



Cycling and Tourism: A Match Made in Sustainability, Physical Activity, and Economic Impact



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A photograph of three people in a natural, outdoor setting. On the left, a woman in a grey t-shirt and shorts stands next to a bicycle. In the center, a woman in a teal jacket and purple shorts sits on a bicycle, holding a can of Joe IPA. On the right, a man in a grey t-shirt sits on a green bicycle, looking towards the woman in the center. The background shows a field of dry grass and trees under a cloudy sky. A quote is overlaid in large white text across the center of the image.

**“Anyone who rides a bike,
is a friend of mine”**

- Gary Fisher



Physical
Activity

Tourism

Events

Active
Transport

Outcomes for:

- Individuals
- Events
- Communities
- Local Business
- Government

Cycling and Tourism

Destination focused cycling tourism (e.g., mountain biking, rail trails)



Event based cycling tourism (e.g., competitions, charity rides)



Intrdestination transport for tourists (e.g., guided tours, bike rental)



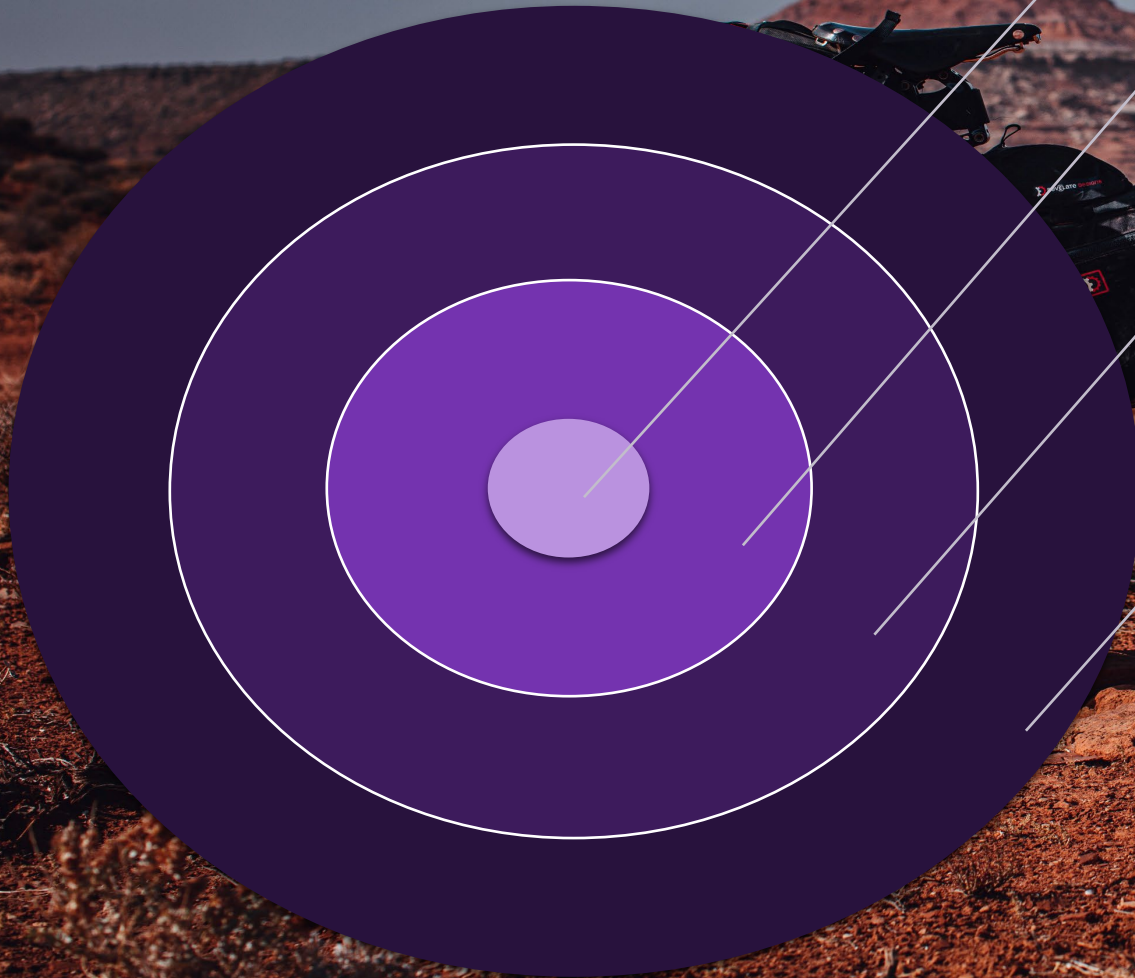
Cycling and Tourism

- ▼ The Progressive Ride: Where do Cycling Tourists Come From?
- ▼ What do they want from their experiences?
- ▼ How can communities best cater to the diverse needs of cycle tourists?



Social Worlds

Adapted from Shipway (2008)
and Unruh (1980; 1981)



Experienced "Insiders"

"Regular" Cyclists

"Occasional" Cyclists

Cycling "Outsiders"

Initiation

Introduction

Expansion

Peak Threshold

Maintain Involvement

Maintenance

Maturity

**Career
Sabbatical**

**Active Sport Event
Career Trajectory**

Initiation

- The first event or trip, typically local or regional, often accompanied by a career cyclist.
- Little to no likes or dislikes
- **Key motives:** health concerns, injury from other activities, training for similar sports/recreation friends/family, cycling culture, event participation (i.e., charity, cause based), luxury experiences.



Introduction

- Minimalistic travel style
- Negligible event, travel and destination knowledge, and awareness
- Minimal to no social connection to other career cyclists
- Sometimes charitable intentions
- Superfluous event attributes important (e.g., shirts, swag)
- Single cycling discipline



Expansion!

- Increase in travel and participation frequency!
- Interest in competition with oneself or others
- **Key motives:** increasing social connection to other cyclists, learning, developing interests
- Increased emphasis on event and travel decisions
- Superfluous event attributes become less important
- Interested in new cycling disciplines



Peak Threshold

- A peak frequency of participation based on constraints (e.g., time, money, personal, location)
 - Maintain
 - Reduce or
 - Sabbatical



Maintenance

- Maintain travel, event, and participation frequency
- Social disconnect with non-cyclists
- Key motivations: maintain healthy lifestyle and connections with other cyclists, novelty, iconic destinations.
- Internal competition often replaces external competition



Maturity

- Reduced travel, event, and participation frequency
- High emphasis on event evaluation and destination criteria.
- High focus on non-competitive events (e.g., festivals)
- Desire to mentor new cyclists, volunteer, and give back to the community



What about the destination?

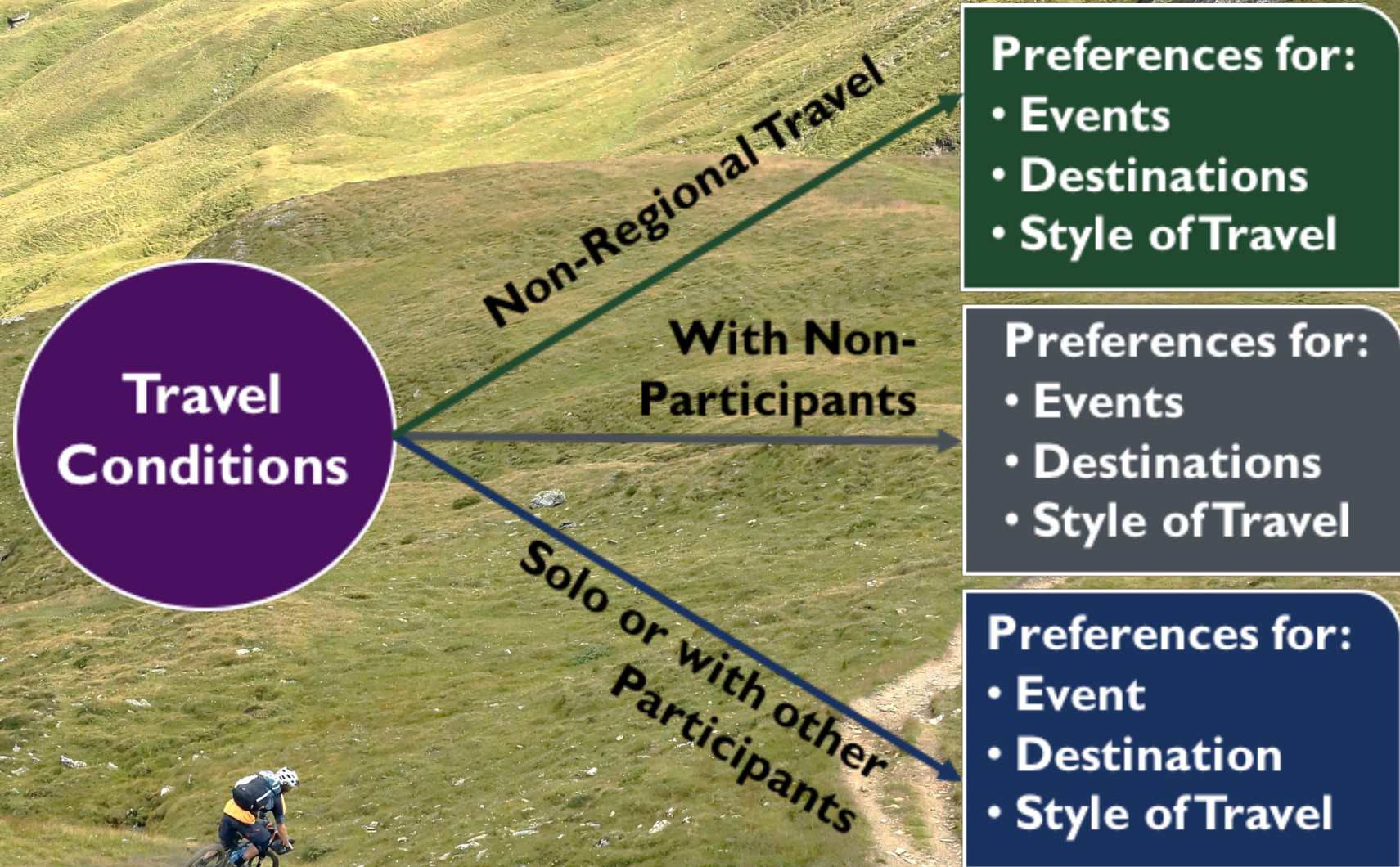
Non-decision makers, and trip characteristics determine trip decisions around the destination and events



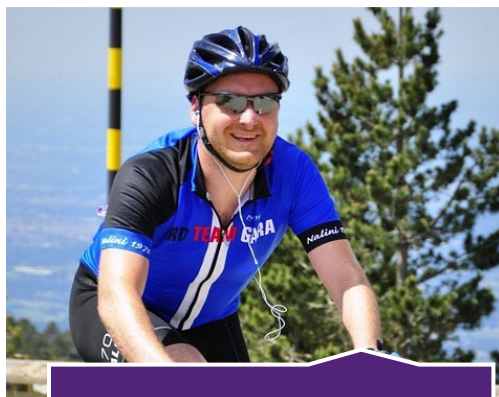
Travel Conditions

Circumstances related to a specific trip such as travel with non-event participants (e.g., spouse, children)

Buning & Gibson (2016);
Sato et al. 2018



A Heterogenous Cycling Tourism Market



Core



Grey nomads



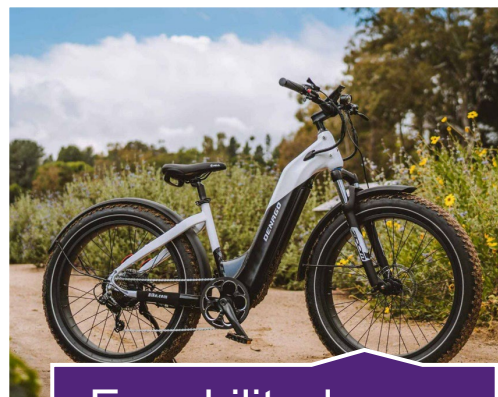
Families



Racing, Triathletes,
Training, Gravel
Racing



Women/LGBTQIA+



E-mobility, luxury,
first time cyclists



Additional non
riding market
(family, spouses,
etc.)

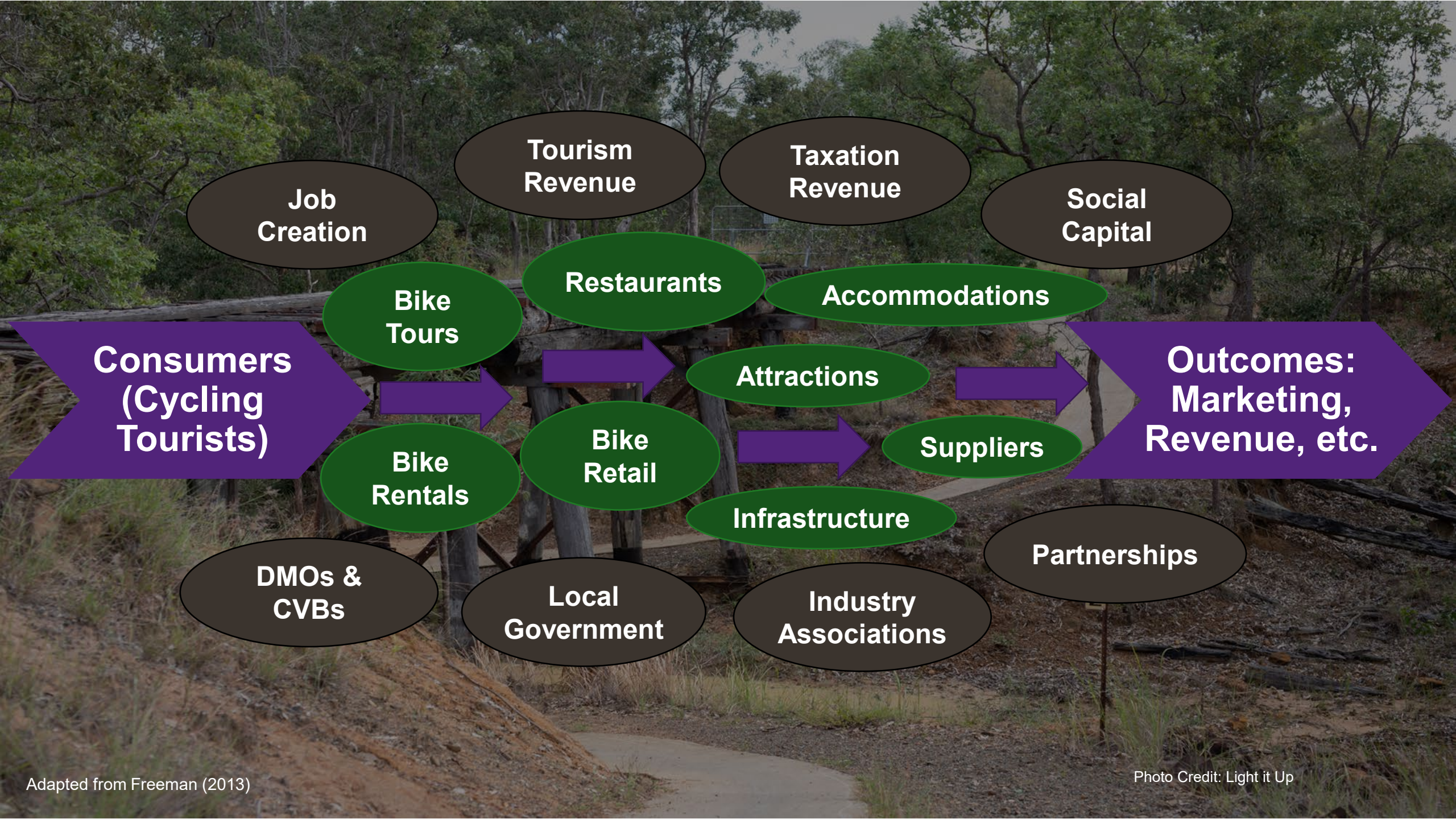


Diversity in skill,
experience and
new markets

How can communities best cater to the diverse needs of cycle tourists?

Community Cycling Tourism Development





**Travel Groups,
Distance, &
Skill**

**Attract
Tourists**

**Generate
Visitor
Spending**

**Grassroots
Driven**

**Leveraging for
Tourism
Development**

**Sustainable &
Efficient**

**Managed
Holistically**

**Create Positive
Local Impact**

What Factors Increase Tourist Spending?

- ✦ Distance travelled
- ✦ Travel party size
- ✦ # of participants in travel party
- ✦ Trip Duration
- ✦ Income



What is Missing?

- Bike Shops and/or tour providers are typically the key point of entry and gate keeper of information for tourists
- Inclusivity, primarily around gender and skill
- E-bikes and accessibility
- E-scooters and other e-mobility options
- Links to tourism attractions, inclusive experiences, non-cyclists
- Links to cycling sporting organizations
- As a venue for events cycling and non-cycling (trail running, etc.)



What is Missing?

- Comparisons of various markets: purpose specific travellers, incidental travellers, inexperienced travellers, luxury travel
- Connecting cities to trails
- Economic work...Consistency in measurement and triple bottom line impact, social and environmental
- A holistic and integrated approach that considers heterogeneity of the cycling tourism market



A group of four mountain bikers is shown from behind, standing on a grassy trail overlooking a valley. They are wearing helmets, backpacks, and cycling gear. The scene is set against a backdrop of rolling hills and a small town in the distance. The image has a dark, semi-transparent overlay to make the text stand out.

**“When people ride bikes,
great things happen”**

- Tim Blumenthal, President, PeopleForBikes

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Micromobility is revolutionising and disrupting urban transport systems globally, offering an array of benefits alongside challenges to communities, planning authorities, and the tourism industry. UQ is leading the charge in understanding this ever changing landscape.

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Collaborative Conversations



Collaborative Conversations

1. What are the challenges your organization is facing now? And over the next 5 years?
2. What do you need from Academia? How can research help?

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