Destination Governance

A New Management Concept for Tourism Destinations?

General meaning of governance:
Any mode of social co-ordination of interdependent activities (market exchange, hierarchy, networks, communities, clans)

Analytical way of using the term “governance”

Limited meaning of governance:
Self-organizing networks between multiple independent actors (public and private), involved in complex relations of reciprocal interdependence, based on dialogue and negotiation, with an emphasis on participation, empowerment and common welfare

Normative way of using the term “governance”: “New governance”
Traditional question in destination management:
How can destination actors be governed by a DMO to produce a competitive and successful destination product?

New question in destination governance:
How should governance arrangements be designed so that processes of cooperation and interaction between all destination actors (including the DMO) can produce a competitive and successful destination product on the basis of a general consensus?

Destination governance instead of destination management?

Different logics of action:
- Political actors (Orientation: elections)
- Administrative actors (Orientation: local/municipal/regional decision-making, institution-based dealing with problems)
- Entrepreneurs (Orientation: market, process-based dealing with problems)
- Organizations of civil society (Orientation: idealistic, based on solidarity of members)

Governance capacity:
“Strategic relational node or arena in a locality, a point of reference for many relational webs, and a locus of the development of shared understandings among the diversity of open relations in a place” (Healey 1999, 115)

Levels of destination governance:
- First-order governance: opportunity creation (empowerment, activating, facilitating, encouraging access, indirect management)
- Second-order governance: institution building (creation of policy instruments)
- Meta-governance: governance of the governance (normative aspects of governance, development of shared visions, re-articulation, collibration)
Is destination governance a new management concept for tourism destinations?

Or is it just an “empty signifier”?