Integrating Innovative Practices and Best Applications in European Union with regard to European Qualification Framework (ECOACT) Project
"Funded by the Erasmus+ Program of the European Union. However, European Commission and Turkish National Agency cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein"
Ecotourism Action Plan

Integrating Innovative Practices and Best Applications in European Union with regard to European Qualification Framework (ECOACT) Project

In the World Ecotourism Summit, ecotourism is accepted as an approach that assures the sustainability of natural resources, supports economic development of host communities and contributes to the conservation of natural resources and the cultural integrity of host communities.

According to the International Ecotourism Society (TIES), ecotourism is a responsible travel, and guarantees the conservation of environment and the well-being of local people.

Due to these aspects of ecotourism, it’s an important tourism activity. Aiming to provide support to the improvement of ecotourism activities, General Directorate of Forestry contributes to and actively participates in the studies on the issue.

In this sense, “Integrating Innovative Practices and Best Applications in European Union with regard to European Qualification Framework (ECOACT) Project” is conducted within the scope of EU Erasmus + program. The aim of ECOACT Project covering the years 2017-2018 is to benefit from the natural, cultural, historical and geographical values of the country by establishing a conservation-utilization balance; to develop tourism alternatives; to increase the share of our country in ecotourism; and to support operators.

Adapting and implementing the European Ecotourism Labeling Standards in Turkey; providing trainings on ecotourism for the operators in 4 pilot cities (Bolu, Kastamonu, Giresun and Artvin) in Black Sea region; including the businesses that meet the criteria into the GreenTravel Map application and putting them on the map; and putting good practices examples in the field of ecotourism into service by including them into the application developed are targeted with the project.

Project Coordinator is General Directorate of Forestry in Turkey. Project partners are Spain (CTFC-Forest Science and Technology Center of Catalonia), Czech Republic (ECO-ORLOV), Germany (ECOTRANS), Slovenia (KTRC Radece-Cultural, Tourism and Recreational Center), and Turkey (OGEMVAK, and Tercih Counselling and Software Co).

In this booklet, 4 main criteria of the European Ecotourism Labeling Standards (EETLS) have been taken into consideration. These criteria are; A. Demonstrate Effective Sustainable Management; B. Maximize social and economic benefits to the local community and minimize negative impacts; C. Maximize benefits to cultural heritage and minimize negative impacts; and D. Maximize benefits to the environment and minimize negative impacts. Based on these criteria, 5 good practice samples for each partner country have been included in the booklet.
Turkey

Gazeelle Resort Hotel, Bolu
Gazelle Resort Hotel, Bolu

Gazelle Resort Hotel, Bolu : Only green, 5-star hotel in Bolu Region
A five-star hotel located in an oak forest of 150 decare which takes 2,5-hour ride to Istanbul and 1,5-hour to Ankara. It has a Green Star Certificate given by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

Gazelle Resort is situated in the middle of a beautiful, green oak forest. Not even a single tree was cut down during the construction of the hotel, in fact the project was completely changed for a 300-year-old oak tree, standing in the project area.

Gazelle Resort & Spa is the area's first and the only green five star hotel since it provides a natural habitat for animals and ensures sustainability. While you run or have a walk at the forest, you may see singing birds, running gazelles, hopping squirrels or beautiful peacocks.

Gazelle Hotel has a Green Star Certificate issued by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Green Star covers reducing the consumption and waste of energy, water and harmful substances; increasing energy efficiency; promoting the use of renewable energy sources; planning and constructing the accommodation facilities so that it will be eco-friendly and in compliance with environment; landscaping arrangements and activities; ecological architecture; raising environmental awareness; providing trainings and cooperating with related institutions and organizations.

Web-site : http://www.gazellehotels.com.tr/gazelleresort/
Gazelle Resort & Spa,

“Best Autumn Hotel” - awarded by the Judge of Hürriyet Seyahat Magazine

Telephone: +90 374 262 98 00 (Pbx) Fax: +90 374 262 90 91 (Pbx)
E-mail: info@gazelleresort.com
Address: Fatih Mh. Kökez Sk. No:23 Karacasu Mevkii / Bolu - TÜRKİYE
İksir Resort Town Hotel, Daday

İksir Resort Town, Daday is located at the end of the province of Daday, Kastamonu. The main building is a wooden mansion: İksir Hanım Konaği which was built as a family resident in 1926. Apart from this, there are two chalets and an organic farm. As well as being able to stay in high altitude mountain houses, it also has access to winter sports and highland tourism facilities. There are ranches on the farm, and cereals, fruits and vegetables are produced. Any customers who are interested in breeding, gathering and processing products and animal care can participate in activities.

The fact that the main accommodation building, which is a beautiful example of the local architecture, is being operated to reflect the life of the pre-century period, the positive communication and cooperation with the people of the environment. Organic production and consumption, horse riding, cycling, nature walk, various competition events (such as mushroom racing) and various eco-tourism activity opportunities.

Consumption of local and organic products, prioritization of the local people in product purchase and recycling, waste management, measures and warnings to reduce waste, including disposable products. The development of various eco-tourism activities and the necessary information to protect the natural and cultural assets.

Being an example of environmentally friendly practices through the production and consumption of organic agricultural products, efficient use of resources and protection of cultural, social and natural values in Daday, one of the important ecotourism destinations in the Black Sea Region.

Organic farming entrepreneur certificate issued by ORSER, production certificate issued by the Governor.

Web site: http://www.iksirresorttown.com/
Telephone: +90 366.616 10 16 Fax: +90 366.616 10 46
E-Mail: info@iksirresorttown.com
Address: Daday Kelebek Mah. 37860 Daday – Kastamonu / Türkiye
Turkey

Birun Kümbet Chalets, Giresun
Birun Kümbet Chalets, Giresun

Birun Kümbet Chalets, Giresun: The facility is located in Kümbet Plateau, Giresun, and at the height of 1800 meters. The whole building is made of wood and it is nature compatible.

The reason for good practice

Being in compliance with the architecture of the region, having good communication with local people. A facility with ecotourism activities. Many alternatives around for nature tourism and others. No certificates or documents but meets the criteria.

(Methods /steps/tools (for improving good practices)

The facility coordinates with the local community, and serves local food. It is in compliance with the culture and nature of the area as a whole.

Specific / measurable results, benefits

Highland tourism is very common in Black Sea Region, and tourists show intense interest. The facility makes a contribution to the area in this respect.

Recognitions (example rewards)

No awards but it has documents issued by the Governor.

Web-site: http://birun.com/
Telephone: +90 454 386 61 11 PbX
Telephone - 2: +90 454 386 61 11 PbX
Turkey

Melek Hotels, Mudurnu
Melek Hotels, Mudurnu:

Offering local flavors in its restaurant, Tekkeliler Mansion is one of the best taste stops. Bolu, Abant Lake and Yedigöller visitors from Istanbul, Ankara and other cities have a good time in this restaurant which combines and serves local Mudurnu flavors and Ottoman cuisine.

It takes nearly 3 hours by car to get to Mudurnu (230 Km to Istanbul and 240 Km to Ankara). Going by bus which runs hourly from Bolu takes nearly 40 minutes.

Melek Hotels Mudurnu-Tekkeliler Mansion is in the center of Mudurnu, next to historical Suleiman the Magnificent Turkish bath, and near Suleiman the Magnificent Mosque and the bazaar. The Mansion has 9 rooms decorated as classic mansion rooms. Tekkeliler Mansion, the restoration of which was completed in 2015, has two restaurants; indoor restaurant could seat about 50 people while outdoor restaurant could seat 100 people. Melek Hotels Mudurnu Tekkeliler Mansion is 22 km to Sünnet Lake, 15 minutes ride to Abant and 45 minutes to Bolu.

Mudurnu, where the first Turkish settlements begun in Seljuk period, is located in the main area, which later formed the basis of Ottoman Empire. It was annexed to the Ottoman principality borders under the guidance of Samsa Çavuş and Köse Mihal. Halil Hayrettin Pasha (Çandarlı Kara Halil), who formed the basis of the first regular army “Yaya Örgütü” and again the first Finance and Treasury organization in the period of Sultan Murat I, was also from Mudurnu and became the first Ottoman vizier. Yıldırım Beyazıt Mosque (1374) and Yıldırım Beyazıt Turkish bath (1382) established in the period of Bayezid I has been standing for 600 years.

Melek Hotels, Mudurnu

The reason for good practice

Melek Hotels, Mudurnu: Offering local flavors in its restaurant, Tekkeliler Mansion is one of the best taste stops. Bolu, Abant Lake and Yedigöller visitors from Istanbul, Ankara and other cities have a good time in this restaurant which combines and serves local Mudurnu flavors and Ottoman cuisine.

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Specific / measurable results, benefits

web references, documents

Web-site : http://mudurnu.melekhotels.com/
Telephone : +(90) 374 421 20 40
E-mail : mudurnutekkeliler@melekhotels.com
Address : Kuran Kursu Sk. No:1 Mudurnu/Bolu/Türkiye
+(90) 374 421 20 40
İstanbul : 230 Km (2 saat 45 dakika) - Ankara : 240 Km (3 saat)
Turkey

İzbeli Farm, Kastamonu
İzbeli Farm, Kastamonu

İzbeli Farm, Kastamonu: The farm, given to İzbeli Family in 1651 in the age of Ottoman Sultan Mehmet IV (Mehmet, the hunter) for Timariots (timar holders) has mostly been kept in its original form. The production is still going on in the region with natural and organic agricultural techniques. Breakfast is also served in the farm.

Embodying the history of centuries, the farm acts as a museum. İzbeli Family donated the bedspread of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk that he used during his visit to Kastamonu in 1925 to City History Museum. İzbeli Farm has been contributing to tourism in Kastamonu since 2002. Organic products that are grown without using synthetic manure or hormones are provided for the visitors of the farm. Besides the breakfast served in the farm has been appreciated by most of the gourmets and praised by local and national press.

Organic agriculture is performed in the farm. For a product to be processed as an organic product, a controlled production in accordance with the related organic agriculture legislation and certification of these products is necessary. It has certificates on organic agriculture given by the Ministries.

Web-site: http://www.izbeliciftligi.com/
Telephone: +(90) 366 244 36 45 / +90 532 575 77 52
           +(90) 532 273 85 00
E-mail: illetisim@izbeliciftligi.com
Address: Örencik Köyü İzbeli Mezrası No:5/2 KASTAMONU
         İstanbul: 230 Km (2 saat 45 dakika) -Ankara: 240 Km (3 saat)
Germany

Swabian Alb Biosphere Reserve
Swabian Alb Biosphere Reserve

Center of the Swabian Alb Biosphere Reserve in Münsingen-Auingen (Baden-Württemberg/ Germany)

Key Figures

The Swabian Alb Biosphere Reserve is located about 50 km southeast of Stuttgart, the state capital. It encompasses 29 cities and municipalities from two administrative districts and three rural districts as well as the former Münsingen military training area.

The reason for good practice

Main purpose of this facility is to show practical examples of implemented model projects and the results of their monitoring that the relationship to nature, local resources and traditions, together with considerate management, can protect the environment and the global climate, economically stabilize the countryside and solve unemployment even in relatively remote areas.

Issues and Challenge, Methods /steps / tools used (to develop the good practice)

Conservation of nature and the environment

In the biosphere region, green tourism development is a priority. This is achieved through a carefully crafted blend of visitor management, tourism stakeholder engagement, development of sustainable tourism services and a quality visitor experience. For example, as part of last year’s projects, the network of hiking trails was consolidated, 31 top trails were upgraded, nine thematic cycle tours were developed and additional opportunities for nature watching were created. On principle, only sustainable, eco-friendly amenities are advertised through the biosphere media. In addition, clearly defined quality standards apply to hiking, cycling, the culinary offer and nature watching. Green visitor mobility is another priority in the biosphere. A Biosphere Bus has been introduced, several leisure buses are now equipped with cycle trailers and the leisure network has improved. With a view to improving local public transport, a survey of certified Biosphere Partners was conducted and the findings are now being acted upon. Additional local public transport is provided for major events and this has resulted in new services being integrated into the regular timetable.
Regional awareness of sustainability issues

Numerous tourism stakeholders were involved in securing UNESCO recognition for the biosphere. More than 200 people participated in preparing the framework document in various forums and more than 1500 citizens contributed their ideas on the region’s sustainable development. UNESCO status initiated a dynamic process which is reflected in a multitude of regional initiatives. Since then, more than 200 sustainable development projects have been launched, almost half of which consisted of investment in the tourism sector.

Quality and sustainability: the perfect partnership

In the biosphere region, new product development is always guided by the principle: “More quality, more conservation of biodiversity, more regional value added”. With the targeted involvement of local product marketers, hotels and restaurants, new ideas and attractive offers for tourists are developed and implemented. For example, two rural districts worked with the tourism, hiking and nature conservation organisations to redesign all the hiking trails in and around the Swabian Alb Biosphere Reserve. This project is now being implemented. Certified Biosphere Partners offer a guest-oriented experience of nature combined with high quality standards. Currently, more than 100 businesses are recognised as Partners in the biosphere region. Strict criteria apply, including at least one energy efficiency or environmental consultation for small businesses and certification in environmental protection for large businesses, and all Partner hotels have introduced the EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS), the strictest of its kind in Europe. Local restaurateurs have joined together to launch the Biosphere Hosts association, in order to underscore their connection with this unique cultural landscape and their passion for their work. Their guests can enjoy speciality products typical of the Swabian Alb – spelt, lentils, juices from the region’s extensive meadow orchards, and quality wines and spirits in creative compositions – or simply relax in tastefully furnished accommodation.

Category: Regionality

Creating new experiences from well-preserved heritage – this is one of the successes achieved by Swabian Alb tourism stakeholders. Cultural identity is a key factor here and is embedded as a strategic element of the framework document for the biosphere region. All its cultural offers must meet specific quality standards in order to be marketed to tourists. Regional events, leading-edge projects and the Partner scheme all help to foster ideas and initiatives that are rooted in culture and heritage, forging a strong common identity for local communities.
Swabian Alb Biosphere Reserve

Winner of the Federal Competition Sustainable Tourism Destinations in Germany (2016/2017)

- The Biosphere Reserve is a good example of how tourism can work as a driver of sustainable development across the entire area.

- The closure of the Münsingen military training ground initiated a conversion process which, with the creation of the Biosphere Reserve, has led to a consistent focus on sustainability throughout the region and an image upgrade par excellence.

- As a result of the developments over recent years, “quality of life” and “identity” are well-established as selling points, with sustainability as the core element.

- A wide range of tourism service providers, local producers and tourism organisations are working together towards shared goals. Consistent networking creates synergies and a sense of community identity. The common denominator of quality and sustainability leads to high-standard products and services which evoke positive emotions.

Recognitions (e.g. awards)

Lessons learned, Challenges met, Critical success factors

Web references, documents

- The text above has been taken from the Report “Sustainable Tourism Destinations in Germany”:

  https://www.deutschertourismusverband.de/fileadmin/Mediendatenbank/Bilder/Impulse/Nachhaltigkeit_Englisch.pdf

- Lighthouse project: Hofgut Hopfenburg Holiday Resort

  https://www.hofgut-hopfenburg.de

- National tourism marketing:


- Contact for further information:

  http://biosphaerengebiet-alb.de
Germany

Bliesgau Biosphere Reserve
Bliesgau Biosphere Reserve

Key people and organisations (initiator, leader, partners)

Saarpfalz-Tourism Organisation and Bliesgau Biosphere Reserve Administration in Homburg (Saarland/ Germany)

Biodiversity and outdoor experience

Especially due to its close proximity of rural, suburban and urban areas, its high population density (an average of 337 km² and approx. 111,000 inhabitants in the planned area) and the resulting high degree of complexity, the biosphere reserve offers a good basis for the development and testing of potential sustainable solutions.

Issues and Challenge, Methods / steps / tools used (to develop the good practice) Specific / measurable results, benefits

Destinations managers support a variety of projects whose aim is to protect ecosystems, such as the development of the European Culture Park Bliesbruck-Reinheim, an archaeological park and open-air museum on the French-German border, and work by tourism sector Partner enterprises in a meadow orchard. There is a strong regional commitment to offering an experience of biodiversity. Certified nature and landscape guides run regular tours of interest to visitors keen to find out more about aspects of the landscape. A range of tourism offers focusing on the biosphere, nature and environmental education, a calendar of events dedicated to species diversity and project-specific visitor management systems guarantee a high-quality holiday experience close to nature.

Recognitions (e.g. awards)

Finalist of the Federal Competition Sustainable Tourism Destinations in Germany (2016/2017)
Commitment to sustainable tourism

Sustainable tourism has featured as a strategic element of the region’s tourism policy, with specific targets, since 2011. The region has consistently pursued a sustainable development pathway since then. For example, in 2016, Bliesgau Biosphere Reserve was assessed by the international Green Destinations initiative and was included in the Global Top 100 Sustainable Destinations. All of its certified sustainable tourism businesses are included on the Green Travel Map Germany. Starting this year, the Biosphere Reserve is participating in the process for Saarland’s certification as a sustainable destination.

Promoting networking

Stakeholder networking facilitates joint and coordinated tourism engagement. The Biosphere Association and Saarpfalz-Touristik share office premises and have thus established a close working relationship, consulting each other on all major projects and programmes. Networking also takes place in a variety of forums with Saarland’s destination marketing organisation and nature conservation associations. Biosphere Reserve Partners are drivers of sustainable tourism development in the region and offer added value for guests and customers. Every Partner acts as an Ambassador for the Biosphere Reserve concept, provides quality and a high level of service, promotes environmental conservation and sustainability and is committed to regional engagement.

The sustainability offer

Starting in 2016, nature tourism offers are designed with reference to the DTV’s Sustainable Development Criteria for German Tourism Destinations. In developing the tourism offer, efforts are made to prioritise businesses which have joined the Partner initiative. The region’s tourist attractions should be accessible to everyone. The Barrier-Free Tourism in Saarland project therefore develops amenities, such as the accessible hiking trail in Kircel and Netzwerk Hören (Hearing Network), for people with disabilities.
Bliesgau Biosphere Reserve

Green mobility

The Biosphere Reserve makes it easy for guests to leave the car at home. With the Saarland Card, launched in April 2017, overnight guests benefit from free bus and rail travel throughout the region and enjoy free entry to more than 60 attractions. The region has joined Destination Nature (Fahrtziel Natur – a sustainable mobility scheme involving Germany Railways and major environmental organisations) and is committed to green mobility at the local level. For example, the Biosphere Bus won a Fahrtziel Natur Award in 2014 as a model of good practice in the Sustainable Mobility category.

Regional value added

A range of quality local products are made in the Biosphere Reserve. A Bliesgau Good Shopping Guide showcases the most important and lists local stockists. The town of Blieskastel joined the Cittaslow movement in 2012, signalling its commitment to sustainable urban development in the region. Biosphere Reserve Partners and local products are considered in the development of the tourism offer and feature in marketing. In addition, Saarpfalz-Touristik supports the organisation and promotion of biosphere markets and other events involving the region’s producers.

* The text above has been taken from the Report “Sustainable Tourism Destinations in Germany”:

https://www.deutschertourismusverband.de/fileadmin/Mediendatenbank/Bilder/Impulse/Nachhaltigkeit_Englisch.pdf

* Lighthouse project: WaldKultUrlaub https://www.saarpfalz-touristik.de * National marketing:


* Contact for further information:

http://www.biosphaere-bliesgau.eu
Germany

The North Eifel
North Eifel Tourism Organisation in Kall (Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany)

The North Eifel, the northern part of the Eifel, a low mountain range in Germany and East Belgium, comprises six sub-regions. The raised bog of the Hohes Venn is particularly noteworthy. It was designated as a world heritage site by UNESCO. The Eifel Lake Plateau with the second largest dam in Germany, the Rur Valley Dam, lies in the centre of the North Eifel.

CATEGORY: SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY In recent years, the mobility offer for tourists has greatly improved as a result of substantial stakeholder engagement. New local public transport links have been established and demand-responsive schemes, such as taxibus services and share taxis, have been consolidated and the provision of hire stations for cycles and pedelecs (pedal electric cycles) expanded. Bus connections to the fully accessible Wild Kermeter area for experiencing nature and, since 2017, the Eifelsteig hiking bus are new additions. Day visitors, overnights guests based at one location but also long-distance hikers are equally attracted by the new offer. Another scheme designed for tourists is the GuestCard. It enables guests who have booked overnight accommodation with participating businesses to use local public transport free of charge within the Rhein-Sieg and other networks and also benefit from discounts and/or additional services currently provided by more than 30 tourism partners.

Finalist of the Federal Competition Sustainable Tourism Destinations in Germany (2016/2017)
Sustainable tourism planning

Working closely with tourism industry partners, destination managers have pursued a variety of strategies in recent years in order to develop the North Eifel as a sustainable tourism region. The tourism infrastructure has been continuously upgraded in order to meet target groups’ demand for a very special experience of nature. For example, premium hiking trails have been created, such as the Eifelsteig and the fully accessible Wild Kermeter area for experiencing nature. The Eifel National Park also attracts visitors with an interest in the nocturnal, for the region has been awarded official Dark Sky Park status – only the second in Germany – and offers guided night-time nature walks and star-gazing. Some hosts have volunteered for “starfriendly” status, which means that they are responsive to the requests and needs of guests taking part in evening or night-time tourism activities.

Protecting and experiencing nature

When it comes to tourism, the North Eifel’s outstanding natural beauty and landscape are its capital assets. Tourism service providers are aware of this and design their offers accordingly. For example, the EifelNaturReisen (Eifel Nature Travel) scheme enables visitors to book new and unconventional experiences of nature in the region. All the offers have been carefully selected in accordance with clearly defined quality criteria. The region has many years of experience in working in close partnership with nature conservation stakeholders. This collaboration always produces new and exciting offers, such as Eifel trekking, which gives guests the exclusive opportunity to camp at specially selected sites in the midst of nature. The precise locations are kept under wraps until a booking has been made.
The North Eifel

Partner networks

Various Partner networks ensure the provision of ecofriendly tourism services with a strong regional connection. The network of National Park Hosts has existed since the Eifel National Park was first established. In order to qualify for the scheme, Hosts must fulfil various optional and mandatory criteria, focusing on quality and sustainability. All the Partner businesses feel a special commitment to the Eifel National Park’s mission statement and have introduced their own sustainable management practices. Products and services sold under the EIFEL regional brand stand for certified quality. Hosts can also display the brand label: a yellow “e”. However, this is only awarded to businesses that have a transparent, proven and audited commitment to quality and regionality. All the participating businesses are conscious of their responsibility to the Eifel natural space and are committed to honouring their quality pledge. The KlimaTour Eifel (Eifel Climate Tour) network is actively engaged in protecting the climate, showcasing businesses with a small carbon footprint and featuring specific tourism offers; guests can also calculate the climate footprint for their own visit.

Stakeholder training

Providing training and upskilling for tourism businesses is another focus of activity. For example, every year, Nordeifel Tourismus GmbH offers six days of consultations for tourism service providers wishing to grow their business and make them fit for the future. Zu Gast in der eigenen Heimat (Guest at Home Activity Day), introduced in 2014, is designed with local residents in mind, giving them insights into their local tourism industry. The North Eifel NeTWorking event was first held in 2015 and helps to improve networking among tourism service providers.

Lessons learned, challenges met, critical success factors

* The text above has been taken from the Report “Sustainable Tourism Destinations in Germany”:

https://www.deutschertourismusverband.de/fileadmin/Mediendatenbank/Bilder/Impulse/Nachhaltigkeit_Englisch.pdf

* Lighthouse project: Cycle and Hike Railway Stations

www.radundwanderbahnhoefe-eifel.de

* National marketing:


* More information about the North Eifel:

http://www.nordeifel-tourismus.de/en/startseite
Czech Republic

Centrum Veronica
Hostětín
**Main purpose of this facility is to show practical examples of implemented model projects and the results of their monitoring that the relationship to nature, local resources and traditions, together with considerate management, can protect the environment and the global climate, economically stabilize the countryside and solve unemployment even in relatively remote areas.**

**Cooperation with local farmers, support of traditional ways of farming and traditions, support of local economy by building accommodation premises for tourists, using of biomass; website.**

**25 beds in 2- to 4-bed rooms with private bathroom with eco-friendly service. Furnished with FSC-certified wood furniture, maximum use of environmentally friendly products and natural materials. Homemade Food with preference for Local Products, Organic Food and Fair Trade Products. Certified as an "Environmental friendly service".**

**Centrum Veronica Hoštětín has a label Environmental friendly services (CZ), which is part of Environmental friendly products label.**

**Traditional ways of farming are attractive for tourists; green management can help the environment.**

**Mainly usage of local products; getting tourists even to the remote area; showing that green way of management is economical.**

**Good relationship with neighbors; know-how; team who aims for success**

**https://hostetin.veronica.cz/**
Czech Republic

Středisko ekologické výchovy - SEVER
This NGO provides accommodation in eco-friendly environment and educational programme about nature for children, adults, teachers, students etc.

NGO wanted to receive ECO-LABEL and Czech label environmental friendly services.

Low consumption of water and energy, waste recycling; use of environmental friendly substances; providing information about nature protection to the tourists; linen and towels change just once or twice a week; trained staff; automatic systems for regulation of heat and light.

Educational programmes; website; cooperation with schools (primary and secondary schools, high schools, universities); attractive environment for tourist from abroad; recycling bins

ECO-LABEL ; Czech environmental friendly service; Label Pavučina (spider web) - label for organizations with programmes in ecological environment.

Even a small amount of money and effort of people can accomplish big things.

Getting ECO-LABEL for tourism accommodation and Czech environmental friendly service label.

Reliable team; know-how; knowledge about nature and ways of environmental management.

http://sever.ekologickavychova.cz/
Czech Republic

České Švýcarsko
České Švýcarsko

České Švýcarsko o. p. s. (NGO) was founded by National park České Švýcarsko office Dům Českého Švýcarska (The House of Bohemian Switzerland) - it is base for NGO České Švýcarsko o.p.s.

Lead partners in the project "Bohemian-Saxon Switzerland - excellent cross-border tourist destination" form programme aim 3

Key Figures

surface
426m²

The reason for good practice

The House of Bohemian Switzerland, which is a visitor and educational center in Krásná Lípa, is a great source to learn about Bohemian crafts such as textiles and glassmaking. The park promotes tourism throughout the year with products designed especially for "low season" even during bad weather. Modern bus lines take visitors around, while parking lots have been built to keep traffic controlled and out of the park’s untainted soils.

Issues and challenge

As a NGO there is problem with funding; big challenge is trans-boundary communication and joint effort with German site.

Methods /steps / tools used (to develop the good practice)

Finding financial support - partners; implementation of the projects aimed on excellent cross-border destination with Germany as a partner and other projects aimed at environmental education.

Specific / measurable results, benefits

Actions for public interested in tourism. Study and graphic design of the region information boards. Brochures and leaflets promoting tourism, creation of website etc.

Recognitions (e.g. awards)

Winner of the 2009 “Tourism and protected areas Award" (project European Destinations of Excellence EDEN)

Lessons learned

Cooperation with neighboring countries is essential; National or European founds are big help almost necessity to help ecotourism rise.

Challenges met

Interconnection of two national parks; Support public tourism transport in Czech Switzerland (train, eco bus).

Critical success factors

Renew the hiking trails in the landscape of Bohemian Switzerland.

web references, documents

Czech Republic

Plaza Alta Hotel
Plaza Alta Hotel

**Key people and organisations**
(initiator, leader, partners)

**The reason for good practice**

Plaza Alta hotel demonstrates the combination of comfortable accommodation and strict environmental protection measures.

**Issues and challenge**

Reduction of energy waste; reduction of general waste, reduction of material waste.

**Methods /steps / tools used (to develop the good practice)**

Due to complete renovation, issues evaluation took place and main targets to achieve this eco-label took place. Hotel staff went through training to follow environmental friendly services.

**Specific / measurable results, benefits**

Thermally insulated windows; building enclosure is thermally insulated; heaters are regulated; hotel is equipped with high-economy lights; waste is sorted and recycled, including fats and oils; no canned beverages, only returnable bottles; flow of water from all taps in rooms is limited to less than ten liters per minute; we plantation bushes and flowers in the hotel surroundings.

**Recognitions (e.g. awards)**

EU-ECOLABEL

**Lessons learned**

Green hotels are attractive for visitors.

**Challenges met**

Reaching up to the EU-ECOLABEL.

**Critical success factors**

Decision to start environmental friendly business; enough money to begin with transformations; training of hotel staff.

**web references, documents**

http://www.plazahotelalta.com/
Czech Republic

Camp Oasa
Camp Oasa

This camp received EU ECOLABEL as a first camp in Czech republic and its environmental services are in excellent level.

The main challenges are saving of energy; saving of water; recycling; renewable energy.

Time was essential in building this environmental camp; camp stuff was trained; the best way how to safe energy and money in the process was chosen.

Own source of drinking water from a deep 20m borehole; the camp has its own biological wastewater treatment plant; cleaned water is used to water ornamental plants; electronic water taps prevent waste of water; 35 photovoltaic panels produce 20% of total electricity consumptions in the campsite (all produced electricity is used in the camp); motions sensors go out when nobody is in the room; hot water circulator pump switches off when there is no discharge; the beer cooling heat pump heats the water for the whole kiosk; outside of the camp electric car is used; local producers of food are preferred; recycling of 5 types of waste and composting organic waste.

EU-ECOLABEL

Environmental friendly service can be managed even without outside sponsorship.

Reaching up to EU-ECOLABEL; environmental friendly service can be managed even without outside sponsorship.

Two things were important: patience; reliable workers.

Spain

Terres de l’Ebre
Reserva de la Biosfera
Terres de l’Ebre – Reserva de la Biosfera

COPATE is the organization grouping all the responsibilities for the environmental management and development of Terres de l’Ebre and the certification system of the label.

Key Figures

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<tr>
<th>surface</th>
<th>Inhabitants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3308,45km²</td>
<td>190,860</td>
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The reason for good practice

Rural area with a high potential regarding its environmental & cultural heritage and high quality products. COPATE has developed the Terres de l’Ebre label to group all these elements and boost the regional development at all levels by giving them protection and assessment.

Issues and challenge

Rural area with different organisms in charge of the environmental & cultural management not well connected between them.

Methods /steps / tools used (to develop the good practice)

Grouping in one organization all the competences and creating the Terres de l’Ebre label to distinguish and protect the regional products, services and spaces. The certificate lasts for 3 years after passing the evaluation process and paying the annual quote.

Specific / measurable results, benefits

90 natural spaces, 52 villages, 103 cultural emplacements, 101 producers are now part of the Terres de l’Ebre label. This number has increased up to 35% last 2017. Also they have developed its own app.

Lessons learned

Rural development and regional heritage can’t be empowered without joining all different actors in one direction and managing them through a responsible and centralized institution.

Challenges met

All producers grouped under the same label. Regional development achieved (increased respectful tourism and recognition of regional products and cultural & environmental heritage). Protection and assessment achieved for all the regions.

Critical success factors

Producers involvement, acceptance of the label inside and outside the region and tourism interest.

web references, documents

http://www.ebrebiosfera.org/en
Spain

Cabanes als arbres
The homestead The Vileta is a traditional Catalan rural house with an extremely pleasant environment. Built in the 14th century, customers will succumb at the charm of the farmhouse and its beautiful surroundings.

The reason for good practice
Capacity to take advantage of the forest and its materials to create an ecotourism experience by building treehouses in the middle of the woods.

Issues and challenge
Isolated area with a lot of environmental resources but no ideas for creating new business and region development regarding ecotourism.

Methods /steps / tools used (to develop the good practice)
Using the natural resources from the area (mostly forestry area) and building treehouses with local materials and ecological water systems as well.

Specific / measurable results, benefits
10 different treehouses in a widespread area with la Vileta acting as the central hosting point. They have almost all treehouses booked for the entire year one year before.

Lessons learned
It is possible to create a successful ecotourism business by only using wood resources and emplacing them in the middle of the nature, which brings a huge added value to the project.

Challenges met
Technical difficulties when building, hard to find balance between wellbeing and natural materials (no chemical products).

Critical success factors
Comfort of the costumers, provide a complete peaceful experience, to be completely surrounded by nature.

web references, documents
http://www.cabanesalsarbres.com/en
Spain

Camping El Solsonés
Camping El Solsonés

Camping located in a rural area (Solsona) with the aim to provide accommodation and tourism services regarding to nature and the environment.

**The reason for good practice**

They don’t want to provide a wide range of services but selected services. They are producing its own electricity. They have a glamping zone built with biomaterials and completely respectful with nature.

**Issues and challenge**

The first tourism business in the rural area of Solsona and its aim was to provide only tourism services regarding nature and skiing, so far from the typical coast camping. There was not so much preconception of ecotourism in this zone.

**Methods /steps / tools used (to develop the good practice)**

Always following the same aim. High quality selected services. Every change of improvement has been taking. They are partly self-efficient by producing solar energy as electricity.

**Specific / measurable results, benefits**

The camping has been increasing since its foundation, with an excellent amount of costumers per year and also getting new clients each year.

**Recognitions (e.g. awards)**

They have the EMAS certificate.

**Lessons learned**

Always be faithful and keep on going with your idea. Believe in your vision and make it credible. Not avoid to improve by investing for innovations.

**Challenges met**

No preconception of ecotourism in the zone.

**Critical success factors**

Acceptance of the services proposed by the costumers, resource efficiency,

**web references, documents**

http://www.campingsolsones.com/en/
Spain

Casa Albets
Casa Albets

The masia of the Albets family, settled in Lladurs, has been rehabilitated into a 4-stars hotel-restaurant with wide and comfortable rooms that follow the rustic character of the house. Casa Albets it's an ecologic and vegan hotel that cares about the environment and their guests' comfort.

**Key Figures**

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**The reason for good practice**

Rural development by rebuilding a house into a hotel. It is a patrimonial treasure from the XI century that went from generation to generation for ages. Ecology has been present in every stage of the rehabilitation and the restaurant is exclusively based on vegan, ecological and local ingredients.

**Issues and challenge**

Rural area with no offers for ecologic and vegan tourism. It is still now (2018) the only vegan restaurant and ecologic hotel in the Solsonès region, attracting many hosts from all the country.

**Methods /steps / tools used (to develop the good practice)**

Almost all the furniture has been manufactured by using own timber from the area. They are creating their own energy through local biomass. They are very connected to history and heritage and they provide local and ecological products from their land.

**Specific / measurable results, benefits**

6 ecological rooms made with high quality materials. An exclusive vegan and ecologic restaurant with capacity for 40 people managed by an international chef specialized in vegan food.

**Lessons learned**

Coherency should be permanent in all steps of the project, from design to final services to costumer.

**Challenges met**

Very targeted offer for tourism (vegan and ecological tourism) in a rural area. Rural development and renaissance by connecting heritage and gastronomy and taking back the people to isolated areas.

**Critical success factors**

Coherency in all phases, acceptance of the restaurant specific menu, wellbeing and natural experience for costumers.

**web references, documents**

https://casaalbets.cat/en/
Spain

El Monegal
El Monegal

Restaurant and Hotel located in Sant Llorenç de Morunys, 20 min. far from Solsona (central part of Catalonia).

The reason for good practice

The place is completely adapted for disabled people and built using bio materials. The owners have a parallel business (production of bio apple). They are using their own energy. They have a bio restaurant selling kilometer zero services. They also organize opera concerts.

Issues and challenge

Lost of agriculture and primary services in the zone, with no distribution circuit for products. No other accommodation services for disabled people as a reference in this place.

Methods /steps / tools used (to develop the good practice)

Being faithful to the aim. They combine the tourism accommodation service with the income of the apple production. They built a house completely adapted to provide experiences related with nature, healthy food, relax and so on to disabled costumers.

Specific / measurable results, benefits

They are producing a bio apple which is distributed at European level. They are experts in hosting disabled people, which is an exclusive offer in the zone (and in most of the rural areas in Catalonia). They are bringing closer the classic music to the zone, by programming live concerts.

Lessons learned

A clear and complete vision since the beginning. The combination of two businesses to maintain both when something goes wrong. Committed with facilitate the access and confort for disabled people. Consistency and coherency with the aim and vision, also providing services from different sectors (food, accommodation, culture, agro products).

Challenges met

Bioconstruction materials, business development and exports at EU level, kilometer zero providers, remote area.

Critical success factors

Coherency and consistency, business planning and design, resource efficiency and parallel cultural offer.

web references, documents

http://monegal.com/
Slovenia

Destination Ljubljana
Destination Ljubljana

Turizem Ljubljana Public Institute - General manager Mrs Petra Stusek; established by Municipality of Ljubljana in 2001

**Key Figures**

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<th>Inhabitants</th>
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<th>Tourism nights</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>275 km²</td>
<td>288919</td>
<td>737456</td>
<td>1334603</td>
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**The reason for good practice**
Sustainable orientation and continuous improvements, lowering costs and reducing waste.

**Issues and challenge**
Lack of environmentally-certified tourism providers and green supply chains. Informing and educating locals.

**Methods /steps / tools used (to develop the good practice)**
Implementing green urban measures over the past decade; Advanced sustainable development strategy; Sustainable urban planning; Preserving green areas and potable water sources; Waste management; Raising environmental awareness among citizens; An impressive network of public transport; Free city bicycle rental system;

**Specific / measurable results, benefits**
Wholesome sustainable development; Waste, pollution and emissions reduction; Increasing number of tourists; Worldwide recognition of green destination; District heating, natural gas distribution in 74% of Ljubljana’s housing; Expanding network of natural drinking water fountains; First public orchard; Fleet of electric vehicles; First capital in the EU ‘zerowaste’ programme.

**Recognitions (e.g. awards)**
First destination in Slovenia with the title Slovenia Green Destination. The certificate of the highest, golden category was awarded by the Slovenian Tourist Board within the framework of the Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism. Tourism For Tomorrow 2015; European Green Capital 2016; The FIJET Golden Apple Award 2016; Global Top 100 Sustainable Destinations - 2014, 2016, 2017; WTM RESPONSIBLE TOURISM AWARD 2017, ...

**Lessons learned**
Sustainable development throughout the whole destination. Raising awareness amongst people is very important. Sustainable development is a long, never-ending process. Going green helps to preserve the environment and consequently makes life better for the whole community.

**Challenges met**
Educating and informing inhabitants and tourists; Reducing waste. Increasing number of green areas. Establishing an array of local socially and environmentally conscious providers.

**Critical success factors**
Clear vision and strategy. Education and informing, raising awareness.

**web references, documents**
Slovenia

Eco Spa Snovik
**Eco Spa Snovik**

**Company:** Thermal Snovik - Kamnik d.o.o., **General Manager** Mrs. Petra Zlatoper. SPA SNOVIK is the highest altitude spa in Slovenia, established in 2001.

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>265.6 km²</td>
<td>29416</td>
<td>25416</td>
<td>65488</td>
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**The reason for good practice**

It was discovered that the area has high quality water and thus, a thermal spa was built. It is of high importance to maintain the quality of the area and the water, so development of sustainable tourism was the only viable choice.

**Issues and challenge**

Money challenges; Successful marketing and sustainable management of the company in an area with no existing tourism; Facing challenges on account of innovative approaches (prejudice, bureaucratic obstacles, ...); Educating local people on the matter of sustainability; Investing knowledge and expertise; Bringing guests to a less developed region.

**Methods /steps / tools used (to develop the good practice)**

Finding financial support - partners; educating locals - implementation of many projects aimed at environmental education and development; steps taken for the water to be recognised as a "natural remedy" by the state; additional certification

**Specific / measurable results, benefits**

100% renewable energy sources, environment friendly technology. Biomass heating, solar collectors, heat pumps. Intelligent Room System (heating electricity, cooling only available when card is inserted). Apartment complex constructed from environmentally friendly materials. Separate waste collection. More than 500 tons less CO2 per year. Energy use 21% lower.

**Recognitions (e.g. awards)**

Numerous awards/certificates. The European Eco-label for tourist accommodation service, ISO 14001, Slovenia green accommodation, CIPRA, Top 10 Green Tourism Solutions

**Lessons learned**

Sustainable management and development is necessary. Bureaucracy is sometimes an obstacle for investors - not only for foreign ones. Getting locals educated and involved is very important.

**Challenges met**

Locals accepted sustainable development, 100% renewable energy sources, many projects implemented.

**Critical success factors**

Greater investments and costs in the beginning, with return of investment in the first few years. Lower monthly bills. Increasing quality of service and offer.

**web references, documents**

http://terme-snovik.si/en/
Slovenia

Kozjanski park
Kozjansko Park

Regional Park Kozjansko
Regional Kozjanski Park

Regional Park Kozjansko, Established by Republic of Slovenia; Manager: Kozjansko Park Public Institute, as part of the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning

Key Figures

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<td>206 km²</td>
<td>10700</td>
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The reason for good practice

Kozjansko park is one of the oldest and largest protected areas in Slovenia. Its extremely high level of biodiversity places Kozjansko park among the most important nature protection areas in Slovenia and Europe as the majority of the park (69%) has been part of the ecologically important areas in Slovenia since 2004 as well as belonging to the NATURA 2000 European special protection areas.

Issues and challenge

Size - extends over 5 municipalities. Locals - informing and educating. Money challenges.

Methods /steps / tools used (to develop the good practice)

Preserving nature (natural water treatment plant, etc.); cooperating with locals, educating and informing; supporting tradition; establishing collective trademark - Harmony - Kozjansko park.

Specific / measurable results, benefits

UNESCO’s MAB programme since 2010; Harmony - Kozjansko park Trademark - designation of (geographical) origin, production and manufacture of goods, products and services within Kozjansko park; organized events, information for different purposes in a protected area of natural, cultural landscape. All in accordance with the protected area requirements.

Recognitions (e.g. awards)

Numerous awards/certificates. The European Eco-label for tourist accommodation service, ISO 14001, Slovenia green accommodation, CIPRA, Top 10 Green Tourism Solutions

Lessons learned

Sustainable management and development is necessary. Bureaucracy is sometimes an obstacle for investors - not only for foreign ones. Getting locals educated and involved is very important.

Challenges met

Locals accepted sustainable development; 100% renewable energy sources used; many projects implemented.

Critical success factors

Higher investments and costs in the beginning, with return of investment in the first few years. Lower monthly bills. Increasing quality of service and offer.

web references, documents

http://kozjanski-park.si/?lang=en
Slovenia

Ortenia — Apartments in nature
Ortenia – Apartments in nature


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<tr>
<td>60,6 km²</td>
<td>3353</td>
<td>99856</td>
<td>337499</td>
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The reason for good practice

Creating and developing a wholesome eco-estate concept.

Issues and challenge

Higher beginning costs;
Lowering costs;
Finding and using sustainable materials;

Methods /steps / tools used (to develop the good practice)

- Using the principle of innovative sustainable construction,
- Natural sustainable materials,
- Buying and installing high energy saving appliances,
- Using renewable energy sources.
- Buying local.
- Educating and informing guests and locals.

Specific / measurable results, benefits

Use of sustainable materials lowered long-term costs. Lower costs also due to renewable energy sources. Cooperation with local entrepreneurs, manufacturers, designers, and thus helping local economy. Appealing to environmentally conscious guests, connecting them to nature. Promotion of local products. Minimum negative impact to the environment.

Recognitions (e.g. awards)

Eco Hotels certified
Slovenia Green Accommodation
Green Globe Certified

Lessons learned

Consistency - sustainability should be a part of everything in your story. Having a clear vision and goals. Connecting with local community.

Challenges met

Deciding on the materials to use, finding the manufacturers and designers locally, using products with 0 km as much as possible, reducing costs, connecting with local community and cooperating with other local providers, working together in creating a story

Critical success factors

Consistency; Use of sustainable natural materials; Cooperation and connecting with local environment; Reliable and educated employees.

web references, documents

http://www.ortenia.com/eng
Slovenia

VisitGoodPlace
**VisitGoodPlace**

**VisitGoodPlace** – the sustainable travel agency  
GoodPlace – Jana Apih, general manager

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**The reason for good practice**

A need to provide carefully developed programs offering the best of the region for responsible and active tourists was recognised. Due to this strong passion for green and active tourism, a Slovenian outdoor experience agency was established to prepare, promote and market sustainable products.

**Issues and challenge**

Large gap between words on paper and the actual situation of Slovenian tourism. Lack of implementation of tourism strategies. Standardisation of the offer and products.

**Methods /steps / tools used (to develop the good practice)**

Transferring relevant international standardization and categorization into Slovenian space; creating and providing a list of carefully developed programs; flexibility; raising awareness and educating all stakeholders in tourism, with that encouraging them to act responsibly towards the environment, culture and society.

**Specific / measurable results, benefits**

- Complying with local environmental legislations;
- Monitored impact of activities on environment;
- Communicating sustainability policy, required action to employees and sustainability principles for reducing negative impacts to partners, clients;
- Motivated employees;
- Local suppliers;
- Using recyclable goods;
- Using goods certified for minimum impact on environment.

**Recognitions (e.g. awards)**

Travelife certified, Slovenia Green Travel Agency

**Lessons learned**

Words on paper do not match the actual situation in tourism. There is a gap, which needs to be filled. Be an example, do and others will follow.

**Challenges met**

New sustainable, green, active products created; Complying with required standards of certification;

**Critical success factors**

Lead by example. Valuable employees. Sustainable products. Connecting with different stakeholders.

**web references, documents**

http://www.visit-goodplace.com/
E

ECOACT

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