

A strategy for sustainable tourism - SI

1. Policy Objective & Theme

- SUSTAINABLE USE OF RESOURCES: Preserving coastal environment (its functioning and integrity) to share space
- SUSTAINABLE USE OF RESOURCES: Sound use of resources and promotion of less resource intensive processes/products
- SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH: Balancing economic, social, cultural development whilst enhancing environment
- SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH: Improving competitiveness

2. Key Approaches

- Integration
- Participation
- Ecosystems based approach

3. Experiences that can be exchanged

The development of a strategy for sustainable tourism placed within the framework of a regional Development Programme for the Slovenian coastal region South Primorska..

4. Overview of the case

A strategy for the sustainable development of tourism was developed between 2004–2006 by the Regional Development Centre in Koper which covers the territory of eight municipalities of the Coast-Kras region spanning over 1,500 km². It deals with the development opportunities and possibilities in the tourism sector in the Northern Adriatic until 2012, specifically in South Primorska – the only Slovenian coastal region.

5. Context and Objectives

a) Context

The region has ca. 80.000 coastal inhabitants. It is characterised by significant natural and cultural features and is economically successful with 70% of GDP from the service activities of trade, transport - the Port of Koper and tourism). Tourism is both competitive and complementary: the sub-regions offer similar products and services but each is different which, in turn, increases the attractiveness of the entire destination. There are infrastructural and environmental difficulties e.g. waste water drainage and treatment, solid waste management, management of protected areas, drinking water resource management and pollution of coastal waters. It is the only Slovenian region lying by the sea and although only 46 km long, the coastal zone is of enormous national value and it is of great strategic importance from an economic, natural and cultural point of view.

With respect to tourism, there is a still modest level of employment in tourism with regard to the potential of the region and the educational structure does not meet the needs and trends of the tourism sector. There is a lack of highly trained management personnel with a lack of attractive jobs and an orientation towards seasonal work. An unfavourable age and vocational structure in the region dictates the search for personnel in other Slovenian and foreign regions and sectors but neither the tourism industry nor the social environment is adequately prepared for this type of employment.

A special challenge of sustainable development of tourism is the preservation and enrichment of biodiversity for its tourism

potential. This potential is declining because of increased settlement in the narrow coastal zone, pollution of water from urban wastewater and agriculture and drainage of wetlands. Especially challenging issues are the incorporation of cultural resources into the tourism product. However, there is great potential for cultural tourism e.g food and wine, cultural theme paths and events as well as capitalising more on cultural heritage assets.

b) Objectives

To elaborate, in co-operation with tourism actors, a joint vision, objectives, strategy and regional programme for sustainable development of tourism. These had to preserve regional authenticity but improve quality and provide long-term international competitiveness for the destination, raising incomes. This was to form a component of a more general objective to contribute to national efforts towards sustainable development of the South Primorska.

6. Implementation of the ICZM Approach (i.e. management, tools, resources)

a) Management

The Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning is responsible for overall co-ordination, management and supervision of CAMP – Coastal Area Management Programme for Slovenian Coast.. A steering committee and advisory Board have been appointed and the work is carried out by a project co-ordinator within the Regional Development Centre Koper. The work formed part of a Mediterranean Action Plan Coastal Area Management Programme.

b) ICZM tools

Several measures for the realisation of the strategy were undertaken. These were:-

Improving tourism infrastructure: investments of smaller tourism providers, especially guesthouses and boarding houses in the countryside, construction of cycling and walking paths, investments in the construction of facilities in combination with man-made and natural sites of special interest (attractions) in touristically less developed areas, to ensure additional tourist and other information signalization, investment in renovation of existing buildings and cultural heritage for the purposes of tourist services.

Development and marketing of new tourist products and services, including promotion of new tourist products and strengthen the marketing of “experience/emotion” instead of “material” offer, establishment of joint marketing (overcoming the local fragmentation), introduction of modern communication and marketing channels, more financial resources for marketing.

Promotion of high-quality tourism and reduction of environmental impacts: raising of quality of the existing tourist products, services and infrastructure (obtaining quality certification, establishing trademarks...), introduction of environmental standards and codes, such as blue flag, environmental codes, the European eco label and the systems of environmental management: ISO standards 140000, EMAS scheme (improvement in environmental performance of organizations and providing the public with the relevant information).

Partnership for sustainable development: Establishment of the cooperation of tourist actors in public affairs which are important for the quality of tourist destination: spatial planning; planning of the public open spaces and greenery; sustainable mobility; establishment of the sustainable development indicators, on the basis of carrying capacity assessment for tourism; cooperation in the field of employment, training and education for tourism, joint awareness-raising actions for target groups.

7. Cost and resources

No costs are available.

8. Effectiveness (i.e. were the foreseen goals/objectives of the work reached?)

A vision, goals and a strategy of tourism development in the region have been defined. They have been harmonised with the

principles of sustainable development and the environment carrying capacity as assessed on the basis of selected indicators. A programme of key measures was also drawn up for the coming programming period and integrated into the Regional Development Programme for the period 2007–2013. The key expected result of the project has been a programme of coastal area management in Slovenia, serving as a basis for the implementation of priority activities and projects in the 2007-2013 programming period, in co-operation with the State, the Municipalities and other key actors in the South Primorska region.

9. Success and Fail factors

The attainment of strategic policies and development objectives required a harmonised, connected and efficient system for the implementation of tourism development. The biggest weakness is that an efficient tourism development organisation on the regional level - the so-called regional tourism (destination) management organisation has not been established yet. The responsibility lies on the national level. The Strategy is being realised by business actors and local communities in the framework of regional Development Programme, with the support of regional Development Centre Koper. A non favourable economic situation after the adoption of the strategy, which is critical in the tourist industry on the Slovenian coast also plays an important role as it does not enable the realisation of ambitious projects in the framework of sustainable tourism. Nevertheless, the support of the residents and small tourist providers with adequate additional (voluntary) activities of the locals helps to ensure an affirmative image of the destination and positive relations with the tourist visitors.

10. Unforeseen outcomes

None so far.

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13. Sources

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- Regional development programme of South Primorska 2007-2013 (2007). Regional Development Centre in Koper (English summary, 18pp)
- Regionalni razvojni program Juzne Primorske 2007-2013 (2006). Regionalni Razvojni Center Koper (118pp)
- <http://www.rrc-kp.si/> (this is the site of the Regional Development Centre in Koper)



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Regional developement programme - ENG (13.95 MB) 



full camp report (2.61 MB) 