. Participant 3 argued that reducing carbon emissions is a collaborative effort between tourism operators and tourists. On the one hand, the funding for tree planting by tourism operators comes from

profits provided by tourists, which means tourists have passively participated in carbon offsetting. Participant 3 described how they and tourists participated in offsetting carbon emissions:

"We're offsetting our carbon we're also using money from our clients. Luggage levies to buy trees to support the trails that we run our trips on ... So that's why we do it for them. So, part of the money that they pay to do our trips goes into regenerative tourism. So, they're actually doing it without even thinking." – Participant 3

On the other hand, as mentioned earlier for special events, Participant 3 suggested encouraging tourists to directly participate in activities such as planting trees. Furthermore, Participant 4 emphasised that due to the geographical location, arriving in NZ itself would result in significant carbon emissions:

"When they come to New Zealand. We want them to come for a very long time in New Zealand, because we have one of the highest carbon footprints to fly to New Zealand, right. So, when it comes to sustainability, we want people. We want to show people that there's so much to do in New Zealand." – Participant 4

Therefore, Participant 4 repeatedly insisted in the interview that the best way to reduce carbon emissions is to enhance the tourist experience and extend their travel time in NZ as much as possible.

Reinvest Back

Four participants emphasised the importance of reinvesting profits into environmental protection, with the most frequently mentioned keywords being ecological restoration and

regenerative. These four participants emphasised that the tourism destination is the foundation of their tourism business, and only by allocating profits back to the destination can their tourism business be sustained in the long term. They mentioned that through the restoration of the destination's ecology, not only has the local natural environment and wildlife been protected, but the quality of tourism resources and products has also been maintained, ensuring the experience of tourists. Participant 3 mentioned their efforts in ecological restoration and regeneration, as well as the significance of reinvesting in destinations to maintain tourism business:

"We have used some of that money to reinvest back into the trails ... We work with our local accommodation providers, activity providers to support them, so that they, too, also put some money back into the trails. Because that's where we get our income from. If we don't have a trail, and if we don't have a great trail, and if we don't build a trail that has ongoing future resilience and beauty. Then we have no product to sell. And then it just goes to the weeds." – Participant 3

Participant 8 discussed that reinvesting profits into destinations is not only about protecting the environment and nature, but also about allowing residents to share the benefits of tourism, improving their lives, and increasing their support for the tourism industry:

"Mainly it's about the economy, and there's also a social aspect that makes local residents more interested in tourism content. They feel that through contents tourism, these attractions, and tourism services, they have gained some benefits such as improving their quality of life. And there are also many scenic spot companies that do this. For example, for

every ticket you spend, we will donate the money to local children or wildlife. For institutions with such a project, it is also a form of sustainable development." – Participant 8

4.5.2 High-Quality Tourist Experience

Seven participants are convinced that a high-quality tourist experience is an essential component of sustainable contents tourism. The participants explained that it is crucial to value the experience of tourists to retain tourists and increase repeat customers. During the interviews, improving the quality of contents tourism products and developing rich contents tourism products were mentioned the most frequently by participants, which are two specific manifestations of a high-quality tourist experience.

Tourist Satisfaction

Seven participants mentioned the need to enhance the quality of the tourist experience. Four participants discussed tourist satisfaction and noted that attention should be paid to tourist feedback to improve tourist experience. Participant 1 mentioned that tourist satisfaction is closely related to tourist experience and sustainable tourism:

"Sustainability is my area ... It kind of provides a framework for everything that we do in that space. It has 4 key areas ... It's also got visitor satisfaction. It's all about reacting to the feedback we get from our visitors improving their experience." – Participant 1

Participant 5 mentioned that if the promotion of tourism providers is consistent with the real products, tourists will recognise the positive experience, while false advertising will lead to people spreading bad reviews:

"For the businesses to be sustainable. They need to be walking the talk. Because if they create authentic experiences and they walk that talk, then that will support positive promotion. That's really important in tourism ... If you have a group of people that come to your site, and they have a bad experience. That's gonna filter out and spread everywhere." –

Participant 5

Five participants pointed out that improving infrastructure is crucial for enhancing the tourist experience. They noted that good infrastructure is the most fundamental requirement for sustainable tourism. Participant 6 mentioned that if the infrastructure cannot meet the requirements for receiving tourists, it will lead to a poor experience:

"Sustainable tourism means that your infrastructure must keep up ... You're just trying to make money. A bunch of people come in, and then you can't receive them anymore. You don't have the ability to handle all this garbage. Then, there is a queue everywhere you go. So, your travel experience is actually not good." – Participant 6

In addition, a few participants pointed out that a high-quality tourism experience means that sustainability can be observed. Participant 5 mentioned that tourists hope to truly feel the sustainability promoted as sustainable tourism in their actual travel experience, rather than just a marketing slogan:

"We talk a lot, but we don't walk, talk all the time ... Because they want it to be authentic. People are looking for authentic experiences, so if they come and you've said that you're sustainable. And they see all these things that aren't ... That will be a negative against that experience." – Participant 5

Diversified Tourism Products

Five participants emphasised the importance of improving the diversity of contents tourism products. They emphasised that NZ's tourism resources can be well utilised, combining cultural and natural resources to create diverse and unique contents tourism destinations. Participant 1 mentioned that the reason for the sustainability of their contents tourism destinations is the combination of cultural and natural environment to develop diverse destinations:

"I think what makes us sustainable is a kind of combination of cultural and environmental tourism. So not only do we kind of present our natural environment as being a tourism focus. We've also got all of our cultural environments. So, with content tourism, we've got a lot of our towns that we use for filming. So, we've got a diverse amount of tourist destinations that I think there's something for everyone." – Participant 1

Four participants emphasised that the core of contents tourism is content, and diversified content works are necessary. They noted that developing cultural and content industries while linking more types of works with the tourism industry would help enrich tourism products. Participant 4 commented that it is not enough to rely solely on waiting for the next sequel of *The Lord of the Rings* to develop contents tourism:

"It's going to stay forever right if we decide to diversify and have literary tourism and video games, and this and that right. And you can emulate and create an industry rather than having all the eggs in one basket and keep waiting for the other Lord of the Rings ... Like the

best way to go about it, I think, is to widen that appeal and have more variety." – Participant

4

In addition to increasing the diversity of content works, three participants mentioned that enriching and updating contents tourism products and activities is also important for enhancing the tourist experience. Participant 1 introduced the reasons why their contents tourism destination has always been attractive:

*"We do very similar in that every couple of years or every few years. We offer a new product. So, we've just had our * (A new destination, along with some new facilities and activities, to experience the world depicted in the work) added. So, it brings people that have already been before. It encourages them to come back, because there's something new, they haven't seen. And then at the end of this year or early next year, we're adding another thing which is our * (A new activity to learn about the creation of the work)."* – Participant 1

Beyond high-quality experiences and diverse tourism products, two participants repeatedly suggested that reasonable pricing is necessary for a good contents tourism experience.

4.5.3 Active Governance and Management

All participants mentioned the important roles of government and managers when discussing issues related to sustainable tourism, believing that the realisation of sustainable tourism cannot be achieved without their leadership and management.

Government Involvement

All participants affirmed the necessity of government involvement in sustainable tourism planning. Most participants insisted that sustainable tourism requires government regulations and policies as a foundation. For example, Participant 5 gave an example of the German government's efforts, pointing out that without sustainable standards set by the government, businesses may claim to be sustainable even if they are not:

"There were a lot of people that might have ticked a box on some criteria that said they were green, but they weren't not really ... I see places like Germany and such. You know. Their government put a lot of requirements on businesses to be sustainable. We don't have those requirements to the same degree here. Economically, I think the drivers and that's a government-based thing, you know." – Participant 5

In addition to the need to establish standards for evaluating sustainable tourism, government monitoring of businesses to implement sustainable tourism has also been mentioned by participants. For example, Participant 6 suggested that the government should monitor destination pricing, homogeneous products, and the number of tourists received:

"Government intervention is related to price control, environment, and infrastructure. And the protection of commerce, such as preventing the appearance of ten coffee shops on a street or in an area. Otherwise, it wouldn't be special anymore ... Environmental protection means that infrastructure should keep up with your reception capacity. For example, if you can handle 10,000 people, then serve 10,000 people. The government doesn't allow you to exceed it." – Participant 6

Business Management

Six participants suggested that businesses should encourage sustainable tourism within their organisations and strengthen management. Participant 5 noted that under the management culture of sustainable tourism, it is easier for employees to carry out various tasks in a more sustainable way:

"Being sustainable is about how your business manages itself the culture within your business ... The way you work is trying to be more sustainable whether you're managing waste power. All of those things you would be looking to make inroads for the way you work to be sustainable. So, if you're looking at being an activity, then you would look for the most sustainable way of delivering that." – Participant 5

Three participants further discussed the significance of employee training. For example, Participant 7 mentioned that their company trains tour guides to promote environmental protection:

"Our training principle, for our tour guides. As soon as a tourist gets on the bus, the moment our guides meet the guests. Our guides will promote environmental awareness to guests." – Participant 7

However, not all businesses actively engage in sustainability management. Participant 6 stated that they were not aware of their company's sustainability measures and had never heard of sustainable tourism promotion and training within the company.

Organisation and Agreement

Three participants emphasised that organisation and agreement are important ways to coordinate and plan sustainable tourism development. Two participants mentioned the positive significance of Qualmark in promoting a more sustainable tourism industry in NZ. Participant 5 introduced Qualmark's rating of businesses through criteria and assessments, forcing them to be more sustainable:

"Qualmark used to have a system, but it was very tick box based, you know. Do you have double glazing? Yes, you can't build a house without double glazing. So that's not a business going out of the way to be sustainable. They've had to do that. To comply with building code ... Qualmark is, it's getting better. They brought in a sustainable tourism rating ... So, I think what's happened to Qualmark have changed their criteria to be better reflecting the needs of what a sustainable business." – Participant 5

Participant 5 stated that Qualmark's criteria have not always been reasonable, but they are constantly improving and being recognised by more people, forcing more businesses to accept Qualmark and value sustainable management.

Sustainability Commitment and Tiaki Promise were also mentioned by participants. They stated that these two agreements requiring sustainable tourism are also widely recognised in NZ, forcing many businesses claiming sustainable tourism to participate. This means that according to the requirements of the agreement, they need to become more sustainable.

4.5.4 Extensive Collaboration

During the interviews, many participants identified strengthening collaboration as the best way to address the current issues of contents tourism in NZ and promote sustainable tourism. In the discussion on sustainability, all participants mentioned the need to strengthen collaboration, which is also the most frequently mentioned keyword. Furthermore, when answering every interview question about sustainable tourism, participants mentioned collaboration. The specific manifestations of the extensive contents tourism collaboration mentioned by the participants can be summarised into the following three aspects.

Widespread Stakeholder Involvement

Six participants claimed that contents tourism requires the participation of a wide range of stakeholders. Several participants mentioned that contents tourism differs from other types of tourism, and the biggest challenge is the need to establish extensive collaboration. A few participants even exaggeratedly stated that extensive collaboration could solve all problems. Participant 1 mentioned that contents tourism has strong instability, which requires tourism operators to improve their adaptability and strengthen it through collaboration:

"It's just being adaptable is absolutely key. When you're in the tourism industry, things can change so quickly, and if you're not ready to change with it. You run the risk of becoming obsolete. So yeah, working with others and just being ready to accept the challenges as they come." – Participant 1

Five participants mentioned the need to increase the number of stakeholders as much as possible and encourage them to participate in the contents tourism industry. Participant 4

pointed out that sustainable contents tourism should involve all stakeholders as much as possible in collaboration from the beginning:

"Collaboration with all the stakeholders from the ground up, right from the local iwis, which are the local Māori tribes, conservationists and operators. So, like that, you actually have an overall kind of collaboration ... So that's the ideal kind of sustainable contents tourism, it's valued includes from the ground up everybody." – Participant 4

Three participants noted that economic benefits and sustainability are closely related. They discussed that the participation of more stakeholders can enable more people to earn income from contents tourism, thereby promoting the common progress of the tourism industry, economy, and residents' well-being. Additionally, two participants stated that collaboration with copyright owners is a prerequisite for the development of many contents tourism businesses.

Opportunities for Small Business

Most participants noted that it was currently difficult for small businesses in NZ to participate in contents tourism. According to six participants, it is necessary to protect the interests of small and medium-sized businesses in contents tourism collaboration. Four participants mentioned the importance of balancing income. As argued by Participant 4, all stakeholders should receive income:

"It can mean like economic sustainability, you know, to make sure that everybody's every local community is making money." – Participant 4

A few participants further discussed how large corporations control the industry, resulting in many stakeholders not benefiting from contents tourism. Participant 4 revealed the lack of medium-sized businesses and the need to improve collaboration by distributing benefits to groups other than large corporations or family microbusinesses:

"If there is more collaboration, I think there is a way to be able to kind of spread more the benefit of tourism across like diverse stakeholders, and reduce the vast inequality within our tourism ... You only have, like massive corporation, which are making millions and millions of dollars to their shareholders, or you have mom and pop shop. There is very little in the middle. So, I think you could kind of like trickle a little bit more." – Participant 4

Four participants also mentioned that developing contents tourism should respect local culture and community. They suggested that the development of content works, and tourism products should be integrated with local culture and prioritise the well-being of local communities and residents. Participant 4 reminded the contents tourism industry to tell the local culture and stories in a respectful and correct way:

"There is cultural sustainability, which is respecting, you know, the local cultures, the Māori traditions and Māori stories need to be respected and told the right way." – Participant 4

These four participants all emphasised the close connection between sustainability and well-being. It is worth noting that, how Participant 1 interprets community support in fact reflect that tourism operators and communities support each other:

"Community wellbeing, that's all about looking after your local community where you're based, whether that be through sponsorship or engagement or working with local suppliers, basically supporting the communities that support us." – Participant 1

Participant 8 also affirmed the mutual support between tourism operators and communities. They encourage tourists to purchase community agricultural products to promote community welfare, and residents are more supportive of tourism business after improving their lives.

Supportive Climate

Five participants commented that extensive collaboration requires a good supportive environment as a foundation. They once again mentioned government leadership and reaching agreements as a guarantee of collaboration, which allows stakeholders to know what kind of business is worth collaborating with and how to collaborate. Several participants mentioned using social media to promote the establishment of collaboration and strengthen communication during collaboration.

During the discussion of sustainable themes, many participants further asserted directly that sustainable contents tourism cannot be achieved without collaboration. Collaboration is also the most frequently mentioned word by participants throughout the entire interview process, which will be the highlight of the next section.

4.6 Forms of Stakeholder Collaboration

This section corresponds to the third research sub question, what role does stakeholder collaboration play in sustainable contents tourism? The researcher explores this issue by analysing the forms of stakeholder collaboration.

4.6.1 An Essential Component

As a member of contents tourism destination operators, Participant 1 acknowledges that they heavily rely on other stakeholders and suppliers. Through the interviews, it can be identified that collaboration is a core role in contents tourism. All participants affirmed that collaboration is an important component of contents tourism and demonstrated this by discussing the benefits that collaboration brings.

General Benefits

Five participants discussed the general benefits of collaboration in contents tourism and explained how collaboration facilitates contents tourism business. They stated that collaboration has brought more job opportunities and made the tourism business successful. They further explained that collaboration spreads the costs of the tourism industry to make it affordable for businesses, allowing tourism operators to learn from their partners' experiences and obtain useful real-time industry information.

It is worth noting that the four participants mentioned that collaboration brings more tourists. They discussed how collaboration can help develop new tourism products and activities, or increase their scale, thereby enhancing the attractiveness of destinations or tourism products to tourists. For example, Participant 5 mentioned that their destination

collaborates with various festival organisers to create tourism products that attract a wider range of tourists:

"We would tap into to their expertise and work with them to create product. Here we definitely look at all of the festival type of activity that happens within Auckland. So, if it's Arts Festival month, if it's photography, festival month, etc. Then we will provide activity and partner with the people running those events so that we can have additional promotion to people that are specifically looking for arts or for photographic activity." – Participant 5

Benefits to Sustainability

Seven participants noted that collaboration is essential for sustainable tourism and explained how collaboration enhances the sustainability of contents tourism. Three participants first mentioned that collaboration can enhance the consensus on sustainable development, as partners influence each other to increase their attention and practice of sustainable tourism. Moreover, during the discussion of the collaboration theme in the interview, the data provided by six participants is highly correlated with the components of sustainable contents tourism mentioned earlier, further verifying the key role of collaboration in sustainable tourism.

First, in the previous section on the components of sustainable contents tourism, many participants mentioned that ecological restoration and environmental protection can be achieved through collaboration. However, in this section's collaborative theme, only two participants emphasised the role of collaboration in environmental protection. Including three aspects: extending travel time, providing funding for protection, and learning advanced

experience. Participant 1 mentioned that they found experts from their partners and learned sustainable tourism methods:

"It's really being able to learn from each other ... How do you manage this type of waste, or how do you manage such an increase in tourist numbers? And you can go and collaborate with some of the others. Well, how did you deal with this? So having that kind of support base as well, people that you can go and ask questions to that are experts in the field and are familiar with what you do is always really helpful." – Participant 1

Second, four participants discussed how collaboration can bring a high-quality tourist experience to customers. They mentioned that collaboration is necessary to make tourism products and tourist experiences complete, and the constantly changing demand for partners drives tourism suppliers to update their tourism products. Participant 3 explained how stakeholder collaboration brings a complete experience to tourists:

"The collaboration that we have with the other stakeholders in the trail is critical to providing a marvellous, amazing experience for the visitor ... Every accommodation provider provides a different experience. Every cafe and restaurant and every activity that they go and see or participate in provides another element to their overall experience. So, we're just one little part. It's the collaboration of all the stakeholders that creates the whole." – Participant 3

Third, four participants mentioned that the governance of sustainable contents tourism needs to be achieved through collaboration. They explained that the government can collect opinions from various tourism stakeholders through collaboration to develop sustainable standards that are more easily accepted by more people. Meanwhile, through collaboration,

the knowledge and experience of experts or practitioners can be gathered to formulate more advanced sustainable development goals and policies. Participant 5 stated that stakeholders will actively collaborate through the conference to push for legislation and achieve the development of sustainable tourism criteria:

"If you've got stakeholders that support the need to have quality and sustainable activity, then they will push for legislation that requests that they'll push to ensure that there are criteria that support that so that they're being marketed, they're ensuring that the businesses that are delivering are of the quality to deliver sustainable activity ... They'll do it through conferencing." – Participant 5

Fourth, five participants mentioned that good collaboration can further attract a wider range of stakeholders to participate in the collaboration. They explained that good collaborative relationships benefit more stakeholders, alleviate inequality in the tourism industry, and make more people willing to participate in contents tourism business. As summarised by Participant 3, the more extensive and good collaboration leads to more success, which can form a virtuous cycle to promote more collaboration:

"Well, everybody wins. So, the more collaboration there is, the more people that buy into the overall experience, everyone's going to win. Everybody, benefits encourage more people to participate." – Participant 3

4.6.2 Diverse Stakeholders

During the interviews, participants emphasised that successful contents tourism collaboration cannot be achieved without the joint efforts of various stakeholders. All

participants discussed the stakeholders in contents tourism and concluded that diverse and rich stakeholder participation is the foundation for achieving collaboration. Although several participants emphasised that everyone is a stakeholder, they also discussed the specific stakeholders that may be involved in contents tourism. Thirty-two types of stakeholders were mentioned by the participants. The researcher classified these stakeholders into 6 major categories based on previous literature reviews and further subdivided it into 16 subcategories. Based on discussions with participants, the definitions and descriptions of these 16 types of contents tourism stakeholders were summarised in Table 5.

Table 5. Stakeholders of Contents Tourism as Discussed by Participants

Primary category	Secondary category	Description
Tourists	Fans	Fans of works are more enthusiastic about paying for various activities related to contents tourism.
	Regular tourists	Even regular tourists can be attracted by curiosity or successful contents tourism destinations.
Contents stakeholders	Creators or producers	For example, authors of novels and film companies.
	Copyright holders	In NZ, it is difficult for stakeholders to identify the copyright owner, but they believe that contents tourism products require high copyright fees.
	Licensed merchandise manufacturers	Produce goods related to the work, such as souvenirs.
Regional stakeholders	Residents	Special attention should be paid to landlords and indigenous groups in NZ.
	Communities	Participants mixed communities, resident groups, and local businesses together in their discussion.
	Non-governmental organisations	Including foundations, groups, conferences, protectionist organisations.
Government	Local government	The specific implementers of regulation and governance and provide a supportive environment for contents tourism.
	Tourism department	Offer policy support and guarantees for contents tourism. In NZ, this department is Tourism New Zealand.
	Whole country	The overall arrangement of the country even determines the development of contents tourism.
Tourism businesses	Tourism service providers	Directly provide services to tourists, such as hotels, restaurants, tour guides, tour groups.
	Suppliers	Provide products or services to tourism businesses, such as car hire companies, destination management companies, contract caterers.
Others	Media	Helps people learn about contents tourism and obtain information. Including travel websites, internet content creators, AI, traditional media.
	Staff	Tourism businesses rely on staff and are influenced by them.
	Sponsors	Sometimes play a decisive role in certain contents tourism activities or events.

Tourists

Five participants viewed tourists as stakeholders in contents tourism. Participant 1 pointed out that the difference between them as a contents tourism destination and other tourism operators, is that they rely on a fan base that likes the works:

"A key stakeholder that we have is a pretty strong fan base as well. We rely on the people that are in love with the books and the films, and that's probably slightly different from other tourism operators." – Participant 1

Not limited to fans, all five participants emphasised that regular tourists are also stakeholders in contents tourism. Participant 2 questioned the definition of contents tourism, and argued that contents tourism can also be a factor in attracting regular tourists to destinations:

"Contents tourism attracts fans to travel, but I don't think it's too comprehensive. Because they may not necessarily be fans. For example, if a person wants to go to Japan, then if there are some contents tourism attractions during this journey, it may also attract him. He may not be a fan, but he heard there are filming locations for Slam Dunk there. He may think it's interesting, so he wants to go there. That is to say, contents tourism will encourage him to visit this scenic spot." – Participant 6

Contents Stakeholders

Six participants discussed stakeholders related to works and contents. Three participants mentioned the creators of the works, such as film companies and authors. However, participants were more concerned about the copyright ownership, and five

participants firmly claimed that copyright owners were key stakeholders that could not be ignored in NZ contents tourism. Most participants pointed out the advantageous position of copyright owners and assumed that in NZ, copyright owners strictly control the copyright of works, and tourism businesses cannot develop contents tourism products without approval. When it came to copyright owners, most participants expressed that the copyright fees for developing contents tourism products may be expensive. However, unexpectedly, none of participants were able to accurately identify the copyright owner of any work, even members of contents tourism destination operators. Participants who already had business dealings with contents tourism destinations believed that the copyright fees for contents tourism could be very high, making it difficult for them to expand their business. However, when it came to discussing copyright fees, all participants most frequently used terms like "maybe", "perhaps", "probably", or "should be". When the researcher directly asked how high the copyright fee was, participants responded that they were unsure. For example, Participant 7 inferred that third-party businesses could not deeply participate in contents tourism, possibly due to high copyright fees:

"Hobbiton's revenue shares, the copyright holders probably take quite a percentage. So, these vested interests, actually people related to Hobbiton. Third parties, no other businesses can get in. If you want to open a restaurant now and put up a sign selling some food from Hobbit. You can't. Because their royalties should be very high ... How much are the copyright fees? Who knows." – Participant 7

Furthermore, a few participants also pointed out that goods manufacturers authorised by copyright owners can also become stakeholders in contents tourism. They can produce goods related to content works, such as souvenirs, which may be sold in contents tourism destinations.

Regional Stakeholders

Six participants mentioned local stakeholders at the destination. Four participants identified residents as stakeholders. They suggested encouraging the participation of local indigenous groups in the development of contents tourism, allowing them to share the benefits of tourism, especially the Māori groups. Three participants mentioned that some land in NZ is privately owned, so landlords sometimes become stakeholders in contents tourism. For example, a few participants disclosed that the land in their current operating destination was owned by certain families.

Four participants claimed that local communities are also important stakeholders. However, when discussing communities, they actually focused more on various residents or local businesses. Even so, they also vaguely mentioned the need to achieve overall collaboration with community collectives to encourage more stakeholders to participate in contents tourism. Additionally, a small number of participants mentioned non-governmental organisations, including foundations, conferences, and conservation organisations, as bridges for communication and collaboration among stakeholders.

Government

Seven participants mentioned the government and noted it to be the most important stakeholder in contents tourism. All 7 participants mentioned local governments, explaining that active regulation and governance by local government departments are key to improving tourist experience and promoting sustainable development of contents tourism.

Over half of the participants considered the Tourism New Zealand and the entire country to be the most important stakeholders. They stated that the level of policy support and overall planning from the NZ government and tourism department for contents tourism determines its development. Participant 4 gave an example of the transformation of NZ's national tourism positioning and analysed the profound impact of the country on the contents tourism industry:

"You have to follow what your country promotes right when the country used to promote itself as a backpacker country, we were a guide for backpackers. Now the country is promoting themselves as luxury country, and is actively trying to push backpackers away ... As a country, nationwide policy implements ... If the country only decides to push film tourism, you only create product around film tourism." – Participant 4

Tourism Businesses

All participants discussed the tourism industry, pointing out that local businesses or various tourism companies are the actual operators of contents tourism. The researcher divided the tourism businesses mentioned by participants into two categories, based on the different service targets: tourism service providers mainly provide products and services

directly to tourists, while tourism suppliers mainly provide products and services for other tourism businesses. It should be noted that these two types of tourism businesses may sometimes overlap in business, such as accommodation suppliers providing rooms directly to tourists, but sometimes they may also package rooms and provide them to tour groups or other businesses.

All participants noted that tourism service providers were the most direct stakeholders because they directly provided products and services to tourists, and the various businesses of contents tourism were directly operated by them. According to the participants, all businesses and self-employed individuals directly contacted by tourists during contents tourism can be considered as tourism service providers. They gave examples of transportation, hotels, shops, restaurants, destination operators, tourist guides, travel agencies, tour groups, online travel agencies, tourism companies, etc.

More than half of the participants emphasised that tourism suppliers are also important stakeholders in tourism business. They disclosed that many tourism businesses rely on their suppliers, and without suppliers, their products and services cannot be delivered. Participant 1 emphasised that the two most important stakeholders for their contents tourism destination are suppliers and tourists:

"We're pretty reliant on our supplies, our suppliers and our customers. Really, those are our 2 main ones." – Participant 1

According to participants, although tourism suppliers do not have direct contact with tourists, the full delivery of contents tourism products and services wouldn't be possible

without them. As described by the participants, specific tourism suppliers may be the same as tourism service providers, such as accommodation providers, destination operators, tourism companies, etc. These suppliers sometimes provide services directly to tourists. Moreover, the participants also gave examples of suppliers who mainly provide products and services for tourism businesses, such as car hire companies, destination management companies, contract caterers, etc.

Others

In addition, six participants mentioned the overlooked groups of tourism stakeholders, such as media, business staff, and sponsors. More than half of the participants mentioned the significant impact of social media and internet content creators on contents tourism. They noted that tourists were more attracted to novel things, and that contents tourism sometimes caused fashion in the media, thus bringing in many tourists to the destination. Three participants pointed out that internet media has made contents tourism popular in certain Asian destinations. Most participants also highlighted that a major issue is that most people in NZ have not heard of contents tourism, and the media is a good way for people to learn about and become familiar with contents tourism. Participant 4, a manager of travel website, described that their websites gave more tourists a chance to learn about destinations they hadn't initially considered visiting, and AI and internet content creators facilitated the dissemination of information:

"AI copied my website. The information is out there because we put it out there ... By doing that we send more people further afield, places that would not have at all have had in

their radar ... So even if they don't know about our website, they probably have been influenced by our content in some ways ... Instagrams and things like those accounts ... They just repackage our content. So, in some ways we're creating the content here because we go to all those places." – Participant 4

Many participants also mentioned that even for fans, it is not easy to obtain information about contents tourism, and the media may help provide tourists with relevant information about destinations and content works.

In addition, a small number of participants indicated that sponsors and staff are also stakeholders. For example, Participant 5 stated that they have a dedicated sponsoring organisation, and contents tourism activities and events at the destination were largely added due to the strong support of sponsors. Separately, a few participants stated that without staff, their tourism business cannot proceed. For example, Participant 1 disclosed that the number of staff varies depending on the season, and when the number is small, several contents tourism activities at their destination can only be temporarily closed.

4.6.3 Far from Easy to Achieve

It is not easy to achieve collaboration. Despite the importance of collaboration in contents tourism, most participants have expressed that there are many obstacles to achieving collaboration in contents tourism in NZ. At the same time, they provided suggestions for reducing obstacles and explained what kind of collaborative environment for contents tourism business makes them willing to participate.

Obstacles

Seven participants discussed the obstacles in contents tourism collaboration, which can be summarised into three aspects: limited opportunities for small businesses, complexity of business, and communication difficulties.

There were still five participants who expressed concerns about the disadvantaged position of small businesses in contents tourism collaboration. Two of them once again argued that copyright owners excessively control copyright, preventing many people from participating in contents tourism. Three participants criticised that the rights of small businesses may be overlooked, which means they are passive in collaboration, and their reasonable needs and suggestions are often not adopted by partners with larger scale. Three participants further pointed out that the difficulty of collaboration is inversely proportional to the scale of the business. Participant 7 from a smaller tourism company and Participant 2 from a larger tourism company, both managing directors, gave completely opposite evaluations of their collaboration experience with Hobbiton:

"Well, Hobbiton. It's not very friendly for tour groups, and the time schedule is very unreasonable. You have to follow the time they set ... Driver's timeout, tour guide's timeout, guest's timeout on the road, right? Without any flexibility ... All the rules were set by them. No coordination, and no flexibility." – Participant 7

"Hobbiton is just a small part of our collaboration in New Zealand ... They may have difficulty booking tickets from other places. But it's relatively easy for us ... Hobbiton was

super nice to us, very relaxed, and convenient for booking tickets. For example, if there is a temporary change, the time can also be flexibly adjusted." – Participant 2

Obviously, larger companies have more advantageous positions in collaboration, while the interests of the small companies managed by Participant 7 are sometimes overlooked.

The complexity of contents tourism business is the second obstacle to collaboration, which was mentioned by four participants. They explained that contents tourism, as a relatively niche type of tourism, is less understood by people, and most stakeholders lack corresponding knowledge and skills, which may lead to difficulties in collaboration and communication. At the same time, they mentioned that due to the copyright and complex agreements involved in contents tourism, more efforts are needed to achieve collaboration. As a result, participants pointed out that these complexities increase the cost and risk of collaboration, making stakeholders more inclined to temporarily observe cautiously rather than actively collaborate.

The third obstacle to collaborate, communication difficulties, was mentioned by three participants. In addition to organisations having poor communication and lacking specialised branches for collaboration, participants also mentioned that it is often difficult to contact the authors and true copyright owners of the works. Participant 4 introduced that they have been involved with *The Lord of the Rings* in their business multiple times, but are still unclear about its true copyright owner, indicating that establishing communication with copyright owners is not easy:

"The Lord of the rings. That's obviously a big barrier to a lot of location, etc.

Intellectual properties, licensing agreements, etc ... Even me, right? Which I you know we talk about it quite often. Right? I don't even know if it's Lionsgate or Warner Bros. Or Tolkien estate like? Who would you talk to right now? And how do you get a hold of them to start a new tool?" – Participant 4

In addition to discussing the obstacles to collaboration in contents tourism, participants also discussed how to promote collaboration from the following five aspects, as well as their expectations for contents tourism collaboration.

Government Involvement

Seven participants emphasised the important role of the government in achieving collaboration. They suggested that the contents tourism industry requires the overall layout and leadership of the government, as well as the development of a regulatory framework. For example, providing financial support to small businesses or controlling the monopoly position of large companies in the contents tourism industry. Participant 4 proposed a government led wide-ranging copyright license to facilitate collaboration among stakeholders in the field of copyright:

"It could be a government wide kind of license. So, if the New Zealand Government could get like. That was shot in New Zealand, we got the right of it, as part of the contract right. And now anyone that has a product you know to do with New Zealand has the right to use the license of, let's say the Lord of the rings, for whatever the nominal fee is like 3% license or 2% license, you know ... There is a streamlined process." – Participant 4

Collaboration Awareness

Six participants mentioned the need to promote collaborative awareness in the contents tourism industry. In addition to sharing profits and encouraging partners to participate in contents tourism, participants also proposed the need to cultivate contents tourism pioneers and advocated for NZ authors to describe their hometowns more in their works. Participant 8 stated that the tourist flow to NZ increased due to the director's decision to use hometown as a filming location for the film *The Lord of the Rings*:

"Although the author of The Lord of the Rings novel is British, it happens that the director of the film is a New Zealander. He decided to choose his hometown as the filming location. This has created the current tourist flow for New Zealand." – Participant 4

Information and Communication

Five participants mentioned that collaboration requires sharing information and strengthening communication. They suggested that contents tourism also needed to reach agreements through establishing organisations, conferences, and business networks to achieve collaboration. Participants pointed out that this can make different businesses more likely to share information, thereby improving stakeholders' knowledge and skills about contents tourism.

Improve Product Quality

Four participants mentioned the need for other stakeholders to provide higher quality products in collaboration. Participants emphasised that their only expectation for other contents tourism providers is that they can improve the quality of the tourism products or

services they are responsible for. Participants also hoped for more and higher quality content works, as this is a prerequisite for developing more contents tourism destinations and products.

Careful Selection

Moreover, four participants mentioned that it is necessary to strictly screen collaboration partners. Partners with experience in contents tourism business, similar goals, and strong tourism professional skills are more favoured by participants. They suggested that business collaboration with these partners with certain competitiveness would be smoother and more likely to succeed. Participant 2 introduced their choice of business partners who also adhere to sustainable tourism and provide high-quality products:

"Our requirements for the quality of tourism are quite high. Team screening. That is to say, we will pay attention to retaining some good tourism partners, and we also have requirements for their services ... We will also raise the standard for our partners, that is, if they value sustainable tourism, they may be considered as partners." – Participant 2

4.7 Summary

Findings are very beneficial for answering research questions. NZ has abundant contents tourism resources, including many content works describing NZ and corresponding destinations, various types of contents tourism activities, and unique Māori culture. However, although NZ's contents tourism has advantages such as a foundation of works, beautiful natural scenery, and high profits, the competitiveness of NZ's contents tourism is still limited at present. This is because the types of works are mainly focused on films, which is relatively

singular. The concept of contents tourism is relatively niche in NZ, and the development level of the contents tourism industry is low and mostly unsustainable. Nevertheless, participants still pointed out that contents tourism can significantly attract tourists, increase fiscal revenue, and improve tourist experience, and noted that the benefits of contents tourism outweigh the drawbacks and have broad prospects.

Destination conservation, good tourism experience, active governance and management, and extensive collaboration are the four components of sustainable contents tourism identified through discussions with participants, which suggest what kind of contents tourism is more sustainable. Destination conservation requirements include protecting the environment, avoiding overtourism, reducing carbon emissions, and reinvesting back into the local environment. A high-quality tourist experience consists of high tourist satisfaction, diverse contents tourism products, and reasonable pricing. Active governance and management, including both internal and external aspects: externally, the government develops sustainable tourism standards and strengthens supervision to ensure their implementation, and establishing organisations and agreements can also play a role. Internally, businesses should encourage sustainable tourism and strengthen management to ensure that members promote sustainable tourism in their work. Extensive collaboration requires as many stakeholders as possible, equal status among all parties involved, and a favourable environment that supports collaboration.

The role of collaboration in sustainable contents tourism was identified in analysing the forms of collaboration in contents tourism. Collaboration plays a crucial role in

sustainable contents tourism and is an indispensable component of it. This is reflected in the collaboration that promotes the realisation and success of contents tourism business, while also bringing in more tourists. More importantly, the role of collaboration in promoting more sustainable tourism corresponds once again to four sustainable tourism components, namely, good collaboration can improve the environment, tourist experience, governance, and broader collaboration. During the discussion with the interviewees, six types of stakeholder groups in contents tourism collaboration were identified and further subdivided into 16 categories, who are the participants and foundation for achieving contents tourism collaboration. However, due to the complexity of contents tourism business, unequal status in collaboration, and communication difficulties, achieving collaboration is not an easy task. The participants further proposed the requirements needed to achieve collaboration, including government involvement, cultivating a sense of collaboration, sharing information and strengthening communication, improving the quality of tourism products, and carefully selecting partners.

In short, based on interviews and data analysis, three research sub questions were answered: 1. The status of contents tourism in NZ is that there are abundant contents tourism resources, but the utilisation and development of resources are insufficient, and there is a lack of mature products. 2. Sustainable contents tourism should focus on environmental protection, improving tourist experience, active governance and management, and extensive collaboration. 3. Collaboration is an indispensable and crucial role in sustainable contents tourism, enabling the business of contents tourism to be realised and become more sustainable.

Chapter 5 Discussion

5.1 Overview

In this chapter, the researcher analyses the research findings by combining previous literature research and theoretical frameworks. The research findings offer strong validation for the application of research and theories such as film tourism, stakeholder collaboration, and sustainable tourism in tourism, and further expanded them to the field of contents tourism. The research sub questions are answered through three sections of discussion:

Section 5.2 first combines the status of NZ's contents tourism with previous research on destination competitiveness, sustainable tourism, and contents tourism, analysing the potential and shortcomings of developing contents tourism in NZ. Secondly, section 5.3 combines the components of sustainable contents tourism with sustainable tourism research and theoretical framework, analyses the significance of each component, and answers what kind of contents tourism is sustainable. Afterwards, section 5.4 further elaborates on the important role of stakeholder collaboration in sustainable contents tourism based on theoretical framework.

During this process, the researcher also discussed the differences between the research findings and previous literature, such as identifying special stakeholders in the contents tourism industry and the different roles and positions of stakeholders in collaboration. Ultimately, a sustainable contents tourism process diagram and recommendations for stakeholders were proposed, which will assist researchers and practitioners in evaluating and developing sustainable contents tourism products.

5.2 Abundant Tourism Resources but Limited Competitiveness

Through this section, explore the feasibility and competitiveness of NZ as a contents tourism destination and further discuss why it is necessary to develop contents tourism. At the same time, identify the current shortcomings of contents tourism and analyse future improvement directions. According to previous research, evaluating the competitiveness of destinations and tourism products requires analysing the tourism resources of the destination and how the destination manages its tourism resources (Mior Shariffuddin et al., 2023; Rheeders, 2022). To evaluate whether NZ already exists and whether it can produce contents tourism products that are attractive to tourists in the future, the researcher explored NZ's contents tourism resources and how tourism businesses manage and develop these resources. Finally, the researcher suggested that NZ has abundant contents tourism resources. Due to the lack of awareness of contents tourism, these tourism resources are rarely developed into mature tourism products, resulting in limited competitiveness of NZ's contents tourism. After learning about contents tourism, all participants held a positive attitude towards it, believing that the overall benefits outweigh the drawbacks. However, they also emphasised the need to address the negative impacts of contents tourism.

As the core attraction of contents tourism comes from various works, the places, items, activities portrayed in them — and even the works themselves — can be regarded as one of the most critical tourism resources (Graburn & Yamamura, 2020; Hernandez Perez, 2019; Okamoto, 2015; Seaton & Yamamura, 2015). This indicates that when analysing the tourism resources of a destination, works that reference the local context should be identified.

As mentioned in the previous literature review, the film tourism of *The Lord of the Rings* series has developed in NZ for decades and has received widespread attention from scholars and the tourism industry (e.g., Buchmann et al., 2010; Carl et al., 2007; Leotta, 2024; Tourism New Zealand, 2023; Tudor, 2015; Tzanelli, 2020). Similarly, the feedback from participants also indicates that Hobbiton, the filming location of *The Lord of the Rings*, is a successful contents tourism destination that is well received by tourists. There are also many works depicting NZ and corresponding tourism destinations mentioned by participants, indicating that NZ has a considerable amount of content resources. It is worth noting that participants not only discussed existing works, but also emphasised that many interesting activities, scenery, and culture unique to NZ that have not yet been mentioned in the works can be regarded as potential content resources.

Although NZ has abundant potential content resources, stakeholders in NZ lack development of them. According to the research findings, contents tourism in NZ mainly focuses on film tourism, with few tourism destinations or businesses linking other types of works with tourism activities, resulting in a lack of diversity in contents tourism products. Participants also mentioned that the existing contents tourism products are relatively basic, mainly focused on sightseeing, and have limited appeal to tourists. As scholars pointed out, the development and management of tourism resources by stakeholders have an impact on destination competitiveness (Mior Shariffuddin et al., 2023; Rheeders, 2022). The neglect of content resources other than movies by stakeholders in NZ, as well as the low level of developed contents tourism products, have weakened NZ's destination competitiveness. In

addition to content resources, participants firmly convinced that NZ had excellent natural tourism resources and considered it a consensus, without much discussion in the interviews. Participants also discussed Māori culture and noted that NZ's unique Māori culture is a very promising cultural tourism resource, while expressing regret that few well-known works emphasise Māori culture. How to turn these rich and unique tourism resources into excellent works and further connect them with the contents tourism industry is a question repeatedly emphasised by participants. Therefore, the research suggests that the lack of recognition of contents tourism and the lack of awareness of its opportunities among tourism stakeholders may be a major reason for insufficient development of tourism resources.

Currently, the competitiveness of NZ's contents tourism is also facing challenges from unsustainable tourism and high prices. Cronjé and du Plessis (2020) mentioned that the new trend in tourism competitiveness research is competitiveness and sustainability, and destinations that adhere to sustainable tourism are more competitive. This indicates that evaluating the competitiveness of tourism destinations requires analysing the sustainability of the local tourism industry. The research results suggest that although there are excellent cases such as Hobbiton, most of NZ's contents tourism destinations and activities have a special unsustainable phenomenon. This phenomenon can be summarised as the lifecycle of contents tourism sometimes being very short, quickly attracting many tourists leading to overtourism, and then quickly losing popularity leading to no tourists. This is consistent with the phenomenon mentioned in film tourism literature that the dissipation of movie popularity leads to a rapid decrease in tourists in a short period of time (Leotta, 2024; Li et al., 2017;

Mitchell & Stewart, 2012), indicating that contents tourism is also influenced by the popularity of works. Moreover, the research results suggest that the high pricing of NZ's contents tourism products affects the experience of tourists, which is detrimental to the development of sustainable contents tourism. This can also be supported in the literature: research on competitiveness explained that tourism product pricing, destination price levels, and tourism expenditures are important factors in measuring tourism destination competitiveness (Mazanec et al., 2007; Mior Shariffuddin et al., 2023; Napierała & Pawlicz, 2023; Rheeders, 2022; Weaver & Lawton, 2014). Weaver and Lawton (2014) stated that low prices may make tourists doubt the quality, but high pricing can bring negative travel experiences to tourists, who will then avoid the destination. Napierała and Pawlicz (2023) stated that when tourists perceive prices to be too high, they will stop visiting and spread negative word-of-mouth, which is not conducive to establishing long-term relationships between tourism destinations and customers.

Despite many issues, participants noted that contents tourism brings greater opportunities to NZ. They emphasised that the successful film tourism case in Hobbiton has brought economic benefits, development of the film and tourism industry, and employment opportunities to NZ. The literature on NZ film tourism also supported the positive significance of film tourism and Hobbiton, stating that the combination of the film and tourism industries significantly promoted the common development of the two industries (Buchmann et al., 2010; Carl et al., 2007; Polianskaia et al., 2016; Tudor, 2015). Participants affirmed that contents tourism involves more types of works and a wider range of contents,

providing more opportunities to further promote the development of various cultures, contents, and tourism industries. Research in the field of contents tourism also supported the participants' inference, describing that contents tourism not only drives the development of tourism, commerce, and cultural industries, but also promotes regional economic revitalisation (Hernandez Perez, 2019; Ishida, 2021; Matsuyama, 2022; Nagano & Yamamoto, 2022).

5.3 Four Key Components of Sustainable Contents Tourism

Rasoolimanesh et al. (2023) mentioned that sustainable tourism indicators generated through consensus with stakeholders are more inclusive and easier to understand. Similarly, the researcher is attempting to identify consensus among participants through the interviews, to determine the components of sustainable contents tourism, thereby contributing to future explorations of more comprehensible and inclusive indicators for sustainable contents tourism. Ultimately, four components were identified, including destination conservation, good tourism experience, active governance and management, and extensive collaboration. This section discusses the significance of four components, and the specific performance of each component is described in detail in section 4.5 of the research findings. Rasoolimanesh et al. (2023) stated that the implementation of sustainable development indicators requires coordination and integration, which means that many sustainable tourism indicators are interrelated, and one indicator can support the achievement of other indicators. This phenomenon is most reflected in the collaboration component. In the interviews, participants frequently emphasised that extensive collaboration is not only a way to promote sustainable

contents tourism, but also an indispensable part of achieving other sustainable requirements and measures. The research results indicate that the first three components can all be achieved through the last extensive collaboration component, which means that extensive collaboration plays a core role in the four components

Environmentally friendly and proactive destination conservation were the first aspect that came to participants' minds when the theme of sustainable contents tourism was raised. According to interview data, destination conservation aims to protect the natural environment, avoid overtourism, reduce carbon emissions, and reinvest profits back into environmental and tourism resource conservation. Research on sustainable tourism supported this finding, stating that sustainable tourism requires protecting the environment and tourism resources of the destination (Hardy et al., 2002; Saarinen, 2015; WTO, 2005). Therefore, to determine whether contents tourism activities or destinations are sustainable, it is necessary to measure whether they pay attention to destination conservation.

The second component is a high-quality tourist experience. The research results suggest that sustainable contents tourism should have a high level of tourist experience quality, diverse tourism products, and reasonable pricing. Participants emphasised that tourists are the key focus of tourism business, and if the experience of tourists is poor, there will be no follow-up tourists, and the contents tourism industry will no longer exist. Scholars also emphasised the importance of valuing tourists' experiences in sustainable tourism research (Apse et al., 2020; Aston et al., 2023; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2023). Rasoolimanesh et al. (2023) mentioned that only a few articles consider tourists as stakeholders, but tourists'

experiences reflect whether tourism decisions are valuable and whether they will pay for the destination experience. Other scholars summarised that tourist experience determines whether tourists will revisit the destination, the amount of consumption at the destination, the dissemination of tourists' reviews, and thus affects the future development of destination tourism industry (Mazanec et al., 2007; Mior Shariffuddin et al., 2023; Napierała & Pawlicz, 2023; Rheeders, 2022; Weaver & Lawton, 2014). The research results and literature both indicate that tourist experience is an important component that sustainable contents tourism indicators need to focus on.

The research findings indicate that sustainable contents tourism also relies on top-down governance and management, with governments, business managers, organisations, and agreements leading the standard setting, daily supervision, and implementation of sustainable tourism. Rasoolimanesh et al. (2023) mentioned that governance is often overlooked by research on sustainable tourism indicators and suggested that future scholars incorporate governance into sustainable tourism indicators. They explained that governance is crucial for sustainable tourism, as it ensures the sustainability of tourism strategies through monitoring and evaluation and aligns the tourism industry with existing strategic arrangements. Weaver and Lawton (2014) emphasised that active government management and planning would have a positive impact on tourism destinations, while developing tourism without formal management could potentially result in negative outcomes. Rašovská et al. (2021) concluded that government involvement is necessary for improving infrastructure, managing crowds, and encouraging sustainable atmosphere. The feedback from participants in the interviews

also confirmed the government's leadership position in promoting sustainable contents tourism. All participants mentioned the importance of government when answering questions about sustainable tourism, believing that contents tourism requires government support.

In addition to governance, the research results also suggest that managers need to strengthen their management to increase employee awareness and make tourism business more sustainable. Relevant literature also supports this point, explaining how tourism organisations can strengthen sustainable management to make the entire tourism industry more sustainable (Mior Shariffuddin et al., 2023; Weaver & Lawton, 2014). Weaver and Lawton (2014) explained that good management means controlling the development of the tourism industry, linking tourism business with the long-term economic, social, cultural, and environmental development of the destination, which is the essence of the concept of sustainability in tourism industry. Mior Shariffuddin et al. (2023) mentioned that active management by tourism stakeholders can optimise the allocation of tourism resources and enhance the competitiveness of tourism destinations in a more sustainable way. Therefore, evaluating the governance and management status and level of destination governments and managers can help infer the degree to which future stakeholders will practice sustainable tourism.

The last component – extensive collaboration – is the most frequently mentioned by participants and is also the most important aspect they consider in sustainable contents tourism. The research results suggest that sustainable contents tourism collaboration is reflected in the broad participation of stakeholders, more equal collaboration status, and a

supportive climate conducive to collaboration. Previous extensive research on stakeholder collaboration demonstrated the importance of collaboration (Brooks & Champ, 2006; Fodness, 2017; Ishida, 2021; Leotta, 2024; Paunović & Jovanović, 2017; Var & Gunn, 2020), and research by other scholars further supported the findings and explained how stakeholder collaboration promotes sustainable tourism (Fodness, 2017; Ishida, 2021; Paunović & Jovanović, 2017; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2023; Zhu and Yu, 2020). The findings of this research also highlight the importance of stakeholder collaboration in sustainable contents tourism. All participants emphasised the need to promote sustainable development of contents tourism through strengthened collaboration, with a few even stating that collaboration can solve all problems in the development of contents tourism. In short, the research results suggest stakeholder collaboration is a core factor in the components of sustainable contents tourism: contents tourism destinations or stakeholders that advocate extensive collaboration and provide a favourable supportive environment for collaboration are more likely to develop sustainable contents tourism products. The next section of the discussion further explains how stakeholders collaborate in contents tourism and how their collaboration promotes sustainable contents tourism.

5.4 Collaboration: The Key Role in Contents tourism

Although this study identified many types of contents tourism stakeholders, their participation still needs to be improved. Nyanjom et al., (2018) mentioned that stakeholders in tourism often coexist but do not interact with each other, remain silent and passive in the tourism industry, and lack participation, which may have adverse effects on tourism

development. Similarly, the stakeholders of contents tourism in NZ are generally described by most interviewees as lacking collaboration and awareness of participation. Scholars stated that the biggest difference between tourism and other industries is that the production of tourism products and experiences cannot be separated from other stakeholders, and collaboration is an essential part (Gursoy et al., 2015; Rašovská et al., 2021; Weaver & Lawton, 2014). Rašovská et al. (2021) mentioned that the success of stakeholders in the tourism industry largely depends on the success of other businesses, and the benefits provided by a business can be reaped by many stakeholders. Gursoy et al. (2015) described how the tourism experience is composed of collaboration among businesses and concluded that the uniqueness of the tourism industry determines that a complete tourism product cannot be independently completed by individuals and requires the collaboration of stakeholders to achieve. Similarly, this research also highlights the importance of collaboration, which is recognised by all participants as an essential component of contents tourism. They all expressed that their organisations cannot do without collaboration with other stakeholders and extensively discussed the benefits of collaboration for the contents tourism industry and sustainable tourism, explaining that the development, operation, and improvement of contents tourism products rely heavily on collaboration. According to the participants' descriptions, stakeholders in contents tourism share talent, experience, information, and technology to promote the success of contents tourism business. It should be noted that participants emphasised that contents tourism involves multiple industries such as tourism and content culture, which makes the design and development of contents tourism products both complex

and expensive. They suggested that stakeholders deepen collaboration by optimising division of labour and resource allocation to spread costs and encourage more stakeholder participation, thereby solving the difficulties in developing contents tourism products and enhancing product attractiveness.

The researcher also summarised the core role of collaboration in promoting sustainable contents tourism and further linked collaboration with other components of sustainable contents tourism identified in this study. According to research findings, stakeholders can promote ecological restoration and environmental protection by sharing resources, profits, and advanced experiences; they can jointly develop rich contents tourism products, update and improve them to bring customers a good tourism experience; they can optimise governance and management by collecting a wide range of opinions and the knowledge and experience of practitioners to develop more easily accepted and advanced sustainable standards and policies; and they can create equal and mutually beneficial collaborative relationships by forming organisations and agreements, thereby further attracting a wider range of stakeholders to participate in collaboration and enabling more people to engage in contents tourism business.

As mentioned above, participants discussed that through extensive collaboration, contents tourism can attract more tourists, promote sustainable tourism and environmental protection, and further attract more participants. The benefits brought by extensive collaboration for contents tourism can be linked to SDGs and the tourism strategy of the NZ government. The relevant goals and strategies can be summarised into four points:

Continuously enhance tourism attractiveness. Protect the natural environment and distinctive culture to improve the quality of tourism. Train residents to manage and welcome tourists, strengthen stakeholder participation and collaboration. Achieve long-term environmental, social, and economic progress (Department of Conservation, 2019; The World Tourism Organization, 2024). This means that extensive collaboration can make contents tourism more in line with SDGs and NZ's tourism strategy.

Previous literature identified the stakeholders that may be included in general tourism (Byrd, 2007; Duarte Alonso & Nyanjom, 2017; Freeman, 2010; Poudel et al., 2016) and briefly mentioned the stakeholders in contents tourism (Matsuyama, 2022; Nagano & Yamamoto, 2022; Zhu & Yu, 2020). Based on interview data, the researcher classified the identified contents tourism stakeholders into 16 categories. In section 4.6.2 of the research findings, they were listed in a table and described for each category of stakeholders. Most of these stakeholders have appeared in previous stakeholder studies, such as tourists, residents, and businesses (Byrd, 2007; Duarte Alonso & Nyanjom, 2017; Freeman, 2010; Poudel et al., 2016). Research in the field of contents tourism also mentioned the unique stakeholders in contents tourism, including content creators and copyright owners (Matsuyama, 2022; Nagano & Yamamoto, 2022; Zhu & Yu, 2020). The limited body of research on contents tourism stakeholders suggested that content creators play a leading role in the development of contents tourism (Matsuyama, 2022). However, there are differences between the data from this research and previous research. The participants distinguished between content creators and copyright owners and perceived that copyright owners in NZ strictly control the

intellectual property rights of works, which increases the difficulty of collaboration and participation in contents tourism business among stakeholders. This is vastly different from the case study of Matsuyama (2022) where content creators actively seek collaboration with stakeholders to develop contents tourism products. In addition, licensed merchandise manufacturers are stakeholders that have not yet been identified in other literature. A small number of participants mentioned that licensed merchandise manufacturers allow tourists to purchase goods related to works, enriching tourist experience and making them important stakeholders.

Despite the research findings and previous literature emphasising the importance of collaboration, almost participants noted the insufficient collaboration in NZ contents tourism and emphasised that achieving collaboration is very difficult. Participants highlighted that insufficient collaboration between tourism businesses and copyright owners is one of the reasons why NZ's contents tourism resources have not been utilised. For example, participants mentioned that tourists commented that tourism activities in Clyde were relatively monotonous and did not find any tourism activities that were highly associated with *Only Cloud Knows*. The participants also emphasised that many tourists would go to the coffee shop featured in the movie, hoping to find souvenirs related to the movie, but found that they could only sit down and have a cup of coffee. In sharp contrast, a collaboration event between a coffee shop and a content work from May to June 2025 was well received by tourists. The coffee shop called Animate Café in Shanghai, China, has partnered with Japanese anime *Ave Mujica* to launch themed food and licensed merchandise (see Appendix

E). Despite the high pricing, the event still attracted a large number of fans to visit and make purchases, with all on-site reservations even fully booked several days in advance. This collaborative event has also received widespread praise from fans on the internet and attracted many general tourists. These two completely different cases illustrate that if the copyright owner of *Only Cloud Knows* can collaborate with Clyde's tourism operators, especially the coffee shop mentioned in the work, there will be a greater opportunity to attract more tourists, enrich their tourist experience, and bring more income to stakeholders.

In addition to the current lack of collaboration, participants mentioned that there are many obstacles that, if not addressed, will still make it difficult to achieve collaboration. According to the participants' descriptions, the monopoly of content resources by large companies leads to limited opportunities for small businesses, complexity of contents tourism business, and communication difficulties among stakeholders, which are the biggest obstacles to achieving collaboration in contents tourism. From the data provided by participants, it can be identified that they are more willing to participate in contents tourism only when the obstacles to collaboration are resolved. Weaver and Lawton (2014) mentioned that the only thing that can be determined in tourism is constant change, and even the latest industry trends can quickly become outdated, resulting in travel managers always being cautious. Rašovská et al. (2021) further mentioned that tourism companies will not take risks before identifying a favourable environment, which means that it is crucial for the government to establish collaboration with tourism providers and provide good competition policies and extensive support. The research findings support the views of these scholars, with participants

emphasising that stakeholders will remain cautious about contents tourism unless there is a government or leader. In line with participants' calls for pioneers in the contents tourism industry, this study's findings indicates that when the contents tourism industry is in its infancy, stakeholders need government or collaborative organisation leadership and overall planning to achieve collaboration. Previous literature has provided examples that can serve as references: The case of mountain tourism in Germany introduced by Paunović & Jovanović (2017) suggested that stakeholders can further create a favourable environment for collaboration and overcome the early development difficulties of the tourism industry by actively forming collaborative organisations. The experience of contents tourism development in Japan also demonstrated the positive significance of chambers of commerce in promoting collaboration among regional stakeholders (Matsuyama, 2022; Zhu and Yu, 2020). Therefore, in the early stages of contents tourism development, there needs to be a pioneer leading the collaboration of stakeholders.

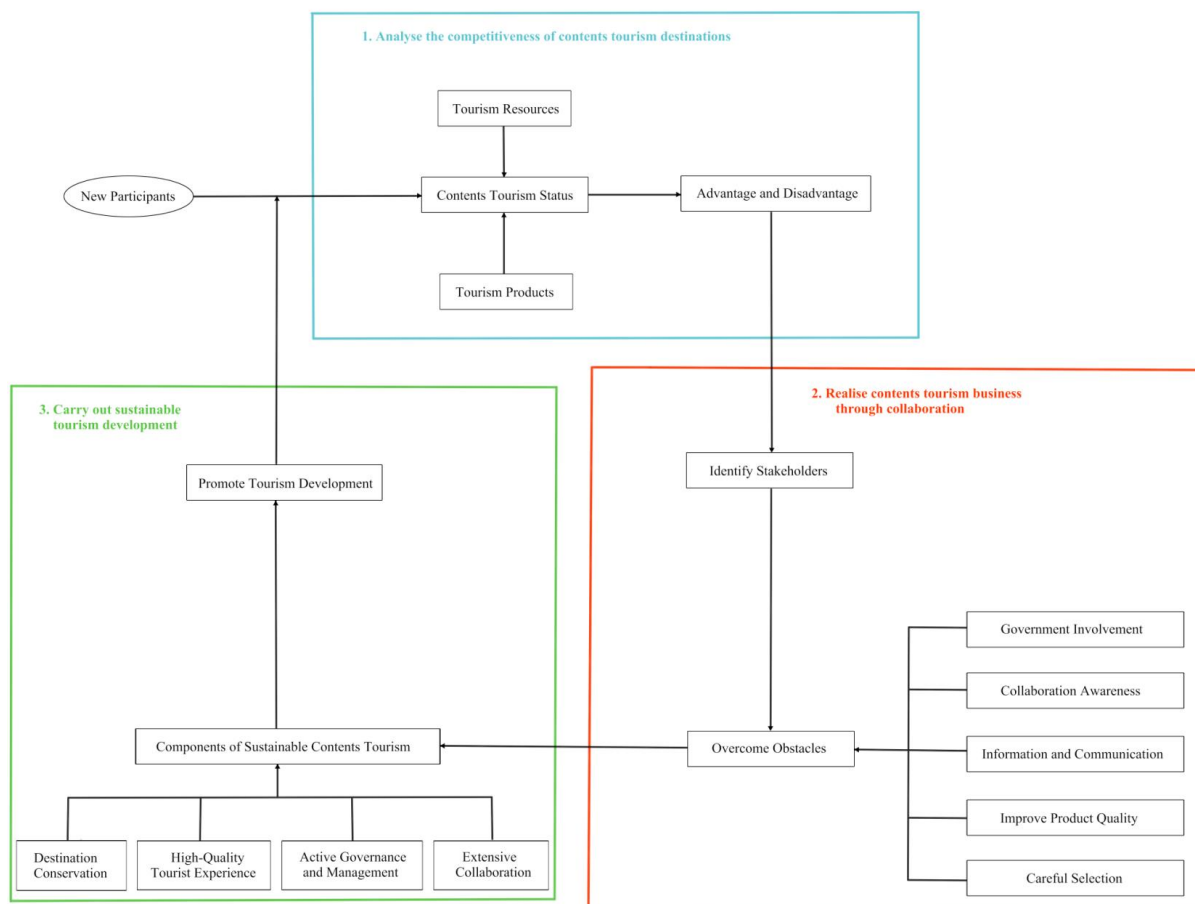
In section 4.6.3, the researcher listed suggestions from participants on overcoming obstacles to collaboration and promoting stakeholder collaboration. It is worth noting that participants emphasised that the government should strengthen regulation and avoid the monopoly position of copyright owners. Participant 4 innovatively proposed that the government could centralise the acquisition of copyright licenses to simplify the authorisation streamline for stakeholders and reduce copyright fees. Participants also realised the need to strengthen collaboration with creators and encourage them to describe their hometowns in their works to promote local tourism.

5.5 Sustainable Contents Tourism Process Diagram

Glaser and Strauss (2017) mentioned that grounded theory was developed by professional sociologists, but can be applied by laypeople or other sociologists, which means grounded theory is sufficiently general and understandable. This study referred to the research methods of grounded theory and used the tools of grounded theory in data analysis, in order to systematically summarise the form of sustainable contents tourism, helping scholars and tourism practitioners evaluate or develop sustainable contents tourism products. Therefore, the sustainable contents tourism process diagram ultimately formed is aimed at making theoretical contributions more understandable and visual.

Matsuyama's (2022) study described that under the active guidance of creators, the attractiveness of works brings tourists and income, copyright income promotes the development of the content industry, produces better works and attracts more tourists, forming a virtuous cycle of the contents tourism industry. This virtuous cycle partially overlaps with the research findings of this study, but this study introduces stakeholder theory and the concept of sustainable tourism, focusing on broad collaboration and sustainable tourism. The research findings also suggest that collaboration is the most core role in contents tourism. Therefore, unlike previous research on contents tourism, the most critical role in achieving a virtuous cycle of contents tourism lies not only in the creator as a single stakeholder, but also in extensive collaboration among various tourism stakeholders, according to the research findings. The three main themes of the research are used to construct a sustainable contents tourism process diagram (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Process Diagram of Co-development for Sustainable Contents Tourism



All the content in the process diagram is grounded in the research findings and can be supported by previous studies. Therefore, this research attempts to combine previous studies on destination competitiveness, sustainable tourism, and stakeholder theory with the empirical research on contents tourism through the process diagram and suggests that future contents tourism researchers pay attention to literature and theories in these fields. The following discussion explains the steps and elements of the process diagram.

According to the first step of the process diagram, new participants should analyse the potential for developing contents tourism by investigating the status of the tourism

destination. This is based on a consensus between the interview participants in this study and findings from previous literature (Huang et al., 2023; Rašovská et al., 2021), that understanding the status of destinations is an essential step in tourism research or practice. According to research on tourism competitiveness, evaluating the competitiveness of a tourism destination is a powerful tool for analysing the status of the destination (Rheeders, 2022), and competitiveness includes potential tourism resources and existing tourism products (Mior Shariffuddin et al., 2023; Rheeders, 2022). The findings of this study identified tourism resources that contents tourism may include, such as natural resources, cultural resources, content works, etc. Tourism resources indicate the potential for developing contents tourism in a destination, while tourism products reflect the level of development of tourism resources by local stakeholders, which may indicate competitive pressure or policy environment (Weaver & Lawton, 2014). After obtaining information on the status of contents tourism in the destination, the advantages and disadvantages of developing contents tourism in the destination can be identified, and a decision can be made on whether to proceed to the next step.

If new participants decide to participate in contents tourism, they will become contents tourism stakeholders. Previous literature indicated that stakeholder collaboration is an important role in tourism (Brooks & Champ, 2006; Byrd, 2007; Fodness, 2017; Nyanjom et al., 2018), and this inference was further expanded in the findings of this study: nearly all participants emphasised that collaboration is an essential role in contents tourism. Therefore, at this moment in the process diagram, stakeholders must move on to the second step -

conducting business through collaboration. To initiate collaboration, it is first necessary to identify other stakeholders (Byrd, 2007; Freeman, 2010). By reviewing research on tourism stakeholders (e.g., Byrd, 2007; Duarte Alonso & Nyanjom, 2017; Freeman, 2010; Poudel et al., 2016), and contents tourism (e.g., Graburn & Yamamura, 2020; Matsuyama, 2022; Nagano & Yamamoto, 2022; Zhu & Yu, 2020), several potential stakeholders in contents tourism can be identified, such as communities, residents, businesses, non-governmental organisations, and creators. The results of this study strongly support previous research, as all types of stakeholders discussed in the literature review were mentioned by the interviewed participants. Based on the data from interviews, this study further divided 16 categories of contents tourism stakeholders (see Table 5), providing a reference for identifying potential stakeholders. However, most interviewees expressed that it is not easy to collaborate with so many types of stakeholders and that various obstacles need to be overcome, such as limited opportunities for small businesses, complex contents tourism business, and communication difficulties. Furthermore, according to the findings of this study, the suggestions and expectations of interview participants for contents tourism collaboration are the way to overcome collaboration obstacles, including active government participation, cultivating collaboration awareness, sharing information and strengthening communication, improving tourism product quality, and carefully selecting collaboration partners.

Through the collaboration in the second step, stakeholders can now complete the development and design of contents tourism products. At this point, stakeholders can be satisfied with the current business or choose to prioritise and adopt sustainability as the third

step. As introduced in Section 5.3, the four sustainability components guide this process, and provide references for promoting the improvement and further development of contents tourism products and the tourism industry. Stakeholders who consider the third step and implement sustainable tourism development are more likely to make their tourism products and businesses sustainable and further promote the development of the tourism industry.

At the same time, the implementation of sustainable tourism development also relies on the participation of other stakeholders, such as creating new works, developing new tourism products, and improving destination environments. This has also further enriched tourism resources and promoted the development of the contents tourism industry. In addition, after the third step the positive development of the contents tourism industry may attract new participants to participate and become new stakeholders in contents tourism. At the end of the third step, it means that a new situation has emerged in the contents tourism resources and industry, and one typical cycle of this sustainable process diagram has also been achieved. This also means that stakeholders can choose to repeat the first step of analysing the potential of new business forms and start the next cycle.

This process diagram provides a simple outline for sustainable contents tourism research, where each section can supplement new elements through specific situations and practices of different destinations, such as what else contents tourism resources include? To what extent are the specific advantages of the destination worth developing contents tourism? Therefore, more data is needed in the future to improve this process diagram and ultimately

form a more universal sustainable contents tourism model, providing theoretical basis for sustainable contents tourism research.

The practical significance of this process diagram lies in providing reference for the future development of contents tourism. Different stakeholders can refer to this process diagram to analyse the development status and potential of the local contents tourism industry, to determine their roles and positions in contents tourism, identify other key stakeholders and potential partners, and promote the quality and sustainability of tourism products and businesses.

5.6 Response to Research Questions

Based on the research results and existing literature, the research question proposed in this study has been gradually discussed in the above. This section lists the three research sub questions in sequence and provides concise answers to them, which allows for a more straightforward observation of the connections and gaps between the research findings and previous literature and serves as a summary of this chapter. The following is a review and summary answer to the three research sub questions:

1. What is the current situation of contents tourism in New Zealand?

As shown in Theme 1 (Section 4.4), NZ has successful contents tourism cases and abundant contents tourism resources, indicating strong development potential. Despite this potential, both participant insights and literature on tourism competitiveness suggest that the current development and utilisation of contents tourism resources is insufficient. Compared to international examples, NZ's contents tourism only focuses on film tourism and lacks diverse

types and products of contents tourism. While the above disadvantages exist, participants consistently viewed contents tourism as a significant opportunity for NZ's tourism industry. However, both the findings of this study and research gaps in literature review indicate that there is still insufficient attention and understanding towards contents tourism in NZ.

2. What kind of contents tourism is sustainable?

Based on research data, this study summarises four components of sustainable contents tourism in Theme 2 (Section 4.5). The higher the fit with the four components, the more sustainable a contents tourism is. According to the components, the characteristics of sustainable contents tourism can include destination conservation, high-quality tourist experience, active governance and management, and extensive collaboration. Previous literature also supports the research findings that these four components can correspond to similar indicators in STIs studies. The further contribution of this study is reflected in several special findings, such as most participants highlighting that diverse content works are the foundation of sustainable contents tourism when discussing high-quality tourist experience. Further details on the unique sustainable manifestations of contents tourism are discussed in Theme 2, which provides a reference for exploring STIs of contents tourism in the future.

3. What role does stakeholder collaboration play in sustainable contents tourism?

This research highlights that stakeholder collaboration is a key role in sustainable contents tourism. According to the research on stakeholder theory in the tourism industry, stakeholder collaboration is one of the most important forms of stakeholder participation in the tourism industry and an important role in promoting sustainable tourism. Based on the

findings of this study, it is suggested to apply stakeholder theory to the field of contents tourism. Furthermore, the findings extend the importance of stakeholder collaboration, as data suggests that contents tourism may be more dependent on stakeholder collaboration than general tourism. For example, contents tourism business and products are almost inseparable from collaboration with special stakeholders in contents tourism such as copyright owners, and collaboration is more complex and extensive. In addition, according to the research results, the implementation of the four components of sustainable contents tourism cannot be achieved without the collaboration of stakeholders, which is also the key to making contents tourism more sustainable.

5.7 Implications for Contents Tourism Stakeholders

In NZ's latest official tourism strategy, it is mentioned that to provide an excellent visitor experience, the tourism industry needs to be encouraged to innovate and provide high-quality experiences in the future. Coincidentally, contents tourism is a new way to enrich tourists' experiences. However, from literature and interview data, it can be analysed that the concept of contents tourism in NZ is rarely known. Furthermore, participants mentioned that NZ is conservative and tends to be slower in accepting new things and concepts. This means that the low popularity of the concept of contents tourism may become a major disadvantage for the development of contents tourism. This means that even if the government states in tourism documents that it advocates innovation, it is difficult to truly drive tourism stakeholders to actively learn about new types of tourism. Therefore, promoting and making stakeholders aware of the opportunities contained in contents tourism is a priority for

promoting its development. It is recommended that relevant government departments learn about contents tourism and encourage research and promotion of contents tourism.

It is worth noting that participants believed that the copyright fees for participating in contents tourism are very expensive, but this is all based on their inference or even speculation. Even none of the participants were able to identify the copyright owners of existing contents tourism related works in NZ. As Participant 3 mentioned, contents tourism requires pioneers. Whether it is copyright owners actively establishing collaboration and communication channels, or tourism businesses actively contacting and participating in the contents tourism industry, there needs to be a stakeholder standing up to lead the first communication and collaboration. In addition, it is recommended that the NZ tourism department strengthen collaboration with content creators and guide them to mention NZ more in their works, in order to promote potential contents tourism opportunities. At the same time, by depicting off-season landscapes and urban scenes more frequently in works, it is possible to indirectly guide the distribution of tourists to alleviate overtourism in natural attractions during the peak season.

In terms of pricing, although most participants stated that general tourists would find contents tourism products expensive, they also acknowledged that fan groups are willing to pay for the high prices. According to participants and literature, fan groups are willing to spend heavily on the works they love, and they will have a higher level of participation and consumption in various tourism activities in contents tourism destinations (Hernandez Perez, 2019; MLIT, METI, & ACA, 2005). Therefore, the researcher suggests that tourism providers

should develop tourism products targeting different groups of tourists, such as providing general tourists with content experience products that are mainly sightseeing and leisure oriented. For fan groups, contents tourism products should feature more diverse activities and stronger ties to the works, aiming to deliver more high-level and immersive experiences. Similarly, it is recommended that manufacturers and tourism destination operators produce and sell relatively affordable souvenirs for all tourists but provide limited-edition and well-designed licensed merchandise to fan groups.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

This study explored the forms of sustainable contents tourism and the role of stakeholder collaboration in it. It investigated the status of contents tourism in New Zealand, key components of sustainable contents tourism, and how stakeholders are involved. The findings suggest that although NZ has the potential to develop contents tourism, most contents tourism practices remain unsustainable, and stakeholder collaboration is crucial for promoting sustainable contents tourism.

The research highlighted the limited academic attention to contents tourism in NZ, particularly the lack of integration with sustainable tourism research and stakeholder theory. Through efforts such as identifying NZ's contents tourism resources, four components of sustainable contents tourism, and 16 types of stakeholders, this study attempts to address research gaps and make theoretical and empirical contributions to contents tourism field. This chapter will review the design and process of the research, summarise the key points discussed, analyse the limitations of the research, and propose future research directions.

6.1 Overview

This research aims to analyse the potential of developing contents tourism in NZ and promote sustainable contents tourism. This qualitative study selected eight participants who were highly relevant to the research topic through purposeful sampling and collected data through semi-structured interviews. Three rounds of coding and theme analysis were conducted using NVivo, and ultimately three main themes and ten sub themes were identified.

The study utilised stakeholder theory to explore how contents tourism can progress towards sustainable tourism. Although the field of contents tourism lacks the application of stakeholder theory, sustainable tourism cannot do without stakeholder participation, which has become a widely recognised consensus in tourism research (Byrd, 2007; Gursoy et al., 2010; Var & Gunn, 2020). On this basis, stakeholder theory has been used in tourism research to explain how stakeholder collaboration promotes sustainable tourism (e.g., Fodness, 2017; Ishida, 2021; Leotta, 2024; Paunović & Jovanović, 2017; Var & Gunn, 2020). The stakeholder theory demonstrates how stakeholder collaboration relates to sustainable tourism, providing theoretical support for this study to explore the role of stakeholder collaboration in sustainable contents tourism.

6.2 Key Findings

This study investigated the status of contents tourism in NZ, the specific manifestations of sustainable contents tourism, and the role of stakeholder collaboration in it. The research results are consistent with the literature, suggesting that contents tourism has already emerged in NZ. Overall, contents tourism is in line with NZ's tourism strategy and beneficial to the development of tourism industry. However, previous research and practice on contents tourism in NZ still focused on film tourism, and there are many problems that make contents tourism unsustainable. First, NZ has abundant contents tourism resources but has not realised the opportunities of contents tourism. These resources have hardly been developed, and there are few competitive contents tourism products. Second, although

Hobbiton showcases a successful cases of contents tourism, most other destinations in NZ lack management and sustainable tourism planning, lead to a rapid decline in tourist arrivals.

To solve the above problems, it is necessary to combine contents tourism with sustainable tourism. Based on the research results, four components of sustainable contents tourism were identified, indicating what kind of contents tourism is sustainable. Including destination conservation, high-quality tourist experience, active governance and management, and extensive collaboration. Among them, extensive collaboration is considered the most important role in sustainable contents tourism, and it is also an important way to achieve the other three components. Extensive collaboration is almost seen as the key to overcoming all current challenges in contents tourism, but NZ's contents tourism collaboration is still in its infancy.

Furthermore, participants generally agree with the potential of contents tourism and show a positive attitude of being willing to participate. However, they are generally concerned about NZ's ability to accept new things and tourism innovation, as well as the environment for collaboration. According to the research results, 16 types of stakeholders in contents tourism were identified. The diverse stakeholders and complex business of contents tourism pose many obstacles to collaboration. Small businesses have limited opportunities, and communication difficulties also become obstacles to achieving collaboration. Based on research findings, government participation, collaborative awareness, sharing information and strengthening communication, improving product quality, and carefully selecting partners are the main ways to address collaboration obstacles. Moreover, there is an expectation that

government agencies and copyright owners will be pioneers in leading collaboration. The government and copyright owners were repeatedly mentioned as the most critical stakeholders in achieving contents tourism collaboration.

6.3 Limitations and Future Research Directions

In this research, two limitations related to the methodology may affect the interpretation of the findings. Firstly, the interviews were scheduled during the peak tourism season in NZ, and several invitees expressed their willingness, while ultimately did not have time to participate, resulting in a limited sample size. Although the sample quality of this study is high, the quantity is not very large, which affects the universality of the research results. In the future, more sample data needs to be collected to validate research conclusion. Similarly, due to the limited sample size, many data were not adopted due to their low frequency of mention. Future researchers can refer to the findings of this study and further expand to explore sustainable contents tourism indicators. Future researchers can refer to the results of this study and expand the sample size by reasonably scheduling data collection time to further explore sustainable contents tourism indicators.

Secondly, due to cost considerations, the research subjects only include participants from tourism businesses and local government institution. Therefore, the sustainable contents tourism process diagram proposed in this study also remains preliminary and requires more data and targeted research to further improve. Future studies should expand the selection of research subjects in research design and obtain more types of stakeholder samples. To

develop a comprehensive sustainable contents tourism model from multiple perspectives and provide theoretical support for sustainable contents tourism research and practice.

In addition, both this study and previous contents tourism literature suggest that fans have shown fanaticism and willingness to pay for products related to works, but there is still a lack of direct research on contents visitor spending. Future research can demonstrate the contribution of contents tourism to increasing tourist spending by analysing the average tourism expenditure of contents tourism. Furthermore, in the future, research can be conducted from perspectives such as tourism motivation, consumer satisfaction, or expectation confirmation theory to explore what contents tourism tourists hope to gain from contents tourism, to explore contents tourism products that are popular among consumers.

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Appendixes

Appendix A: Interview Guide

Sustainable Contents tourism Model:

Collaboration between New Zealand Tourism Companies and Stakeholders

Interview guide

Introduction [5 mins]

1. Thank the interviewee(s) for taking part in the research.
2. Advise confidentiality, ethical consideration, and duration.
3. Define and describe core terms.
 - Contents tourism: Contents tourism refers to the travel of tourists to destinations related to the content of various works, stimulated and driven by the content of the works. (Works may include but are not limited to movies, TV shows, comics, Japanese anime, novels, music, games, dramas, literature and art, photography, religion, etc.)
 - Stakeholders: Any group or individual who is affected by tourism or can affect the development of tourism in a region can be considered a stakeholder.
 - Sustainable tourism: Tourism that coordinates the interests of all parties while protecting the well-being and living environment of contemporary and future people and can be sustained in the long run. It is a type of tourism that minimizes the negative impact of tourism.
4. Overview of topic and research objective.

Background Information – Company details [5 mins]

5. Please give me an overview of your business, including a brief history.

Prompts:

- How many employees do you have?
- How many years has it been running?
- What tourism products or service do you offer?
- Where does it operate?
- What is the ownership structure? –family -private -public -overseas -NZ
- Who are your key stakeholders?
- What is your role and what are your responsibilities in the business?

Theme 1: Understanding of Contents tourism [15mins]

6. What do you understand by the term *contents tourism*?
 - Prompt: novels and movies *The Land of Long White Clouds*, *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Hobbit*, *The Piano*, *Whale Rider* and *The Last Samurai*.
7. Are you involved in contents tourism? What activities do you offer?
 - How successful was it? Compared to other types of tourism business, is its revenue significant?
 - If not, would you consider offering contents tourism?
8. Have you heard of any other contents tourism available in New Zealand?
 - Prompt: Are there any other types of contents tourism besides film tourism?
9. Do you know of other operators involved in contents tourism, in the area, or in NZ? What do they do?
10. New Zealand's film tourism is famous, but there seem to be few other types of contents tourism cases and related tourism products. Can you talk about possible reasons?
11. What are the potential future contents tourism opportunities for NZ?
 - Prompt: movie, novels, history, culture, food, making something
 - Prompt: problems and advantages of developing contents tourism in NZ

Theme 2: Improving the Sustainability of Contents tourism [10-15min]

12. What does sustainability mean to your company?

- Prompt: economic, environmental, cultural, social, other
 - Prompt: timeframe – short-term, long-term
 - Prompt: key stakeholders – region, community, customers, residents, workers, owners, govt
 - Prompt: positive, negative impacts
13. What are the issues and challenges in making contents tourism sustainable in New Zealand?
- Prompt: economically, environmentally, socially
 - Prompt: overtourism, rapid obsolescence of works
14. Do you have any solutions or suggestions for addressing the issues and challenges?
15. What do you think the ideal sustainable contents tourism would look like? How do different stakeholders participate in this kind of tourism?

Theme 3: Establishing Cooperation/Collaboration with Stakeholders [15 mins]

16. What potential stakeholders do you think may exist in contents tourism? Is there anything different from other types of tourism?
- Prompt: for example, copyright holders or creators of works.
17. What types of tourism stakeholders do you usually cooperate/collaborate with?
- Prompt: for example, other tourism enterprises, communities, residents, tourism suppliers (transportation, hotels, shops, restaurants, cafes, etc.).
 - Prompts: What kind of business dealings do you have with them?
 - How do you cooperate/collaborate with them?
18. Do you think there are any differences in stakeholder cooperation/collaboration in contents tourism compared to other types of tourism?
- Follow up if possible: Which stakeholders are involved in your contents tourism and in what way?
 - Follow up if needed: How do you cooperate/collaborate with them?
19. What are the advantages of cooperating/collaborating with stakeholders compared to

independently operating contents tourism business?

20. What obstacles and difficulties exist in cooperating/collaborating with stakeholders in contents tourism?
 - Prompt: for example, costs, times, efforts, poor communication.
21. How can stakeholder cooperation/collaboration help improve the sustainability of contents tourism?
 - Extend if necessary: How does stakeholder cooperation/collaboration work in reducing the negative impact of contents tourism? (For example, how to promote environmental protection, improve residents' well-being, etc.)
 - Follow up if needed: Will you collaborate with other stakeholders to improve the sustainability of contents tourism? What is the reason?
22. What do you expect for other stakeholders to do in order to develop contents tourism?
 - Prompt: for example, government, copyright holders.
 - What would you do?

General Questions (if time allows)

23. Are you personally interested in contents tourism, or have you had any experience with contents tourism?
24. Do you have any knowledge of other tourism cases abroad?
25. What do you think are positive effects of cooperating/collaborating with other stakeholders besides affecting tourism sustainability?
26. What do you think are the problems with contents tourism?

Conclusion

27. Is there anything else you would like to mention that we haven't covered here, or any question you would like to go back to?
28. Reiterate purpose of study
29. Reiterate disclosure of information

30. Ensure contact details are available

Appendix B: Information Sheet



INFORMATION SHEET

Kia Ora,

My name is Haohan Zhu, a Post-Graduate student pursuing a Master of Business Studies (Management) at Massey University. This document provides information about my 120-credit thesis research project titled “Sustainable Contents tourism Model: Collaboration between New Zealand Tourism Companies and Stakeholders”.

Project Description

This primary objective of this research is to explore the model of contents tourism in New Zealand and understand how stakeholder collaboration plays a role in improving the sustainability of contents tourism. Contents tourism refers to tourism stimulated by contents from various works such as movies, TV shows, comics, Japanese anime, novels, music, games, dramas, literature and art, photography, religion, etc., and the film tourism stimulated by *The Lord of the Rings* is a well-known case in New Zealand.

The following is the primary research question:

“How can New Zealand tourism companies collaborate with stakeholders to expand contents tourism models within the limits of Sustainable Tourism Indicators, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, Tiaki Promise, and the New Zealand government's tourism strategy?”

The following are sub-questions to help answer the primary research question:

1. Who are the main stakeholders of contents tourism in New Zealand and what roles do they play?

2. How do New Zealand tourism companies collaborate with stakeholders in contents tourism?
3. How sustainable is contents tourism in New Zealand, and how can stakeholder collaboration promote the sustainability of contents tourism?

Participant Recruitment

To be eligible for participate in this study, participants must have worked in the tourism industry, preferably with experience in contents tourism or film tourism related businesses or have some understanding of them.

Invitation to Participate

I am interested in learning about the industry situation of film tourism and contents tourism in New Zealand, and how they can achieve long-term development. I would like to hear your insights from your extensive experience in the tourism industry, or your experience in the contents tourism business. *You are invited to be part of this study.*

The information presented below offers comprehensive details about the study and the procedure involved. If you express your interest in participation, we will thoroughly review this information to ensure that you fully understand your rights as a research participant, are comfortable with the process, and can complete a consent form prior to the session.

Research Process

In this study, it will involve a one-on-one semi-structured interview that is expected to last between 30-45 minutes. These interviews will be conducted either in-person or through online conferencing software such as Zoom, with consideration given to the participants geographical locations.

Data Management

At the beginning of the semi-structured interviews, I will request and confirm your consent to audio record our interview session for documentation. After the interview is completed, I will personally transcribe it for analysis and subsequently provide you with an electronic copy to review for accuracy.

Data obtained from the semi-structured interviews will be reported in my Master's 120 credit thesis. Additionally, this data may also be included in potential future, such as conference presentations or scholarly journal articles, maintaining anonymity of all participants. The privacy of all participants will be rigorously upheld, ensuring they remain unidentifiable in

any reports or publications, as the raw data will remain confidential. Quotes may be used anonymously as part of the final report. The final report will be available for participants after it has been submitted to the University.

Transcripts and audio recordings of the interview sessions will be kept in a secure location, with exclusive access granted only to me as the researcher. With your consent, I will archive the data for potential use in future research endeavours. Should you choose not to allow data from your interview session to be archived, it will be systematically and ethically destroyed a period of 7 years in compliance with research best ethical practices.

Your Rights as a Participant

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview;
- withdraw from the study (including during the interview);
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher.

Benefits of The Study

The benefits of participating in this research provide you with a valuable opportunity to learn about an emerging type of tourism and offer new ideas for expanding your company's business. Your participation allows you to freely express your opinions, viewpoints, and experiences in sustainable tourism, contents tourism, or stakeholder collaboration, providing you with an opportunity to reflect your professional level and understanding.

Another advantage is that the information you share will provide researchers with the opportunity to analyse the experiences and insights of employees, which will help to gain a deeper understanding of the models and sustainability pathways of contents tourism, ultimately enriching existing literature and research in the field and providing new references for promoting the long-term development of New Zealand's tourism industry. The final research results of this project can also be shared with participants.

Ethical Conduct

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee and classified to be a low-risk research project. Additionally, the project has undergone peer review by the researchers mentioned in the contacts.

If you have any questions or reservations regarding the ethical conduct of this research, please contact Patsy Broad, Team Leader at the Massey University Human Ethics Committee. You can reach her via telephone at +64 6 356 9099 (extension 83840) or by emailing humanethics@massey.ac.nz. The Ethical Notification Number of this research is 4000029489.

Study Contacts

Should you have any inquiries or require further information regarding this study, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or my supervisors:

Haohan Zhu
Master's Student
Massey Business School
Haohan.Zhu.1@uni.massey.ac.nz

Dr Kazunori Kobayashi
Primary Supervisor
School of Management
Massey University
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Dr Wayne Macpherson
Secondary Supervisor
School of Management
Massey University
W.Macpherson@massey.ac.nz

Ngā mihi nui,

Haohan Zhu

Appendix C: Consent Form



RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Researcher: Haohan Zhu

Sustainable Contents tourism Model: Collaboration between New Zealand Tourism Companies and Stakeholders.

This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Massey University Human Ethics by email: humanethics@massey.ac.nz. The Ethical Notification Number of this research is 4000029489.

I have read the Information Sheet and received an explanation of the study details. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions or clarifications at any time.

I willingly grant permission for the interview to be recorded, with the clear understanding that my responses will remain confidential to the researcher, and any summarised information will be anonymised in any publications.

By providing your physical or electronic signature below, you acknowledge that you have read and understood the conditions outlined in the Information Sheet, and you voluntarily consent to participate in the study.

Full Name: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

I voluntarily consent to participant in the research study.

Appendix D: Low Risk Ethics Approval



11/10/2024

Dear: Haohan Zhu

Re: Low Risk Notification - 4000029489 - Sustainable Contents tourism Model: Collaboration between New Zealand Tourism Companies and Stakeholders

Thank you for submitting a low risk notification for your research/teaching/evaluation.

This email is to acknowledge receipt of the low risk notification and to inform you that the details of your project have been recorded in our database for inclusion in the annual reports to the Health Research Council Ethics Committee (HRCEC) and the Massey University Research Committee (URC).

You may proceed with your research, though it is advisable to provide a couple of weeks before commencing, as all low risk notifications are checked for completeness and clarity by a Research Ethics Advisor. You may be contacted if your application is incomplete and/or further clarification is required.

The low risk notification for this project is valid for a maximum of three years.

Please notify me if situations subsequently occur which cause you to reconsider your initial ethical analysis.

If a sponsoring organisation, funding authority (e.g., the Health Research Council) or a journal require evidence of ethical approval from a Human Ethics Committee (with an approval number), you need to complete a full Massey University Human Ethics application to be reviewed and approved by one of our Human Ethics Committees. Applications must be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of the research.

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course-Related Student Travel Overseas. In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact the Research Ethics Office, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz. "

Please include the following statement on all public documents (e.g., information sheet, consent form) related to your project:

This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Massey University Human Ethics by email: humanethics@massey.ac.nz.

I wish you all the best in your research, teaching or evaluation activities and appreciate your thoughtful consideration of ethics principles and practices.

Ngā mihi nui,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tracy Riley', written in a cursive style.

Professor Tracy Riley
Acting Chair, Research Ethics Chair's Committee

Research Ethics Office, Research and Enterprise
Massey University, Private Bag 11 222, Palmerston North, 4442, New Zealand T 06 951 6841; 06 951 6840
E humanethics@massey.ac.nz; animaethics@massey.ac.nz; gtc@massey.ac.nz

Appendix E: Shanghai Animate Café and *Ave Mujica* Anime Collaboration

Figure E1. Themed Food and Beverages from the Collaboration



Note. The themed food and drinks offered by the café were available only during the collaboration period. Photo taken by BuyaoSS.

Figure E2. Licensed Merchandise from the Collaboration



Note. Photo taken by BuyaoSS.