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Rethinking Sustainability: An Evaluation of Regeneration

Potential in the Swiss Hotel Industry



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Executive summary

Introduction

The Brundtland Report's release in 1987 marked a turning point for sustainability as a concept that has since become increasingly relevant to all industries, including tourism. Despite efforts to reduce its impact, limiting the damage is no longer sufficient, and alternative approaches such as regeneration are gaining traction. (Bellato et al., 2022) This study explores the potential for regeneration in the Swiss hotel industry, through interviews with Swiss hoteliers, ending with ideas of recommendations for a more regenerative future.

Context and literature

“At its simplest, regenerative tourism seeks to ensure travel and tourism delivers a net positive benefit to people, places and nature, and that it supports the long-term renewal and flourishing of our social and ecological systems” (Dredge, 2022) To distinguish it from sustainability, which focuses on reducing negative impacts, regeneration aims to generate positive impacts. Furthermore, for regeneration to happen, a general shift is required in the value system. COVID-19 highlighted the impact tourism industry have on climate. Even though it is hard to define the impact of the hospitality sector, it is sure that the impact is massive. Fortunately, there is a widespread consensus that the hotel industry possesses significant potential for regeneration. This is particularly true when considering that hotels attract guests from all corners of the globe who may be influenced by the practices and initiatives they observe in the hotels they choose to stay in. For that to happen, hoteliers need to realise that their daily business actually extend beyond the physical property and that they are part of their community, of their ecosystem, of their place. (Ho, 2020) This thesis builds upon existing research in Switzerland's regenerative hotel industry. These prior studies involved conducting interviews with industry experts, and international self-proclaimed regenerative hotels, as well as performing quantitative studies to survey the landscape. After that, it was time to engage more deeply with the main stakeholders: Swiss hoteliers.

Methodology

After analysing the literature review, six semi-structured interviews with Swiss hoteliers coming from relatively different backgrounds were conducted. Then, a benchmark analysis of self-proclaimed regenerative hotels was realised. The analysis of transcriptions, and results of the benchmark enable to answer the research question that guided this project: How do Swiss hoteliers approach the idea of regenerative hospitality and its potential? Finally, recommendations have been elaborated to answer the challenges and needs expressed by hoteliers during interviews.

Results of the interviews and the benchmark analysis

The interviews conducted with the hoteliers produced interesting findings about their motivations, challenges, and needs. Many hoteliers are driven by a desire to act for the good of the planet, and this stems from their personal values and education as children. They are also motivated by a desire to benefit people, including the locals, the destination, the clients, and the guests, and a long-term vision for leaving a better world for future generations. However, the hotel industry also faces several challenges, including a lack of resources (financial, human and knowledge), support from the government, and the complexity of the industry. Hoteliers expressed the need for more information, transparency, coaching, and guidance from experts, as well as additional financial assistance. The benchmark analysis enabled to complete the evaluation of the regeneration potential of Swiss hoteliers by comparing them with self-proclaimed regenerative hotels. The results show that Swiss hotels have some regenerative practices in place, although some were not even aware of the concept. While they have a strong sense of place, they could integrate more with the local ecosystem and positively impact people's social and economic well-being. Swiss hotels mindset seems to go in the right direction, but they really should aim to become a force for good and achieve net positive impact.

Conclusion: recommendations, limitations, and further development

The report offers recommendations for the industry, including financial support, integration of regeneration in the current sustainable strategies and education campaigns. For Swiss hotels specifically, the report proposes suggestions such as integrating local ecosystems, prioritizing people intelligence, and communicating transparently. Collaboration and co-creation are key elements for the success of adopting a regenerative mindset in the Swiss hotel industry. The study explores the potential for Swiss hotels to transition towards a more regenerative model, but there are limitations to the study. The participating hotels were already engaged in sustainability and a small sample size and regional focus limit the generalizability of the results. Regeneration is a complex concept, and further research is needed to gain a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of its potential in the Swiss hotel industry. To address these limitations, future research should include a more diverse sample of hotels and interviews with key stakeholders of the hotel industry like government bodies. Taking active measures to develop effective solutions is essential in supporting the transition towards regenerative hospitality.

Foreword and acknowledgements

For years, sustainability has become an integral aspect of many people's lives. As the planet faces an ever-worsening climate situation, numerous businesses have adopted sustainable practices and business models to reduce their impact on the environment. However, despite these efforts, it appears that the situation is becoming increasingly urgent, and sustainability alone may no longer suffice. The question then arises: what is the next step? Regenerative tourism has gained significant interest in recent years due to its potential to create sustainable, resilient, and regenerative destinations. Switzerland, being a renowned tourism destination, is also part of this trend. In my dissertation, I delve into the concept of regenerative tourism in Swiss hospitality, drawing from previous research (by Hospitality Business School - École hôtelière de Lausanne (EHL) and institute of tourism of Haute École Spécialisée-Suisse Occidentale Valais/Wallis (HES-SO)) conducted through international self-proclaimed regenerative hotels as well as regenerative experts and a quantitative survey sent to 1822 Swiss hotels. The next step seemed to be interviewing hotels from diverse backgrounds to gauge their perspectives and understand the regeneration potential of the country. To achieve this, I conducted a comprehensive literature review, semi-directive interviews, and a benchmark of self-proclaimed regenerative hotels. Through this research, I aim to uncover the regeneration potential of Swiss hotels, including the challenges, motivations, and needs that come with the transition towards regenerative practices. The ultimate goal is to provide practical recommendations for hospitality stakeholders interested in embracing this innovative approach. However, this study is limited to hotels already committed to the approach, and future research should explore the perspectives of hotels less familiar with regenerative tourism.

This work is the result of a series of collaboration, without which nothing would have been achievable. First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to my thesis advisor, Mr Roland Schegg, for his invaluable guidance throughout my research. His knowledge, experience, and feedback have been crucial in helping me navigate the complex landscape of regenerative tourism and regenerative hospitality in Switzerland. Then, I would like to thank the numerous hospitality professionals who generously shared their time and insights with me; Philippe Baud, Jan Pyott, Marie Forestier, Philip Hauser, Jean-Bernard Rausis, Frère Marcel and Cyril Dederding. Without their contributions, this dissertation would not have been possible. I would also like to thank Mr. Alessandro Inversini and Mr. Martin Hohn for generously giving me their time and valuable advice at key stages of my project. Finally, a special thanks to my loved ones who supported me closely or from afar during this period which was rich in emotions.

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List of abbreviations

EHL:	Hospitality Business School - École hôtelière de Lausanne
HES-SO :	Institute of tourism of Haute École Spécialisée de Suisse Occidentale Valais/Wallis

Introduction

Since the publication of the Brundtland Report, officially entitled *Our Common Future* in 1987 by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), sustainability has increasingly gained importance in everyone's life. Indeed, this is where the concept of sustainable development as it is understood nowadays took roots. (ARE, n.d.) According to this report, sustainable development is when "Humanity has the ability to make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (United Nations, 1987) However, the literature shows that many agree to state that sustainability is not enough anymore as the needs of the current society are not met. In 2021, the Earth Overshoot Day was on the 29th of July showing that in seven months, the population has consumed all the resources that Earth can generate in a year. Humans consume and live as if they had almost three planets at disposal, which is not possible anymore. (*Earth Overshoot Day, a Date That Is Coming around Earlier and Earlier Every Year*, n.d.) Among the industries that pollute the most, the tourism industry is considered one of the most polluting industries globally, contributing to environmental degradation, carbon emissions, and waste generation. Indeed, in the past decades, many factors (affordable air travel, increased connectivity, new technological advances, new business models and greater visa facilitation) influenced the growth of travel. (*Transport-Related CO2 Emissions of the Tourism Sector – Modelling Results*, 2019) With the ongoing climate crisis and the urgent need to reduce carbon emissions, it has become crucial to rethink and transform the tourism industry into a less impacting one. Even if sustainability measures is already present in the tourism industry, it is essential to explore how this industry can shift towards more responsible and actually become a force for the good, especially in the context of Switzerland, a country known for its natural beauty and tourism appeal.

The objective of this research is to explore the connection between sustainability and the hotel industry in the context of tourism, specifically through the lens of regeneration. Regeneration has become a prominent concept in recent years, offering a potential solution to the pressing issue of climate change. In Switzerland, there has been a growing interest in the concept of regenerative hospitality, and this study seeks to supplement existing research by analysing the regeneration potential of Swiss hotels. To achieve this, the study employs a literature review, semi-structured interviews, and a benchmark analysis. Ultimately, the study aims to provide recommendations to assist with the regenerative transition.

1. Regenerative tourism

1.1. *Definition*

“At its simplest, regenerative tourism seeks to ensure travel and tourism delivers a net positive benefit to people, places and nature, and that it supports the long-term renewal and flourishing of our social and ecological systems” (Dredge, 2022, p. 270). In this citation, the notion of long-term impact is emphasized. Regeneration is about the present and future. Bill Reed goes in the same direction by stating that regeneration is a matter of continual evolution and adaptation. “Regeneration is not episodic” (Ho, 2020, p. 9). Regarding the aspect of positive benefit that characterizes regeneration, Bill Reed mentions it with the term “abundance” which is created when giving back to one another, speaking about humans, land, and social psychological systems. In the same paper, a quote from Portia Hart, Standard Bearer for Regenerative Travel, states that “Regeneration is not about checking the boxes, getting your score, and then resting on your laurels. Regeneration considers essence of the entire system and is about constant co-evolution and improvement” (Ho, 2020, p. 11). In addition to confirming this notion of constancy, here the fact that regeneration involves the whole system is outlined. Regenerative tourism is a co-production, and if it is done properly, with the force of all stakeholders, it has the potential to enable them to flourish “not just in a material, financial sense but also emotionally, mentally, physically and spiritually” (Pollock, 2019, p. 7).

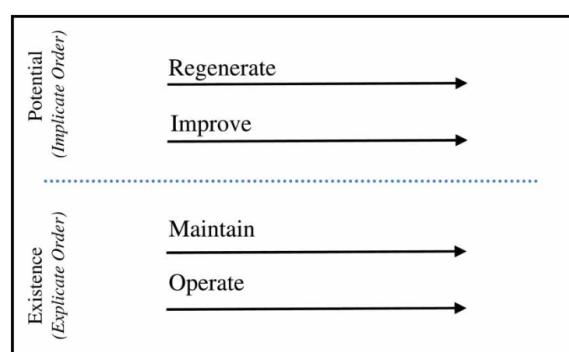
1.2. *Sustainability and regeneration*

Defining regeneration without comparing it to sustainability is rare. Bellato, Frantzeskaki, and Nygaard did it and according to them “while both approaches promote the wellbeing of future generations, sustainable tourism strives to minimize social-ecological damage. In contrast, regenerative tourism seeks to create net positive social-ecological systems effects”(Bellato et al., 2022, p. 10). Regeneration and sustainability have similarities, but the main difference is that sustainable practices, even if they are not only optional but essential, are not enough(Pollock, 2019). “Sustainability doesn’t go far enough”(Archer, 2019). These are the words of Kristin Dunner, CEO of Tourism Bay of Plenty. Because she noticed the same thing, she wants to go further with regeneration for her new destination plan in New Zealand.

The same idea is expressed in *Regenerative Travel Principles for Hospitality* in a more detailed way. It is stated that “from a very simplistic standpoint, being green is about doing less damage, sustainability is reaching net neutral, and regeneration is making it better” (Ho, 2020, p. 11). The author goes on by explaining that the comparison is not here to say that sustainability is wrong or bad. Both concepts are in the right direction, regeneration simply goes one step further. As demonstrated in the paper, “Sustainable travel was the first step in establishing a collaborative relationship with nature and understanding how our operations can fit into the design of the whole system. Regenerative travel takes a step further.” Both concepts can be seen as complementary.

However, sustainability is sometimes also seen as an over-used concept. Indeed, even if Kristin Dunne, mentioned above, joins other authors to say that sustainability only reduces harm, she states that it is short-term thinking. And this is not possible enough. She and her team started to work towards regeneration with the following question as a starting point: “How can we fundamentally leave our place better than we found it?” (Archer, 2019). Mang and Reed see this duality as a challenge. According to them, a regenerative approach is often seen as in competition with sustainability practices, which is not the case. Instead, regeneration should be understood as levels of work, as described in Figure 1. This framework represents four levels of activity with which any living system should constantly engage to survive and thrive. “Understanding regeneration as a hierarchy of differentiated levels of work offers an ecosystem perspective that can reveal both the interrelatedness and necessary interdependence of the different sustainability approaches, as well as the distinctive niche each occupies.” (Mang & Reed, 2012)

Figure 1: Levels of work by Charles Krone



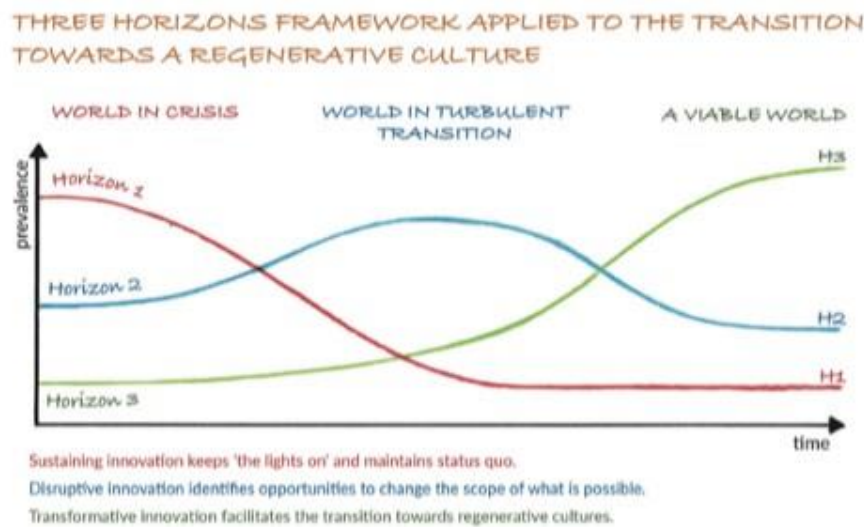
© 2011 Institute for Developmental Processes

Source: Taken from Mang and Reed, 2012, adapted from original by Charles Krone in the 1970s

2. Shift to a new paradigm

Now that the concept of regeneration is defined, it is possible to understand what it will take to see this concept happen. Basically, what is needed is a radical shift in mindset. In the conclusion of the rapport of a hackathon on sustainability and regeneration, it is stated that “one of the main outcomes of this hackathon is the general understanding that the viable pathway forward is transformation. Aligned in the regeneration context, it is, fundamentally, a radical shift in the value system” (Legrand, 2021, p. 12). And according to Daniel Christian Wahl: “Transformation is inevitable and already under way.” (Wahl, 2016) The Three Horizons framework represented in Figure 2 and developed by the IFF (International Futures Forum) members and other future practitioners allows to structure humans’ thinking about the future that they need to create. This tool helps to catalyse individual and collective reflection to find innovative solutions to go from horizon one, representing “business as usual”, to horizon three, the viable world. It helps to face uncertainty and to drive the needed transformation.

Figure 2: The Three Horizons framework



Source: By Daniel Christian Wahl, adapted from bit.ly/DRC229 with permission of IFF

This is a strategic tool that is interesting for the world humans are living in, often termed the “VUCA” world. This acronym stands for the volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity that society is currently facing. The world now has to deal with always more rapid changes, mostly due to technological advances, as well as increasingly complex and interconnected factors resulting in a quite unpredictable world. And “...a lack of clarity about how these factors are shaped and changed are creating an environment that is much more difficult to interpret and analyse.” (Major & Clarke, 2021)

2.1. Management style

“Something is broken in today’s organizations” (Laloux & Wilber, 2014). Among other hypotheses concerning the reasons for this sad constatation, there is one concerning our relationship with the planet:

Perhaps more fundamental than all this is the harm we do to the planet that hosts us: to varying degrees, all of our organizations are participating in a system that is polluting the atmosphere, water, and land; destroying invaluable ecosystems and species at a frightening rate; and exhausting raw materials that might never be available again to the children of our children.(Laloux & Wilber, 2014)

Despite all the negative aspects he sees in today’s society and management system, he is optimistic. He realises that the world needs a mind shift and that if humans suffer now, it is because this old system is dying. A new stage, more meaningful, soulful, and better adapted to the current challenges humanity faces is about to emerge. This new leap is about seeing organisations as living systems rather than machines, that are powered by self-management, wholeness, and evolutionary purpose. Indeed, old rules for management that appeared approximately 250 years ago during the First Industrial Revolution still influence even the latest and most successful companies of today. And the problem resides here. Those principles dictate mechanistic companies that “solve for uniformity, bureaucracy, and control.” (*Organizing for the Future*, 2020) To confirm Laloux’s optimism, one concept that emerges from this new leap made of self-managed systems is holacracy. It consists of several principles. For example, organizations are no longer divided into wide departments but into teams. And those teams are the structures of the company. They design and govern themselves and they are defined by their roles. Leadership is then contextual and changes with the role rather than with the individual. (Bernstein et al., 2016) Anne Pollock also suggests it is now important to make the difference between “managing” and “leading”. To her “...managing means addressing symptoms and crafting tactics to fix problems.” Instead of managers, leaders should step up. Indeed, a leader’s role is to look for a vision and to conduct the team towards it by inspiring and encouraging them. (Pollock, 2019)

2.2. Change of value system

The value system that needs to be altered referees in many cases to the never-ending pursuit of growth (economic, numbers of visitors...). According to (Archer, 2019), Kristin Dunne, CEO of Tourism Bay of Plenty, is one of the marketing leaders that asks the tourism industry to switch objectives. She dreams of an industry that focuses on environmental issues, that are often linked to tourism, instead of placing economic growth as the sole objective. Economic growth isn't valued for no reason. "Tourism is one of the world's major economic sectors" (UNWTO, n.d.-b). In addition to that, the contribution of tourism to the GDP and employment rate is always highlighted. In the same article of the UNWTO, it is stated that in some countries, tourism is so important that it can contribute to 20% of their GDP and that this industry creates one in ten jobs. Tourism clearly has a huge economic impact, but its importance can go beyond the monetary aspect. For Regenerative Travel Principles for Hospitality, Anne Pollock says that "we have a tendency to think about growth as GDP and economic growth¹, but we can also grow in ways that are less "consumptive" and extractive, such as growth in knowledge and understanding" (Ho, 2020). According to her, it is crucial to start focusing on the quality rather than the quantity of visitors and destinations.

Gross National Happiness (GNH) is often mentioned to illustrate this required shift in system value. As Munro explains, GNH is made of four pillars: good governance, sustainable economic development, preservation of the national culture, and preservation of the natural environment. He goes on by stating that "the central notion is that gross national happiness is more important than gross national product"(Munro, 2016). (Verma, 2017) shares this point of view when he describes GNH as "...a unique living alternative that challenges GDP metrics...". He defends his point of view by explaining that GNH does not place economic growth as a factor of human progress at its centre but societal happiness. This philosophy is rather unusual but radical. It challenges the original system of value, and it could be an example to follow. To stop pursuing economic growth, what society needs is a new economic system meaning a new relationship with capitalism. Indeed, there are countless proofs of the failure of this system: mass tourism that causes over-tourism, declining employment, climate change that means resource degradation, and labour conditions. Over-exploitation of natural resources has always been justified by this system, but it cannot continue. "This system has worked for a few, at the cost of the many and has driven the degradation of communities and ecosystems around the world". (Wahl, 2016, p. 26)

It is a huge challenge because it implies finding new measures of success and people are just not used to it. A new economic model is demanded, but what should it look like? More and more people agree on the fact that we need to change. However, it is way harder to start imagining how it could be different and few are the ones who have undertaken this task. (Cave & Dredge, 2020).

2.3. *Importance of the individual shift*

Another shift that is often suggested is the individual shift. The earth needs a change, and according to (Dredge, 2022), an individual shift is the most powerful level for change. “We consider regeneration (and regenerative tourism) as a capacity-building journey, not an outcome, a plan or single output. Shifting individual understanding and mindsets provides the most powerful lever for change.” (p. 273) Daniel Christian Wahl wrote about the collective and individual role humans play in giving birth to the new world that will arise from this shift:

If we take the time to get the questions right, to live the questions more deeply individually and collectively, we will not only be able to hear this new world breathing, we will realize that with each breath we take we are participants in the networks of relationships that are giving birth to this world. (Wahl, 2016, p. 25)

Humans are not separated from the world and the nature surrounding them. They are part of it and need to understand that in this huge ecosystem, everything affects everything” ..., as a result, to care for others is to care for ourselves”. Anne Pollock illustrated the idea with Figure 3 which clearly suggests changing an individual’s mindset but also that humans are part of life and not superior to other life forms. (Pollock, 2019)

Figure 3: From ego to eco



Source: Pollock, 2019, p.6

2.4. *Humans and nature*

As described earlier, it is not enough to limit the effects of human activity on the planet, instead “– people need to take their place again as a part of nature.”(Mang & Reed, 2012) A holistic mindset is core to the regeneration concept. Here the idea is to perceive humans and nature as fully connected and interdependent and to go from an ego (me) to an eco-mode (we) as illustrated previously. (Dredge, 2022)

It also exists in literature exploring the separation between nature and humans that has been propagated by scientific thinking and accelerated under capitalism. Put simply, this separation between humans and nature has empowered the current paradigm that humans dominate nature and that nature’s role is to provide free resources for economic wealth creation. But the scale, size and depth of environmental crises currently unfolding across the planet suggest that nature is pushing back. A paradigm shift is underway. (Dredge, 2022)

“A regenerative practitioner designs an ecosystem that integrates natural and human living systems to create and sustain greater health for both.” (Mang & Reed, 2012) To do so, humans can and should get inspired by nature when it comes to designing. Concepts like biophilia and biomimicry are then interesting. To begin with, biomimicry is a concept that etymologically means “to imitate life” (bios=life, mimicry= to imitate). Concretely, biomimicry is about using nature as a model, a standard measure, and a mentor. For example, designers can develop a building that follows the shape and the physical form of natural elements. In addition to the appearance, designers can also get inspired by the natural ecosystem and its processes. The main idea for the design sector is to create self-sustaining buildings, which totally fit the regeneration concept (Sewalk et al., 2015). Since ever, nature sustains itself and has nothing to learn from humans, who are responsible for its degradation. Instead, humans should observe and be open to mimicking nature and its wonderful processes. The Biomimicry Institute, co-founded by Janine Benyus, created a free website ([AskNature.org](https://www.asknature.org)) that gathers biological strategies, inspired innovations, and educational resources, where visitors can learn and get inspired by nature and translate it into designs to solve sustainability challenges. Humans and nature are then connected. Some links can be drawn from both entities. Biophilia goes even further. Edward O. Wilson described this term in 1986, as “the innate tendency to focus on life and lifelike processes.”(Wilson, 1986, p. 1) It is also often described as the profound human desire to interact with nature.

Many theories show that humans and nature have a deep bond, and some demonstrate the positive effects that nature can have on humans. For instance, Ulrich's "Stress Recovery Theory" advances the benefit that natural environments can have on post-stress recovery. (Khozaei et al., 2022) Growing awareness of those concepts has their importance in the regeneration realm. Realising that the surroundings and beautiful nature can actually help humans physically and mentally and that their bond is undeniable can motivate this mindset shift, tending to care for nature, to eventually caring for ourselves.

2.5. *Impact of COVID-19 on tourism*

Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next. We can choose to walk through it, dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred, our avarice, our data banks and dead ideas, our dead rivers and smoky skies behind us. Or we can walk through lightly, with little luggage, ready to imagine another world. And ready to fight for it. (Roy, 2020)

Arundhati Roy argues that the COVID-19 pandemic could be a portal for the new world that should birth, as mentioned earlier. It could be only if humans resist the temptation to go back to "business-as-usual", to the normal of the pre-pandemic period. Past must be left behind and this tragic period should be used "as a 'great reset' to rethink, reimagine and redesign a new restorative, resilient, inclusive and zero carbon growth model." (Bigwood, 2020) COVID-19 has the potential to shift mindset because it affected the entire world. This period was hard for people and for many industries, tourism in particular. Indeed, its different sectors namely aviation, travel companies, booking agents, retail, attractions, food and beverage, and accommodation were severely wrecked. Borders had to close; nobody could use those services anymore. Incomes have fallen drastically, and the number of jobs lost has exploded. (Cave & Dredge, 2020) The UNWTO estimated the loss of international tourist arrivals at -74%. (UNWTO, 2021) But in the midst of all this chaos, some great insights have emerged. Public awareness about the consequences of mass tourism raised. The diminution of pollution during COVID-19 was remarkable and also relief of the local population who were finally no longer overwhelmed by the sea of tourists for a long time. (Schmöcker, 2021) Some trends have been identified by the UNWTO regarding the changes in travellers' behaviour during times of COVID-19. Some of them fit perfectly the shift in mindset required to adopt a

regenerative mindset and should definitely be permanent. For example, they identified a growing interest in sustainability, authenticity, and local hood explaining that “travellers have been giving more importance to creating a positive impact on local communities, increasing looking for authenticity”.(UNWTO, 2021) Among the other trends, interesting ones are the adoption of domestic travel or staycation, news concerns like health and safety and the need to get away in nature, developing rural tourism or road trip travel.

3. Hotel industry and regeneration

To provide the appropriate context for this research on the hotel industry, a wider perspective on regenerative tourism was necessary. Having established this context, the focus can now shift to the hotel industry, beginning with a global overview before narrowing down to the Swiss level, which is the focus of this study.

3.1. *Negative impact and challenges of the hotel industry*

The impact of tourism companies can be hard to measure as their supply chains generally involve different sectors namely transport, catering, attractions, and accommodation itself. However, there are many attempts to estimate the CO₂ emissions of these different sectors. For instance, according to the World Tourism Organization, the hotel industry was responsible for 21% of global tourism emissions in 2008. This percentage includes the emissions of scope three, which is the most important for this branch of tourism. Indeed, in the same report, it has been found that scope three accounted for 55% of the emissions, whereas scope two represent 37% and scope one only 8%. (*A Net Zero Roadmap for Travel & Tourism, 2021, pp. 13–16*). However, other reports claim that this industry accounts for 264Mt CO₂-eq direct and controllable emissions, meaning scope one and two, which represent 10% of global tourism emissions. (*Global Accommodation Sector, 2022, pp. 3–4*)

As demonstrated, the major concern is about determining the boundaries of emissions to be considered (especially for scope three). Accommodation providers are not spared. Estimating their CO₂ emissions is a challenge and there is a growing need for standard methodology. Then, many different business models are adopted within the accommodation. It creates confusion about the assignment of emissions to the different roles. Furthermore, accommodation providers often depend on local third parties so the decision-making process can be longer and more complicated. (*A Net Zero Roadmap for Travel & Tourism, 2021, p. 22*) Another challenge identified is the lack of data to support decision making around sustainability initiatives. For many hotels, becoming sustainable or regenerative seems very expensive. However, being an eco-hotel can also be profitable. If the actions of the hotel are clearly shown, guests concerned about the topic may be willing to pay more if they do good for the planet. But how to link the bookings with sustainability? How to know that a guest chose this hotel because of its sustainable assets?(Johnson & Claar, 2021)

3.2. *Potential of the hotel industry*

Bill Reed once said:

The majority of green and sustainable hospitality projects are working on being efficient.

Regeneration is about engaging and understanding the larger life shed of the system. If we can learn and appreciate the systems of life in the places we visit, there is a chance we will take that perspective home with us and engage with places in renewed ways (Ho, 2020)

In this citation, Bill Reed demonstrates the importance of showing the example. As it is demonstrated in the latest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, people are increasingly traveling. Indeed, 2020 was the tenth consecutive year of growth (UNWTO, n.d.-a) There are then many touchpoints that can be analysed and used to teach good practices to travellers. David Leventhal emphasizes that hotels must understand that their activities extend beyond their physical property. Meaning that hoteliers are not a separate entity from the community, they are part of it and must work together (Ho, 2020, p. 8). The third author of the paper, Anne Pollock, continues in the same direction stating that “regenerative principles should help the hotelier see that there is a more holistic and organic way of seeing the world and that their role becomes a change agent for their community.” For her, it is all about destroying separations between stakeholders and that they all become aware of the interdependence and interconnectivity of everything, travellers included. (Ho, 2020, p. 10) The relation between the property and the local ecosystem is also expressed by Alessandro Inversini and Lionel Saul as follows: “it is less about generic sustainability guidelines to comply with and to justify towards a given body or certification authority; it is more about a genuine involvement with the local ecosystem.”(Inversini & Saul, 2023)

3.2.1. Positive impacts of COVID

COVID-19 hit severely the accommodation sector. Many hotels had to close due to a drastic diminution in bookings. Others had to innovate and invest to remain open while answering to growing needs Necessary renovations and maintenance work could be done, which is difficult when the hotel is occupied. like safety, health, social distancing... However, out of this difficult period came some very good and sustainable initiatives. It was the opportunity for property managers to rethink their buildings and evaluate them. Generally, they reduced their carbon emissions and their use of chemicals, and the industry also saw an increase in touchless technologies. An interesting benefit from the pandemic that is crucial for a regenerative transaction is an increasing focus on supporting the local economy (Johnson & Claar, 2021).

COVID-19 was a hard period for many people, but some lessons can be drawn from these extraordinary years of pandemic. Some years ago, would it have been possible to imagine lockdowns and social distancing? Certainly not, but now it is acceptable. For the Guardian, here is what Rebecca Solnit expressed: “In the midst of fear and isolation, we are learning that profound change is possible,”(Solnit, 2020). This is quite encouraging for the shift in mind that is required as seen earlier.

3.3. Current state of regenerative hospitality

Net-zero hotels are emerging around the world in countries like England, Sweden, Ireland, Austria, Netherlands, and the US. This is a first and crucial step for regenerative travel that aims at being net-positive. Those hotels have the particularity to be essentially powered by renewable energy sources. Solar panels, groundwater heat pumps, wind turbines, elevators that charge when they go down to power the ascent, blue and green roofs, and the list goes on and on. Many solutions are emerging and inspiring new businesses. (CNN, 2022) Furthermore, an organisation dedicated to regeneration has emerged in the past years: *Regenerative Travel*. This organisation is “...a community of independent hotels regenerating people and place”(Regenerative Travel - Begin Your Regenerative Journey - Regenerative Travel, n.d.). This organisation is co-founded and owned by Amanda Ho and offers a list of so-called “regenerative” hotels spread around the globe. Furthermore, educational materials and resources are created and offered to allow people to gain knowledge about the link between regeneration and tourism. Basically, they try to make people understand how tourism can be a force for good. What about Switzerland?

Within the Swiss tourism industry, a few large projects with a direct link to sustainability have already been initiated. For instance, in collaboration with the whole industry, the national tourism office *Switzerland Tourism* launched in 2021 its new strategy called “Swisstainable”. This national initiative has great importance as it aims at promoting the country as a sustainable one in the entire world. While Switzerland already offers many sustainable tourism products, this aspect has often been overlooked in marketing campaigns. “Swisstainable” aspires to reverse this trend. (Suisse Tourisme, 2021). Swiss hotels can now apply for the “Swisstainable” label which is declined in three levels or categories: committed, engaged, and leading. Another sustainable label worth mentioning emerged in Switzerland: Ibex fairstay. There are currently about 120 Swiss hotels registered in the different tiers (bronze, silver, gold, and platinum). Even though regeneration is not mentioned in its description, the philosophy of

the label seems close to the concept. Indeed, a holistic approach seems to be at the heart of the concept. Assessment of hotels is made based on five different areas, namely management, ecology, regionality, social balance, and finance and performance. (Ibex fairstay, 2021) Even more recently, another project coordinated by the EHL Hospitality Business School and co-funded by Innosuisse has been announced, “The Resilient Tourism Project”. Leading Swiss universities and tourism actors unite in order to improve and strengthen the innovation, competitiveness, resilience, and sustainability of the tourism ecosystem in Switzerland. The third part of this massive project is directly linked to sustainability and is formulated as follows: “Conduct stress tests and design resilient tourism systems in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)”.(EHL Hospitality Business School, 2022) Both projects are subject to national interest and are linked to sustainability. In some way, they are close to regenerative hospitality but not dedicated to it. Notwithstanding, a preliminary step of “The Resilient Tourism Project” actually is. Intending to tackle the unexplored field of regenerative hospitality and to explore how it can be supported by digital technology, the “Digitally Enabled Regenerative Hospitality Ecosystems” project is a pioneer work on Swiss regenerative hospitality. This project is led by a team composed of Roland Schegg and Sarah Balet from the HES-SO Valais Wallis and Alessandro Inversini and Lionel Saul from the EHL. One step of this project consisted in conducting 19 semi-structured interviews with travel professionals (academics, consultants, and self-proclaimed regenerative hoteliers) coming from 15 different countries all over the world. The goal was to gain a preliminary understanding of the regenerative tourism field. This work has huge importance as it represents the first attempt to understand and describe how regenerative orientation can be implemented in hospitality establishments. However, according to the authors of the rapport “Given the fragmentation and multifaced nature of the industry, further work is required to establish the viability of the concept and the model for other (i.e. bigger) hospitality businesses.” (Inversini et al., 2023)

After that qualitative study, a quantitative survey was created and sent to 1822 Swiss hotels, with 108 answers. The goal of that study was to assess the perception of Swiss hoteliers regarding the theme of regenerative tourism and sustainable tourism in general. It was also aimed to quantitatively measure the importance and the adoption of regenerative practices within the sector. The questionnaire was structured around key themes that derived from the 19 interviews conducted with international experts. Those themes were the following: Place intelligence (Natural and social ecosystem), People Intelligence (Staff, guests, and suppliers), Philosophy, and Technology. Overall, the results of this quantitative survey show that most hotels share the principles of the regenerative philosophy, even if they do not express it in the same terms. Hotels seem to be more involved in the theme of Place Intelligence than in People

Intelligence. Indeed, the link between the hotel and the destination appears to be quite strong. However, it seemed more mixed for the governance, the implication of all stakeholders in the decision-making process, and the sustainable measures. (Schegg et al., 2023)

The team in charge of the project delegated another project in autumn 2022, an exploratory study based on secondary data, to a group of three tourism students of the HES-SO in Sierre, for the course *Projet Institut* directed by Roland Schegg who was also, with Mrs Sarah Balet, the teacher in charge of this project. The main objective of the students was to explore and determine the level of regenerative actions already undertaken by Swiss hotels. After some time passed on the literature to fully understand the concept of regenerative hospitality, basically, the team created an evaluation grid that would be used to analyze hotels' official websites and to benchmark them according to key regenerative characteristics that they defined, based on the literature (place, place's intelligence, people intelligence, governance, communication, net positive impact, sustainability measures, and technology). The report handled by the students is not public and was shared for this research. Hence, it is not mentioned in list of references and can be considered as personal communication.

These research studies are the most recent ones in Switzerland and are then worth further exploring. The first step was to interview hoteliers among other actors from the regenerative field. The hoteliers solicited were self-proclaimed regenerative, so it appeared interesting to interview hoteliers who are not as familiar with the concept to have both perspectives. Furthermore, the conclusion and perspective of the quantitative survey within Switzerland suggest to further investigation of the initial findings by conducting case studies among respondents to determine concrete actions related to regenerative hospitality. This led to this present work, which is articulated around six interviews with Swiss hoteliers from different backgrounds who are relatively close to the sustainable paradigm but not necessarily to the regenerative one.

4. Research question and objectives

As mentioned, so-called regenerative hotels starts to bloom around the globe. The concept of regeneration starts to be implemented in the global industry and Switzerland is not left apart. Indeed, huge research on regenerative hospitality is on its way. A quantitative survey has already been sent to almost every hotel in the country, introducing them to the concept. Some qualitative interviews have been set up with actors in the regenerative field (consultants, research, hotels...). However, no qualitative research has been organised solely with the main actors of the hospitality industry: the Swiss hoteliers.

Considering this specific context, the following research question has been formulated:

RQ: How do Swiss hoteliers approach the idea of regenerative hospitality and its potential?

In order to answer this question and to lead this work, the following objectives have been set up:

1. Gaining insights into the motivations, barriers and needs of hotels regarding a sustainable and potentially regenerative approach.
2. Gathering examples of effective methods that hoteliers can employ to work towards a regenerative future.
3. Evaluate the regeneration potential of Swiss hotels from different categories and backgrounds.

5. Methodology

To accomplish the objectives of this study, a qualitative methodology was employed, consisting of three distinct phases. Firstly, a comprehensive literature review was conducted to establish the contextual framework of regenerative hospitality. This step was deemed essential for several reasons. Firstly, it facilitated the adoption of a holistic approach to the subject matter by providing a broad understanding of the topic. Additionally, it enabled the identification of existing knowledge gaps that required further exploration. Furthermore, the literature review provided the foundation upon which the interview guide was constructed. Once the knowledge gaps were identified, the interview questions were designed to elicit responses that addressed these gaps. Subsequently, semi-structured interviews were conducted with Swiss hoteliers to determine their motivations, limitations, and requirements for adopting more sustainable business models, and to gather examples of effective measures and techniques already in use in Swiss hotels. This interviewing process constituted the second phase of this research. Finally, in order to meet the final objective of evaluating the regenerative potential of the sample, the results of the interviews were discussed in conjunction with the literature review. This allowed for the presentation of additional and valuable information that emerged from the interviews but did not fall within the ambit of the first or second objectives. Furthermore, to complete the evaluation of the regeneration potential of Swiss hotels, a benchmark of good practices from self-proclaimed regenerative hotels from all over the world has been conducted and linked to the results of the interviews. Therefore, the analysis was concluded, and recommendations could be formulated.

5.1. *Semi-structured interviews*

“... a leader is also required to facilitate collective reflection as a precursor to tapping into some collective intelligence. The best way to do that is to pose open-ended questions and convene conversations. That’s exactly what’s happening in Flanders and hopefully elsewhere right now.” (Pollock, 2019)

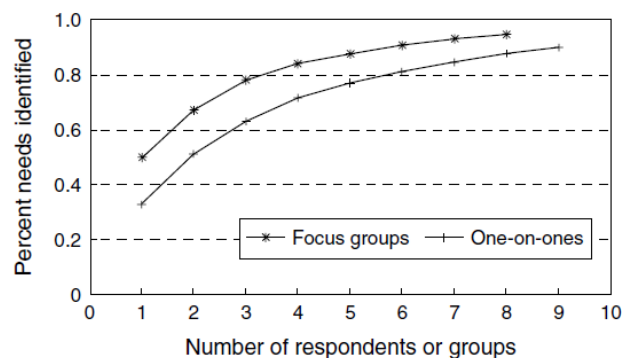
In the context of this study, it happened in Switzerland to collect pertinent qualitative data that would provide insights into the research question. To achieve this, semi-structured interviews were conducted between the 1st of February and the 30th of March 2023. The interviews were designed to be of approximately one-hour duration, to elicit detailed and comprehensive information corresponding to the objectives of this dissertation. The use of a semi-structured,

open-ended questioning format was preferred, as it allowed for the possibility of unexpected and valuable information to arise during the interviews, thereby enriching the research outcomes.

5.1.1. Sample

To generate the required sample for this study, an initial consideration pertains to the determination of the appropriate number of participants that will constitute it. According to Hauser and Griffin, the number of one-on-one interviews conducted for qualitative research should range from five to nine. (Griffin & Hauser, 1993) Indeed, based on the study about Office Equipment, four one-on-one interviews are already about as effective as two focus groups. Four interviews corresponding to approximately 72% of needs identified, to reach at least 80% of needs identified, five interviews or more are recommended.

Figure 4: Focus Groups vs. One-on-One interviews



Source: Taken from Griffin and Hauser, 1993,
adapted from original by Silver and Thompson, 1991

For this work, six interviews were conducted with Swiss hotels. The companies contacted for this study were selected from an existing list provided by Mr. Roland Schegg. In November 2022, he and his team namely Sarah Balet (HES-SO), Alessandro Inversini (EHL), and Lionel Saul (EHL) sent an online quantitative questionnaire about Regenerative Hospitality to 1822 Swiss hotels. At the end of the questionnaire, participants had the possibility to write their email addresses if they were interested in potentially collaborating in future projects. 23 hotels answered positively and gave their contact. They were almost all contacted (21) and six of them agreed to take part in this present dissertation. They are presented in Table 1, displayed on the next page. Hotels were contacted by email with a brief description of the project along with a public/online Google Spreadsheet link that enabled the hotels to express their interest in participating in the study and schedule an interview at their convenience. While participants

were offered the option of either physical or virtual meetings, preference was given to conducting physical meetings on-site at the hotels. This approach was deemed advantageous, as it obviated the possibility of technical difficulties and allowed for a more natural flow of conversation. Additionally, conducting interviews within the hotel environment provided an opportunity to observe and experience the unique ambiance and atmosphere of each hotel.

Table 1: Sample of the semi-structured interviews

Interviews	Hotels	Date	Location	Stars	Labels
H1	BEATUS Wellness & Spa-Hotel	01.02.2023	Bern Mountains	5*	Swisstainable I
H2	Boutique Hotel & Restaurant Glacier	01.02.2023	Bern Mountains	4*	Ibexfairstay (platinum) Swisstainable III
H3	Hôtel Bon Rivage	16.02.2023	Vaud Town/ lakeside	3*	Swisstainable II
H4	Hotel Belvedere	17.02.2023	Bern Mountains	4*	Ibexfairstay (platinum) Swisstainable III
H5	Hôtellerie Franciscaine	22.02.2023	Valais Town/urban periphery	/	/
H6	Modern Times Hotel	30.03.2023	Vaud urban periphery	4*	Swisstainable I

Source: Author's data

Initially, the hotels contacted were those that best suited the study and offered a diverse sample in terms of classification, location, and labels. However, some hotels that would have fit the study perfectly did not respond to the invitation email. The results of the study depended highly on hotels' willingness to participate. One can notice that the hotels that were open to exchange on the topic were those already engaged in the transition, from slightly or fully. Indeed, even if the acquisition of a label is not enough to define a hotel as green, sustainable, or even regenerative, because it depends on their actions, it shows an interest and a first step

towards the transition. In addition to that, it appears that there is a connection between the classification of hotels and the acquisition of labels. The exception to the sample is H5 who officially is neither classified nor labelled but whose engagement is translated into their actions, as presented in the analyse of the results (See point 6: Presentation of the results).

5.1.2. Structure and process of the interviews

After defining the number of testimonies required and contacting the hotels the interviews were to be prepared. The interviews aimed at exchanging openly with hoteliers to gather the information that would answer the research question and objectives. To obtain rich and in-depth insights, the tone of the interview was close to the one of a conversation. However, a basis of the interview guide was prepared to structure the exchange. Based on the literature review, ten questions were prepared to guide the conversation and to understand the position of hotels regarding sustainability and regeneration. The goal was to understand:

- Their motivations, limitations, and needs to adopt a sustainable and/or regenerative business model.
- The place that sustainability holds in the hotel and examples of concrete measures.
- Their thoughts and position concerning regenerative characteristics.

The basis of the interview guide is presented below. For some questions, follow-up ones were anticipated and put in brackets. Before starting the interview, confidentiality matters were addressed. A simple confidentiality sheet was created in this regard [Appendix I]. Participants were asked to express their agreement or disagreement with the following points: being recorded during the interview, that their names be used if necessary for this work, and that the name of the hotel be used if necessary for this work.

Basis for the interview guide

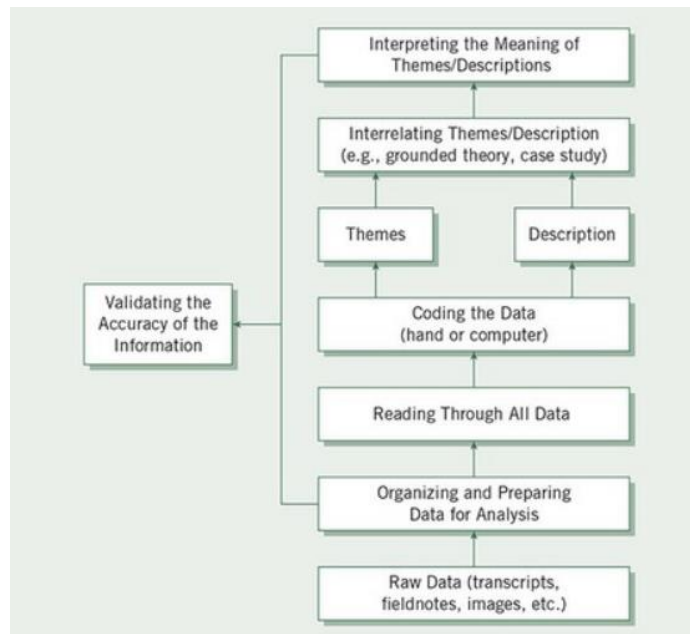
1. What do you understand of the concept discussed today, Regenerative Tourism/hospitality?
2. How do you feel about the current sustainable practices?
3. What mindset do hoteliers need to adopt and how do you position yourself about it?
(*Follow-up question: limitation aspect*)

4. If we see your hotel as a cornerstone of the destination's regeneration, how does your hotel fit it, and what is its role? (*Follow-up question: Could the hotel be elsewhere or is it proper to the destination? limitation aspect*)
5. Can you describe your stakeholders and your relations with them? (*Follow-up question: their origin, limitation aspect*)
6. In what way are your customers changed when leaving your property? (*Follow-up question: information on the topic, regenerative activities, limitation aspect*)
7. What significance does digital technology hold for your company and the companies you are associated with?
8. Are there any other examples of sustainable actions you are undertaking or will be undertaking in the future that you would like to mention?
9. What are the needs of a hotel that wants to make the transition, or continue it, to a sustainable or even regenerative business model?
10. What motivated you/ motivates you in the short-mid and long term to be patient and overcome those limitations? (*Follow-up question: what are the benefits of practicing regenerative hospitality?*)

5.1.3. Analysis of the data

Cresswell's 6 steps provided the inspiration and basis for the analysis of the data obtained from the interviews. These steps are presented in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Cresswell's 6 steps



Source: Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 269

The first step is to **work on the data to organise and prepare it for proper analysis**. In practical terms, this means transcribing the interviews. This step is time and energy intensive and necessary and therefore, should not be neglected. As mentioned earlier, all interviewees agreed the conversation to be recorded. This detail is crucial for transcription. Indeed, it is more convenient and efficient to make a transcription from a record than from notes taken during the interviews. All the transcriptions [See Appendices II-VII], were done manually. Below the level of details chosen for those transcriptions is explained:

- As the nonverbal of participants is not useful for this work, it was not transcribed.
- Some too precise details, anecdotes, or examples were not transcribed as they do not add much value and tend to make the text more cumbersome. The goal was to lighten the text as much as possible as the interviews were quite long. Only necessary data was kept.
- Words expressed in another language were kept so but put in italics to make the difference.

Then comes the second step. Once a transcription was done, a **general reading** was done. The goal was to have a general idea of the text to have a helicopter view of all the data and to be able to reflect on its overall meaning. Interesting facts and ideas expressed by the respondent could already be outlined.

After that general reading, the most crucial part of the analysis comes. This part is made of the three following steps as presented by Cresswell, namely the **coding of the data, the creation of themes, and the representation of themes and descriptions**. The analysis is an iterative process and especially with those steps that are rather intertwined. For that reason, they will not be explained separately but rather in one single paragraph. To begin with, it is important to specify that for this work the coding was deductive, meaning from the research question to the data. As presented previously, this research is guided by a research question and three objectives. To answer the research question, those goals served to build the interview guide. The transcripts were then analysed the other way around. Concretely, one colour was attributed to each objective or sub-objective and then reported directly in the transcriptions to the elements found corresponding to the objective. The process was applied to all transcriptions allowing comparison between them. To start the juxtaposition of data from the different interviews, they were all gathered in one single Excel grid. The template is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Analysis grid

	Motivations	Limitations	Needs	Examples
Interview I				
Interview II				
Interview III				
Interview IV				
Interview V				
Interview VI				

Source: Author's data

Once all elements from each transcription were reported into the four different categories of the grid (motivations, limitations, needs, and examples of measures), another sorting was made. After reading and comparing data within one category, some recurrent themes were clearly identified. And that process was applied to the four different categories. Those themes were then used to structure the **presentation** of the results. (See point 6: Presentation of the results).

That part of the dissertation consists of the presentation of the different themes discovered in each category. The method used to present the results was quite straightforward. The idea was to illustrate each theme by at least two hoteliers that share the same point of view and if existing, the theme was counterbalanced by hoteliers who have other opinions on that specific subject. Ideas of the hoteliers were expressed indirectly by paraphrasing them but when a quote from the transcription illustrated very well the topic, it was directly quoted, to support the point.

Having presented the results, it remains to **interpret them**. This step is crucial as it is where the results are put into context. Indeed, the idea of this final part of the dissertation is to link the results with the literature review initially realised. The discussion was done under the prism of the last objective of the work namely: Evaluate the regeneration potential of Swiss hotels from different categories and backgrounds. Indeed, this objective could not only be presented as the regeneration potential can solely be defined thanks to the criteria exposed in the literature review. The elements selected from the interviews that were placed in the analysis grid, which meet the first two objectives of this work, as well as other valuable aspects that were brought up during the interviews that did not fall exactly within these objectives, could be related to what has already been done in the field of regenerative hospitality. This allowed a comparison and thus an evaluation of the regeneration potential of six Swiss hotels.

5.2. Benchmark

After analysing and interpreting the results of the interviews thanks to the literature review, a first attempt of assessment of the regeneration potential is done. To complete this study, a benchmark analysis was conducted on the websites of self-proclaimed regenerative hotels, or hotels described as such, from all around the world, to assess the regenerative measures implemented by Swiss hotels. Indeed, to be able to identify the regeneration potential of Swiss hotels, it is interesting to compare them to hotels that correspond to regenerative criteria.

This benchmark analysis is the continuation of a quantitative study carried out by a group of students from the HES-SO. As explained in the context (See point 3.3), this project was a first attempt to evaluate the regeneration potential of Swiss hotels and was supervised by Roland Schegg and Sarah Balet. The group analysed the websites of a sample of 148 Swiss hotels and five self-proclaimed regenerative hotels from all over the globe. In order to flesh out the list of effective measures that can be put in place for regeneration, the analysis of websites of self-proclaimed regenerative hotels is extended for this present study. A total of 37 hotel

websites were analysed during the period from November 2022 to January 2023. Regenerative Travel is currently the only organization that identifies hotels that can be considered regenerative, and as such, 29 out of the 37 hotels analysed were part of this organization. The remaining eight hotels were selected based on their mention in sustainability or regeneration-related articles or websites. The analysis involved exploring and examining the hotels' official websites, and any regenerative aspects identified were recorded in a simple grid [Appendix X]. All identified measures were then consolidated according to the HES team's model [Appendix VIII and IX] for greater coherence and were grouped into the following categories:

- Place
- Place's intelligence
- People intelligence
- Governance
- Communication
- Net positive impact
- Sustainability measures
- Technology

6. Presentation of the results

To analyse the results of the interviews, the information in the transcripts was sorted according to the main themes of the interview guide and consequently the objectives of this work. The most frequent ideas and proposals were identified and presented in this chapter. Each theme is analysed together with the different information and opinions that were given. This chapter is divided into two main parts grouping several sub-themes following the logic of the interviews. Therefore, the first part presents the motivations, barriers, and needs expressed by hoteliers regarding the adoption of a favourable approach to the environment. The second part gathers examples of effective methods mentioned by hoteliers. The last objective, namely the regeneration potential, will be directly addressed in the interpretation of the results.

In this section, the information provided is based on the interviews conducted. To avoid repeating the interviewees' names and for the sake of brevity, an abbreviation is used to represent each source rather than quoting them every time. An exception is made in the case where a sentence from an interview in French is quoted as such. For ease of reading, the sentence is translated into English, but the original sentence is quoted at the bottom of the page. Hence, the sources of information are introduced only once as follows. Comments of:

- **H1** come from the personal communication that took place on-site on the 1st of February 2023 with Mr. Philippe Baud representing the HLS Hotels & Spa AG (Hotel Ermitage Schönried & Hotel Beatus Merligen).
- **H2** come from the personal communication that took place on-site on the 1st of February 2023 with Mr. Jan Pyott representing the Boutique Hotel Glacier in Grindelwald.
- **H3** come from the personal communication that took place on-site on the 16th of February 2023 with Mrs. Marie Forestier representing the Hotel Bon Rivage in La Tour-de-Peilz.
- **H4** come from the personal communication that took place online on the 17th of February 2023 with Mr. Philip Hauser representing the Hotel Belvedere Grindelwald.
- **H5** come from the personal communication that took place on-site on the 22nd of February 2023 with Mr. Jean-Bernard and Frère Marcel representing the Hôtellerie Francscaïne in Saint-Maurice.
- **H6** come from the personal communication that took place on-site on the 30th of March 2023 with Mr. Cyril Dederding representing the Modern Times Hotel in Vevey.

6.1. *Hotels' motivations, barriers, and needs*

6.1.1. Motivations

Own philosophy as a private

For each person interviewed it seems that the main motivation towards initially adopting sustainable practices and continuing to for example be regenerative come from personal conviction as H4 says: “[...] *what we do is not going to change world climate but in the end it's a question of philosophy*”. For H1, it is **one's responsibility** to act sustainably for the planet and for future. He adds that he is convinced that it is time to act and stop ignoring facts. H2 explains that they **brought to the hotel their behaviour as a private**. They were educated since childhood to recycle; it is normal for them. They sort waste at home, so why not doing at work? Same for H5 who is used to living simply since he is a child. And this personal philosophy seems to be linked to some mindset. Despite the limitations and difficulties that this topic engenders, the motivation simply comes from adopting a **positive and optimistic mindset**, as mentioned by H1. This opinion is shared by H6, who, after talking about some challenges his hotel face, seems confident that some solutions exist or will emerge because nowadays there are many solutions that society did not talk about ten years ago even though the problem was the same. He focuses and the **progresses already made**. Being positive can also mean adopting a **problem-solver mindset**. That is the case for H2, who does not give up when facing difficulties but just tackle them as challenges.

Transparency appears to be part of some hoteliers' vision. H4 explains that this is important for them to show guests the efforts made because in general guests are not aware of what it takes to run a hotel. H6 goes in the same direction when explaining that they expose their products in the hotel hall to show their transparency and to make guests aware of that part of the business. Products and especially meat are exposed in a refrigerated cabinet, which can sound inconsistent as eating meat is not the best sustainable solution. However, as their meat is local, they want to show clients that it is not prohibited to eat meat, but there are ways to do it. Eat less but better. On the contrary, H1 adopts a different mindset. In their hotel, they seem to work actively for sustainability, but they do not talk about it much. Some people even think they should talk about it more, but they do not want to give the impression of lecturing the guests. H3 and H4 seem to agree that **preserving nature and landscapes is logical as it is their capital**. Swiss tourism businesses live off their environment. People come to Switzerland for that so if they want to keep hosting guests, they have to look after their surroundings.

For the people

Firstly, for some of the interviewees, the **common effort** appears to be part of the impulsion to adopt a sustainable approach. H1 explains that he is not the only one having this philosophy. It is part of some employees' ADN, and the owners support them in this process. H2 has a global approach when saying “[...] *it's just logic to me. We are in one big boat called Earth.*” H5 uses the same expression “we are all on the same boat”¹, when explaining why they organise social and local activities where people can meet and exchange to get out of their solitude. Here **empathy and care** is clearly a motivation. They try to have an offer that increases people's resilience to the world which is unfortunately a bit melancholic and anxious.

Then, it appears in almost every interview that efforts are being made to **satisfy the clients and the employees**. For H1, sustainable efforts are seen as an added value to the client's experience. As for H2, *“It is really broad, but the end call, I want a happy guest. That's our number one job here. I want that the guest walks in here and leaves with a smile on his face. But again, 90% is in the walls they see 10%, so you have to make the 10% really good!”*. Same for H4, who simply states that the happiness of their guests and employees is important to them. H6 seems to care about giving the opportunity to young people to work in a business that tries for its ecosystem and to inspire them to act the same. In addition, for him, it looks like hoteliers think on a **destination level** including the local community and environment. It is the case for H4: *“And in the future, we should really try to figure out what can tourism bring to the local community and to the local environment.”* Same for H6 who expresses his wishes to always do more for the people impacted by the hotel (employees, families, suppliers).

Finally, doing it for others also motivates H3 and more specifically for **future generations, for her children**. This long-term perspective is shared by H6 who also dreams of a better planet for his children. As for H1 and H4 who work in a family business, it seems that this operating mode automatically inducts thinking about the future. It seems that as management people tend to stay longer in the business, the vision is also shared from one generation to the other. H4 adds that the vision is thought 20,30 or 50 years ahead.

¹ « Et le but d'être un acteur social dans la région pour moi c'est important parce que là aussi c'est de faire que les gens se rencontrent sur des thèmes, justement l'accompagnement des malades ou l'accompagnement à domicile ou faire le deuil, de s'accompagner pas forcément sur un thème religieux mais simplement de se rencontrer, d'en parler de pouvoir échanger, parce qu'on est tous dans le même bateau. Ça c'est un peu notre vision un peu locale. C'est un peu notre motivation. » Personal communication H5, 22.02.2023)

Extra benefits

In each interview, except with H1, it is clearly expressed that implementing sustainable practices is an opportunity to **save money**. H2 illustrates how the amount of money saved can be easily calculated by considering one's trash production and estimating the cost of the bags used. By doing so, one can obtain a clear picture of the potential savings. H4 and H5 expressed the same reasoning with energy. They invested in that because they knew in the end it would **lower the exploitation costs**. H3 confirms that point when saying that it is too bad that a hotel does not implement even little measures because it means they do not realise it actually saves money, **on top of doing good for the environment**. In her opinion, when it comes to sustainability, there are many quick wins with little investment or high investments with high ROI, so it is always worth it. H6 seems to question what H3 expressed. There is clearly a financial benefit in implementing sustainable practices, but can it be the only motivation? Or should it be communicated to the guests? How? In his opinion, in many hotels, there is a lot of marketing for sustainability that just hides financial motivations.

Then, in addition to savings opportunities, it appears that implementing responsible measures is easy and can then **save time and energy**. *“For me it was very surprising to learn actually that many people don't know how it works, how simple it is”*, said H2 when talking about waste sorting. Same when it comes to the water carafe and bottle in the rooms. For him, it is really simple to implement. H3 also noticed that because **sustainability is becoming a norm**, some things are easier to implement. She feels that there are things they could not have afforded a few years ago towards customers, some practices they would not have accepted. But in a sense, she sometimes also feels that it could be seen as opportunistic. The balance is hard to find.

6.1.2. Barriers

Barriers and limitations in terms of implementing a sustainable approach in a hotel were the themes that were most elaborated by the hoteliers. Below are the different challenges that were mentioned by the sample.

Lack of resources

In the first place, for each respondent, the main problem seems to be **financial**. This limitation is redundant in each interview and expressed by terms like expensive, cost-intensive, costly, matter of budget, always finances that need to be respected...H2 confirms that when saying *“[...] financial is a big stopper for a lot of business”*. Implementing new measures to

diminish carbon footprint is generally a big jump and that costs much. As also mentioned by a few of the hotels (H2, H3, and H6), **the margin of a hospitality business is low**, meaning that it is also a big jump for the budget. When asked if they received any form of **help from the government**, the answers were mitigated. In the case of H1, when installing a heat pump, they planned to receive a huge amount of money but in the end, they paid for everything, and that was a **surprise**. It seems that as they received the CO2 tax in return for not buying fuel oil anymore, it cut them out of any other form of subvention. H6 feels that subvention applies only to particular buildings or situations and that it can be hard to get them. To continue with, H2's answer when asked if they received help was "Yes and no". They got some subvention but apparently, they also got punished because they were already using green energy. A weird situation that they still **had not understood** at the time of the interview. Some **frustration** is also perceived in the conversation with H5 and H2. They explained that much of the budget goes into the walls, for things like security. Aspects that clients will never see or notice. And H5's frustration seems to go further. In addition to being very expensive, security regulations are quite strict and if not respected the consequences are severe. They do not feel helped by the laws, or by the government. In that regard, H6 is less categorical. They acknowledge that the government is quite strict: if they do not respect the goals they have with it, in terms of sustainability, the hotel can be shut down once and for all. But when asked if they see that as a limitation, they seemed to see the long-term benefits of it. Those goals make them save energy, then money.

Something that also comes out of the conversations is the lack of time. Working in a hotel seems **time and energy intensive** and there is not much time left for thinking of concepts like sustainability or regeneration. H3 explains that even if a new practice would make her save or earn money, they just do not have the time to implement it. She mentions this aspect at least three times making it sound quite important. Same with their suppliers; H2 once asked if it was possible to return the empty wine bottle to the producer to reduce it but he was answered that it was not possible because it was too much work. H4 emphasises that "*Especially in small family businesses, they don't have time to think about all these things outside of the daily business, they don't have the resources to think about it, or even to start thinking about thinking of it.*" Working in the hotel industry is time and energy consuming and this is partly because of the schedules those work implies. Many people work until late or have shift work (working hours divided between mornings and evenings). On top of being exhausting, it disqualifies some options like the use of public transport because it does not allow for flexibility. This dilemma is raised by H6.

Then, a **lack of people qualified for the topic** appears to be a limitation. H3 suggests that this may be a reason why some practices are still not applied. Because there is a lack of training and information for the collaborators and the management team. The ideal would be to have a **person in charge of the sustainability** of the hotel, but it is again costly. And according to H4's past experiences, people in charge of sustainability change quite often. As it is a small part of their jobs, they end switching up jobs or industries.

H3 explains that in the past, there was **no suitable responsible alternative in the market:** either not efficient or too expensive. But even nowadays, when it comes to hygiene for example, they still cannot really explain why, but the bacteriologic tests were not satisfying enough to keep using "green" products. H2 shares this opinion when explaining that now in terms of cosmetics and hygiene, there is no alternative to plastics. Some hoteliers like H4 and H5 feel limited by what they can still do, especially in terms of diminution of energy consumption. H4 feels that they did almost everything they could, they don't have massive projects left but are open to more ideas.

Complexity of the hotel industry

The hotel industry seems to be quite complex due to the variety of its actors and sectors of activities. Four hotels out of six are ranked 4* or 5* and then meet so-called luxury standards, which opens up the debate about the relationship between **luxury and ecology**. From H1's point of view, everyone defines sustainability differently. But for him, luxury hotels can also be sustainable, as much as the little chalet in the mountains where you do not use electricity. They can also do the maximum to save energy and limit their impact. H6 also does his best to limit its impact but he raises the paradox of an eco-luxury hotel when expressing that luxury goes with opulence which is very contradictory with this theme. In 4* hotels, people tend to expect this limitless lifestyle, and this translates to non-regenerative behaviour like taking much more than needed at breakfast, for example. And generally, people can expect to enjoy benefits from a jacuzzi. H5 specifies that some hotels will claim that they have the most sustainable ones but, in the end, having a jacuzzi is not sustainable. H3 takes a more global view but similar when saying that this is complex to operate sustainably because, after all, the hotel industry is definitely a polluting industry. Same with H4 who takes the example of a destination where over-tourism is a problem. A hotel can do whatever it wants, he cannot be sustainable because in the end there are just too many people and that is a fact.

Something else that appears to concern the hotels interviewed is the **myriad of labels** that exist. It seems to engender some concerns. Firstly, H1, H2, and H6 deplore the **lack of**

transparency of certain labels. In H1's opinion, some destinations have brilliant and long documents about their engagement but when examined more carefully, there are more words than actions. Audit companies seem far from reality. It makes echo to the questioning of the motivations. It seems that it can easily look like **pure marketing and greenwashing** and that is a recurrent criticism of sustainable, green, eco-labels (See point 6.1.1 Extra benefits). H6 thinks that those labels forget themselves and are moving away from the initial aim. They should not even advertise for their label; it should be a natural process. For H2, **confusion for the clients** is also generated. Indeed, he says that there is no distinction visible between a weak and a strong label, clients cannot make the difference. H6 used to agree with some labels but he slowly realised and perceived a lack of coherence in the labels' philosophy. H6 seems to deplore the fact that the few guests that base their purchase decision on sustainability aspects solely pay attention to the labels and limit their choice to that. Because in a sense, they can just hope those labels are true. On top of all that, H3 regrets that applying for labels is generally expensive and with what was mentioned by the other hoteliers, is it then really worth it?

Offsetting is also frequently criticised (H1, H2, H4, H5, H6) and called "fake sustainability". H2 and H5 express that there is never a certainty of where the given money goes. However, H4's opinion is more balanced. He does think that offsetting is just a financial transaction and that it is not the solution, not the way to go, but he expresses the idea that it is better than nothing and that every little action can still help. In their business, they decided to use an offsetting program that allows them to finance global and local projects. For them, it is still a way to finance the transition even if it can be the only one.

Working in the hotel industry implies collaborating with many different people: all the employees of the different sectors of the hotel, all the suppliers, the government... This can be sometimes difficult to **cope with many different points and view**. For example, H1 explains that they really try to be local when it comes to food but if the chef wants to use exotic ingredients because that is his way of cooking, what can be done? There is also the idea of grouping the orders of a destination to limit transport emissions, but each hotel has its preferences for wine for example and that complicates everything. It can also be difficult for mountainous hotels which sometimes are far from other hotels. To go on, H2 affirms that it is not easy to find suppliers that share the same vision in terms of sustainability.

Except for H2, every hotelier argues that many of the limitations or advantages that have to do with sustainability depend on the **hotel profile** like its size, location (canton, regions), business model (cooperation/chains or not), clients and lifespan (those last two points will be

discussed in the following sections). H1 feels that SMEs like his business are sometimes left apart and that it is different for bigger companies that have more relations and lobbies. Then H2 makes the comparison with hotel chains which always have HR departments with great procedures. It seems more complicated for a smaller structure to put such things in place. She feels a shift in Switzerland between small structures and big chains that have the resources to establish great sustainability projects and strategies. To go on, as mentioned earlier (see point 6.1.1 For the people), H4 expressed that small family businesses have fewer resources. As for H5, they speak about the different issues hotels face according to their location. For example, seasonal and temporary employees generally affect mountainous regions more than urban hotels. H1, which is located quite far from other hotels of the region, feels that this setting can affect the collaboration with other hotels. For example, to group orders or also some processes can take longer when talking about decarbonisation goals with the confederation. Finally, H6, which has 136 rooms, makes the comparison with a small hotel of 20 rooms expressing that it is just very different: it is booked for four months and there is less production, so not the same challenges.

Some hoteliers adopt a broader view and shared additional limitations that go beyond the Swiss hotel industry. H5 and H6 express the frustration of the **little impact they have on a global scale**. On the one hand, it is annoying to put so much effort and not be able to see the results in the world. And on the other side, it can be maddening when realising that all your efforts are cancelled with a trip in a private jet, as H6 explains. He adds that unfortunately “[...] *there are 1,000 people in the world who could do a lot who don't and who will have the effect of billions.*”, talking about the power of huge companies who potentially have the power to save the world.²

From past to future

Another aspect of a hotel that can affect the transition to a sustainable or regenerative approach is its **lifespan**. According to H4 “*it might be very difficult for established businesses or established hotels, established managers to rethink their values.*” He adds that change will then come naturally because the leaders of younger generations will automatically have a different mindset. It will just take time. H1 confirms that there is a **shift in generation** which is beneficial to the industry. He feels that hotels work more and more together, as colleagues and not as competitors which was more the case a few years ago. This idea is reinforced by H2's statement “*We don't talk about competitors here, we are colleagues*”. He goes on by

² « Je pense qu'il y a 1000 personnes dans le monde qui pourraient faire énormément qui ne le font pas et qui auront l'effet de milliards de personnes. » (Personal communication H6, 30.03.2023)

expressing the same idea as H4. In his opinion, the sustainability path is a generational jump, and then, in certain people's minds, it is not a norm, it is just not present because when growing up they were not as exposed to the problem as today's youth. However, H6 counterbalances this feeling when expressing his concerns about the younger generation who has consumption habits (related to phone use and social media) that are not really compatible with a regenerative approach.

The idea that it is **hard to change something existing** is also reflected in the buildings. H3 feels that it is challenging to renovate an old building and that it would be sometimes more efficient to raze everything and start again with a brand-new concept. *L'Hôtel des Horlogers* (Vallée de Joux, Switzerland) is quoted as an example of this kind of concept by H6. He praises the level of detail they applied in the process from A to Z to limit their impacts on their ecosystem. The two concepts cannot be compared but it seems that in the Boutique Hotel Glacier, something relates to that. As H2 explains, the owners had since very early on the product Glacier sustainability in mind. Sustainability measures were one of the first decisions discussed in the hotel. So past habits and mindsets are hard to let go of, and the future is difficult to embrace for some businesses. For example, technology is increasingly important in the industry and actually reinvented it. Most of the hoteliers implemented digitalisation progressively and use it to be more efficient and responsible. For H1 and H4, digitalisation means a lot less paper. H4 adds that they use an intelligent building management systems that allows them to optimize temperature system and save energy. H3 and H6 talks about the recent application they launched to communicate internally and to the guests, which saves paper and makes things easier, more centralised. However, technology is not flawless. H5 agrees with the advantages of technology and actually enjoys them in the hotel. But in his opinion, some digitalisation projects only mean a reduction in the numbers of staff and guests. For a business hotel, the emergence of online or hybrid meetings, mainly due to COVID-19, is not beneficial. *"We can see that some of the groups have decreased in size. So that's good for the Regenerative Hospitality but not so good for us...!"*³ To end with, for H1 and H2, there is also a balance to find because they know guests are still looking for human contact and prefer it.

Something that comes out of the conversations with H3, H4, and H5 is **the lack of long-term vision** that exists in the industry. H3 feels that there are still some types of hotels, small ones, that live their daily business without really adopting a vision. Regarding H4, it seems that

³ « On se rend compte quand même qu'une partie des groupes ont bien diminué en taille. Alors ça c'est bien pour la *Regenerative Hospitality* mais moins pour nous... ! » (Personal communication H5, 22.02.2023)

determining the optimal solution can be challenging at times because it's difficult to predict the consequences of one's actions and to empathize with the potential outcomes. As for H5, he adopts a broader view of the topic when expressing that it is sometimes hard to imagine the future and to embrace a long-term vision in a **world full of uncertainty** like the war situations society experiences nowadays in 2023. H1 raises the effect global conflicts have on the industry. Indeed, he mentioned the increase in prices of goods and electricity because of the war in Ukraine.

Clients' role

An aspect each interviewee without exception mentions is that the impacts of a hotel depend on its clientele. A first thing that is brought up, is that some measures cannot be taken because it would alter the **clients' comfort**. Especially in 4* starts hotels, and this refers to the contradiction between luxury and ecology evoked earlier. (See point 6.1.2 Complexity of the hotel industry). For example, H1 stipulates that they will not start cooling down the water to save energy because of the client's comfort, and *"This is where it starts to become difficult"*.⁴ H6 shares this opinion. It feels difficult to please everyone, but they still try to. For instance, the majority of their wine is Swiss, but they feel compulsory to offer some great French wines because that is what people want. Same with the meat, if the chef wants to vary his menu, he will occasionally but eventually buy red tuna from the Philippines. Same for H3, who makes a lot of efforts by offering seasonal products and products from the garden but who still offers sea fish because they have the demand for it. It seems the same on the suppliers' side. Even if they decided to stop printing bills, they are still people that systematically ask for them on paper, and at some point, it seems difficult to do differently. In that regard, H5 simply puts that they just cannot please everyone and that it will always be the same. They seem to overpass this barrier.

Apparently, client's comfort has a certain importance as well as their **habits**. For H2, H3, H4, and H6 habits **depend highly on cultures**. In H2 and H6's cases, some people from the USA or Asia are not used to drink tap water so even if the hotel offers it on each floor, clients will go on buying PET water bottle because they just do not understand that it is possible. H3 noticed the cultural difference at breakfast time. It seems that families of Latin culture take much more than what they need at the buffet. After putting some informative panels on the tables about food waste, they just notice that some cultures are more sensible to others. For

⁴ « *Mais par exemple on ne va pas commencer à diminuer la température de l'eau chaude, pour le confort du client. C'est là que ça commence à devenir difficile.* » (Personal communication H1, 01.02.2023)

example, H4 talks about the GCC countries that travel to Switzerland mainly in summer, it appears that they do not really care about their impacts and *“it is just the way it is”*. Last example from H6 is about air conditioning. It is hard to argue with people again from the USA or from Asia that are used to overuse it. It looks like it does depend on cultures. **Personal habits and values** are to be considered as well, as H4 thinks. H6 points out his powerlessness for everything that takes place in the rooms: the length of the guests' showers and the use of light for example. How could one possibly control that? On top of personal values, the client's profile also counts. She continues by raising the difference that can exist between business and leisure guests. As they may have less time, they prefer to take their coffee to go, but the hotel does not accept that as they wish to limit waste. And clients find that difficult to understand. And simply put by H6, the carbon footprint of a hotel initially starts with the trip of the guests from their homes to the hotel. And that single step is already challenging to offset.

This **lack of understanding and interest** from the **clients** is something witnessed by half of the hoteliers (H1, H2, and H3). In H1's opinion, who said that they have little feedback from customers regarding sustainable efforts that the hotel makes, it is hard to interpret their silence. Do not they say anything because for them it seems normal? Or because they do not pay attention? To go on with, H1 also talked about the lack of interest from the **confederation and political organs**. He deplores the fact that they do not really have help or protection when it comes to implementing big measures to reduce their impact and repeated twice that no one is interested: *“It's clear that it's 280,000 tonnes less CO2, but nobody is interested.”*⁵ For H2, majority of the guests do not understand hotel's effort and measures as according to him, 98% of them are not coming in their hotel for their sustainable approach. However, he insists that one should not generalise too much. He thinks that there are already, and more and more, certain types of guests that base their decision on that aspect. But it will take time for that part of the clientele to grow. H4 indeed noticed that some guests really have a look and what the hotels write and do about sustainability. To continue, H6 also thinks that few people choose a hotel for its ecological philosophy. He even raises the paradox that if one is really ecological, does he go to hotels? And if the clients do not understand, how could they possibly accept some changes? That is the question raised by H3 in that matter. In those regards, H1 and H4 feel that when it comes to sustainability arduousness seems to increase, and double the effort needs to be done to convince, as put by H4 *“[...], if you have good arguments you might succeed. [...]”*

⁵ « C'est clair c'est 280'000 tonnes de CO2 en moins mais ça n'intéresse personne. » (Personal communication H1, 01.02.2023)

6.1.3. Needs

The needs of hoteliers regarding the continuation of the transformation process which respond to the limitations mentioned in the previous section is the part of this first objective which has been the least elaborated. Nonetheless, some noteworthy concepts have emerged, as follows.

Within the hotel

According to H2, to implement big projects or measures related to sustainability, what is needed are **resources**. That is why they say it is crucial to have a financial partner along with a lot of people and material. As seen in the limitations section, hoteliers lack time to really be involved 100% in the hotel's sustainability. That is why another need brought up by H3 and H4, is definitely **a person in charge of sustainability**, who dedicates his work time to that topic. It appeared difficult to change an existing business to make it less impactful. For that reason, H3 seems to think that for some hotels, it would be easier to close for a certain time and **change everything needed at once** rather than changing little by little.

Help from the government

In the face of the various possible subsidies, hoteliers seem a little bit lost. What subsidies? For whom? How much? To have **more information and more transparency** about it, the best solution mentioned by H3, H4, and H5 seems to be the implementation or reinforcement of **coaching sessions** for hoteliers. When asked what would be the needs of a hotel that wants to make or continue its transition, this is what H4 answered:

“Yes, simply the knowledge of what can be done and how and where you might actually get the financial resources that you need. It seems that a lot of people are just very unaware of what is actually possible or what can actually be done. So coaching would definitely be a part on like “okay you know if you do this or if you try this, not only you help environment you also save money”. A lot of people are unaware of what can actually be done.”

H3 and H5 mentioned that Hotellerie Suisse already provides certain resources. H5 observed that Hotellerie Suisse is endeavouring to be more proactive and initiate discussions directly with hotels, rather than solely responding to requests for assistance. However, there is room for further improvement in this regard. Indeed, Marie Forestier who represents H3, is part of Hotellerie Suisse as vice-president. From her point of view, there is a great **need for support** for certain hotels. It appears that the hotels that are interested in the proposed

coaching are hotels already engaged in sustainability. Although, it should also and mainly touch those less concerned to bring everyone on the same journey.

Something positive that the confederation already did but should be continued is to **ease the process** with building permits for example. In H2's experience, their construction permit for a solar roof passed without permission, and for him, this was a great step forward. It really made the difference not having to ask and wait for paperwork. Furthermore, H6 wishes for a change in the Swiss deduction system. According to him, it would be interesting to be able to **deduct from the tax declaration** the "green" actions you implemented. Lastly, H1 believes that the **impulse needs to come from the top** to have significant impact and to be taken seriously. In a hotel, it should come from the manager or the owner, as it is the case for him. However, as previously mentioned, this also depends on the confederation, where the authority lies. Therefore, it appears that a shift is necessary in the confederation to bring about the desired change.

Shift in mindset

The last need that emerges from the interviews is a **general shift in mindset**. According to H6, the world cannot go on as it goes now. And mainly because the **capitalism** that dictates a constant need for growth is coming to an end as it is just not compatible with a world made up of finite resources. He shared a mindset he thinks society should embrace, namely a **happy sobriety**. People should learn to be content with less and to stop pursuing happiness in limitless material things. Because if everyone changes a little bit their lifestyle, it can make a difference. This implies that all stakeholders of the hotel should alter their behaviour and consumption habits, including the clients. The ideal would be that clients understand the issues at stake in a hotel and change their behaviour in accordance with it. But is it the hotels' role to educate them? According to H6, people need to be educated before coming to hotels, so it is a societal challenge. In H5's case, they do have a paper explaining their actions displayed to clients but that is pretty much it, they realised they never really tried it. In H4's business, people interested in sustainability should find the information they need. And H4 actually thinks that one can slightly influence the guests, mainly by giving out interesting facts and numbers (food waste per person...). And H1 seems to wish for more transparency and accuracy in the information given about the impacts of the hotel. One should not hide behind a 40 pages sustainability dossier thinking it is enough to have. One should live it fully and not lie or hide information. Another social aspect is brought up by H6, namely the **need for authenticity**. On the one side, by the clients when it comes to the use of technology for example. H3 and H6 expressed their motivation not to use a robot for the reception because they know guests are

still looking for human contact. H1 shares this point of view when explaining that they know people prefer to ask the reception to book whatever they need instead of doing it on the tablets provided in the rooms. It seems that in addition to the authentic aspect of the experience, the authenticity of the staff also counts. H6 wants his staff to feel good at work, to feel natural, and to feel as they want. This implies allowing tattoos, piercings, jewels, and anything that differentiate one employee with another. H6 noticed that his staff feels better that way, and this will automatically please the clients in search of authentic contact. To end this section, a comment by H4 echoes the other needs expressed earlier. For him, especially to see the shift of generation needed to renew the mindsets happening, one needs to be patient. A shift is needed, but it cannot be done overnight. **It will take time.**

Table 3: Synthesis of the results responding to the first objective

Category	Motivations	Limitations	Needs
Sub themes	Own philosophy as a private One's responsibility Private behaviour Positive mindset Nature is their capital	Lack of resources Financial problem Limited help from the government Lack of time and qualified people No alternative	Within the hotel Resources: financial and human Radical shift
	For the people Common effort Empathy and care Clients/employees satisfaction Destination level Future generations	Complexity of the hotel industry Luxury VS ecology Myriad of labels Offsetting Cooperation Hotel profile Global scale	Help form the government More information and transparency Coaching and support Easy process Deductions Impulse from the top
	Extra benefits Less costs Save time and energy Becoming a norm	From past to future Shift in generation Hard to change the present Lack of long-term vision Clients' role Client's comfort Depend on culture and personal values Lack of interest	Shift in mindset General shift No capitalism No profit maximisation Happy sobriety Authenticity Time

Source: Author's data

6.2. *Examples of effective methods towards a regenerative future*

During the interviews with hoteliers, they were not explicitly asked to provide a comprehensive list of all the actions they had taken up to that point. Instead, examples of actions emerged naturally as they answered other questions. This approach allowed hoteliers to highlight what they deemed necessary and important, and the actions and measures were subsequently contextualized. Table 4 displays the results, but it should be noted that the list is not exhaustive and is intended to provide an idea of what can be done. Although the most frequently cited aspects were identified, this list cannot be considered a definitive model. Hoteliers may have chosen to mention only the most important actions or those that were relevant to the interview context, and therefore, the list does not represent all the actions they have taken in their business.

Table 4: Effective methods expressed by the sample

PLACE	
Local providers (seasonal food, materials, maintenance...): from the village, region, or Switzerland	H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6
Distribution of regional guest cards that guarantees free access to public transport and promotes local activities	H1, H3
Try to attract guests for longer periods	H4
Inclusion of local people: free meeting rooms, moderate restaurant price, open house days, local partnerships, sponsorship of local events	H1, H3, H6
Involvement of the hotel in the regional politics/committee	H3, H4
Local employment	H4, H5, H6
Creation of a map on the website to show the origin of ingredients	H2, H6
Maintenance of a biotope/pond developed naturally	H6
Green spaces naturally cut by sheep	H6
Maintenance of a garden used for the kitchen	H3, H5
Project of having a common garden for local people	H5
PEOPLE	
Provision of a staff accommodation (existing or in progress)	H1, H2
Employees encouraged to use public transport by charging monthly for parking spots	H1, H6

Employees encouraged to come by bike with the installation of practical and safe infrastructure for bikes	H3
Traineeships and internships possibilities	H1, H6
Encouragement of diversity: employees with different nationalities	H1
Integration of employees: with F and S permit	H1
Gender equality: annual gender equality	H1
Payment of the wages before the end of the month to adapt to staff' needs	H2
Establishment of a box for anonymous feedback from the staff	H2
Staff encouraged to take personal initiative	H3
Implementation of an application for internal communication	H3
Weekly meetings via Teams	H6
Close relationship with providers	H1
Valorisation of partnerships: with students, disabled people, providers to have a win-win situation	H3, H6
Education of the guests: encouraged to stop buying PET bottles, nudge on the buffet table, facts into newsletters and tablets in the rooms, showing them their products	H2, H3, H4, H6
Education of the staff	H3
Construction of a bigger lift for disabled people	H5
Hosting of helping association, people on the move, people from social services, ill people	H5
SUSTAINABILITY	
Different hotels orders grouped in the same region to limit transport	H1
Guests' excursions grouped to limit transport	H1
Installation of a heat pump	H1, H4, H5, H6
Solar roof (existing or in progress)	H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6
Use of blue energy	H2
Electric charging car station	H2
Intelligent building management system to control the temperature	H3, H4
Intelligent air-cooling system, heat recuperation system	H4, H6
No air conditioning	H6
Isolation	H5
LED	H5, H6
3 glasses windows	H5

Paperless politic: especially in the back office, replaced by an app	H1, H4, H6
No single-use plastic	H1, H3, H6
Waste: sorting, recycling program	H3, H5, H6
Purchase in bulk to limit transport: kitchen, cosmetics, materials...	H1, H2, H3
Valorisation of waste: leftovers to the staff, used fruits for cocktails	H2, H3
Active search of "energy monsters" and get rid of it	H2
Provision of water glass bottle	H2, H6
Minimisation of towel washing	H3
Banishment of mini bars	H3, H6
Change of the cutlery service: only one fork and knife	H4
Banishment of laundry service	H5
Kitchen according to number of guests: Implementation of pre-order menu when not too many guests, <i>table d'hôtes</i>	H4, H5, H6
Banishment of chemical products for the garden	H3
Employment of a person in charge of sustainability	H4
Labels, audit (CECB, RSE), off-setting program, part of an energy agency	H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6

Source: Author's data

To synthesise, it is interesting to note the similar elements that appear in more than three of the conversations. Firstly, it appears that every hotelier includes the **local aspect** in their daily business. By **sourcing themselves locally** in terms of food, material, and maintenance. The radius of origin varies from communal, to regional and national. Indeed, local does not mean the same for everyone, it should always be specified. Then, the **inclusion of local people** also seems important for hoteliers of the sample. Whether in the form of job offers, partnerships, or sponsorships. Indeed, in the interviews the inclusion of local people was expressed in different ways: opening the house for the locals, special offers for them, sponsorships of local events, or even partnerships with a centre for people with disabilities. To continue with the **guests**, at least four hoteliers specified that they try to **educate them** by explaining to them directly what they could do differently, or by displaying nudges on the buffet table to avoid a frontal confrontation, and mostly by showing facts and information about hotel efforts on newsletters, application of the hotel, brochures... Where most hoteliers agree is when it comes to **measures reducing their impact**. To begin with the transition to **renewable energies**, all of them already have solar panels or are currently working on it. In addition to that, four of them installed a heat pump. Then, at least half of the hoteliers adopted a **paperless politic** and banished the **single-one use plastic items**. Finally, it seems obvious to have a

waste management system or even recycling programs. A last aspect that comes out is the habit of **purchasing in bulk** to limit transport and material. To continue, what happens in the kitchen seems to be a first priority for the majority of the hotels interviewed. This department of a hotel is an important one to consider in terms of food sourcing and food waste. For instance, during the interviews, the breakfast buffet was generally referred to as a nuisance to the efforts the hotel made for the environment. To control food waste, several hotels implemented a system allowing the chef to **adapt the food offer according to the number of guests**. On top of that, to limit the transport impact and to stimulate the local ecosystem, all hoteliers make sure to **favour seasonal and local food**. To end this section with, it appears that all hoteliers interviewed **made use of external bodies** to support, accompany or help them into this business model transition. Whether it is labels, audit bodies, or energy agencies, all made the leap.

7. Discussion of the results of the interviews

To synthesise the results obtained from the semi-directive interviews, they will be discussed and interpreted with the literature review. Additionally, this section will address the last objective of the dissertation, which is to evaluate the potential of regeneration of the interviewed hotels. Indeed, their potential can only be assessed thanks to predefined criteria presented in the literature review. That is why this last objective is presented and interpreted simultaneously. This section is structured into two main parts. Firstly, the hoteliers' philosophy and vision will be related to what is specific to a regenerative philosophy, as per the literature review. The second part narrows down on the potential of regeneration of the measures and actions already in place in the hotels. Both parts are structured into sub-themes that logically follow the outline of the literature review.

7.1. *Regenerative philosophy*

To begin with, it is important to redefine regenerative tourism. For instance, with Dredge's version as follows: "At its simplest, regenerative tourism seeks to ensure travel and tourism delivers a net positive benefit to people, places and nature, and that it supports the long-term renewal and flourishing of our social and ecological systems" (Dredge, 2022, p. 270). The results of this study show that hoteliers quite agree with that definition, sometimes without even knowing it. Indeed, many expressed their will to do their best for future generations, for their children. That is why they adopt a long-term vision, especially in family businesses, to consider their impact on their ecosystem over 25 or 50 years ahead. Of course, when talking about impact, hoteliers work to limit it or have a positive one. They clearly expressed their wish to do more, illustrating it by in-progress or future projects which relate to the aspect of constant co-evolution and improvement mentioned in the literature. Furthermore, all the hotels interviewed except one were part of a label: *Swisstainable* or *Ibex fairstay*. As described in the context, those labels are not directly linked to regeneration as it is quite a new concept, but they have similarities. According to the respondents, *Swisstainable* label does not require that much to be part of it, but it still encourages the implementation of new measures to limit their impact. Admittedly, it focuses on sustainability and on limiting the impact, but as seen in the literature, sustainability and regeneration are complementary. Sustainability seems to be a necessary step to begin with. As for *Ibex fairstay*, the returns of both interviewed hoteliers holding the platinum level show that the procedure for obtaining this label is more tedious and laborious. Indeed, Jan Pyott from the Boutique Hotel Glacier (H2) explained during the interview that it

took him four months to gather all the data required to apply for the label. It is a very complete questionnaire. And then, an external auditor comes to check that everything is correct and in order and finally gives the final decision to a third layer, an external panel. The process is solid, complete, and controlled. The approach also seems to be more holistic and therefore tends more toward the concept of regeneration. Even though sustainability and regeneration are seen as complementary, in the literature many agree to say that sustainability is limited and not enough anymore. This reflects in some hoteliers' minds. Indeed, some of them expressed that they are at the end of what they can do, they do not have big projects left and they are waiting for the next big idea. What if the next big project was regeneration? One way to understand this phenomenon could be that any hotel should adopt sustainable measures to limit their impacts and that maybe it should be the first step but then, they should go on with exploring less obvious and measurable actions to bring positive impact on their destination and ecosystem. To have a chance to achieve that, Anne Pollock advances that regeneration is all about co-production and that to enable stakeholders to flourish, they have to work together, the force of all stakeholders is needed. This aspect of co-creation is tackled repeatedly during the interviews. There are examples of great collaboration between partners and hotels of the same region to group the orders and limit transport for instance. They work as a destination, together. It has also been noted that in the past, the relations between hoteliers were more competitive than nowadays. It seems that the hotel industry is heading in the right direction. However, it has also been raised that even if a hotel is part of a destination and will interact with its ecosystem, in the end, it has to work alone and look after its own business. This is sometimes seen as a duality.

In the literature review, many authors agree to say that a shift in mindset and value system is required to head toward a regenerative future. Some also affirm that it is already on its way. The interviews conducted for this study show that indeed, mindsets are changing. Some hoteliers share the opinion that capitalism should be and probably will be an idea of the past. At least two hoteliers clearly expressed that their goal was not or has never been to maximise profit. And this challenges the injunction of the continual and never-ending pursuit of economic growth that exists in today's society. In the same topic, the wish to favour quality over quantity, to have less but better, is highlighted by some hoteliers. This idea was nicely illustrated by the concept of happy sobriety that Cyril Dederding from the Modern Times Hotel (H6) dreams of for the future. To go on with, some changes are also happening within the hotel. As presented in the literature review, the management style is also important for regeneration to happen. A tendency for flat management can clearly be witnessed in the hotels interviewed. Furthermore, as Anne Pollock once exposed, traditional managers should give way to leaders who have the

role to look for a vision and pass it to their team. Going from only addressing symptoms to inspiring the team and conducting them to a brighter future. In one of the interviews, the need expressed by the hotelier was that the impulse, to see changes in terms of sustainability and regeneration, needs to come from the top. The role of the leader is crucial as it is the one who will guide and inspire others through this radical shift. One person has great power, but not only the leader. The literature shows that to see this shift happening, the individual shift might be the most powerful tool. Basically, if everyone changes, the world will automatically. That is why the notion of education in hotels increasingly gain importance. The fact that habits change drastically according to cultures and personal values was clearly demonstrated during the interviews. Hotels are the first witness of that as they welcome guests from all across the globe. And that is precisely why they have a huge educational potential. To their guests as well as their employees. Some hotels regret that the actions they undertake in their business do not have a global impact. But actually, they do. Because if a client is confronted with sustainable and regenerative practices during their stay and understands them, the chances are high that they will reproduce them at home or simply think about them and be more open to changing their habits. Which is massive. However, not everyone agrees that this is the role of a hotel to educate people. Some do not feel legit to do so. And a hotelier expressed that indeed, the philosophy in place in a hotel should not be a dogma. Everyone has the right to see it differently and act accordingly. Therefore, one should not make judgments about others' behaviours. To conclude this first part, the aspects that correspond to the philosophy of regenerative tourism are found in the respective philosophies of the hoteliers interviewed. Some are more than others, but there are interesting and promising ideas in all of them.

7.2. *Regenerative measures*

According to the literature, the regeneration of an ecosystem means influencing positively its places, people, and nature. In this section, the elements that hotels have put in place that come close to this idea will be presented. Firstly, it was interesting to note that the majority of the hotels seem to be integrated into the local ecosystem and community. This aspect seems to be important to them.

To begin with the pillar "places", hotels seem to have a sense of the place. As seen in the context with David Leventhal's view, hoteliers should understand that they are not independent of the community; rather, they are integral members of it and should collaborate to achieve common goals. And to continue with, "...it is more about a genuine involvement with the local ecosystem."(Inversini & Saul, 2023) The examples cited by the hotels include actions such as

the participation in the promotion of regional cards that offer reductions to guests to incite them to take public transport or take part in specific activities. Then, the inclusion of local people seems to be at the heart of many businesses. By favouring local employment and local providers. Indeed, the majority of the hotels interviewed try to partner with local people for instance for the maintenance of the hotel, the subcontracting of the laundry, and obviously, the food. It is important to contrast this point with the opinions of some hoteliers. Indeed, they seem to be placing more and more importance to work with local suppliers, but it appears that it is not that easy. Supplying locally means costing more and sometimes the relationships are historical and then hard to break to find someone more local. Furthermore, in addition to being local, hoteliers were asked if they favoured suppliers that are in this sustainable paradigm. Here the answers were more mitigated. Some want to but feel hard to find them. Others do not want to change suppliers for the reasons cited previously. To continue with, some hotels also try to include the local community by opening the hotel from time to time, giving them advantages like free access to meeting rooms, and participating and sponsoring local and cultural events. Finally, one hotel mentioned that one goal was now to attract guests for longer periods to benefit the entire destination.

To continue with the second pillar which concerns the nature of the ecosystem, hotels appear to totally care about it. The literature shows that the COVID pandemic revealed the impacts that the tourism and hotel industry had on nature. The results show that hoteliers are totally aware of that and actively work to change their impact on nature and their relationship with it. Firstly, the majority of hotels understand that nature is their capital and that preserving it is crucial for the future of their business. That is why all of the hotels undertook concrete actions to reduce their CO₂ emissions. This is an important aspect to look at when knowing that hotel industry CO₂ emissions represent approximately 10-20% of global tourism emissions. All the hotels plan to have or already invested in solar panels, many have heat pumps, and the majority have all the basics requirements like LED implementation, triple glasses windows, insulation, no one single-use plastic, paperless politic, waste sorting, purchasing in bulk, minimisation of towel washing...To name a few other measures, some banished the minibars, valorise waste by reusing them (giving croissants to staff, using fruit for cocktails..) and more and more seem to provide glass bottles on the different floors. To finish with the CO₂ emissions, one of the hotels even affirmed that they produce more than what they need. As seen in the context with concepts like biophilia, it seems that humans are automatically and unconsciously attracted to nature. It has also been proved that being in contact with nature can have great positive impacts on them. During the interviews, it appeared that some hotels are taking this aspect into account. Some implemented green spaces around

the hotels like biotopes or gardens, of which some ingredients are used in the kitchen. They also encourage local activities in nature by partnering with tourism offices or local suppliers like a sailing club for instance. However, the results for this aspect are still shy and would require further exploration.

The last pillar is about people. In the literature, the emphasis is on giving back to others, and society. This aspect was found in several of the interviews with some wonderful examples. For instance, two hotels in particular spoke about concrete social actions they undertake which have a great impact on people. In the Modern Times Hotel (Vevey) exist a partnership with a centre for disabled people of the same village. The hotel found a way to include them by exposing their art in their windows and entrusting the decoration of the lobby to them. It was also interesting to hear the story of the Hotellerie Franciscaine (Saint-Maurice) who seems to consider this social help as their mission. Within their establishment, they have the habit of welcoming people in need who are seeking a place to escape from domestic violence, to recharge themselves or even to spend their last days. Additionally, they organize shared meals with to alleviate people's loneliness and provide moments of sharing. The other hotels showed their involvement in that topic in different ways like with their employees for example. One hotelier noticed the general clients' and employees' need for authenticity, which was also described in the context. Authenticity is a growing need and trend which makes even more sense with the increasing importance that technology holds in hotels. Clients still prefer human contact at the reception to a robotic exchange. The authenticity of the staff is expected and one hotelier notice that when is given the liberty to be natural and authentic, they are happier. To end with, another hotelier made the following statement:

“You know we have gone very far; it's been quite a while since we were talking about shareholders value in economies and went from stakeholder's value and from there to all the other people or groups that are impacted by your business to now the approach to give out more than you take in. And I think that is the way we should be going.” (Personal communication H4, 17.02.2023)

To conclude this discussion, the quantitative survey about regenerative hospitality in Switzerland conducted by Roland Schegg, Sarah Balet, Alessandro Inversini, and Lionel Saul showed that hotels were more involved in Place Intelligence than in People Intelligence and that they were moderately involved in sustainable measures and in governance. The results of this present study confirm that the “place” pillar has great importance to all hoteliers. The link between the hotel and its ecosystem is quite strong. The “people” pillar is tackled, and

great examples have the potential to inspire other hotels. However, this aspect was less frequently repeated and then less representative than the first pillar. As for the sustainable measures, all of the hotels interviewed seemed to have already implemented a lot. However, this point might be biased and not very representative as the majority of the hotels are part of sustainable labels.

Even without really being familiar with the concept of regeneration, it seems that the hotels interviewed are inspired by the topic and are closer to it than they think. However, they see some challenges proper to their industry that probably need to be addressed to go further in the process. In the literature, the lack of standard methodology when it comes to the estimation of a hotel's impact is expressed. This need is felt in some of the speeches of the hoteliers interviewed. Some of them do not know where to start calculating their impact, others know that it takes a lot of time and do not have enough time to get lost in calculations. One solution is to outsource to auditing companies, but this is expensive. Another lack found in the literature that is also observed by some hoteliers concerns the lack of data on the link between travellers and sustainability. Do the guests come to the hotel specifically for its sustainable profile? Is it a motivation? Do they care about it? It is then hard to measure the impact a hotel can have on guests. However, it seems that guests are willing to pay more if they are aware of some hotel's efforts.

The potential of regeneration of the hotels interviewed is clearly existing. It differs from hotel to hotel, but interesting points were raised that confirm that this is a topic that interests the hotels and that can be expected to increasingly gain importance. However, thinking about the definition of regeneration that induces a positive impact on its ecosystem, some hoteliers found it very difficult to imagine ever having a positive impact on it. It's hard enough to limit your impact, so is it really possible to reverse the trend, considering the nature of the hotel industry?

8. Benchmark of good practices

The semi-structured interviews gave a first idea of the regeneration potential of Swiss hotels, by comparing them with the literature review. However, it is important to stress that those results cannot be generalised to the whole Swiss hotel industry. Indeed, qualitative interviews are useful to understand the topic deeper and potentially discovering new aspects of it, but they cannot speak for all the Swiss hotels. To complete and extend this study, a benchmark analysis of self-proclaimed regenerative hotels' websites from all over the world was carried out in order to position Swiss hotels' regeneration potential. As a reminder, this is the continuation of a project conducted in autumn 2022 by a group of students from the HES-SO Valais/Wallis and supervised by Roland Schegg and Sarah Balet. Therefore, this last part consists of two separate sections. The first section briefly presents the results obtained by the HES students. The second is the continuation of the analysis carried out especially for this study.

8.1. *Exploratory study by the HES*

Below are the preliminary results obtained from the exploratory study carried out by the group of students of the HES-SO.

8.1.1. Quantitative part

The main part of their work consisted in analysing the websites of 148 Swiss hotels, among which 30 are Swisstainable level III certified. They created a grid containing regenerative characteristics and the websites were then compared to it to see if some of the characteristics were present or not in the hotel communication. As the results [See Appendix II] were generated only from websites, it is important to mention that this implies that results depend on hotels' transparency in their practices. However, if those results are considered, they lead to the following main preliminary statements:

- Swiss hotels seem to have a **high sense of place**, even if only 55% think they participate in the local life and contribute to it positively.
- **More than half of the sample buy from local suppliers** and serve local and seasonable food. However, only 9% grow their own vegetables.

- **When it comes to nature, scores are quite low.** 24% of them take measures to protect the surrounding flora and fauna, and only 9% act to regenerate it. However, 63% are partly designed with natural resources (partly and not necessarily local).
- Swiss hotels **do not prioritise their link with the local community.** 45% of them collaborate in PPP, 35% closely help the community and only 15% establish educational opportunities for local youth.
- Scores are **even lower for the staff valorisation.** Gender equality matters only rates between 14-28% and 22% of hotels offer continuous training.
- **77 % of Swiss hotels are committed to the well-being of their guests.** However, only 36% of hotels offer regenerative activities in which guests can participate.
- When it comes to **suppliers, scores are moderate.** More or less 50% of hotels work closely with local partners with whom they share same values. But 39% say they create jobs for local people.
- 58% of hotels are certified, which shows engagement. However, and not least, **only 5% of the sample state that they redistribute profits at a local level.**
- The overall **collaboration with the community seems balanced** as 68% of hotels participate in and support the local culture but 45% say they use a collaborative approach with local organisations. **Scores are quite low when educating** customers and mostly shareholders on a regenerative approach.
- Hotels seem to be clear about the communication of their global message but less about their concrete actions and results. **Only 17% sensitise and train its staff on the values of a regenerative approach.**
- In 41% of cases, people and positive impact are mentioned in the vision of hotels. But a bit less, 34% seem to take measures to really have a positive impact.
- 41% of hotels have, or clearly present, actions to reduce energy consumption. Moreover, scores for the **use of technology for sustainable purposes are mixed but below average:** between 26 and 48%.

As mentioned, the HES team not only used their grid to analysis Swiss hotels. Indeed, they applied it to five self-proclaimed regenerative hotels around the globe, listed in the *Regenerative Travel* organisation presented in the context. As a matter of fact, the *Regenerative Travel's* hotels practices influenced the creation of the evaluation grid. The results of this analysis can be seen in the appendices [Appendix III]. Since the sample size of regenerative hotels (5) is much smaller than that of Swiss hotels (148), it is not meaningful to compare them in great detail. It is worth mentioning that since only the sample of hotels (5) is designated as regenerative, the percentage of regenerative hotels exhibiting regenerative

characteristics is obviously higher in this group than in the Swiss hotels. However, it should be noted that there are still four criteria in which Swiss hotels have a higher percentage than regenerative hotels.

- *the hotel's design and decoration reflect the local culture,*
- *the hotel is embedded to the place,*
- *the hotel collaborates in private-public partnerships,*
- *the hotel works as a flat organization,*

Figure 6: Results of Swiss hotels vs regenerative hotels

REGENERATIVE HOTELS		SWISS HOTELS	
% of hotels corresponding to the criterion	Number of criterion	% of hotels corresponding to the criterion	Number of criterion
1-30	6	15	32
30-50	9	17	
50-70	11	8	12
70-100	18	4	

Source: Author's data, adapted from results found by the HES student group for the exploratory data

8.1.2. Qualitative part

On top of the quantitative analyse, the team realised a qualitative study that aimed at gathering good practice examples of Swiss hotels from the sample. Below are the results reflecting what is displayed on hotels' websites. It is interesting to note the similarities with the examples explained during the semi-structured interviews (See point 6.2) namely:

- Local purchase and local employment
- Apprenticeships offers
- Use of sheep for the gardens
- Hotel garden
- Sponsoring local clubs and event
- Customers can donate for sustainable development measures
- Communication on the origin of the products
- Sustainable measures: green energy, use of organic cleaning agents, waste management, no single use plastic items
- Car charging stations

Table 5: Examples of good practices of Swiss hotels

Linked to the place	Rooms with raw materials from the region Mattress natural rubber and coconut fibers, ECO rooms
Place's Intelligence	Local purchase only Urban garden Permaculture, producing energy, food and leaning on established structures. Bio-breakfast with integration of fair-trade products Use of sheeps for the garden wellbeing (their manure is used as valuable fertilizer for the garden) Own bees Garden including many native shrubs and hedge plants, which creates different habitats. Cows in the hotel (produce milk which is turned into cheese) the meat comes from their own butchery
People Intelligence	Employment of local people to develop their skills Value training and apprenticeships protected employment places
Governance	Invest in further processing of CO2 neutral fuels and materials Sponsoring local sports club, support local youth work and local events Customer can donate for sustainable development measures)
Communication	Communication on the origin of products and materials Sharing tips and tricks about food consumption, recycling and communicate with stakeholders. Presentation of the sustainability manager
Net positive impact	Thermal springs, holistic medical expertise, healing, self-discovery Setting up a 'fund' system to give the opportunity to people who need a holiday but cannot afford it.
Sustainable measures	Green energy 100% renewable Use organic cleaning agents Waste and recycling management No single-use plastic Charging stations for all types of electric cars
Technology	Motion sensor in order to save energy Have a sustainability disclaimer where they give figures and fact on all actions they do towards regenerative hospitality Geothermal System Environmentally friendly waste heat from electricity production

Source: HES-SO Valais/Wallis (Projet Institut), 2022, p.35, personal communication

8.2. Extension of the exploratory study

For this project, the analysis is pushed over, and the comparison is more thorough. As a complement to the work of the HES team, the best practices of 37 hotels all around the globe were gathered. To begin with and as a general disclaimer, it is important to note that all the responses provided were obtained from the sample of hotels. Although certain hotels demonstrated a commendable level of transparency on their official websites, the management practices of some other hotels may not have shared all the pertinent information required for this analysis through their media. As a result, this study underscores the significance of

transparency, which can enable companies to establish a stronger bond of trust with their stakeholders.

Linked to the place

- Motto: “A house should be of the land, not on the land”, respects origins, and fits into its surroundings.
- Safeguarding local products (example of a hotel that maintains a vineyard with a grape variety indigenous to the place).
- Construction of the building: use of local materials (rocks, sand, bamboo, mud bricks, stone) with the help of local artisans/architects inspired by local architecture.
- Traditional and local activities proposed to guests (like archery and darts in Bhutan, weaving baskets, and tasting local food).

Place's intelligence

Nature

- Permaculture practices.
- Reforestation and forest conservation programs, repopulate native tree species (partnerships with foundations and organisations).
- Biodiversity programs like turtle sanctuary, turning coastlines into a no-take zone (no fishing), coral reef rehabilitation, artificial reef building, indigenous species protection (example: black-necked cranes), and maintenance of a bird/butterfly checklist.
- On-site: plant nursery, native pollinator on the roof, only potted native plants for décor, beehives.

Food

- Food produced on-site (farm-to-table, hotel farms, organic and animals from the farms, honey with beehives, organic gardens with own greenhouses).
- Creation of local dishes.
- Food waste: turned into compost (also vermicomposting), Partnership with Too Good To Go, bottling, pickling and fermentation to preserve food surpluses, nudge on the buffet, empty plate strategy, farmers deliver fresh products in returnable boxes.
- Non-perishables (rice, beans, flour, grains) bought in bulk and stored in sealable air-tight (and pest-proof) bins.

Communities

- Local employment and internships and scholarships for young people.
- Distribution of organic baskets or Ramadan boxes for the inhabitants.

- Investment in local infrastructure: local school, fire station, waste management station, public water taps, police station, sponsors for local projects (football), kindergarten.
- Equitable access for local communities: discount rates of up to 50% off.
- Support or create foundations to: support women artists, primary care to thousands of local patients, encourage entrepreneurship and help students to graduate in technical skills that support the tourism industry, zero waste program, educate youth on sustainability, education on English, art, recycling project, animal welfare activities,

People intelligence

Customers

- Activities contributing to their well-being: yoga, cold water immersion, meditation, mindfulness coaching, massage, astronomy, hiking, orienteering, farming and foraging, into the night walking tour, kayak and sup.
- Activities that raise awareness about regeneration: sacred sites hikes by local indigenous, local food, discovering local artists, bird watching, walking safaris, butter and cheese making activities, sustainability and regenerative agriculture tours (inform guests about all flora and fauna that they will encounter on their tours, also learn how to minimize their impact during tours), course on Permaculture Design and Natural Building, upcycling workshop, permaculture walk, bee a beekeeper and little gardener, visits of the hotel farm, solar powered safari.

Staff

- Equality: Equal pay and antidiscrimination policies, employment of people from under-represented groups (BIPOC, LGBTQ+) and more women.
- Diversity and inclusion: Ongoing training, English lessons and development programs.
- Well-being: offers the services of a psychologist for all employees should they require it.
- Financial support: interest-free loans to its staff members, lowest wage 15% higher than the national minimum wage, offered fully funded health benefits and compensation packages, permanent contract.
- Sustainable lifestyle: Employees who are not from within a short boat ride's distance live onsite, they are given refillable cups/water bottles, empowered to interact with guests without any formal hierarchy (equality and mutual respect), Ex-poachers hired as askaris (camp guards) providing them with the fulfilling regular income source necessary to leave poaching behind.

Suppliers

- Supplier selection process (examples: switch florists to one who delivers flowers in woven bags instead of in plastic, also uses a colour-coded crate system to receive goods at their purchasing stores instead of receiving them in plastic packaging)
- Green Purchasing Policy, a supply chain management system where the hotel asks suppliers to commit to eliminating unnecessary plastic packaging when supplying goods to the hotel.

Governance

- Is committed to documenting and measuring through independent third-party certifications (vetted by National Geographic sustainable tourism expert, annual reports).
- Green Team with a Green Manager.
- Lab to analyse guest's use of the room.
- Charging stations for electric cars.
- Pack For a Purpose: Incentive to motivate clients to bring school or medical material to help the community.
- Setting room prices: Green bonus (-10% if by train, bicycle, e-car), Regenerative Trust (2% fee added to the total bill amount for all guests as a contribution to the environment and community of the destination), Bursary program that makes retreats available to everyone regardless of their financial status.
- Partnerships: with indigenous people, long-term artist residency partnership that supports artists who want to improve their environmental impact by focusing on natural and eco-friendly working materials and recycling processes and gaining greater environmental awareness, with over 100 organizations for advocacy on intersectional issues of race, gender, and ability, with universities and scientists to gauge the carbon sequestration potential of various restoration initiatives.
- Active in regional politics (volunteer), Co-founder promotes the transition through founding/ acting as chairwoman/president of multiple hospitality and conservation associations.
- Educate local stakeholders on the importance of reforestation, protecting, and conserving Langkawi's natural heritage.
- Profit redistributed into the local area: "84% of our expense dollars are spent within our province or 100 KM of the lodge", hotel owned by a charity and 100% of operating surpluses are re-invested back into the community to stimulate local employment,

sourcing, infrastructure investment, and support community programs, community programs.

Communication

- Information about sustainability actions and programs in each guest's room
- Staff: education by showing graphs and benchmarks to highlight the 'why' behind their work on waste reduction. Tying progress to benchmarks empowers them and highlights the impact of their efforts, encourage staff to look for ways to save energy dollars at home, they bring these good practices to work.
- Website: Motivations, goals and philosophy displayed on the website (example: People, planet, and profit hold equal weight at Eaton), annual sustainability report available

Net positive impact

- Clean-up days/actions (beaches, abandoned hunting camps)
- Offset the unavoidable emissions in reforestation project
- Guests and offsetting: The inn provides guests with an estimate of the carbon footprint of their visit and the option to purchase carbon offsets, guests are also invited to plant trees to offset the CO2 emissions of their transport
- Restorative practices: irrigation using wastewater (local flora flourish after long suffering from drought), annual tree and local plants plantation, instilling nutrients back into the soil of 5 gardens, reintroduction of native animal species (example: reintroduction of the first wild cheetah, lion, elephant and black rhinoceros back into the landscape in more than a century), fish and wood used because they are invasive species (help the circularity of the local ecosystem), Biodiverse green roof to absorb CO2 and develop biodiversity

Sustainability

- Use of renewable/natural energies: solar (thermal) panels, heat pumps, electric vehicles (no emissions, no noise), fully biofuel capable and uses coconut oil biofuel for its power station whenever it can be procured, ample use of windows to maximize natural light, ceiling fans and screened windows that provide an alternative to air conditioning, sea-water air conditioning (SWAC), elevators charge when they go down to power the ascent, wind turbines producing energy for air conditioning and heating, ground-breaking natural ventilation system, solar chimney harvests power to heat water
- Savings of energy: generator turned off for several hours each evening to conserve on fuel and listen to the quiet, water savers, light/power sensors, low energy lamps,

Candlelight dinner for our guests, Reduction of non-essential lighting for 1 hour in shared spaces, towel and sheet reuse program.

- Water: grey-water for irrigation, rainwater harvesting, gathering their own spring water, composting toilets in the winter for all guest cabins, all employees use outhouses instead of flushing toilets, salt water for toilets, blue roof (catches and retains rainwater, slowly releasing it to the drainage system to reduce the chances of local flooding, converts rainwater into energy), free filtered water available on every floor (water fountains, glass carafe in rooms, in-house water bottling).
- Waste: waste sorting, food waste converted into biogas, composting.
- No plastic or single-use-plastic items: straws, dental kits, toiletry bottles, plastic cups, key cards, water bottles, plastic cutlery and plates, soap and shampoo dispensers.

Technology

- Captures natural rainwater then purify it using state-of-the-art filtration and UV light sterilization technique.
- Gym equipment that uses the energy guests generate
- Advanced HVAC system: The ventilation system captures 81% of rejected heat using a thermal wheel and heats incoming fresh air for free.

8.3. Positioning of Swiss hotels

For this last section, three different parts of this study will be put in common and discussed in order to position Swiss hotels in terms of regeneration:

- The results of the semi-structured interviews conducted with 6 Swiss hotels
- The results of the exploratory study conducted by HES students with 148 Swiss hotels' websites
- The results of a benchmark analysis conducted for this present study with 37 regenerative hotels

To structure this part, the discussion will be discussed following the same structure used for the three different parts, using the regenerative characteristics described in the literature review. Each paragraph first presents the elements that Swiss hotels already seem to have, which are similar to what is found in regenerative hotels. Then, the elements that Swiss hotels should work on to get closer to the regenerative approach are listed.

To begin with the **link to the place and the place's intelligence (nature, food and communities)**, both the exploratory study and the semi-structured interviews show that Swiss hotels already have common points with regenerative hotels namely:

- high sense of place mostly by involving local people (staff, suppliers and inhabitants)
- internships offer
- Purchase in bulk
- Valorisation of food waste
- Support of local projects

The exploratory reveals that hotels do not prioritise the local community, but this can be nuanced with the results of the interviews which show great engagement with the locals. Regenerative hotels seem to go further with the following elements that Swiss hotels could further develop:

- use of the local material and savoir-faire into the construction of the hotel
- offer of traditional and local activities, proper to the destination.
- actions to preserve the flora and fauna like biodiversity programs and many green spaces around the hotel (garden...)
- production of food on site
- creation of foundations and programs that serve the local community

Then comes the part about **People Intelligence**. As seen in the quantitative survey sent to Swiss hotels in November 2022 (See point 7.2), this part is less considered by Swiss hotels. Interesting measures were mentioned in the interviews, but they were isolated and not representative. The exploratory study shows that Swiss hotels do not really try to educate guests and staff. However, according to the semi-directed interviews, the majority of hoteliers seemed to make an effort to educate guests. Hence, the following aspects should be further developed by Swiss hotels to get closer to the regenerative hotels approach:

- More staff valorisation: emphasis on gender equality, inclusion, diversity and well being
- Financial support
- Offer of regenerative activities for guests
- Green supplier selection process

As for the **governance** aspect, Swiss hotels seem to head in the right direction, as the following aspects demonstrate:

- involvement in local politics
- certification process/regular audits
- valorisation of partnerships (students/disabled people/providers...)

However, there are differences in results worth noticing. The Swiss hotels could get inspiration from the following measures present in regenerative hotels:

- Person in charge of sustainability
- Incentive to motivate clients to bring material to the community
- Green bonus when setting room prices
- Distribution of profit to the local area

The **communication** of Swiss hotels is also promising. In the majority of the cases, hotels seem to be clear about their global message:

- Information is displayed on the website, newsletters and in the hotels' rooms.
- Implementation of an application proper to the hotel for the guests or the staff

Nevertheless, some points could be further developed to follow the regenerative hotels' path:

- Communicate clearly about the actions and the results (annual sustainable report)
- Communication with the staff to make them understand the why behind the actions.

To end with, the aspects of **net positive impact, sustainability and technology** will be discussed together. Basically, it appears that the majority of Swiss hotels implement sustainable practices mainly to reduce their energy consumption through the use of renewable energy. The semi-structured interviews were full of examples of sustainable measures which are also implemented in regenerative hotels (like the use of renewable energy, no single-use plastic item, free filtered water available in the rooms). This is quite promising. However, the results about their net positive impact and the use of technology for sustainability are more mixed and could be further developed. Below are some ways to improve its positive impact and some additional ideas for sustainable measures. It is important to mention that the technological aspect has not been found very much in the benchmark of regenerative hotels. This aspect needs to be developed in general.

- Clean-up days and actions
- Offset the unavoidable emissions in fostering project
- Restorative practices: annual tree and plants plantation, biodiverse green roof
- Utilisation of the energy created by the gym machines of the hotel
- Blue roof

In conclusion, the benchmark analysis reveals that Swiss hotels already exhibit some regenerative elements in their daily operations, which is promising. However, some hotels were not even aware of the concept of regeneration, indicating that it is a gradually emerging

concept. Nevertheless, there is a clear difference between Swiss hotels and self-proclaimed regenerative hotels. Despite already having a strong sense of place, Swiss hotels could further integrate into the local ecosystem. Additionally, they could focus more on positively impacting people, especially in terms of their social and economic well-being. Furthermore, while Swiss hotels have started to limit their negative impact, they should now think about ways to reverse the trend and become a force for good, especially in terms of achieving a net positive impact.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this study is divided into three different parts. The first part summarizes the main results to provide a clear understanding of the findings. Then, a series of general recommendations for the hotel industry and other relevant entities interested in regenerative hospitality in Switzerland are presented. Finally, the study's limitations are discussed, and suggestions are made for areas of improvement to guide future research in this field.

Summary of main results

By conducting a literature analysis, interviews, and benchmarking, this study aimed to better understand the regeneration potential in the Swiss hotel industry. This approach showcased the main motivations, limitations, and needs as the hotels transition towards a more responsible business model like sustainability or in the future, regeneration. Additionally, this study permitted to draw up an inventory of the measures already implemented by a sample of Swiss hotels and to compare them to those of self-proclaimed regenerative hoteliers. This provided a more comprehensive assessment of the industry's potential of regeneration.

The semi-structured interviews conducted with six Swiss hoteliers generated engaging results firstly about their motivations. It appears that the wish to act for the good of the planet comes from own personal values influenced by the education received as children. The mindset they have as private is translated into the philosophy of their business which makes the difference. Furthermore, many are those who understand that to be able to continue operating in their industry, it is vital to preserve nature as it is their capital. Switzerland is indeed a country known and visited for its unique landscapes and nature. (Möhr, n.d.) Additionally, hoteliers seemed to be driven by people. The interviews show that common effort is valorised and that many actions are thought to benefit people: the locals, the destination as a whole, the clients, and the guests. Empathy and care are necessary elements of this industry. Even if it is not always easy, hoteliers appear to be guided by a long-term vision. Especially those who have children and sincerely want to do their best to leave a better world for future generations. Finally, hoteliers seem to be aware that implementing some measures can save time, energy, and money which are big barriers to many businesses.

Indeed, the interviews revealed several challenges facing the hotel industry, including a lack of resources such as finance, qualified personnel, and time, as well as a lack of support from the government. Additionally, the complexity of the industry presents several challenges, such as confusion caused by the proliferation of sustainability labels, and difficulties for luxury hotels to balance client expectations with their environmental responsibilities. The industry's focus on pleasing customers also makes it challenging for hotels to feel legitimate in educating them about sustainable practices, especially since consumption habits vary greatly based on culture and personal values. Additionally, the political and climatic context can make it difficult for hotels to adopt a long-term vision, and the potential impact of individual efforts can be demotivating when overshadowed by unsustainable global practices. Finally, a lack of interest among some clients in sustainability highlights the need to raise awareness and foster interest in sustainable practices from a young age.

Hoteliers expressed several additional needs, including the desire for more information, transparency, and coaching from experts. They feel that they need guidance to navigate the complex landscape of regeneration, and suggested the possibility of tax deductions for initiatives that have a positive impact, as well as more subsidies to support the implementation of new measures. They also believe that the necessary help and impetus must come from the top, i.e., from the government. To achieve this, a general shift in mindset is required, which involves abandoning capitalism, moving beyond profit maximization, and towards greater authenticity. Hoteliers dream of a world in which people embrace the concept of "happy sobriety".

The final results concern the assessment of the regeneration potential of Swiss hotels, considering the results just presented and those of the benchmark analysis. It suggests that while some Swiss hotels are already incorporating regenerative elements into their operations, without even knowing it, others are just starting to explore the concept. Although Swiss hotels have a strong sense of place, there is room for them to integrate more fully into their local ecosystem and positively impact people's social and economic well-being. In addition to limiting their negative impact, Swiss hotels should strive to become a force for good and achieve a net positive impact. There is a clear difference between Swiss hotels and self-proclaimed regenerative hotels, but the potential of regeneration is quite high as the mentalities seem to already go in the right direction, which is crucial to start to regenerate as exposed by Mang and Reed, "The first step on the path to regenerative work is not a change of techniques but a change of mind." (Mang & Reed, 2012) To address the objectives and research question of this work, recommendations based on the results just described were developed and are presented on the following pages.

Managerial recommendations

Given the study's context and the assumption that regenerative practices are a viable solution for the future, it is recommended that the tourism and hotel industry adopt these practices. The study's results were used to establish a series of recommendations divided into two parts. The first part provides recommendations for the hotel industry and specific bodies, while the second part offers advice directly to Swiss hotels. The semi-structured interviews revealed the challenges and needs that hotels face when transitioning to a more responsible business model. To propose solutions, the recommendations are based on these results expressed by the six hoteliers interviewed. The synthesis of these barriers and needs can be found in [page 39](#). It is crucial to address these challenges to move towards a more sustainable and regenerative hotel industry. It is important to note that this list of recommendations cannot pretend to be exhaustive and should be considered as ideas to catalyse the shift that is required to head towards a safe future.

The study's findings suggest areas of improvement primarily directed towards the Swiss tourism and hotel industry bodies, as well as the state, which could contribute significantly to the development of regenerative tourism in Switzerland.

- **Take regeneration into account:** The government and tourism bodies (HotellerieSuisse, SECO) should integrate regeneration as a key component to their current sustainable development strategy.
- **Rethink financial support:** To support the regenerative initiatives of hotels, it is recommended that government bodies and relevant organizations provide additional financial assistance through grants, tax incentives, and subsidies. To further advance the adoption of regenerative practices, the hotel industry should also advocate for policy changes that facilitate access to financial support, such as tax deductions for hotels that implement regenerative initiatives.
- **Develop coaching and support:** The industry and especially HotellerieSuisse, should develop coaching and support to hoteliers, especially those lacking knowledge and experience in the regenerative field, through mentorship programs and consulting services. The hotel industry should provide more information and transparency to hoteliers about what is possible and what they can do to become more regenerative through workshops, seminars, and webinars.
- **Establish partnerships:** Encourage partnerships between hotels and relevant organizations such as NGOs and universities to promote collaboration and knowledge-sharing and to continue exploring the regenerative field.

- **Simplify sustainability labels:** The hotel industry should work towards simplifying the confusing landscape of sustainability labels in the industry to make it easier for both the hotels and clients to navigate.
- **Educate and interest population:** In collaboration with the government, the hotel industry should take proactive measures to educate and engage the public, especially the youth, in sustainable and regenerative practices through initiatives such as educational programs, marketing campaigns, and incentives for sustainable tourism. Such efforts are vital in promoting the shift in mindset necessary to advance regenerative practices.

Then, based on the results of the six interviews, the exploratory study conducted by HES students, and a benchmark analysis conducted with regenerative hotels, a series of suggestions is proposed below for Swiss hotels to get closer to the regenerative approach:

- **Stay informed:** Swiss hotels should gain knowledge about the potential of regeneration of their industry to be able to understand the concept and implementing it progressively thanks to resources like the [Regenerative Travel](#) organisation who regularly share whitepapers of best practices or [Regen Hospitality](#).
- **Integrate local ecosystem:** Swiss hotels could focus more on using local materials and savoir-faire in construction, offer traditional and local activities to the guests, preserve flora and fauna, and produce food on-site.
- **Prioritize people intelligence:** Swiss hotels could work on staff valorisation, offer regenerative activities for guests (yoga, mindfulness, immersion in nature), and implement green supplier selection processes.
- **Focus on net positive impact:** Swiss hotels could offset unavoidable emissions, implement restorative practices (tree and plants plantation), and start actions like clean up days.
- **Communicate transparently:** Swiss hotels should communicate clearly about their sustainable actions and results through annual sustainability reports and communicate with staff to make them understand the "why" behind the actions. In that regards, Swiss hotels should open a position for a person in charge of sustainability.

To conclude, in order to move forward with the regeneration of the Swiss hotel industry, it is important to recognize the interdependence between the government, tourism, and hotels. A regenerative approach should be taken at all levels of the hierarchy, with a key element being collaboration and co-creation. This involves hotels working together with hotel associations, who can then liaise with the government to find solutions that benefit everyone involved. By adopting a regenerative mindset and working together, the Swiss hotel industry has a greater chance of success.

Limitations of the survey and perspectives of further studies

The present study explored the regeneration potential in the Swiss hotel industry, focusing on the challenges and opportunities for hotels to transition towards a more regenerative model. However, the study faced several limitations that must be acknowledged.

Firstly, even if hotels with very different backgrounds were contacted, the hotels willing to participate in the study were those that were already engaged in the topic, such as those that already held a sustainability label or classification. This limits the generalizability of the results to the wider hotel industry in Switzerland. Secondly, the study interviewed six hotels from three different cantons. While these hotels provided valuable insights and are from at least two linguistic regions, the small sample size and regional focus again limit the extent to which the results can be considered representative of the wider Swiss hotel industry. Finally, the concept of regeneration is still relatively new and broad, making it difficult to define the real potential of the entire industry. Indeed, this is challenging to evaluate because it is a complex and nuanced concept that cannot be reduced to a simple checklist. Therefore, the present study may not have captured all aspects of the regeneration potential of the Swiss hotel industry.

To address these limitations, further research is necessary. One important step would be to interview more hotels from diverse backgrounds, including those without sustainability labels or classifications. To do so, it may be necessary to find ways to engage and interest these hotels in the topic. Additionally, increasing the number of interviews and conducting focus groups could help foster a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the regeneration potential of the Swiss hotel industry.

Finally, it may be beneficial to include interviews with key stakeholders, such as representatives from government and industry associations, to explore potential solutions and strategies for the transition towards regenerative hospitality. By addressing these limitations and conducting further research, one can better understand the regeneration potential of the Swiss hotel industry and identify ways to support its transition towards more sustainable and regenerative practices. While it is important to comprehend the obstacles and requirements, taking active measures to tackle these barriers through developing effective solutions is essential for the future.

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Author's declaration

I hereby declare that I have carried out this final research project on my own without any help other than the references listed in the list of references and that I have only used the sources mentioned. I will not provide a copy of this paper to a third party without the permission of the department head and of my advisor, including the partner company with which I collaborated on this project, with the exception of those who provided me with information needed to write this paper and whose names follow:

- Philippe Baud from Hotel Beatus in Merligen
- Jan Pyott from Boutique Hotel Glacier in Grindelwald
- Marie Forestier from Hotel Bon Rivage in La Tour-de-Peilz
- Philip Hauser from Hotel Belvedere in Grindelwald
- Jean-Bernard Rausis and Frère Marcel from Hotellerie Franciscaine in Saint-Maurice
- Cyril Dederding from Modern Times Hotel in Vevey

Date: 15th of May 2023

The author: Carmen Rosat

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Rosat', written in a cursive style.