

**2<sup>nd</sup> National Wildlife Tourism Conference**  
**Esplanade Hotel, Fremantle Western Australia**  
**13-15 August 2006**  
**'Getting Real About Wildlife Tourism'**

**ABSTRACT SUBMISSION – WORKING PAPER**

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**PRESENTER PROFILE:**

**GELTER, Hans**, PhD in Biology, holds a faculty position as Senior lecturer in Biology and education program coordinator for the Master Program in Professional Experience Production, at the Department of Music, Media and Experience Production, Luleå University of Technology, Sweden. He teaches various subjects within the Experience Production Study Program, such as Hospitality, Interpretation, Guiding, Environmental and Outdoor Education, Experience production, Creativity Management etc. He has previously been teaching Biology, Environmental and Outdoor Education at the Department of Teachers Education at Luleå University of Technology, and Genetics, Evolution and Ecology at Uppsala University. Gelter has personal experiences as Nature Interpreter and Guide through the Swedish company *TEMA Resor* with Safari in Tanzania and Nature Trekking in Greece, Madeira, Austrian Mountains and Safaris and Trekking in Nepal. Gelter has also a Nature Tourist Company, *Guide Natura* and is presently engaged in a validation/certification system for Nature Guides in Sweden. Gelter has participated in scientific expeditions on Greenland and along the Northern Russian Arctic coast as well as private nature tours in Northern Canada, USA, Europe, Central Russia, Australia and New Zealand and is a keen Mountaineer with climbing expeditions in the Alps, Alai and Himalayas.

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**TOWARDS A SWEDISH VALIDATION AND CERTIFICATION SYSTEM  
FOR NATURE GUIDES AND INTERPRETER’S**

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As nature tourism becomes an increasingly important component within the experience economy, the demands and expectations increase on nature guides as well as on tour and safari operators. This is partly a consequence of increased demands among better and better educated visitors within the new information society. The offered experience need to be extraordinary, of high quality and personalized to fulfill demands from the new experience economy. The emergence of eco-tourism as a consequence of demands for sustainable environmental management and an explicit environmental ethical awareness and Biophilic values in society sets new standards within nature tourism. These new demands have to be combined with the need for tourist companies for economical sustainability and possibility to grow and develop.

The growing nature tourism in Sweden which previously has been a peripheral area for tourism in Europe, and these new demands in the experience economy has resulted in a Swedish quality marking system, “*Nature’s Best*” of nature based tourist products which has gained international interest. But the educational and professional system for nature guides is still undeveloped in Sweden where most are self learned or more or less educated without any certification standards. The concept of certified nature Interpreter’s as in US has not yet been introduced in Sweden and Scandinavia. Based on similar principles as “*Nature’s Best*” eco-certification, a system for educational curriculum, validation of established nature guides and a national certification system is being established with the aim of integrating the concepts of Interpretation, Experience Production and sustainable Eco-tourism.