

THEMATIC GUIDE ONE

Developing Sustainable Rural Tourism



THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN CO-FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,
DIRECTORATE GENERAL EDUCATION AND CULTURE, LEONARDO DA VINCI
PROGRAMME



EURACADEMY THEMATIC GUIDE SERIES

European Summer Academy
for Sustainable Rural Development

EURACADEMY

THEMATIC GUIDE ONE

Developing Sustainable Rural Tourism

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ISBN: 960-87327-5-1

Athens, March 2003

Published by PRISMA - Centre for Development Studies
on behalf of the EURACADEMY partners

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P R E F A C E

This Thematic Guide is offered to you -the practitioner-student- as a provocation. It is not a text-book. Nor is it a definitive Guide to how to achieve sustainable rural tourism. The Guide acted as a reference tool in the 1st Summer Academy held in Gotland, Sweden between 10-21 of August 2002 and has been revised in the light of the discussions there and enriched with examples brought by participants.

It aims to stimulate your thinking on developing sustainable rural tourism. Namely, it is a collection of ideas and examples which may help you to think round the whole subject of sustainable rural tourism. You may ask yourself:

- How can tourism be developed in a sustainable way?
- How can each area gain a unique tourism product?
- How should tourism relate to the natural and cultural heritage?
- How does it bring benefit to other economic sectors?
- How can the local community be involved and sensitised?
- What is the role of animators and of entrepreneurs?

To make the best of it, we invite you to:

- Read the Guide carefully and think about the questions at the end of each chapter.
- Prepare questions and think of case studies to illustrate -or to refute !- the principles suggested in the Guide.
- Pursue some of the further reading that is suggested

Good reading!

The Euracademy Partners

INTRODUCTION

Part I

For us in Euracademy, rural tourism does not stand alone. It is part of a larger theme-sustainable rural development. In this Guide, we try to show why we take that view.

Briefly summarised, we believe that tourism will only bring real benefit to the people, the economy and the environment of rural regions if it is 'integrated' with other aspects of rural life. Without that integration, there are real dangers that rural tourism will fail or will bring damage to the place or the people. We explain this later.

Therefore, we begin by offering brief ideas on Rural Development, in order to show how important rural tourism may indeed be, as a sector with potential for growth at a time when other sectors are faltering. We then (chapter 2) offer a broad approach to Sustainable rural tourism. The other six chapters outline a series of themes which may be seen as facets of the complex prism of rural tourism. Each of these later chapters includes case studies. These case studies are focused mainly on the theme of the chapter in which they sit: but inevitably they refer also to other themes, and we refer in many places to these links between chapters.



The participants to the First Summer Academy

CHAPTER 1.

Sustainable Rural Development

The changing scene in rural areas

1.1. This is a time of rapid change in the character of rural areas throughout Europe, and in the policies related to them. By rural areas, we mean those territories, roughly 80% of the European land area, which are not covered by cities or large towns.

1.2. Rural areas vary enormously in character: from the peri-urban areas around the cities to the high mountain pastures; from the Mediterranean lands of olive and wine to the reindeer grazing areas of Lapland; from the puszta of Hungary to the green fields of Ireland. There are no standard problems, no standard answers, in the rural development that they need. But they are all affected by change.

1.3. Many of the more remote, marginal or mountainous regions of rural Europe have been losing population over long periods of time, and this process is still continuing. In such places, the local economy tends to be fragile and narrowly-based: it is difficult to sustain the public services: young people tend to move away from the area. By contrast, many rural regions near the cities are changing rapidly in character, as city workers look for new homes there or urban enterprises move out onto green-field sites. In such places, rural people may be tempted away from jobs in farming or may be unable to buy houses at inflated prices.

1.4. The whole of rural Europe, moreover, is affected to greater or lesser degree by the radical changes in agriculture. Until the 1980s, the primary role of the rural areas was seen (by the public and by politicians) to be the production of food; and the thrust of rural policy was to encourage the production of more food, at low prices. Then came two major events which radically altered the picture. First, in the early 1980s, the success of the Common Agricultural Policy produced (for the first time) a surplus of milk, meat, wheat, wine and related products within the European Union. Second, in 1989 came the collapse of the Iron Curtain and of the Soviet Union, which removed at one blow the Soviet market upon which Central European farmers had depended.

1.5. European policies related to agriculture have been changing, quite fast but painfully, in the face of these two great events. Other factors also are forcing a change in policies. World trade negotiations may oblige the European Union to reduce its financial support to farmers and its export subsidies on food, and to open the European food market to outsiders. There is growing public concern about animal welfare on farms; about livestock diseases and their potential impact on human health; and about the impact of intensive agri-

culture upon the environment.

1.6. For these and other reasons, the emphasis in rural policies has shifted away from "more food at low cost" to a wider concern with the well-being of the people, the economy and the environment of rural areas. In particular, there is a concern to strengthen and diversify the economy of rural regions. Farming is no longer the only, or even the dominant, sector in that economy. The role of farmers is changing in many regions. They may still have importance as producers of food: but they are also perceived as (and sometimes supported from public funds to be) entrepreneurs in other fields, producers of resources to which value can be added in the local economy, providers of space for recreation or leisure activity, guardians and maintainers of the natural and cultural heritage.

1.7. This is indeed a fertile context within which rural tourism can play an enlarged role as one significant sector within diversified local economies, and as a source of new activity and income for farmers.



View from the Maronia archaeological site, an attraction for cultural tourism, Thrace, Greece

The policy framework

1.8. In all rural development, there is a tension between the global and the local -between (on the one hand) what local people and entrepreneurs would like to do, and the potential offered by local resources, and (on the other hand) the market conditions, policies and regulations imposed, or the support offered, from outside. That is why you may need to understand the policy framework which affects rural development including, as we shall see, rural tourism. In Europe, that means particularly the policy framework of the European Union, bearing in mind that the EU is rapidly growing in size and influence.

1.9. We describe above the shift in policy over the last 20 years, from 'more food at low cost' to a wider concern with the well-being of rural areas. In the European Union, this shift in policy was crystallised in a few key policies or initiatives:

- The report on 'The Future of Rural Society' in 1987
- The LEADER Initiative, launched in 1991
- The Review of the Common Agricultural Policy, in 1992
- The Cork Declaration on Rural Policy 1995 (see references in Further Reading, chapter 9)

1.10. These moves all applied to policy within the EU, with its 12 member states increasing to 15 after the accession of Austria, Sweden and Finland in 1995. But the prospect of eastward enlargement pushed the Union towards a further significant shift in policy, which is reflected in Agenda 2000, the major policy statement agreed at the Berlin summit of March 1999.

1.11. Agenda 2000 has a broad concern with enlargement of the Union and re-allocation of EU funds. Its policies cover the period 2000 to 2006. Here, we emphasise only its provisions relevant to rural development. Briefly stated, these are:

- A gradual reduction in funds for support of production, processing and export of food;
- The creation, within the Common Agricultural Policy, of a 'second pillar' related to rural development;
- The Rural Development Regulation, under which EU member states produce and implement their own rural development programmes, with features drawn from a 'menu' of possible activities set by the regulation: one of these activities is the development of rural tourism;
- The LEADER+ initiative, aimed (like its predecessors LEADER I and LEADER II) at promoting action by local partnerships to pursue integrated rural development in many regions of the EU; and
- The SAPARD programme (Special Aid for Pre-accession in Agriculture and Rural Development) offered by the EU to the 10 Central European countries which are candidates to join the Union. Under this programme, the governments of these countries are launching national programmes of rural development. These

national programmes have a strong emphasis on meeting the EU standards in key fields such as food processing and animal welfare, as part of what is known as the *acquis communautaire*. Non-agricultural matters, such as rural tourism, do not yet figure strongly in them.

1.12 Agenda 2000 is thus prompting a new generation of rural development programmes, both within the existing EU and in the accession countries. These programmes are not standardised, in that governments are free to choose the features within the EU 'menu' that they wish to pursue. Moreover, many of the governments have their own rural development programmes, in addition to those which are part-funded by the EU.

1.13 This element of discretion, retained by the member states or candidate countries, is not only a commonsense reaction to the impossibility of controlling everything from Brussels. It reflects also the principle of 'subsidiarity', which implies that decisions should be taken at the lowest appropriate geographic level. What this means in practice is part of an evolving debate within Europe.

1.14 In this debate, there is a growing emphasis upon regions, which are geographic units smaller than most states, and which some people see as the right level for making decisions about broad issues of regional and rural development. Very often, indeed, rural development programmes are part of regional development programmes, which may also embrace the cities, large towns, major industrial areas or infrastructure such as main roads and railways. But the rural areas need substantial attention, in their own right. This is one reason why there is growing emphasis upon action and initiative at local level. Many people believe that rural development programmes will be more effective if they are actively supported-indeed, preferably, initiated- at local level. There is much talk about local partnerships, local action groups, and 'bottom'-up' or 'grass-roots' action. Later in this Guide, we offer examples of what this can mean.



A tour in the meadows in Gervide Gard, Gotland, Sweden

Concepts and principles

1.15 To complete this brief scene-setting before we move into the subject of rural tourism itself, we offer some concepts which may help you to understand the challenge of rural development.

1.16 Rural Development. There have been many definitions of rural development. The following is one of the most useful:

Rural Development is a deliberate process of sustained and sustainable economic, social, political, cultural and environmental change, designed to improve the quality of life of the local population of a rural region.

1.17 The key points in this definition are:

- the emphasis on a deliberate and sustained process: rural development is not a short-life affair: it needs to be pursued over a long period of years and in a deliberate way.
- the inclusion of sustainability: see further comment below.
- the five other adjectives-economic, social, cultural, political and environmental-which show the width of the subject and the need to keep and take an integrated view (see further comment below): the word 'political' is included not in the sense of party politics, but because any effective rural development involves a growth of public awareness and confidence at local level and hence a subtle change in power relationships.
- The word change: rural development is not about protecting the status quo- it is about deliberate change in order to make things better.
- The focus on improving the life of the local population. Too much so-called 'rural' (or 'regional') devel-

opment in the past has been motivated by national needs (e.g. for electricity, water, defence, or for contribution to the national balance of payments from tourism), rather than the needs of the rural people themselves. National needs may indeed be met in rural development, and any successful meeting of local needs will contribute indirectly to national well-being. But the modern concept of rural development has a prime emphasis on the needs of the local population.

1.18 Integrated rural development. In both the developed and the developing world, there has been a growing emphasis on the need for an **integrated** approach to rural development. What does this mean? It indicates four things:

- the focus should be on society **and** economy **and** environment;
 - the development should be **both** 'top-down' **and** 'bottom-up': it should embrace the policies, money and support of **government** (at all levels) and the energy, resources, and commitment of the **people**;
 - it should involve **all sectors**-public, private and voluntary;
 - it should be based on **partnership and collaboration**.
- 1.19 Four 'legs' or 'pillars' of rural development. To illustrate and dramatise the idea of an integrated approach, we offer the concept of four legs or pillars of rural development, which - like the legs of a horse, or the pillars of a building - need to be kept in balance with each other. The legs or pillars are:
- The people, with their skills;
 - The economy;
 - The environment; and
 - Ideas, institutions and power structures.

Paragraphs 1.22 and 2.14 show the links between this idea and the principle of sustainability.

1.20 **Community-based development.** Rural development should be based on the interests, and the involvement, of the community living in the area. By 'community', we mean all the people living in a given rural area. They are the basis for sustainable rural development because:

- they know best what are their problems and needs;
- they control many of the resources -land, buildings, local products- upon which development is based;
- their skills, traditions, knowledge and energy are the main resource for development;
- their commitment is vital (if they do not support an initiative, it will die).

Moreover, the more lively and active a community is, the more likely it is to attract people to move into the area, and to keep people



Visitors to a traditional wooden church in the Carpathians, Poland

from moving away.

In chapter 7, we explore how local communities may be involved in the processes of rural development, including rural tourism. We address there issues such as capacity building, conflict resolution and the creation of partnerships. These issues are also explored in other chapters.

1.21 Sustainable development. All public bodies, and many private companies, are now applying the word 'sustainable' to their programmes or products. What they mean by the word is not always clear. We need to be as clear as possible if we use it about rural development. The underlying concept is offered by the famous Brundtland definition of 1987, that sustainable development is:

Development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

But that definition provides no basis for assessing whether a particular programme or project is truly sustainable. We need a definition which assists such assessment, and which reflects the emphasis (above) on an integrated and community-based approach. The next paragraph offers such a definition.

1.22 Sustainability in rural development, including rural tourism. Sustainability is not simply a matter of respect for the environment. It relates to all four of the 'legs' or 'pillars' of rural development - people, economy, environment and institutions.

People. To be sustainable, development must promote:

- Democracy and security;
- Fairness, or equity, including special help for the poor and a concern for women, children and ethnic minorities;
- Quality of life for all the people;
- Leadership by the people, in partnership with government; and
- Respect for the memory of ancestors, and for the rights of people not yet born.

Economy. To be sustainable, development must:

- Help to strengthen and diversify the economy of rural areas;



Traditional barn converted to simple accommodation for walkers, Peak National Park, England: this brings extra income to the farmer

- Ensure that local people gain substantial benefit from the local activity;
- Look to the long-term prosperity of rural areas, rather than simply their short-term benefit; and
- Avoid harmful side-effects elsewhere in the national, regional or local economy.

Environment. To be sustainable, development must:

- Respect natural systems, the cultural heritage and the integrity of the environment;
- Minimise the use of non-renewable resources;
- Consume renewable resources no faster than nature can renew them;
- Make efficient use of all resources used; and
- Avoid causing pollution and other adverse impacts on the environment.

Institutions. To be sustainable, development must:

- Be within the capacity of human institutions to control and manage, in a way that meets the other criteria stated above; and
- Not be the source of unsupportable costs in the future.

1.23 These ideas offer, in fact, the beginnings of a check-list which may permit one to judge how sustainable a particular policy, programme or project may be. Such a checklist may be turned into a set of indicators, which permit the measurement of the impact of a policy, programme or project. This is further explored in chapters 2 and 8.

Questions, arising from chapter 1, for you to reflect upon

For this chapter, we invite you to focus both upon your whole country, and upon the rural area in which you work or a specific rural area with which you are familiar.

1. **What** kinds of rural areas are there in your country? How important are these rural areas in the life and the economy of the nation?

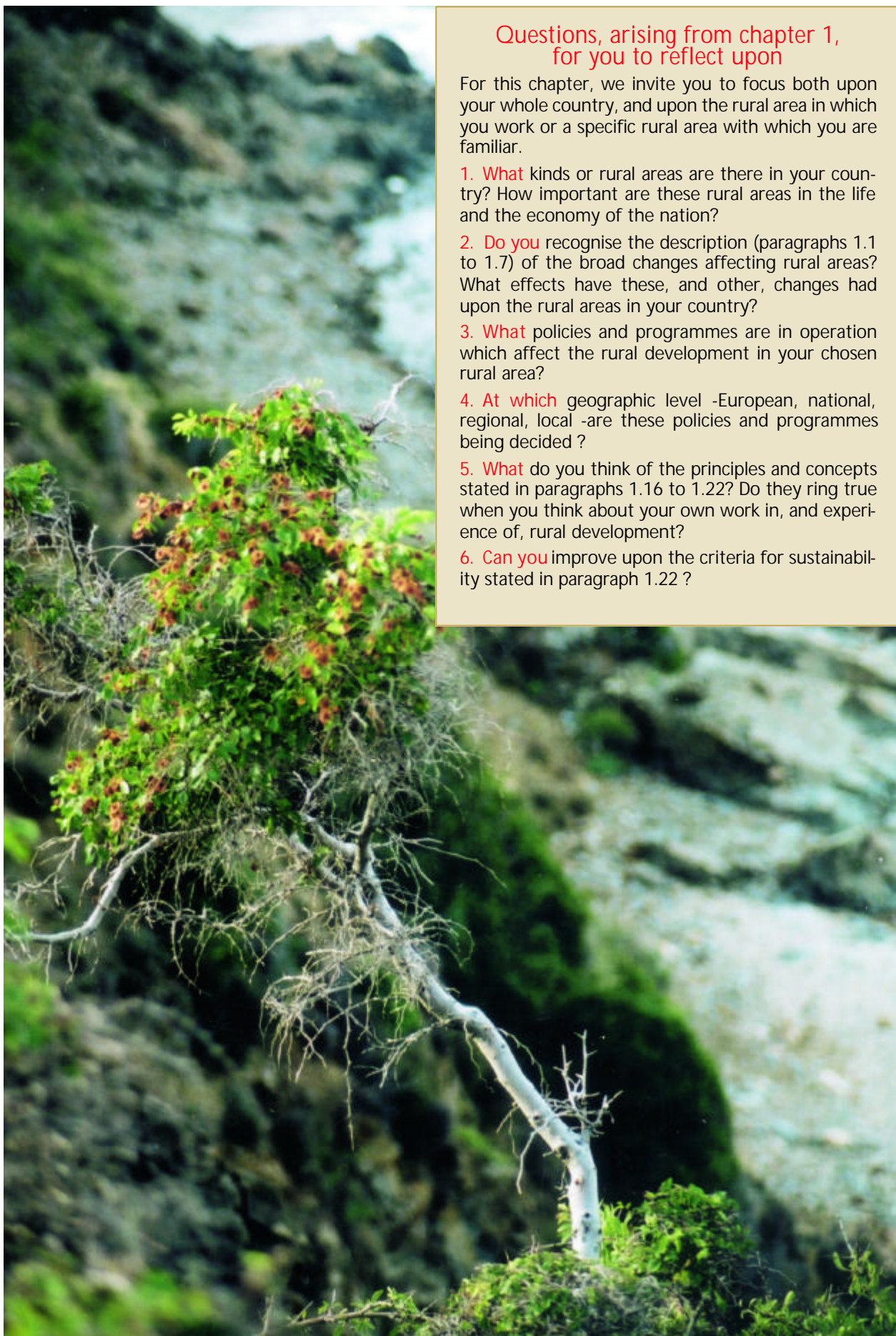
2. **Do you** recognise the description (paragraphs 1.1 to 1.7) of the broad changes affecting rural areas? What effects have these, and other, changes had upon the rural areas in your country?

3. **What** policies and programmes are in operation which affect the rural development in your chosen rural area?

4. **At which** geographic level -European, national, regional, local -are these policies and programmes being decided ?

5. **What** do you think of the principles and concepts stated in paragraphs 1.16 to 1.22? Do they ring true when you think about your own work in, and experience of, rural development?

6. **Can you** improve upon the criteria for sustainability stated in paragraph 1.22 ?



CHAPTER 2.

Sustainable Rural Tourism

2.1 In this chapter, we define what we mean by tourism. We then:

- describe the character and growth of tourism;
- outline the nature, and the potential benefits and dangers, of rural tourism; and
- offer concepts and principles for sustainable rural tourism, parallel to those which we stated in chapter 1 for sustainable rural development, and ideas towards a typology of rural tourism.

Tourism: its nature and potential

2.2 A definition. Tourism is a multidimensional, multi-faceted economic activity with a strong social element. In 1991, the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) offered the following definition:

Tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, businesses and other purposes.

Tourism may include holidays (main or second holidays, short breaks or day trips), business trips, visiting friends or relatives, travel for education, sport, health or religion. It includes movement by people within their own country, and travel between one country and another. It is closely connected to recreational and sporting activity by people in the countryside near their homes, since this activity may use the same resources as are used by visitors from further away.

2.3 Rising demand. The demand for recreation and tourism is rising very rapidly, particularly in the developing world. It has been stimulated by greater accessibility of tourist destinations as well as increased mobility, income and free time of the tourist-consumer. World tourism grew by an estimated 6.8 per cent between 1999 and 2000, its highest growth rate in nearly a decade. Moreover, despite the grim expectations following the international crisis of September 2001, world tourism showed a 3.1% increase in international arrivals in 2002, when international arrivals reached a record 714.6 million, proving the sector's resilience to unforeseen events (table 1). Tourism has been growing faster than even the most ambitious predictions. According to the WTO's long-term forecast in "Tourism: 2020 Vision", international tourist arrivals will top one billion by 2010 and reach 1.56 billion by 2020.

TABLE 1. INTERNATIONAL TOURIST ARRIVALS

Region	International Tourism, 2002		Growth rate (%)			Mean Annual growth rate (%)
	Arrivals (millions)	Market share (%)	2000/1999	2001/2000	2002/2001	
World	714.6	100	6.8	-0.5	3.1	4.3
Europe	411.0	57.5	5.8	-0.3	2.4	3.6
Northern Europe	42.5	5.9	1.2	-5.9	2.3	4.3
Western Europe	141.4	19.8	4.0	-1.6	1.8	2.2
Central/Eastern Europe	81.1	11.3	4.1	1.6	3.9	5.8
South Mediterranean Europe	146.1	20.4	10.4	1.6	2.2	4.0

Source: WTO (January 2003)

2.4 Economic importance. Tourism has been a major generator of income and employment, at national, regional or local level. It has been estimated that tourism accounts for 10.1% of the world's GDP and 10.6% of world employment.

2.5. A volatile industry. Tourism is a volatile industry, in the sense that demand for it can fluctuate very markedly in response to economic cycles and to other events, notably disasters, hostilities or rapid political changes. For example, the tourism industry in Greece and the Middle East suffered severely during the Gulf War in 1991: the foot and mouth disease in UK slashed the demand for tourism there in 2001: the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers on 11 September 2001 dramatically affected international tourism, leading several airlines to close or shrink.

Winter Conference brings life to Slovakian town



2.6. A highly competitive industry. Tourism is also a highly competitive industry. This means that those who depend upon continuity or growth in demand from tourists must put constant effort into sustaining the quality of their "product", marketing it effectively, and adjusting what they offer to suit changes in demand. Current trends in tourism include a shift towards shorter but more frequent breaks; expectations of higher quality and value for money; and a growing interest in "environmentally friendly" forms of tourism.

Rural tourism

2.7 A small but growing sector. Within the total world market for tourism, rural tourism forms a relatively small sector, but one of growing importance. The reason for this is that a very large part of tourism till now has been concentrated on the coast and in the cities. If governments and the tourism industry wish to develop new regions for tourism, they may look to the rural areas which till now have been little developed for tourism. Local authorities and other bodies throughout Europe are indeed looking to rural tourism as a key part of their efforts of local development. Of the 900 local action groups operating under the EU's LEADER II programme, over 70% sought to promote tourism, usually with a specific focus on use of the local heritage. Many parts of Central Europe have similar hopes.

2.8 Contact with nature, and rurality. Rural tourism may be defined simply as that tourism which takes place in a rural context; or as an economic activity which depends upon, and exploits, the countryside. For the visitor, rural tourism offers something different from familiar models of tourism. However, it is argued that rural tourism is more than an alternative to other, more conventional forms: it is a state of mind whereby tourists are actively seeking a leisure experience in a rural environment. The actual or perceived "rurality" of a region may be attractive, as a contrast to modern, urban life. Rural tourism offers a renewed contact with nature. This explains why agro-tourism, eco-tourism and a host of the so-called "alternative" forms of tourism have become so popular during the last decade, helped by intelligent marketing and by significant financial support from national and regional governments and from the EU.

2.9 Economic benefit. Rural tourism can make a very significant contribution to the economy of rural regions. This contribution may be judged not only in terms of gross output and employment figures, but also in the broader economic benefits that it can bring.

Rural tourism can serve to diversify the local economy; to provide new markets for local products and services; to provide new sources of income for farmers and others whose livelihood is threatened by changes in agriculture; and to prompt the creation of new businesses. Tourism can be the new "cash crop" in rural areas, changing the balance between the primary industries such as agriculture and the tertiary or service sector.

2.10 In many remote or marginal areas, rural tourism is seen by both local communities and policy makers as a primary driving force for revitalisation. Indeed, it is sometimes seen as a panacea for the problems facing these communities. But there is danger in over-dependence upon tourism in areas with a fragile economy. Such over-dependence can make the area more vulnerable to the effects of demand fluctuations. We explain this further in chapter 5.

2.11 Other benefits. Tourism can also bring social and cultural benefits to rural areas. They may include social and cultural contact between local people and visitors; increased awareness, among both visitors and local people, of the value of the heritage and the need for its protection; a strengthening of the identity and cohesion of the local community; and fuller use of, and thus greater viability for, local transport and other services. At its best, therefore tourism can help rural communities to find new strength in their local economy, while preserving their quality of life, heritage and social values.

2.12 Dangers. However, there are also dangers associated with tourism. They may include a greater cost on public services; an increase in land values or in the cost of houses, to the disadvantage of local people; unbalance in the job market, with a heavy emphasis on seasonal, part-time or female jobs; temptation to people to leave their traditional work in agriculture or other trades; congestion and crowding that impinge on the quality of life and privacy of local residents; a clash of culture between local people and visitors; an increase in crime and anti-social behaviour; or pollution and over-use of the physical environment. For good or bad, the self-perception of residents and local identity may also be subtly affected when the local heritage and culture become 'commodified' into tourism products.



Economic benefit through tourism : farmer selling vegetables and fruit to tourists on the island of Aegina, Greece

Concepts and principles in Rural Tourism

2.13 How can one ensure that rural tourism brings the benefits described above, and that the dangers are avoided? We offer concepts and principles which may

help you to answer this question.

2.14 Sustainable tourism The main answer to that question lies in the concept of sustainability. How should this concept be applied to tourism? WTO offers the following definition of sustainable tourism:

Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems.

Sustainable tourism does not however imply an anti-growth attitude. Rather, it favours development which sets limitations to growth and encourages tourism within these limits; sets realistic short and long term objectives; and emphasises the importance of satisfying human needs and aspirations.

2.15 Relation to the pillars of rural development. The definition above relates to all the four pillars of rural development to which we referred in the last chapter. Indeed the criteria for sustainability set out at the end of that chapter can be very aptly applied to rural tourism.

2.16 Planning and management. One of the outcomes to the Earth Summit of 1992, where the concept of sustainable development was given world-wide recognition, is the Agenda 21 for Travel and Tourism. This stresses the benefits that tourism can bring to rural areas, but also the vital need for planning and management of rural tourism. This requires a long-term perspective, and careful consideration of the many ways in which tourism and the environment interrelate. Ideally, tourism activities and facilities should be kept within the carrying capacity of an area so that its natural features are not damaged and the local communities are not disturbed.

2.17 This, however, demands a global view of the factors that affect sustainability (economic, social, cultural, political, managerial, equity and fairness); understanding of how market economies operate; the ability to resolve conflicts of interest over the use of resources when they arise; and the participation of all stakeholders in the decision-making. Applying Integrated Quality Management (IQM) is a new practice which bridges forward planning and everyday management and helps attain the global view mentioned above. Case study 3.4 provides an example of IQM in practice. The principles of

IQM, and many examples, can be found in the European Commission publication, 'Towards Quality Rural Tourism' (European Commission, 1999).

2.18 Impact assessment. Planning and management of tourism can greatly benefit from constant monitoring and assessment of the impact of tourism upon the local resources-human, physical, cultural. For this, it is accepted to use indicators, which help to quantify impacts and adjust planning objectives in a tourist area. Examples of indicators suggested by the WTO are:

- visitor numbers (per annum/peak month)
- social impact (ratio of tourists to local inhabitants)
- carrying capacity (the ability of the site to support existing and future levels of visitors)
- Income and jobs generated by tourism for the local population
- critical ecosystems (number of rare/ endangered species).

In later chapters, we pick up many of these points.

2.19 Integration. An integrated approach to development, with a focus on society and economy and environment, based on the involvement of all sectors (public, private and voluntary), and on local partnership and collaboration, is imperative for achieving sustainable rural tourism. It is also essential that the supply of rural tourism is balanced with the other uses of the countryside so that harmony is attained and conflict between uses is avoided. However, in reality, it is hard to find true examples of integrated tourism development on

the ground, despite the support this concept has received over the past decade. This, arguably, does not reflect a lack of intent or desire by the local communities to achieve integration; rather, it implies a lack of understanding and information about the nature of sustainable tourism and a hesitation to build a long-term vision for the future.

2.20 Community involvement. A feature common in much of the literature on

sustainable tourism is the assertion that a "community-based approach to tourism development is a prerequisite for sustainability". This implies a bottom-up approach whereby self-regulation and participation of the local community are promoted, vis-a-vis externally imposed regulatory frameworks. Community-based tourism planning is seen as vital for two reasons. Firstly, to avoid conflicts and tensions that are likely to occur if the development of tourism is not compatible with the community's desires and objectives; this may happen when outside interests dominate local tourism.



Acheron is a popular river for rafting in Epirus, Greece

Secondly, local residents, arguably, have the moral right to be involved in the development of an industry which is likely to result in both benefits and costs to their community. This is particularly true in the rural context where, frequently, local people have a "symbiotic relationship" with their environment.

2.21 However, it is not easy to integrate tourism development into a community or destination without causing pain to some local people, because tourism can bring both opportunities and threats. But that process is much more likely to succeed if the local people are involved in the decision-making process, and if they can feel that the development will bring real benefits to them. We explore this theme further in chapter 7.

2.22 Conflict or co-operation? The planning and management of rural tourism may involve, in any rural area, a large number of individuals and organisations, from the public, the private and the voluntary sectors. The public sector may focus mainly on provision of public services, policy-making for rural development (including tourism) and land-use planning. The private sector is usually focused on providing accommodation and other services, with a profit motivation. The voluntary sector may include conservation bodies or pressure groups, concerned with the natural or cultural heritage of the area, or village groups concerned with various aspects of local development.

2.23 These different 'stakeholders' can find themselves in conflict over the objectives, and the methods of rural tourism development. Creative ways must be found to resolve such conflict, and to nurture communication and co-operation between the different interests (for example, bringing them all together in a constructive partnership). Also, education is needed, both of visitors and providers, to spread public awareness of sustainability and to build the capacity of all stakeholders to protect and preserve the local resources, upon which the very vitality of rural tourism is dependent.

We explore this further in later chapters.

A typology of tourism development

2.24 We emphasised in Chapter 1 that the rural regions of Europe vary enormously in their geographic location, in their character, their position vis-a-vis the cities, the strength of their local economies etc. We stressed that there can be no standard answers in rural development which can apply equally to all rural regions.

2.25 That principle applies equally to rural tourism. Regions vary greatly in their capacity to attract and to absorb tourism, and indeed in the extent to which tourism is already developed. Looking broadly at all tourism regions (urban, coastal and rural), Cohen (1972) grouped them into four categories, which take into account the capacity of the destination to receive tourism and the nature of the tourists' experience. This typology, which applies to tourism in general, reflects a continuum from organised mass tourism to the



Walkers on Hadrian's Wall, England

"authentic" experience of "undiscovered" places, including:

- Organised mass tourism destinations
- Individual mass tourism destinations
- Explorers' destinations
- Drifters' destinations

Rural regions may fall anywhere in that continuum. One of the main factors that differentiates categories is the tourist's wish for adventure and his/her expectations concerning available facilities and services. The organised mass tourist is seen as the least adventuresome and most demanding while the drifter/explorer is motivated to search for adventure offered by authentic experiences rather than plush facilities and services.

2.26 The above classification of tourist destinations is useful to guide policy. Mass tourism destinations, whether organised or individual, require strict planning and management measures to protect the environment and safeguard sustainable development. Such destinations offer the opportunity to local people to make a living solely from tourism, so that the latter becomes the dominant economic activity. On the other hand, explorers' destinations are natural areas, often protected by designations, which require the minimum intervention in the form of visitor management. In such areas, tourism is expected to play a small complementary role in the local economy.

2.27 Taking as a starting point the importance of tourism in the local economy, another useful way to distinguish different models of tourism development is by reference to the scale or impact of tourism:

- *Modest tourism*-in which tourism development is of small scale, and plays a complementary rather than primary role in the local development process. Mild forms of tourism, such as agro-tourism, eco-tourism, cultural tourism etc are more likely to be developed under this model, providing income to individual farmers or other entrepreneurs, but accounting for only a small proportion of the local economy. More benefits than dangers

are likely to be perceived by the local community, matched by a desire for further development.

➤ *Dominant tourism*-in which tourism is a leading sector in the local economy and may have more importance than farming and crafts. The tourism development may be mainly in intensive forms, though with mild forms in a complementary role. Over-dependence on tourism may lead to an unbalanced productive structure, matched by an influx of outside investors and over-exploitation of natural resources. The dangers of non-sustainable tourism development are more likely to

appear in extreme form under this rather than other models.

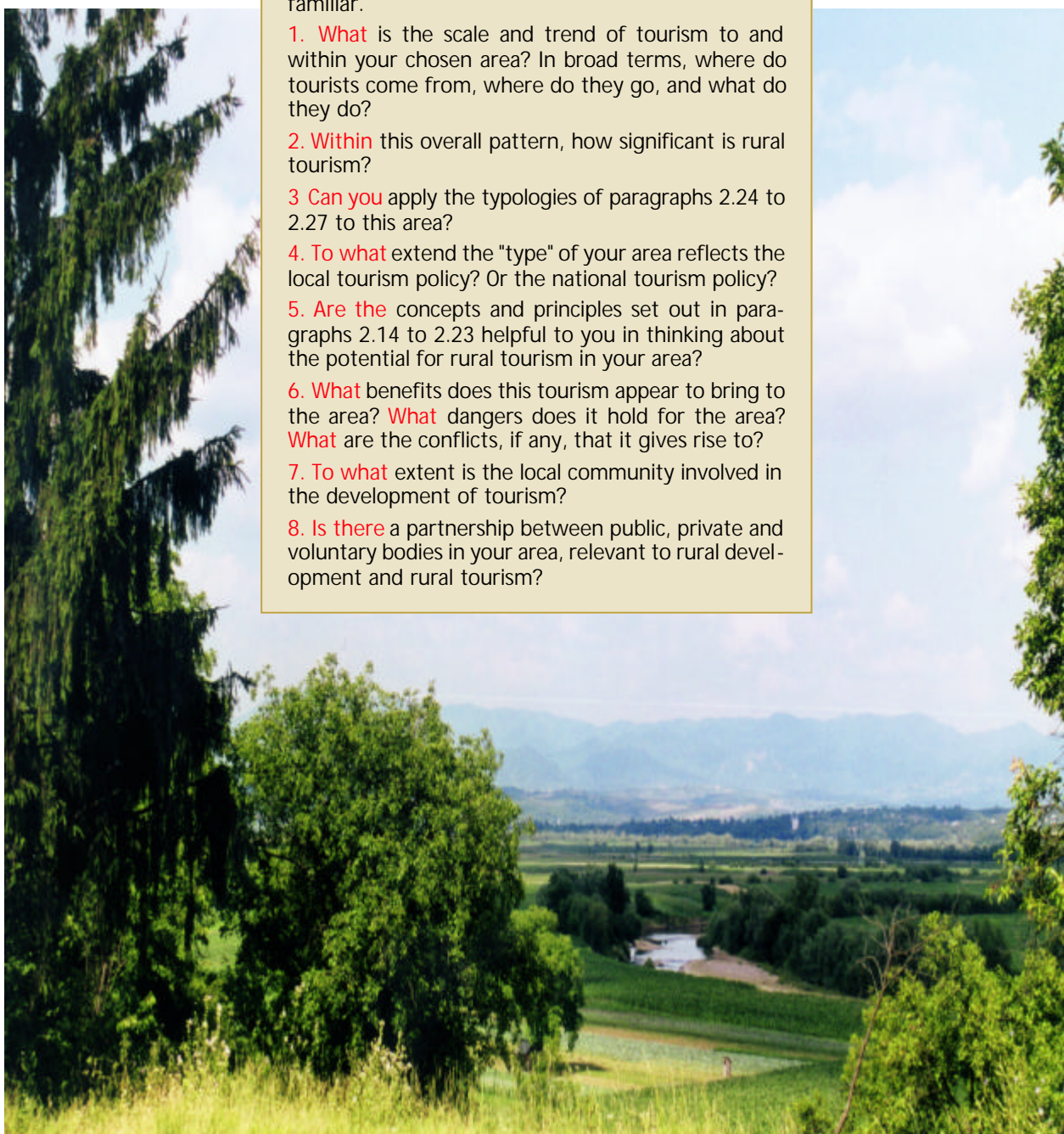
➤ *Balanced tourism*-In which tourism is a dynamic sector in a balanced local economy, in which farming, forestry and other traditional activities retain their importance. This is an ideal situation to develop sustainable tourism. Some intensity of development is expected, combined with mild forms. This situation typically evolves through effective diversification of the

local economy, and the different sectors are more likely to support and benefit from one another than in other models.

Questions, arising from chapter 2, for you to reflect upon

For this chapter, we invite you to focus both upon your whole country, and upon the rural area in which you work or a specific rural area with which you are familiar.

1. **What** is the scale and trend of tourism to and within your chosen area? In broad terms, where do tourists come from, where do they go, and what do they do?
2. **Within** this overall pattern, how significant is rural tourism?
3. **Can you** apply the typologies of paragraphs 2.24 to 2.27 to this area?
4. **To what** extent does the "type" of your area reflect the local tourism policy? Or the national tourism policy?
5. **Are the** concepts and principles set out in paragraphs 2.14 to 2.23 helpful to you in thinking about the potential for rural tourism in your area?
6. **What** benefits does this tourism appear to bring to the area? **What** dangers does it hold for the area? **What** are the conflicts, if any, that it gives rise to?
7. **To what** extent is the local community involved in the development of tourism?
8. **Is there** a partnership between public, private and voluntary bodies in your area, relevant to rural development and rural tourism?



INTRODUCTION

Part II

So, rural tourism is a complex and multi-faceted thing. We urge you to look at it 'in the round', in a holistic way, so that you have the best chance of keeping the pillars (explained in chapter 1) in balance. In this way, rural tourism may be truly sustainable. In reality, however, not everyone can float, in their mind, high like an eagle looking down on the whole scene. Rural tourism is a very practical business, down to earth. Each person involved—the hotelier, the farmer, the national park warden, the marketing expert, the local resident, the strategic planner—starts with his or her own perspective. The challenge for you, as you try to make good things happen, is to see the thing from their perspective and take the wider view. That is why the rest of this Guide is structured by reference to six themes:

- Creating the tourism product (chapter 3)
- Protecting and managing the heritage, with tourism (chapter 4)
- Synergies: how tourism can benefit other parts of the rural economy (chapter 5)
- Entrepreneurship: how to encourage enterprise related to rural tourism (chapter 6)
- The local community: how to involve and sustain the local people through tourism (chapter 7)
- Strategic planning: a formal approach to the long view (chapter 8)

These six themes are simply a convenient way of 'cutting the cake'. You will see, as we describe each theme, how we link it to the others. We urge you to bear in mind the whole picture as you focus on each theme.



Visitors to Morwellham Open Air Museum, based on a historic copper-mining port in Devon, England

CHAPTER 3.

Creating the Tourism product

3.1 In this chapter, we outline how the resources of an area can be turned into something that the tourists may buy.

3.2 The consumer's view. It can be useful to start from the perspective of the tourist. If you want to attract visitors to your area, try putting yourself in their position. then remember two things:

- This holiday, or business trip, may be a big event for them, and a big expenditure.
- They may have a wide choice of places that they could go to.

This means that they will be thinking hard about the experience that they may have, and the cost. They may need to be persuaded that you are offering a unique tourism product, or at least one that is especially attractive.

3.3 Remember also that the visitors may start considering your area for one particular reason -the mountains, the fishing, the music festival or the conference- but their holiday or business trip will consist of more than that. They may need accommodation, food, information, transport, entertainment, activities, a variety of services. They need to be convinced that these elements will be available.

3.4 A tourism product is the combination of the above elements, which can be marketed under its own distinct brand identity. It may consist of a unique combination of different components, such as accommodation and catering facilities, tourist attractions, arts, entertainment and cultural venues and the natural environment.

3.5 A tourism destination is a place which offers one or more distinctive tourism products. The profile of a rural destination is defined by the experience it offers to visitors, depending among other things, on its accessibility or remoteness, its rural identity and the special resources it makes available to tourists (ecological, therapeutic, cultural, sports etc). This is well illustrated by the description of Gotland in case study 3.1.

3.6 However, the overall tourism experience consists of more than the visit to the destination. It can include the preparation for the trip, the journey to and from the destination, the visit itself, and the resulting memories. Thus, it may be seen to consist of five separate and identifiable phases, as follows:

- the anticipation phase;
- the travel to the destination;

- the experience at the destination;
- the return travel home; and
- the phase of recollection.

Source-R&J Sharpley, 1997: p. 69

3.7 The heart of this is, of course, the experience at the destination. The quality of that experience depends upon all these factors that make up the tourism product. These factors may include the quality of accommodation, adequacy of facilities, opportunity for activities, contact with local people and with other tourists, the weather, prices and the sense of value for money, the attractiveness of the rural setting. A tourist's dissatisfaction with one of these elements may spoil or diminish his or her overall tourism experience. For example, the enjoyment of a visit to the countryside may be spoiled by high prices of local food or drink, by traffic jams in the way back home, by overcrowded sites or by the sight of ugly buildings.



Climbers on cliffs purchased by the Peak National Park authority, England

3.8 The tourism package. Sometimes, the different elements which a tourist needs are all part of a 'package' which he can buy. For example, the organisation Center Parcs offers holidays in rural locations in the Netherlands, England and some other countries, where holiday-makers occupy chalets in woods or around lakes and can take part in sporting activities and entertainments, all within a single large complex. The complex at El Teularet in Spain, described in case 3.2 below, is self-contained in a similar way. A smaller example is the Gize agro-tourist farm in Poland, described at case 5.2 in chapter 5. In all these places, the visitor may find all that he needs within a single site and through a single enterprise; and may not need to use the services of other firms or to move around the countryside once he has arrived.



Visitors enjoying the heated pool in Center Parcs holiday camp, Sherwood Forest, England

3.9 Co-operation. In most rural areas, however, the attractions and facilities are not under the control of single companies. Thus, as the tourists pursue their visit, they will find themselves visiting facilities provided by many different people and enterprises. This has the advantage that the economic benefits from the spending by visitors are spread through the local economy, which may not happen where the enterprise is concentrated in a single company. But it also implies that the quality of the visitors' experience depends upon the action of many different providers; and that the effectiveness of the destination, and of its marketing, depends upon co-operation between those providers. Case studies 3.3, 3.4 and 4.2 offer examples of such co-operation.

3.10 Investment. Whatever the structure of the tourism industry in a given rural area, a key need is for investment in the creation and good management of tourist facilities and services. This is essential in order to ensure that services of the right standard and quality are available, to meet the expectations of tourists. We emphasise the word standards: tourists vary in the type and level of facility that they expect, and the price that they are willing to pay. Each area, each entrepreneur, must be clear what kinds of tourist they are aiming at, and then ensure that the resources are to the standard

and quality that they will expect.

3.11 Long-term management. Moreover, in a competitive and constantly changing industry, tourism providers may need constantly to raise the standard, and adapt their offer to changing demands, while ensuring that the rural setting remains attractive. This implies a long-term effort of physical maintenance and effective management, based upon observation of the performance of the tourism enterprises and crucially upon monitoring of visitors. This monitoring should relate not only to how many people come, but also where they came from, what they did, what they liked and disliked, what they would like to do more etc. The most successful rural tourism enterprises really listen to their guests and act on what they learn. Also needed is a constant effort of monitoring of the impact of tourism on the local community and environment, in order that it shall remain truly sustainable. We develop these points further in chapter 8.

3.12 Labelling and quality assurance. The Tzoumerka association in Greece (case study 3.5) provides an example of co-operation among tourism enterprises to ensure the qualitative upgrading of the tourism product of their area, through the introduction of a quality label. Another example of quality branding is provided by the Swedish Eco-tourism Association which, in co-operation with the Swedish Travel and Tourism Council, had launched a powerful labelling system for tour operators who organise eco-friendly activities. The objective has been to ensure high quality travel experiences and environmental conservation by guiding customers' travel choice towards branded eco-tourism operators and their tours. The small size of most culture and nature tourism operators can make it difficult for them to market their products efficiently. A labelling system makes this easier for all parties.

3.13 Innovation. Tourism providers may also need to be innovative in developing new products of rural tourism, responding to potential "niche" markets with particular expectations: Finnature (case study 4.4) provides an example of this. However, any new tourism products that are developed, in order to enhance the appeal of an area, should be compatible with the essential character of the area. For example, in the Kalampaka area of central mainland Greece, which is famous for the sight of the monasteries on the Meteora Rocks and which attracts many visitors, it was recognised that some alternative tourist attraction was needed in order to extend the tourism season. The Local Development Agency, in collaboration with other LEADER Local Action Groups in Scotland and Sweden, organised there in June 2000 the first competition of multiple sports as part of the "European round of adventure races": these used the hard and level ground which surrounds the rocks.

3.14 Marketing. Success in rural tourism depends upon effective marketing. It is not enough to create a fine tourism product. You must ensure that there is a mar-

ket for that product, and that the prospective visitors are told effectively about the product. This implies the need for:

- proper assessment of markets from the outset, looking at existing local patterns and not just local trends;
- a focus on 'market segmentation', that is the different kinds of visitors, across a wide spectrum from day trips by people from the local town to specific types of international visitor; you may need to decide who is most relevant in your product, who will be most easy to attract immediately and who may be attracted later;
- applying skill, energy and resources to marketing, and working closely with established outlets such as tourist boards and tourist information centres;
- being prepared to keep going overt the initial lean years until visits start to multiply.

To achieve this may demand the hiring of marketing experts, who will analyse the market and advise which kinds of visitors may be interested in your area and what kind and standard of services they may be looking for. The description of Heritage Trails (case study 4.2) shows plainly the relationship between markets and products.

3.15 Co-operation in marketing. Marketing can be done by individual enterprises: indeed, as we describe below, the Internet is making this more possible today. But most marketing is done on a wide basis, either for a whole region as a destination or for specific types of facility (such as farmhouse accommodation, or youth hostels) which are found in many regions. In either case, a co-operative effort may be needed, bringing together all the main parties in a region or many entrepreneurs in a specialist sector. Examples of co-operative effort on a regional basis are provided by case studies 3.3, 3.4 and 4.2. Quality labelling is also an indirect but effective way of cooperative marketing, as discussed above (see case study 3.5).

3.16 Destination Branding. For those who seek to market particular destinations in a highly competitive industry, a powerful weapon is destination branding. The point of this is that every region in the world, when promoting itself to potential visitors, may offer superb resorts, hotels, attractions and facilities and claim to have the friendliest people. So, it is not enough to offer the same in your region. There must be something which is truly unique to the place, and which is based upon the essential character of the place, as perceived and valued by its own inhabitants. For example, visitors may be much attracted to characteristic local products, such as traditional food or local wine. This principle is illustrated by the example of the Villany-Siklos Wine Route (case study 3.3).

3.17 The Information Society. The management and promotion of the tourism product of a rural area can also benefit from the Internet and other tools of what is called the "information society". The use of information technology can help the managers of small and

medium-sized tourism enterprises, for example through Computer Reservation Systems (CRS), Destination Management Systems (DMS) and marketing on the Internet. We give examples in later chapters of individual farm tourism enterprises who get most their clients through marketing and booking on their own Website. The wine routes and heritage trails, featured in this or other chapters, have used the Internet to publicise their activities and to attract customers-see, for example, case study 3.3.

Note: the Information Society, and the contribution that it can make to rural development, is the theme of the Euracademy Second Summer Academy, to be held in Ioannina, Greece in July 2003. A Thematic Guide, similar to this one, will be produced on that theme.



Marketing local quality products through the Internet, women's cooperative of Agios Antonios, N. Greece

3.18 An institutional framework. This need for long-term effort, and for maintaining standards in facilities controlled by many different people and organisations in a given area, points towards the value of having an institutional framework that can take a long-term responsibility for creating and promoting the tourism product. There is no single model for this framework. In some places, the local authority provides the focus. In other places, the role is played by the Chamber of Commerce, the *Syndicat d'Initiative (France)*, the Regional Park or a local association of businesses.

3.19 Local organisation. In case studies 3.3 and 4.2, we describe the Villany-Siklos Wine Route Association which initiated and managed the wine route of their region; and the Heritage Trail Associations set up in Slovenia to

create and then to sustain the Heritage Trails there. These are both examples of local organisations which have been set up specifically to manage and market the tourism product. But the task of securing continuity in the tourism product may also be undertaken by local organisations with a more general remit. For example, the Local Action Groups set up under the LEADER programme, which in many countries take the legal form

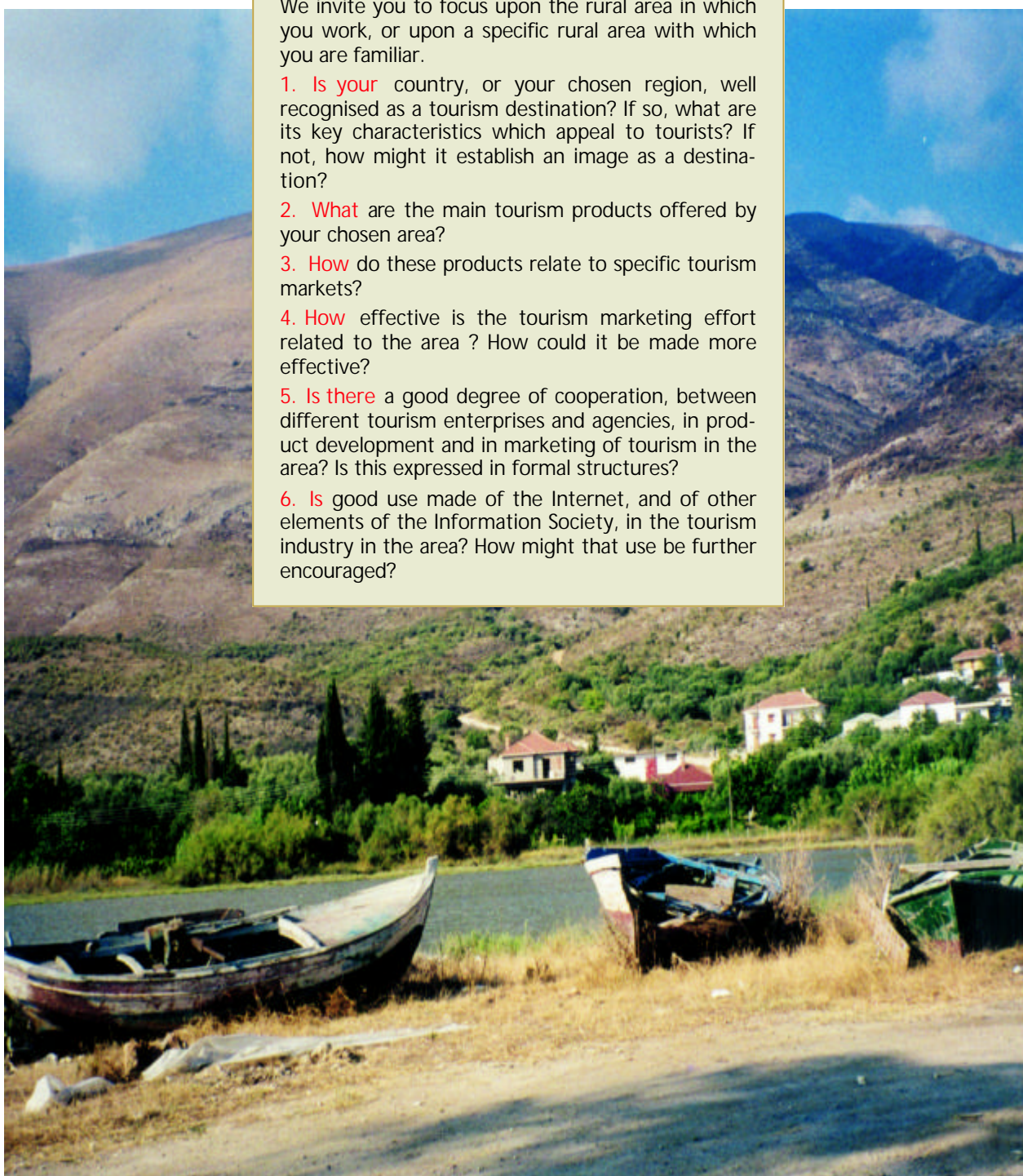
of a company limited by guarantee, are providing leadership in the economic development of their areas, including tourism, beyond the time limits of the EU funding provided by that programme.

A local organisation which represents the different sectors (public, private and voluntary) in its area has a better chance to develop, monitor and manage the tourism product of the area in an integrated way than any agency based outside the area.

Questions, arising from chapter 3, for you to reflect upon

We invite you to focus upon the rural area in which you work, or upon a specific rural area with which you are familiar.

1. **Is your** country, or your chosen region, well recognised as a tourism destination? If so, what are its key characteristics which appeal to tourists? If not, how might it establish an image as a destination?
2. **What** are the main tourism products offered by your chosen area?
3. **How** do these products relate to specific tourism markets?
4. **How** effective is the tourism marketing effort related to the area? How could it be made more effective?
5. **Is there** a good degree of cooperation, between different tourism enterprises and agencies, in product development and in marketing of tourism in the area? Is this expressed in formal structures?
6. **Is** good use made of the Internet, and of other elements of the Information Society, in the tourism industry in the area? How might that use be further encouraged?



Case Study 3.1

The island of Gotland, Sweden: a significant and varied tourism destination

The 1st EURACADEMY Summer School was held on the Swedish island of Gotland, in the Baltic Sea. This is a large island, 7,500 square kilometres, almost wholly rural, with large areas of productive forest and many farms. It has a population of 58,000, of which about 22,000 live in the capital Visby. The island's economy is mixed, with emphasis on farming, forestry, fishing, manufacturing and tourism.

Tourism on the island started in the 19th century, and by 1900 there were about 8,000 visitors from outside the island each year. These numbers increased gradually to about 100,000 by 1960, and then accelerated in response to growing leisure time and income among the Swedish population. By 2001, the numbers reached 700,000 a year. A majority of visitors come from Sweden, notably Stockholm and its surrounding region, but there are also significant numbers from other Nordic countries and from England, Germany etc.

The major assets of Gotland for tourism are its temperate climate, the sea and the coast, the natural and cultural heritage, the opportunity for outdoor activities such as horseback riding, sailing and cycling, and the sense of adventure. The capital Visby is centred on a walled mediaeval town, of World Heritage status, and offers a popular mediaeval festival in August. Almost all other tourism on the island is truly rural, and there is a wide variety of accommodation, from camping sites and holiday cottages to high-quality hotels. Many Swedish people from Stockholm and elsewhere own second homes on the island.

Tourism in Gotland is highly seasonal, with about 400,000 visitors present in July, 250,000 in August, 175,000 in June and much lower figures in the other months.

This seasonality is welcomed by many tourism entrepreneurs, who say that they can earn enough in a short season to be viable: some of them have other sources of income in the off-season. However, others would like to see a longer season. The Gotland Tourist Association is actively campaigning to attract more visitors in the low season, in the context of the vision of the island's local authority which wishes to create 500 new jobs mainly in the tourism and service industries and thus to retain a higher proportion of the young people on the island.

The Association's marketing activity is focused on Gotland's overall image as a destination, an island rich in nature and in history, offering a wide variety of (mainly outdoor) activities. The rural side is not separately emphasised. But many of the entrepreneurs in

the rural areas undertake their own marketing, with a strongly rural emphasis; and there are two large agencies based on the island which handle the marketing of many hundreds of tourism enterprises.

Contact: <http://www.gotland.com>, info@gotland.info



The Open Air Bunge Museum shows how the Gotlandic peasants of the past lived



An open air dinner is part of the Mediaeval Festival, Visby

Case Study 3.2

El Teularet: a tourism package in Spain

El Teularet is a tourism development project promoted by "La Confederación Sindical de Comisiones Obreras", a confederation of trade unions. It is sited in the mountains, near the village of Navalón in Valencia.

The aim of the development was to provide holiday facilities, of varied kinds, for members of the trade unions, and for members of the general public, notably nature lovers and people who seek mountain sports and recreation. The centre also provides courses for schoolchildren in environmental awareness.

The project started in 1996. To date, the investment has exceeded 2.5 million Euros, with funding from the regional authority and from the EU through the LEADER II programme. Private sector investment has also been attracted, and this has affected the scale and design of the development. The project has progressed in phases: first a camping site, then facilities for environmental education, and later a hostel, hotel and catering facilities.

The complex now provides a number of complementary services:

- Overnight accommodation, including a hotel and a hostel, with a combined capacity of 85 guests, and a camping site with 70 tent or caravan places;
- Refreshment facilities, including bars and a restaurant serving traditional food;
- Facilities for environmental education and research;
- Facilities for sport and recreation, including a sports centre within the complex, and activities in the mountains such as tracks for mountain bikes;
- A supermarket, and an infirmary.



Refreshment facilities in El Teularet, Spain

Visitors to the complex come mainly from the Valencia region, whose population is less inclined to travel abroad after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. Marketing is based on a Website run by the Confederation. Use of the complex is also promoted by organisations like the Education and Youth Federation and the Caravan Association, who tell their members about the "alternative holidays" which are offered there,



Promoting the use of sustainable energy sources

and who organise excursions and courses at the centre. Word-of-mouth publicity also plays an important role.

Experience in running this popular rural complex has shown that the creation of such a centre must be followed by a continuing process of strong and committed management. This is essential in order to remain alert to changes in demands made by visitors, and to adjust the product accordingly; and also to ensure that the tourist activity does not over-run the carrying capacity of the mountain ecosystem. The managers are alert to the need for environmental protection, for example by removal of all garbage.

The project shows that the social sector, represented in this case by the trade unions, can play an important role in creating "alternative" forms of tourism, showing the way to the private sector when the latter does not dare to embark on innovative and risky development projects. However, cooperation with the private sector proved to be an advantage, permitting more substantial investment and a wider range of facilities and services. The project has stimulated the interest of other tourism enterprises in traditional cuisine, in sustainable energy and ecological agriculture.

Contact: <http://www.ccoo.es/servicios/teularet.html>

Case study 3.3

Villany-Siklos Wine Route, Hungary

This wine route in south-west Hungary is an ambitious example of a form of tourism product which is found in many parts of southern Europe. It is bringing significant benefit to the local economy.

The aim of the Villany-Siklos Wine Route Association is to promote tourism in the region in a way which adds value to the wine and related culture of the area; and thus to create jobs, to bring additional income to the inhabitants, and to make the region more attractive to outside investors.

The Wine Route runs through eleven communes in Baranya County, on the southern periphery of Transdanubia, close to the Croatian border. This is a region with a weak economy and low average incomes. Its main assets for tourism are an attractive landscape, traditional architecture and wine. However, tourism was little developed before the early 1990s. Then, the leaders of the County recognised that the quality of the wines and the expertise of wine makers in the Villany-Siklos micro-region were high enough to support a wine route of European appeal.

The communes of the micro-region responded with enthusiasm to this proposal by the County Council. The mayor of the smallest community, Palkonya, who had already started an effort to promote tourism in the micro-region, took the lead in creating the wine route. In 1994 the Villany-Siklos Wine Route Association was established. Local authorities, civil associations, private persons and small and medium sized enterprises joined the organisation.

The "concept" for the wine route was produced by experts in tourism, regional development and wine production from the government. Funding of 20 million HUF (82,000 Euro) came from the EU through the PHARE programme. A well-designed 30 km-long wine route was created, linking a series of tourist attractions and various facilities for tourists. These included accommodation units, wine tasting and wine selling places, which created an integrated tourism product for the area.

From the beginning, the Association organised training building courses for local people, to prepare them for the creation and running of the wine route. It also secured further funds to improve the wine route "product", for example by running a training course for unemployed people and small entrepreneurs, and by providing interest-free loans to local entrepreneurs to create jobs in tourism. The Association established an office in Siklos, the capital of the micro-region, funded by PHARE and staffed by a regional project manager. They produced a strategic plan and operational pro-



Cultural sites incorporated in the Wine Route

gramme for the Wine Route, followed by a quality control system, a tourist information service and a marketing plan. Standards of high quality were demanded from all tourism services related to the Wine Route, including accommodation, wine tasting, wine selling, recreation activities and eating places.

Today, the Villany-Siklos Wine Route offers 60 places where wine is sold, 50 places where wine can be tasted, 8 restaurants or inns, 3 wine shops, 10 hotels or pensions, 32 farms offering farmhouse accommodation, 2 camping sites, 1 horse-riding establishment and 1 museum. The Association has created a corporate identity for the wine route, with a clear brand image; set up a Website for its marketing; and established a unified signposting system and a series of "information points" along the route. In 2001 the Association started a travel agency in Villany, which operates as a non-profit organisation, dedicated to the successful marketing and selling of Wine Route products and services. The agency offers up-to-date information; guides the wine-loving guests to follow specially planned local tours (of two to three days' duration); creates tailor-made schedules to suit the visitors' needs; and promotes high-quality wine tasting facilities and accommodation. The Association has established close links with more than 30 scientific and professional bodies and counts 91 entrepreneurs as members. The Villany-Siklos Wine Route has become a model for the creation of similar projects in Hungary. Over the past two years, five new wine route associations were founded in South Transdanubia. These new Associations joined forces with the Villany-Siklos Association to create a single regional system of quality control and uniform information signing. The South Transdanubian Wine Road, a network of the local wine routes, is due to come to operation before the next tourism season.

Contact:

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Case study 3.4

Journey into Ostrobothnian Art, Finland

The Journey into Ostrobothnian Art" is a cultural trail which encourages visitors to pass through part of western Finland, visiting art museums and other features on the way.

The idea of creating the trail was born in early 2000, as part of a cultural tourism project of Southern Ostrobothnia initiated by staff of the communes and the art museums in the area. Their aim was to create new culture-related tourism products for the region. They organised six workshop sessions, during which they discussed:

- what new product can we create, and with what image?
- which are the target groups for this product?
- what would the customers need?
- what kind of experience will the visitors have?
- what are the strengths and weaknesses of the project?

At the end of the workshops, the product description was written down; prices, providers, cooperating bodies and the timetable were defined; and marketing measures were discussed.

The Journey into Ostrobothnian Art forms a trail of about 160 km, passing through the area of three municipalities, Kuortane, Alajarvi and Ahtari. It combines the services of three art museums, three farm hotels and one wine producer.

All the partners were already well established, and known for the high quality of their services, but they had not previously cooperated closely. They have developed the Art Journey together and have harmonised their marketing: for example, the bed-and-breakfast prices are the same at each farm hotel. The marketing is aimed mainly at elderly people who make one- or two-day bus trips to the area, in small groups. The wine farm and its products offer an additional attraction, not directly related but complementary to the Journey.

The Art Journey offers an entertaining tour, which can be bought as a unit or can be tailored to the needs of a specific group. It features its own brochure folder, which can be filled up with the material of the alternative sight-seeing themes which the customer chooses. It is marketed by the Southern Ostrobothnian Tourist Service.

The Art Journey is a good example of how to create a new tourism product by bringing together different features, thus creating a varied and more interesting experience for the tourist out of already existing services and sights. This tourism product is perceived as a novelty in Finland and is attracting increasing numbers of tourists. It offers a good example to tourism professionals from other parts of Finland, who come to Ostrobothnia to participate in the Art Journey in order to gain experience to develop similar projects in their area.



Interesting encounters in the Art Journey



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Case study 3.5

A non-profit agency ensuring high-quality tourism in Tzoumerka, Greece

This is an example, from a mountainous area in Greece, of a non-profit agency which uses a Local Agreement on Quality Control (LAQC) to secure the qualitative upgrading of the tourism product of that area.

The LAQC idea is used in various parts of Greece. It is expressed through the creation of a civil, non-profit agency in which a variety of tourism enterprises such as hotels, restaurants, traditional food or crafts businesses may participate. They enter a 'quality contract' with each other, which commits them to respect, preserve and disseminate the local tradition and heritage; to respect tourists and protect them from exploitation; and to refrain from unfair competition among themselves.

The Tzoumerka LAQC brings together 24 businesses from 7 mountainous villages, with a population of 6,800 inhabitants. The region suffers from economic decline and depopulation, with a GDP that is less than 70% of the national average. Tourism, especially winter tourism, is a fast developing sector in the area, offering a good prospect for economic regeneration.

A small but dynamic group of local entrepreneurs, most of whom were involved in the local LEADER programme, decided to proceed with a LAQC, encouraged by their Regional Development Agency. The aim was to make their area known and establish its identity as a high quality resort with a traditional flavour, accessible to middle-income tourists; and to benefit collectively from services which individual businesses cannot afford, such as expert advice, training, advertising, participation in tourism fairs and publication of brochures.

The members of the Tzoumerka LAQC must meet at least two out of five criteria or "quality peaks" set out by their contract - traditional character of the furniture and equipment of the premises; high standard of service offered to tourists; high quality of food and drink, including traditional produce, dishes and wines; traditional architecture; and a commitment to environmental protection and cleanliness.

The certification of the members of the LAQC, and their monitoring on the basis of quality peaks, is carried out by a committee consisting of representatives of the

Regional Authority, the Prefectural Authority, the local authorities and the Regional Development Agency. The ambition of all LAQC members is to become certified in all five peaks. The quality peaks are displayed on the premises of each business, and all businesses certified through the system are shown on an information board at the entrance of each village.

The members of the LAQC have started collective negotiation with tour operators; have had a joint presence in two big tourism fairs in Athens and Thessaloniki; and have published a tourism brochure for their area. They intend to create a joint booking system on the Internet, and to organise training courses for the entrepreneurs and their staff. They hope to take part in EU programmes and initiatives.

The first two years of the Tzoumerka LAQC have not



Panoramic view of the village of Vourgarelli, the seat of Tzoumerka LAQC

been easy. The 24 entrepreneurs had to put aside the suspicion and mistrust that naturally grows in small places, when the pie is small and the competitors many. The culture of collectivity had to be developed and this took time. The benefits of the LAQC have begun to appear, and the mentality of the local businesses has already changed substantially. The LAQC members are enjoying better business and are proud of their new role as guardians of local tradition and defenders of quality.

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CHAPTER 4.

Protecting and Managing the Heritage, with Tourism

4.1 This chapter focuses on how rural tourism may both draw upon, and contribute to the protection of, the natural and cultural heritage. The symbiosis between heritage and tourism is a key aspect of the search for sustainability, as described in chapters 1 and 2.

4.2 The wealth and diversity of the European heritage. The rural regions of Europe are rich in cultural and natural heritage. Moreover, this heritage is highly varied from region to region, reflecting the intricate landform and changing geology of the continent, the wide variation in climate, the diversity of wildlife and of land use, the historic evolution of human settlement and other factors.

4.3 Heritage as a resource for tourism. This heritage and this diversity are massive assets for those who wish to develop in rural tourism. They offer the tourist a strong contrast to the modern man-made environments of the urban world, and they provide a starting-point for articulating what is unique about each place, which can enable it to compete in attracting tourists. Historical settings, cultural activities and traditions, archaeological finds, beautiful landscapes, wild-life experiences and adventures are appealing in themselves, and they can help people to connect to their own origins and identity and to the world in which they live. They can release the sense of creativity, beauty and play.

4.4 Sustainable use. But if these assets are to be used for tourism, it must be in a sustainable way. Tourism is unique, as an economic sector, in that the customers come to the product (whereas in agriculture, for example, the products are transported to the customer).

This means that the rural area, which is the destination, receives the visitors and everything that goes with them-their cars or coaches, their sports equipment, their dogs and mobile radios, their social customs. These things can have an adverse impact on the quietude of the countryside and the quality of its heritage and environment. This environment is the setting of local people's lives and the resource for agriculture and other economic activity. It is also the major attraction for future tourists. For this reason, unsuitable or excessive tourism which may damage the environment or annoy the residents must be avoided, in order to achieve sustainability.

4.5 Eco-tourism. There is in fact a rising awareness within the tourism industry, and among tourists themselves, of the need to respect the environment and the heritage of receiving areas. People recognise that tourism should be compatible with, indeed ideally should actively assist, the conservation of natural and cultural resources. This is shown by the growth of 'eco-tourism', nature-based tourism, alternative tourism, and the like. In 1994, The World Wildlife Fund summarised ecotourism as being:

A responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well-being of local people

4.6 The Swedish Ecotourism Association has launched a labelling system that confirms the standards adopted by members of the Association who provide eco-friendly holiday activities. These standards require them to;

- respect the limitations of the destination
- support the local economy
- make all their company's operations environmentally sustainable
- contribute actively to conservation
- promote the joy of discovery, knowledge and respect.
- ensure quality and safety all the way through.

More detail can be found on www.ekotourism.org. A good example of this approach is also provided by Finnature case study 4.4.

4.7 Standards of this kind are valid for all kinds of rural tourism, not only for those with an "eco-label". The principles of sustainability, as outlined at the end of chapter 1, should be applied. How is this to be achieved in

The Byzantine Castle of Ioannina, a major tourist attraction in the remote region of Epirus, Greece





Open air agricultural museum in Hungary

practice? How can one so organise tourism that the impact upon the environment is reduced to an acceptable level? How can one ensure that the income generated by tourism contributes to the monitoring of effects of the tourist activities, and to the maintenance and management of the resources? Can the tourists' use of the heritage be so managed as to strengthen the local social capital, spread the income from the tourist industry within the community, raise the awareness of the value of the heritage within the local community, and support institutional development?

4.8 Carrying capacity. One answer to these questions lies in the idea of carrying capacity. This suggests that the type and volume of tourist activities and facilities should be kept within the carrying capacity of an area, so that its natural features are not damaged and the local communities are not disturbed. The Slovenian Heritage Trail (case study 4.2) provides an example of how carrying capacity may be assessed, and then used to achieve a sustainable result.

4.9 The idea of carrying capacity, and the techniques for applying it, can help you to assess how much tourism, of what type, can be accommodated in an area without damage to the heritage and the local people. But the assessment must then be applied. This may involve the acceptance, by visitors, entrepreneurs and others of constraints upon their activities. In some cases, they may need to make a significant change in what they have been doing or an investment in improved facilities. Sometimes, controversial decisions may be involved, such as stopping a tourism activity which has been of economic benefit for some people.

4.10 Conflict resolution. Sustainable management in rural tourism may therefore involve a process of negotiation between different interests in an area, including landowners, tourist entrepreneurs, different groups of residents, environmentalists, local administrative and political bodies. They may have conflicting interests and ideas concerning the management of an area or a particular resource. For this reason, systems of conflict resolution may be needed in order to support a constructive process. Case study 4.3 illustrates how the adverse

impact of canoe tourism on a lake system in Sweden was resolved in a way that has been accepted by the tourists, the landowners and the authority responsible for nature conservation. Syvota (case study 7.4) illustrates how action can be taken to remedy the adverse impact of tourism on the environment.

4.11 Guidance to visitors. If tourism is to be made compatible with the environment and the interests of local people, the tourists must be guided towards the places and activities which are acceptable, and away from those which are not. This should be a positive process, in the spirit of saying 'Yes, but...' rather than 'No' when the tourist seeks to do something. Those who manage tourism have many different tools that they can use to guide the tourist. These tools include:

- Publicity of all sorts, which (as with the Heritage Trails described in cases study 4.2) can focus on those sites which have the capacity to receive visitors, and avoid mention of those which do not
- Information to visitors, which can say plainly where they are welcome and ask them to avoid other areas or activities (case study 4.3 provides an example of this)
- Sign-posting, which can help visitors to find their way around an area or a specific site
- Positive physical signals, such as car parks and paths which appears welcoming to the visitor.



The Merry Cemetery in Sapanta, Romania is an unusual example of fine folk art

- Physical barriers, to prevent or discourage access to sensitive areas: these barriers may be obvious (such as locked gates) or subtle (such as prickly bushes)
- Direct advice to visitors by wardens, rangers and others.

4.12 Raising public awareness. The methods described above can help to prevent negative impact of visitors upon the place or the local people. But an even greater gain can come from creating a positive link between the visitor and the place, by raising the awareness of people about the heritage. Moreover, this awareness can fruitfully start among local inhabitants, who can often be quite unaware of the quality of their local heritage: if they come to appreciate that heritage, they

may not only help to protect it but may also encourage visitors to appreciate it too. That is why many managers of heritage sites put effort into telling local people and visitors about the heritage, seeking to raise their awareness and interest in the wildlife or the history of the place, and to enlist their practical or even financial support for the efforts to safeguard that heritage. This may be done through leaflets, on-site interpretation, visitor centres, rangers or wardens, guided walks, events and so on.

4.13 A vivid example of this process of raising public awareness is the Fröjel Discovery programme, based on the Viking harbour at Fröjel on the west coast of Gotland. The harbour, dating from the Middle Ages, has

actions such as ensuring the regular collection and removal of litter or the repair of damage to public facilities. Management can also increase the capacity of fragile places. Examples of this are the system of boardwalks that have been installed at Plitvice National Park in Croatia, to carry visitors across the wetlands and sensitive limestone features; and the steep stone-set paths which allow walkers to climb the hills in the English Lake District without causing erosion of the hillsides. Another example is the silent boats, driven by electric power, which carry visitors into the quiet reed-beds of the Broads National Park in England.

4.15 Symbiosis. The relationship between tourism and the heritage need not be seen only as a matter of cau-



The Dourankoulak nature reserve, a stop on the Dobroudja Heritage Trail, Bulgaria

disappeared under farmland. Over the last five years, on the initiative of a professional archaeologist and the local history group, it has been progressively excavated, using volunteers from many parts of the world. It is the site of much local enthusiasm and attracts a growing number of visitors. To serve these visitors, members of the local history group have converted a disused school-house into a cafe and a rural museum, to display artefacts discovered on the harbour site. More details can be found on <http://www.vikinggotland.com>

4.14 Resource management. Harmony between tourists and the receiving environment depends also upon active management of resources. Such management can ensure that damage is avoided, for example by skilful siting of tourism facilities, as shown in the example of canoe tourism in case study 4.3; and by

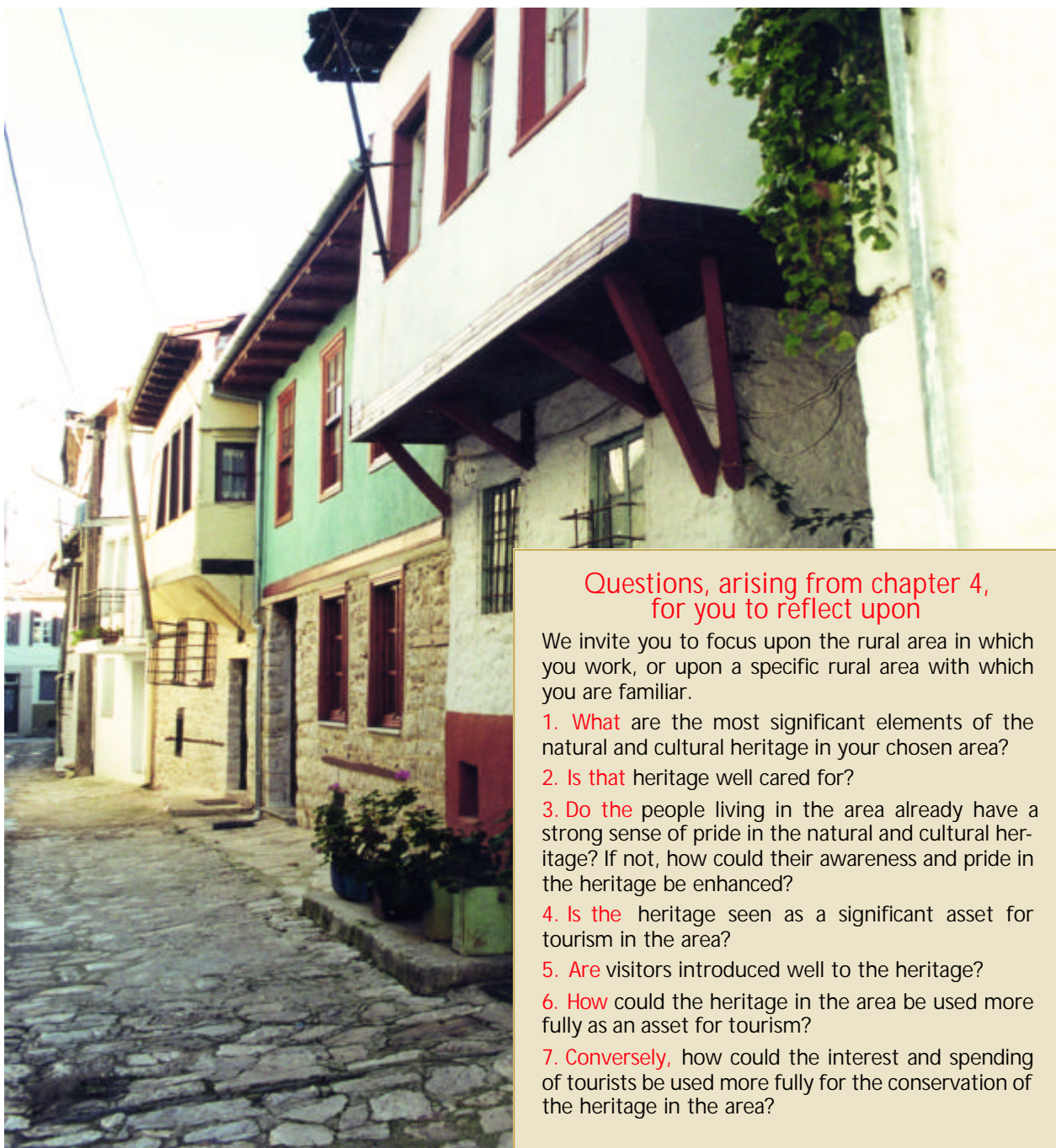
tion and the avoidance of negative impacts. There are many examples of positive symbiosis between tourism and heritage. Europe is rich in examples of tourism facilities which bring visitors into direct contact with the heritage, and which thereby help to sustain the heritage and to promote local development. For example, many buildings of heritage character are used to accommodate tourists, including:

- Portuguese *posadas*, Spanish *paradors*, the castle hotel at Otocec in Slovenia and many other historic buildings used to provide high-quality tourist accommodation;
- Traditional buildings used by visitors, such as the tourist accommodation on many tens of thousands of farms throughout Europe (see description in chapter 5); and

➤ Hundreds of youth hostels based in castles, manor houses, mills and other buildings.

4.16 Heritage-based attractions. Many thousands of tourist attractions are based on heritage features. They include the World Heritage village of Hollókö in Hungary; the Italian village of Alborobello, with its remarkable *trulli* houses; the historic houses and gardens which are conserved and opened to the public by the National Trusts in the United Kingdom; the Walloon ironworks (case study 4.1); the Iron Age farmhouse at Gervide Gard (case study 6.4); and the historic towns of Xativa (case study 7.2) and Morella (case study 8.4). In such ways, the historic heritage can indeed become an asset for local development, and local development can help to sustain and enhance the heritage.

4.17 Events related to the cultural heritage can be a major attraction for tourists. An example is provided by the Festival of Celtic Culture, at Dowsupada in Poland (case study 4.5). Also in Poland, many thousands of visitors experience each year a re-enactment of the great mediaeval battle of Grunwald. There, on 15 July 1410, the army of the Teutonic Order led by Ulrich von Jungingen was destroyed by the Polish, Lithuanian, Russian and Czech armies. The great Master of the Teutonic Order was killed together with many of his knights, which ended the power of the Order. Every year, on the anniversary of the battle, a Grunwald Day is organised by scouts, Polish knights and the local Grunwald Association. The biggest attraction is a re-enactment of the battle by 1000 Polish knights.



Questions, arising from chapter 4, for you to reflect upon

We invite you to focus upon the rural area in which you work, or upon a specific rural area with which you are familiar.

1. **What** are the most significant elements of the natural and cultural heritage in your chosen area?
2. **Is that** heritage well cared for?
3. **Do the** people living in the area already have a strong sense of pride in the natural and cultural heritage? If not, how could their awareness and pride in the heritage be enhanced?
4. **Is the** heritage seen as a significant asset for tourism in the area?
5. **Are** visitors introduced well to the heritage?
6. **How** could the heritage in the area be used more fully as an asset for tourism?
7. **Conversely**, how could the interest and spending of tourists be used more fully for the conservation of the heritage in the area?

Case study 4.1

The Walloon Ironworks, Sweden

"Vallonbruk i Uppland" is a non-profit organisation, with the aim to conserve, describe, revive and market a region with historic ironwork sites in the Swedish province of Uppland. In pursuing this aim, it makes a substantial contribution to tourism, and thereby gains income and public support for its work.

During the 17th century, about 20 ironworks were established in Uppland province. Smiths from Wallonie (now part of Belgium), whose skills in high-quality steel production were the most advanced in Europe, were brought in to run the works. These works were of major economic importance at that time, and are now significant parts of Swedish industrial history. Apart from the ironworks, the sites include manor houses, villages for the workers, churches, schools and gardens. The surrounding countryside was also much affected by the activities of the works, for example through the cutting of the forests for firewood.

The last ironwork was closed down during last century, yet people still live in these villages. The Walloon works are thus a living cultural heritage from the 17th to 19th centuries, and a great tourist attraction. Tourists can join guided tours at the works, see the old smithies, learn about the history and traditions of the works, and also see varied exhibitions and enjoy musical events. Last year, about 220,000 tourists visited the works between May and August, which is 70,000 more than five years ago. The works are also open all year for conferences and group visits.

The initiative to develop these ironworks as tourist attractions came from the County Administrative Board. They wished to promote heritage-based tourism through networking and close collaboration with local people and actors. To start with, they advertised for interested partners, and organised meetings and site visits in order to build up a network of interested people.

The non-profit organisation "Vallonbruk i Uppland" was created in 1995. It has only one full time employee, plus one person employed by the County Administrative Board working one day a week. 'Vallonbruk i Uppland' also has a project leader working part-time with the different projects, depending on money from the EU and co-financing from within the region. But the strength of the organisation lies in its links with five distinct networks. These include several hundred people involved in local development groups; 40 to 50 tourist guides; the owners and employees at inns and mansions; the owners of cafés; and a number of artists.

Much of the organisation's work is focused on support



Guided Tour in Walloon Ironworks

for the local enterprises, through marketing and the display of information, and also through projects and educational programmes to increase the skills of those involved. These programmes have been funded by the Swedish Council, the EC's Leonardo da Vinci programme and the European Social Fund (ADAPT programme); and also assisted by the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences and tourism organisations.

To minimise the wear on the cultural heritage, the organisation works closely with the County Antiquarian. Many of the buildings in the sites are listed 'culturally valuable buildings' which implies that specific regulations need to be followed. According to the organisation, the tourist activities present no significant risk of wear on the cultural heritage.

The organisation is very dependent on financial support from the local partners, and from the EU through projects. Today, it is supported by local companies, the County Council, the public transport authorities, local development groups and other organisations and people in the counties of Uppsala and Stockholm. The turnover of the organisation varies from year to year. In 2001 it was almost 110,000 Euro.

The activities of the organisation offer an example of how to support tourism through encouraging rural enterprise and raising public awareness of cultural values. To people interested in setting up similar organisations, 'Vallonbruk i Uppland' would emphasise the need to involve all actors at the local arena and to establish broad networks among them.

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Case study 4.2

Heritage Trail, Slovenia

The Dolenjska/Bela Krajina Heritage trail in Slovenia is an ambitious tourism product, of which the aim was to help the regeneration of the local economy by skilful tourist use of the natural and cultural heritage.

Many European regions are rich in "heritage" sites -such as castles, churches, historic villages, natural caves, viewpoints, museums and art galleries- which could be used for tourism. But the challenge is to bring them into such use in a way which truly benefits the people and the economy of the area; and which is sustainable, so that the tourism does not damage the heritage sites.

The Heritage Trails project -initiated in 1995, jointly by Ecotourism Ltd, ECOVAST and PRISMA- was designed to address that challenge. It was funded by the Tourism Directorate (DG XXIII) of the European Commission, and by the governments and local authorities of the two pilot regions chosen for the project, Dolenjska/Bela krajina in Slovenia and the Dobroudja region of Bulgaria.

The project team defined a Heritage Trail as "a regional network of natural and cultural heritage sites which is created within a well-defined product identity, in order to support an interesting and varied tourist visit of up to one week". In each of the two regions, the team studied a range of heritage sites; identified those sites which might attract visitors; and worked closely with the landowners and with local people to decide whether the sites had the capacity to receive visitors.

This assessment of carrying capacity had two elements-physical and social. On the physical side, the project team (which included architects and planners) assessed whether each site could accept a significant flow of visitors without damage to the site and without risk to the visitors; assessed the capacity of the access roads, car parks and other facilities; and talked to the owners or managers of the site to ensure that they had the desire and the ability to receive visitors.

On the social side, the team pursued a process of public consultation, by which local people were first informed and then given an opportunity to consider whether they wished to accept tourism in their village or area. A judgement was then made as to whether the site or the village did or did not have the capacity to

receive visitors: if it did not have that capacity, it was omitted from the Trail.

The team then undertook a detailed marketing study, to establish which kinds of visitors might be attracted to the region; prepared an outline of a Trail which might be marketed; undertook intensive consultation with local authorities and others to complete an agreed Trail; and helped to create a Heritage Trail Association. This Association is responsible for the setting up and marketing of the Trail. The project team gave detailed advice on standards and product quality to the hotels and other enterprises who will service the Trail.

The Slovenian Trail was initially marketed at the World Tourism Fair in 1966, on the stand of the Slovenia Tourist Board. Marketing brochures were produced in Slovenian, German, French, Italian and English, to suit the markets which had been identified.

Travel agents and journalists were invited to visit the Trail, and the interest gradually increased. Over the last six years, a constant programme of Trail development has been pursued. This includes sign-posting along the Trail; improvements to the main publicised sites, including on-site interpretation boards; and production of a

set of site-related interpretation brochures. Training courses have been offered for providers of bed-and-breakfast and other accommodation in the farms and villages, and many new enterprises have been created. The marketing material now includes a Trail guide which gives details of all accommodation, restaurants etc that can be used by visitors. The number of Slovenian and foreign visitors has steadily grown.



Water-powered saw-mill on the Heritage Trail, Slovenia

The success of the Heritage Trail has prompted the adjoining Slovenian region of Kocevje to create a second Trail, while a third Trail was started in central Slovenia; and the Slovenian example has inspired the creation of a Heritage Trail across the border in northern Croatia.

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Case study 4.3

Canoe tourism and the protection of the natural heritage in Sweden

An example of the deliberate management of recreation, in harmony with nature, comes from the lake system of Dalsland-Nordmarken in the Swedish province of Dalsland.

This system of lakes and rivers, covering almost 10,000 sq.km, includes an extensive nature reserve for protection of birds. It has also, since the 1970s, been used for outdoor recreation, following a decision by the County Administrative Board. Some campsites were built at that time, and the activities were jointly financed by the Board and the municipalities in the region.

A union of the municipalities in the area, DANO (Dalsland-Nordmarken), was also established to promote canoe tourism, which has become very popular in the area and now attracts about 60,000 tourist guest-nights every year. Most of the canoe tourists come from Germany and Denmark. In Sweden, the Right of Public Access gives people the right to move freely through wildlife areas.

About ten years ago, it became clear that the sheer number of canoe tourists was beginning to threaten the sensitive lake system. During 1994 and 1995, DANO conducted an extensive inventory of the natural values

which all tourists pay a fee of 2 Euro per person-day.

DANO wants to find a sound balance between tourism business and nature conservation in the area. They are in a continuous dialogue with the landowners. All landowners receive some compensation for the use of their land, but most of them place more importance on DANO's supervision of the movement of visitors.

There is also a continuous dialogue with the canoe entrepreneurs. DANO seeks to ensure that they understand the nature protection regulations, respect the garbage separation and collection sites in the lake system, as well as the directions of the Right of Public Access. The entrepreneurs are asked to advise the tourists on how they should act to show consideration to the landowners. However, the tourist industry is not a formal partner in DANO, because DANO wants to stay neutral in relation to its task of superintending the impact of that industry on nature.

DANO's experience suggests that finding a sound balance between tourism enterprise and nature conservation in such a place depends upon a good understanding between the local actors, notably the land-owners and the tourist entrepreneurs. It is important to find



Canoeing in the lake system of Dalsland-Nordmarken

in the area, and put in hand a programme for the protection and sustainable management of these values, in consultation with the County Administrative Board which is responsible for the bird protection system.

DANO now seeks to discourage wild camping by asking tourists to stay at prepared campsites within the lake system, where there is access to fire place, garbage cans and dry toilets. These campsites are located in places which are attractive for tourists but which bring the least possible disturbance to wildlife. To finance the campsites, a nature protection fund has been set up, to

good sources of finance, so that the work is not too dependent on voluntary labour. The nature protection fund model works very well, and the aim is to finance all the activities of DANO through this fund.

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<http://www.arjang.se/turism/sjosystem/main.htm>

<http://www.dalslandskanal.se/2002/pages/nature>

Case study 4.4

Finnature's birdwatching tours

Finnature Ltd is a tour operator which specialises in nature and birdwatching tours in Finland and adjoining countries.

The company started up in 1993, organising birdwatching tours round Liminganlahti Bay in Finland. Today, the firm has more than ten top professionals who lead groups, mainly of foreign visitors, on tours around Finland (for example bear-watching and photography on the eastern border or birdwatching on the Kaamasjoki river and delta), northern Norway (Varangerfjord) and Estonia (birdwatching tours around Matsalu Bay).

Finnature's company philosophy is to raise public perception of the value of Finland's natural environments, and to help preserve them for future generations. The company is committed to the sustainable use of nature. Its tours offer clients the opportunity to enjoy the wonders of nature under expert guidance.

Finnature has a wide network of carefully selected partners - transport companies, hotels, restaurants etc - who serve the visitors and who share the ideology of the company. These partners are required by the company to maintain a high quality of service.

foreign customer is about 65 years old, from the upper middle class.

Finnature supports conservation work through WWF and BirdLife Finland. In 2000, the Finnish Union for Nature Conservation, the largest environmental NGO in Finland, awarded Finnature its annual environment prize.

Contact: <http://www.finnature.com/>



Birdwatching in Finland

Finnature's marketing is done mainly through foreign tourist agencies who specialise in nature tourism, rather than directly to the consumers. It aims deliberately at specialised target groups of customers, and aims to suit the product to those customers. It focuses mainly on foreigners, particularly British, American, Japanese, German and Austrian; and on small groups, suited in size to the accommodation offered by the partner enterprises. For example, in the United Kingdom the target group was limited to elderly, wealthy customers who are keen on birds and nature tourism. The typical

Case study 4.5

The Festival of Celtic Culture, Dowspuda, Poland

The Festival of Celtic Culture is a substantial tourist attraction based upon the distinctive cultural heritage of a rural area.

The Festival was conceived by Roman Fiedorowicz, a mayor of Raczek County. He believed that the inspiring history of Dowsupady County could be used to stimulate the tourism industry and to promote the region.



The special heritage of Dowsupada arises from the fact that Sir Ludwik Michał Pac, patron of the arts and general in the army of Napoleon, was fascinated by the culture of Scotland and the Celtic islands. In the early 19th century, he built at Dowsupada a neo-gothic palace in the English style, and developed a model agricultural estate. He invited a group of 500 Scottish farmers to settle on the estate in order to promote the new trends of British agriculture among the local peasantry. The descendants of these Scottish farmers still live in the area, and the name of the nearby village of Szkocja (Scotland) marks the link.

In August 1997, Raczek County Council together with the Association of Friends of Dowsupady organised an event in the ruins of the Pac's palace. This was the

Festival of Celtic Culture, presenting the history of the Scottish settlement and the culture of the British Islands. It has become an annual event, now recognised as one of the major artistic events in north-east Poland. Its setting and atmosphere are awesome, and performers include the biggest names of Polish folk scene plus artists from Scotland, Ireland and elsewhere.

The 3-day Festival, held each year during the last weekend of August, includes a variety of events - tournaments, training in Scottish, Irish and Breton dances, musical activities, competitions, exhibitions of Celtic culture, promotion of books. Celtic music is presented by both professional and amateur groups. Fans of Celtic culture from the whole of Poland and from abroad come to the Festival. Each concert may attract more than 5,000 people. In 2000, the whole event attracted about 15,000 people in 3 days.

The Festival is supported by local government, sponsoring institutions and companies, local cultural institutions (the community centre) and music bands from all over Poland. It brings economic benefit to the area by giving small firms an opportunity to offer accommodation, board and transport for visitors to the events.

Cultural heritage sites in Dowspuda, Poland.



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CHAPTER 5.

Synergies: how Tourism can benefit other parts of the rural economy

5.1 This chapter focuses on how tourism can bring benefits to the people and economy of the receiving area by finding positive links - or synergy - with other aspects of life in that area.

5.2 In chapter 1, we suggested that tourism should be regarded as sustainable if it contributed to the receiving region in the following positive ways:

- Help to strengthen and diversify the local economy.
- Ensure that local people gain substantial benefit from it.
- Look to the long-term prosperity, rather than simply the short-term benefit of the region.
- Avoid harmful side-effects elsewhere in the national, regional or local economy.

If these things can be achieved, then there will be true synergy between tourism and the other parts of the rural economy.

5.3 Tourism is not a panacea. In chapter 2, we suggested that tourism development can bring substantial economic benefits to a rural area. However, it should not be seen as a panacea for the economic survival of rural areas. If tourism becomes too dominant in a rural area, it can cause damage to other economic sectors, for example by making an excessive call on the infrastructure of roads or water supplies or by attracting workers away from farming and other traditional activity. A way to maximise the benefits from tourism in rural areas is through the encouragement of synergies. Synergies may be developed at the community level, spreading the benefits from tourism to a wide range of enterprises from different sectors of the economy; or they may be developed within an enterprise, through diversification of its activity.

5.4 Synergies within the community. In many rural areas, it is good to regard tourism as a supplementary economic activity, through which other sectors may become more viable. This will be achieved, for example, if hotels buy their food from local farmers or suppliers, if they use local craftsmen to repair or extend their buildings, or if the tourists buy locally-made souvenirs. Local shops, garages, bus services and other resources - which are important to the life and the economy of the host community will be more likely to survive if tourists spend their money there. The local tax revenue gener-

ated by tourism may help to sustain community facilities and services. Residents may gain from investments in infrastructure which meet the needs of tourists. Local associations may gain income from direct sales to tourists, or from providing services to tourism events



Partners in a LEADER Group, Sweden

such as the Hultsfred Music Festival (case study 7.1).

5.5 Crafts-the obvious spin-off. Tourists like to buy souvenirs which are useful and distinctive. This desire provides an opportunity for craftsmen in the receiving area and is, indeed, one of the most direct and popular types of synergy to emerge in a tourist destination. This is well illustrated by the Valle d'Aosta (case study 5.3). The ceramic crafts industry on the Greek island of Sifnos includes over 30 workshops which produce traditional crockery and decorative items for tourists, providing jobs for over 200 people. In many areas, crafts which were at risk of disappearing have been saved or even revived in response to demand from tourists. Examples of this are the revival of traditional pottery and embroidery in the Alentejo region of Portugal; the work of Desa in Croatia (case study 5.4); and the revival of the once famous but later declined wood-carving workshops of Vytina, in Arcadia, Greece.

5.6 Business networks. The local economy benefits the most out of the creation of local synergies, if the local businesses co-operate to keep the income directly or indirectly created by tourism within the community. Such co-operation may be formal or informal.

Formal networks may take several forms. For example, the LEADER Initiative encouraged the creation of Local Quality Control Agreements among different kinds of business, aiming to set and maintain certain standards of quality services, through the implementation of a labelling system to the enterprises that met the standards. Such Local Quality Control Agreements have operated successfully in 16 areas of Greece, bringing together in a registered association several hotel and guesthouse owners, restaurateurs, craftsmen, food shopkeepers and farmers producing for the tourist market (see example in case study 3.5). Besides upgrading quality standards, these associations propagated local produce and local tradition, thus directing the income from tourism to local businesses, boosting at the same time local pride and preserving heritage.

5.7 A systematic approach to synergy-building. Synergies of the type outlined above can be promoted by any of the actors involved in tourism in an area - the farmers, the hoteliers, the craftsmen, the visitors themselves. A neat example of simple cooperation between a few enterprises is provided by case study 5.5. But the greatest benefit will come from a systematic approach to the issue by a leading organisation or group. Such an organisation may be a Local Development Agency (e.g. those established in the context of LEADER); an association created to promote and manage a specific tourism product (such as the Wine Route Association of case-study 3.3 or the Heritage Trail Association of case-study 4.2); a local authority or a voluntary body (such as Desa in case study 5.4).

5.8 An organisation wishing to promote synergies may use different means, for example:

- The compilation of an inventory of the area's resources, which may then be assessed as to their capacity for absorbing direct and multiplier benefits from tourism: this may then lead to the organising of events or other activities which encourage the gaining of such benefits. Case study 5.1 is an example of this approach.
- The creation of a focal point, such as the 'House of the Apple and the Pear' in Normandie-Maine Regional Park, described in 5.14 below.
- The encouragement of networks among local producers and service providers in the tourism sector, such as the Local Quality Control Agreements described above or the networks created by different types of tourist routes or trails.

5.9 Synergies within an enterprise. Synergies may be also created internally, at individual enterprise level, among the main activities of the enterprise and the services developed for tourists. In Chapter 1, we described the changes which have affected farmers in recent years, and the strong need which many farmers now have to diversify their sources of income. Tourism is one option which many farmers have chosen to exploit: indeed, some farmers now make more money

from tourism than from their farming activity. There are many ways to create synergies between farming and other activities that a farmer may choose to undertake to serve the tourists. Offering accommodation in the farmer's house or other suitably converted farm buildings, providing sporting or other nature-based activities, direct sales of farm products to tourists - properly packaged or processed- and catering facilities with a distinct identity are the most common ways used by farmers to target the tourist market.

5.10 Agrotourism. Many thousands of farmers in France, Germany, Italy and other countries gain a significant second income through offering accommodation or activities to tourists. These services, often referred to as agro- or agri-tourism take a variety of forms, for example:

- Bed and breakfast - the visitor is accommodated in the farmhouse and offered a substantial breakfast as part of the service. Some visitors stay one night or two, others for a week or more.
- Half, or full, pension - an evening meal may be added (half pension) or both mid-day and evening meals (full pension), all provided by the farmer. In France, the offer of evening meal is called *table d'hôte* (the host's table): this means eating, with the farmer, a generous meal with dishes made from the farm's own products, with local wine. In this way, the farmer offers a special experience to the visitor, and adds value to his own products.



Dinner lounge in a farmhouse waiting for a group of tourists, Tverdica, Bulgaria

- Self-catering accommodation - many farmers do not wish to cook for their visitors, but have buildings which they have converted into holiday flats or cottages, equipped so that the visitors can cook their own meals.
- Activities for visitors - who may either be staying on the farm or simply coming in for the day. The activities may include horse-riding and pony-trekking, fishing, shooting, water sports, educational visits, and opportunities to 'pick your own food' (such as soft fruit). Gize farm

(case study 5.2) provides a versatile example of this.

5.11 Such farm-based holidays bring money into the farm economy, and promote contact between rural people and town-based visitors. The work of Desa in attracting French visitors to the farms of resettled refugees in Croatia (case study 5.4) is a poignant example of this. Moreover, farm-based holidays can help to sustain the traditional features of the rural landscape. For example, in the National Parks of England, many traditional barns are no longer used for farming. Several dozen of them have been converted into camping barns, which provide a new life for the building, simple accommodation for walkers, and a modest secondary income for the farmer.

5.12 Many of these farm-based services are marketed through national organisations, such as Gites de France, Urlaub auf dem Bauernhof (Germany), Magyar Falusi Turizmus (Hungary), Irish Farm Holidays, Agriturismo (Italy) and Privetur (Portugal). The quality of the accommodation, and of other services provided, may be regulated by these associations or by national tourist boards.

5.13 Direct sales of farm products. Another response by farmers to the financial pressures upon them is to add value to their products by processing them and by direct sale to customers. Tourism can greatly assist this process. Tourists may visit the farm, or stop at a stall run by the farmer beside the road or in the local market town, in order to buy preserves, sausages, cheese and other dairy products, wine, cider and other drinks, items made from wool or animal skins, and so on. The Villany-Siklos Wine Route (case study 3.3), the Slovenian Heritage Trail (case study 4.2) and the Zala Wine Route (case study 8.3) all encourage visitors to call at farms during their journey through the area. The Cilento region in Italy has achieved a remarkable growth of the mozzarella cheese industry, following an effective and clever marketing of this traditional product through direct sales to tourists at farm outlets along main roads. Local hotels and restaurants can also be a significant market for local farm produce, such as meat, fruit and vegetables.

5.14 At Barenton, France, the Regional Park authority of Normandie-Maine has converted a group of traditional farm buildings to form the "House of the Apple and the Pear", where visitors can discover the local traditions of growing fruit and producing cider, calvados and other drinks. From the centre, the car-borne tourist can follow itineraries to visit farms to sample and

purchase these products. Thus spending by visitors flows out into the local economy and helps to sustain the traditional farming activity and the landscape which is created by it.

5.15 Farm restaurants. Styria, in Austria, provides another example of adding value to farm products. It has a provincial law which permits farmers to run farm-based restaurants, which are called 'buschen-schenken' because their standard symbol is a cut bush mounted on a pole. The law imposes two conditions: that the farmer may not offer hot food, which would compete directly with traditional restaurants; and that at least 80% by value of the food and drink sold in the buschen-schank shall be produced by the farm itself. The result is that several hundred farms are able through their farm restaurants to get full retail value, plus a service charge, for their wine, cider, meat products, bread, vegetables, fruit, milk etc; and the people from surrounding towns are able to find an agreeable meal in a rural setting.



Farmers' wives selling onions to tourists, Potes, Cantabria, Spain

5.16 Creating a culture of synergy. Certainly, synergies will not fall from the sky. They are the result of a long process that involves the building of trust among enterprises, understanding the opportunities for co-operation, introducing a collective dimension in business thinking. In other words, a culture of cooperation should emerge among local enterprises, to make synergy possible. Such a culture can bring the benefits of a

better circulation of information; opening up of new business opportunities; learning from other tourism enterprises; improving quality of service; establishing a closer relation to the market. The creation of synergies is often related to the process of community participation and involvement in local decisions about tourism development. These issues are further explored in chapters 6 and 7.

5.17 Local Economic Analysis. A Local Economic

Analysis, depicting and analysing the flow of money and resources within the local area, may uncover strategic aspects of the local economy that need to be strengthened in order to get a better balance. If the analysis is made with active participation of the local population, it may also increase their commitment to and understanding of the importance of developing synergies as a way of boosting local incomes.



Questions, arising from chapter 5, for you to reflect upon

We invite you to focus upon the rural area in which you work, or upon a specific rural area with which you are familiar.

1. **What** place do you perceive that tourism has in the local economy of your chosen area?
2. **Does** tourism appear to complement, or to compete (for labour, resources etc) with other sectors in the local economy of that area?
3. **Does** the spending by tourists, or by tourism enterprises, bring visible benefits to other sectors of the local economy, such as crafts or shops, garages and other rural services?
4. **Are** there business networks which can be used to promote synergies between tourism and other parts of the local economy?
5. **Is** agro-tourism well developed in the area? Would it meet the real needs of farmers? How could it be further encouraged or developed?
6. **Has** there been any formal analysis of the economic impact of rural tourism in the area?

Case study 5.1

Hyypä village, Finland: promoting the whole village



Tourists have the opportunity to enjoy the tranquillity of unspoilt nature



A dancing trip in the forest

Hyypä village, in Southern Ostrobothnia, provides an example of a systematic initiative to develop synergy between tourism and a wide range of enterprises and services within this rural community.

Hyypä is said to be the longest village in Finland - 40 km long! It has 1,100 inhabitants. At one end of the village is Lauhavuori national park; at the other end is Hyypä dale, a national cultural landscape. Nature is thus a major attraction for the Finnish and foreign tourists who come to Hyypä.

In 2001 the project "Hyypä for tomorrow" was launched, funded by the LEADER+ programme. The aim of the project was to market all the resources of the village as a tourist attraction. The first step was to list all the services in the village - craftsmen, artists, food producers and processors and all kinds of enterprises including those related to tourism. These included bed and breakfast accommodation, cultural sites, hunting trips, field trips into the surrounding wilderness, snow-mobile safaris etc.

All these services were then described and indexed in a brochure "At the Hyypä village". This brochure also listed events to be held throughout the year, such as cross-country skiing, mud jogging, art exhibitions, art camps, church services and the Hyypä marathon held on 21 September. This brochure is widely publicised and distributed.

To attract further publicity and sales, Hyypä village has its own stand at the annual Kauhajoki Food Fair. This stand presents the products and the skills of the village - for example, potatoes prepared to a special local recipe, and displays by a felter, a field guide, a candle-maker, musicians, a butter-maker and others. Visitors to the fair are invited to take part in events in the village.

The next step in the "Hyypä for tomorrow" project is to tailor different kinds of trips for specified tourist groups and to have a single telephone number from which all services can be ordered. Hyypä has just been chosen as the village of the year in Southern Ostrobothnia.

Contact: <http://hyypa.kauhajoki.fi>

Case study 5.2

Eco Agro-tourist Farm in Gize, Poland

An imaginative example of tourism development on a farm is provided by the enterprise of the Marczak family on their farm at Gize, in north-east Poland.

This farm, about 20 hectares in extent, is set in a picturesque area of hills and forests in the Mazurian Lake District. It is within easy reach of features for walking, cycling, canoeing and scenic driving, such as the Kurtynia River, the Augustowski Canal, Wigry Lake with its 18 islands, the primeval forests of Borecka and Rominicka, and the Baltic coastline.

The aim of the Marczak family is to offer a complete holiday on their farm. Tourists can relax in comfortable conditions and a clean environment, and enjoy a different kind of entertainment. The house is built in local style, with comfortable rooms for up to 20 guests. The farm includes a 4-hectare park with two small lakes and a beach. The lakes offer fishing for carp, tench, sturgeon and pike; guests can use a rowing or sailing boat or a raft. Children can use a fine playground with a tower, swings, sand-pit and chutes; and can also play in an 'Indian village', where there are tepee tents for 12 people, near the lake and the forest. Guests can sleep in tents even during very cold nights, particularly when they make bonfires: near the tents, there is a large grill with benches for up to 40 guests.

The farm prepares its own food, not only for the guests but also for other tourists. This includes fish, and a variety of vegetarian food - vegetables, fresh fruit (apples, pears, cherries, sour cherries, plums, gooseberries and blackcurrants), honey, pasteurised jam without sugar, also dried fruits from the Marczaks' farm.

The farmer's pride and joy are the wholemeal flour products, such as onion rolls, apple pie and plum pie. Excellent bread, pasta, cheese or apple rolls are baked of wholemeal flour, called Torka. Recently, the farmer planted a hazel grove (with 350 trees) and raspberries. The family has received an Ecoland certificate for the quality of their organic wheat and vegetables. There are two full-time employees in the farm, also some part-time during the tourist season.



Traditional food products prepared in the farm

Mr and Mrs Marczak were educated as German language teachers. They have proved their success as farmers and as tourist entrepreneurs. Their son and daughter have grown up into the business: they are excellent guides to the Mazurian Lake District, and they speak English and German very well. They plan to publish a special tourist guide for the area.



View to a lake in the Eco-agrotourist Farm in Gize

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Case study 5.3

Adding value to wood through tourism, Valle d'Aosta, Italy

Valle d'Aosta in Italy provides a very long-established example of how a rural community may create income and jobs through adding value to forest products, with substantial help from tourism.

Valle d'Aosta is an autonomous region in northern Italy. It has a long wide central valley in the Alpine mountains, with many side valleys. It has been populated for many thousands of years: the main town of Aosta was founded during the Roman Empire two thousand years ago.

The economy of the valley rests mainly on up-land farming; some manufacturing and service industries; and particularly tourism. Tourists come throughout the year, to see the mountain scenery and to walk, ski etc.

The flanks of the valley contain forests of pine, birch and other trees. The people use the timber from this forest to make houses, furniture and tools and for fire-wood and other purposes.

They have developed, over a very long period, a strong tradition of craftsmanship in wood. This tradition is reflected in a remarkable heritage of skills and products in wood, which is strongly supported by the public authorities. In each of the side valleys, the regional authority gives financial support to a training school, where young people can learn the craft skills. In this way, the long-established skills are continued, and there is also constant innovation, with new and imaginative products in wood.

Every year, on the last two days of January, a fair-la Fiera di Sant'Orso - is held in the town of Aosta, as it has been since the year 1001 AD. In those two days, the craftspeople and the students in the training schools assemble to meet each other and to show their products to the public. The streets are lined with hundreds of stalls selling different products made of wood by local people -bowls, sculptures, carved flowers, jugs, boxes, ladders, barrels and many other items. Thousands of visitors come to buy the products. The workshops of many of the craftsmen are open for visiting for the last six days in January. The products are then on sale all round the year, at shops much visited by tourists; and are also exported from

the valley for sale.

This long-standing tradition produces full-time jobs for many people in the valley, and extra income for many farmers and others. Value is added to the wood grown in the valley and to the skills of the people.

Contact: <http://www.santorso.com>



A stall-holder at the Fiera di Sant' Orso

Case study 5.4

Desa, Croatia: tourism-related enterprise for refugees

Desa is a women's organisation based in Dubrovnik. It was founded in 1993 as a peace and humanitarian NGO to meet the psychological needs of women victims of the war, both displaced women from Croatia and refugees from Bosnia. Today, nine years later, Desa's main aim is to promote economic and community development through public education, while continuing to provide a space for women to support one another.

Desa's initial programme was a response to the situation in which Dubrovnik found itself in 1991-92, a city crowded with refugees and displaced persons in an environment devastated by the war. Desa chose to offer help to refugee women who were wandering around aimlessly in a traumatized state, with nothing to do but queue up for humanitarian aid. The aim was to offer some activity which could keep them busy and help them feel useful, in order to regain their self-esteem.

Desa organised workshops in hand-craft activities: this represented a form of therapy, and the finished product could be sold and thus provide a small income. As the refugees started returning to their homes, Desa put more accent on self-help activities, with courses in sewing, weaving and traditional decoration of homes. Many of the refugees came from the nearby region of Konavle, which had a tradition of fine embroidered costumes. To make new costumes, they needed silk thread. Desa therefore secured from France a small quantity of silkworm and purchased 1,000 saplings of dwarf mulberry tree, as the start for a silk project. Today, about 25 families in the Konavle region are engaged in silk-worm breeding, and the production of embroidery has started. Embroidered items are sold to tourists in the fine show-room that Desa has created, alongside its weaving workshop, in the historic quarantine building outside the great walls of Dubrovnik.

Since the main economic activity of the Dubrovnik region is tourism, Desa gave priority to educational programmes aimed at enabling women to take part in tourism-related activities, using their homes, the pro-

duce from their land, their animals, and their rich environment. Desa sees the rural tourism project as a "return to life" programme, a form of self-help activity, which can further the economic well-being of the local farming population in the most environment-friendly way, by bringing potential customers directly to the farmers' doorsteps, and with them a new life to the community.

The rural tourism project was first started in the year 2000, in cooperation with the French organisation 'Accueil Paysan' based in Grenoble, which agreed to publicise in their French brochure the farmhouse accommodation in the rebuilt houses of the Croatian villages of Popovici and Radovcici. After the first year's trial experience, Desa organised in the spring of 2001 a series of educational programmes for the local hosts, to enable them to improve their hospitality options and to communicate better with their clients. This included a

course in French language and basic requirements of French tourists. The result is that a modest flow of French visitors has begun to arrive, bringing much-needed income to these poor families.

Desa hopes that this kind of project will persuade the younger people to recognize the job opportunities within their home region. With the tourist economy developed, more young people may stay on with their families, instead of thinking about emigrating elsewhere.

During the 2002 summer season Desa intends to organise special courses in embroidery and silk spinning, for the holiday-making visitors. This will serve as the platform for Desa's future educational programmes, which will relate to organic farming, alternative ways of exploiting the endemic flora, the introduction of new species of

fruit or vegetables, and new technologies in vine and olive growing.

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Jany Hansal, founder of Desa, with a refugee from Bosnia in the show-room in Dubrovnik

Case study 5.5

Mortelenboeren, the Netherlands: a joint enterprise to encourage synergies

DE Mortelen is a protected landscape area situated between 3 cities -Eindhoven, Tilburg and Hertogenbosch- in the Netherlands.

A few years ago five entrepreneurs-3 farmers, an innkeeper and a miller - who live near the reserve came together to set up a combined venture, under the name 'Mortelenboeren'. This offers to visitors a recreational package, which brings benefit to all the partners. People visit them for one day and go from farm to farm by covered wagon.

A short description of the day. The visitors:

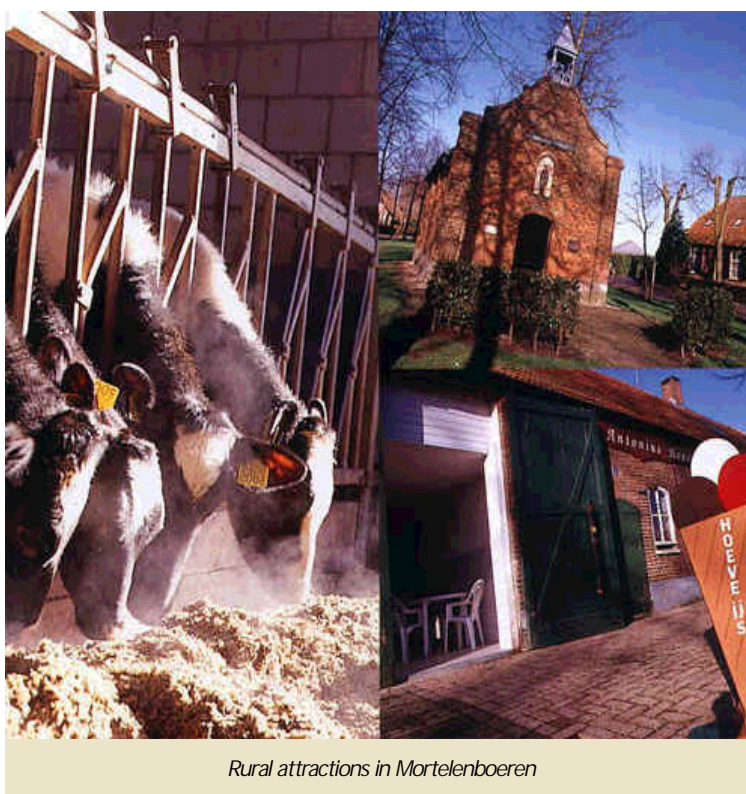
- Start at the cafe, with coffee and a regional delicacy.
 - Visit a water mill, where the miller tells them about the history of the building and shows his professional skills. His wife bakes fresh bread, which can be tasted.
 - Visit a goat farm. They are guided around the farm and are told about the keeping of goats, their health-care and breeding. They see different kinds of goats and also get the chance to taste goat milk and goat cheese.
 - Visit a free-range chicken and cattle farm. A typical regional lunch is served here, and then the farmer shows them around his farm and tells them about life on the farm.
 - Visit a dairy-cattle farm. An expert guide describes the history of the area around this farm and they visit the little chapel, which stands close to the farm.
- After that the farmer's wife lets them taste her home-made ice cream.
- Drink a special liqueur in the covered wagon on the way back.
 - Finish their visit back at the cafe, with soup and bread and butter.

Two years ago, the partners produced a brochure for a

wide range of specific regional products and tourist activities. This includes, for example, an activity-farm with camping, a deer-farm with a picnic place and possible overnight stay, a cheese-maker, an asparagus grower, a fruit grower, a vegetable grower, a plant grower, a gardener, home made ice-cream, flower arranging, a water-mill and Limousin meat. Recently the partners organised a special day, on which people went from one enterprise to another by bicycle. This was a great success.

In this triangle are several landscape reserves. The government is making plans to connect all these reserves with each other with ecological zones. All the landscape reserves together will carry the name 'het Groene Woud', which means 'the green forest'.

It will be an attractive region for tourists, but also for weekend-recreation for the people from the surrounding cities. This development will offer more opportunities for the local entrepreneurs.



Rural attractions in Mortelenboeren

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Website www.mortelenboeren.nl

CHAPTER 6.

Entrepreneurship: how to encourage enterprises related to rural tourism

6.1 This chapter focuses upon entrepreneurship, which is a major driving force behind rural tourism. As a growing economic sector, tourism depends upon substantial investment and upon effective management. A large part of the action lies within the private sector, or within organisations which (whatever their legal status) are obliged to operate in an entrepreneurial way. Those who wish to promote tourism in an area therefore need to understand the nature of entrepreneurship, and how it may be encouraged and supported.

6.2 The nature of entrepreneurship. What is entrepreneurship? It may be defined as:

the skill of creating and running organisations or businesses whose viability depends upon income secured in the open market

This definition implies that entrepreneurship is an active, creative and inventive process, whose success depends upon the ability to 'read' and respond to the market, to take well-calculated risks in production and in investment, and to make effective use of resources such as staff, money, buildings and raw materials.

6.3 It has been said that "entrepreneurs are born, not created by education". Indeed it is true that many of the most effective entrepreneurs in tourism, as in other fields, are natural businessmen, without much formal education. Nevertheless, many of the skills essential to entrepreneurship can be learned, and it is certain that many entrepreneurs emerge through personal development on the job. Moreover, a striking characteristic of many entrepreneurs is that they and their enterprises evolve, change and grow over time, in response to their own growing confidence as well as to the opportunities or difficulties presented by the market.



Farm shop selling local products in Smaland, Sweden

6.4 This pattern of growth helps to explain why, at any point in time, the enterprises in a particular area may vary greatly in size and in professionalism. Within the private sector of tourism, one may find enterprises essentially of three types:

- the individual or family business
- the small company
- the larger company.

These three types are briefly described below.

6.5 The individual or family business usually operates on a relatively small scale, often within or very close to their home, with limited capital commitment and mainly using their own labour. Such enterprises can make decisions easily, and can cope with fluctuations in trade by economising where necessary. But they may find it difficult to raise the capital for significant expenditure, and to keep abreast of changes in the 'climate' of markets, regulations, tax systems etc within which they are operating. They tend to expand their business in a step-by-step way, avoiding risky adventures. Most farm-based tourism enterprises, small guest-houses and tourist-related shops fall within this category. Fine examples are the farm at Gize (case study 5.2), Koskenkorva Banquet Catering Service (case study 6.1), and Szele Stableyard (case study 6.3).

6.6 Running a tourism business within a single family can put great strain upon that family, particularly where the tourism season is long. This may prompt the family to seek help, and to move towards the small-company model. A neat example of this is the holiday camp of Sudersand Semesterby on the Swedish island of Faro. This was previously owned by the municipality, but was bought in 1994 by two couples working together. To spend 215.000 Euro to buy it, and have invested a further 430.000 Euro since then, ploughing back all profits into the enterprise. The annual turnover has increased from 140.000 to 355.000 Euro. The camp consists of 42 rentable cabins, and a youth hostel, plus a restaurant which is now let to another entrepreneur. During the tourism season, the two couples are able to alternate on the management work, so that the strain is reasonable; the two husbands have other jobs in the off-season.

6.7 The small company, with up to (say) 25 employees, is usually controlled by a family or a small number of people who are locally based. Such companies tend to have a loyalty to the local area, and to be ready therefore to employ local people, use local suppliers etc.

Their staff often includes part-time or seasonal workers, to suit the pattern of tourism and therefore of work, and this enables them to control costs and to cope with fluctuations in trade: a fine example of this is provided by Gervide Gard, Gotland, Sweden (case study 6.4). The team of staff in such an enterprise may be large enough to allow the manager or others to specialise on marketing, regulations, accountancy and other aspects of the business; and their level of turnover may allow them to amass or to borrow capital for significant new investment or upgrading.

6.8 The larger company usually has multiple facilities, not always in the same region, for example a chain of hotels, restaurants or spas. They may have no strong loyalty to any one region, and may seek their employees (particularly in the higher grades) and their suppliers from outside the area. They are usually highly professional, and well aware of what tourists expect by way of standards; and they command the resources needed to meet new market demands.

6.9 A local culture of entrepreneurship. These three types, or scales, of enterprise can usually co-exist well in a rural area, because they tend to appeal to (and aim at) different segments of the overall tourism market of the area. They make their entrepreneurial decisions separately. But they usually have sufficient contact with each other - through chambers of trade, tourism associations, rotary clubs or more informal networks - to share a culture of entrepreneurship. This culture may be distinctive to that particular area, and will be reflected in the formal image that the area has as a tourism destination and in the experience which it offers to



Traditional craftsman in Spain

tourists. Case study 7.2 provides an example of a new network of tourism enterprises set up by young businessmen in a small town in Spain. A strong geographic contrast to this is provided by the description, at case study 6.5, of a Sami entrepreneur in northern Finland, who bases his tourism activity on the long-established culture of his people.

6.10 Trust and confidence. The local culture of entrepreneurship can also be seen in terms of how entrepreneurship is valued in a community. People may not be used to acting as entrepreneurs. The social context - such as a feudal or hierarchical structure in local society - may hinder the emergence of the confidence and trust which are an essential basis for entrepreneurship and for transactions between entrepreneurs. To create that confidence and trust, a supportive network may be needed. Studies show that successful entrepreneurs spend much time networking, and that both their professional and private networks are important for their success. Therefore, support for networking may do much to stimulate creativity and innovation and thus to enhance and diversify the tourism product of an area. Such support may well come from local authorities or other public bodies.

6.11 Motivation. Why does an enterprise start, or grow? Very often, the answer lies in need, or in perceived opportunity. An example of need as a driving force is provided by the farm Gervide Gard, case study 6.4, where the farmer felt obliged to move progressively out of farming and to find a new source of income, but also had a vision of a tourism enterprise which he might well have pursued anyway. An example of opportunity as a driving force is provided by Koskenkorva, case study 6.1, where the entrepreneur saw the potential of her manor house as a setting for tourism activity. The precise motivation will be different for each family or company. In a survey in 1983 in the English county of Herefordshire, farmers gave four main reasons for their decision to provide tourist accommodation: to increase their annual income (35%), to offset falling income from agriculture (20%), to find a new use for redundant farm buildings (16%), and to enjoy the company of visitors (25%).

6.12 Stimulating enterprise. The present policy of most countries (WTO, 1998) is that the private sector is expected to play the lead role in tourism development, but that the public sector should take initiative on those things which the private sector cannot easily tackle. But practical experience in many rural regions shows this minimalist approach is not enough, if the development of rural tourism is to be both effective and sustainable. The public sector can play a very effective role as facilitator and stimulus for private enterprise. This role may involve the use of a variety of means, including:

➤ **strategic planning**, to clarify the role that tourism may play in the economy and life of the area, the

resources that may be used to develop it, the tourism markets which may be addressed etc: we describe this in more detail in chapter 8

➤ **provision of infrastructure**, such as water supplies, roadworks, public transport, public open spaces, promenades, sports facilities etc

➤ **marketing**, in which the public sector may need to take the lead, though in close cooperation with the private sector

➤ **financial and fiscal supports or incentives**, which can help greatly in the early stages of creating or expanding a significant tourism destination: for example, in the 1960s the Austrian government gave a powerful impetus to the expansion of farm tourism in the mountain areas by offering capital grants of up to 60% of the cost of farmhouse extensions of up to 20 tourist beds, and gave tax holidays of 10 years on the income from these new businesses

➤ **credit guarantees** or mutual guarantee systems, which can help entrepreneurs to start or expand their business

➤ **advice and training**, which can be particularly helpful to family enterprises. Examples are the training for enterprises offered by the Walloon ironworks organisation (case study 4.1); the training offered by the Heritage Trail Association in Slovenia, which has helped over 200 householders and farmers to start or extend their tourism enterprises (see case study 4.2); the training of craftsmen offered by the Valle d'Aosta region (case study 5.3); the training of refugee women offered by Desa (case study 5.4); and the nationwide training offered by the Irish Farm Holidays organisation to its members.

6.13. Stimulation and support for enterprise, of the kinds described above, may be needed in rural areas throughout Europe. There is a particular challenge in the countries of central and eastern Europe, which have only recently moved from the command economy towards a greater reliance on the market economy. Examples in this Guide - the Villány-Siklos Wine Route (case study 3.3), Gize Farm (case study 5.2) and Szele Stableyard (case study 6.3) - show that entrepreneurship is indeed to be found in these countries. But there is much scope for action by public and non-profit organisations to support and stimulate such entrepreneurship. An example of such action is the mutual guarantee fund, grant-aided by the Carpathian Foundation in south-east Poland, which enabled small enterprises to secure credit on viable terms to expand their activity. Case study 8.5 describes the nationwide training offered by the Estonian Rural Tourism Organisation to its members.

6.14 Co-operation between enterprises. A key aspect of entrepreneurship is cooperation between enterprises within an area, or within a specialist sector of the tourism trade. This cooperation may relate to marketing, as described in Chapter 3, but also to many other

aspects of the trade, such as standards, booking systems, mutual help, training, advice etc. The Tzoumerka LAQC (case study 3.5) and the Walloon ironworks (case study 4.1) provide good examples of such co-operation. The members of the Peak District Farm Holidays Association in England, which was set up in the 1980s, have gained great benefit through co-operative marketing, a unified booking system, regular meetings and discussions. They recently secured a substantial grant from the European Union to enable all the members to be equipped with computers and Internet access, plus software for handling accounts, booking systems and related matters. Case study 8.5 describes the nationwide cooperation between members of the Estonian Rural Tourism Organisation.

6.15 Social entrepreneurship. In recent years, there has been growing emphasis upon a different form of initiative, namely social entrepreneurship. This might be defined as 'risk-taking in the public interest'. It may be pursued by local authorities; by non-profit companies, such as the Women's Cooperative at Agios Antonios (case study 6.2) or the Vydra initiative (paragraph 6.16 below); groups of enthusiasts, such as the local history group at Frojel on the west coast of Gotland (see paragraph 4.13); by trade unions, as in the El Teularet development (case study 3.2); or by organisations which bring together the public, private and voluntary sectors, such as the Local Action Groups set up under the LEADER programme (see example on paragraph 6.17 below).



Four shops and a cafe, all run by women in the Swedish village of Bode

6.16 Initiative by non-government organisations (NGOs). Three NGOs in the Cierny Balog area in Slovakia, who each run educational or agro-tourism programmes, are now collaborating in a programme called Vrcharske Putovanie ('Walking around Polana'). After a year of preparation (including marketing research, analysis and negotiations with entrepreneurs), the three NGOs set up a travel agency to promote the use of tourism resources in the region and thus to create

employment. The resources include a variety of private accommodation; a range of outdoor activities, including educational tours, cycling, climbing, horse-riding, visits to nature reserves and farms; and traditional crafts, such as needlework and products in wood, leather and stone. The agency offers a variety of tourism products, based on 14 different combinations of services and activities and with varied length of stay. The target markets include families with children, mostly from urban areas; youngsters keen on challenging outdoor activities; and couples, with an emphasis on romantic holidays. The NGOs are now planning the construction of an amphitheatre for sports and cultural events in a beautiful valley. They are determined to sustain a creative approach to management, through constant monitoring and research of market needs, so that new attractive activities are added every season.

6.17 Initiative by local action groups. In the LEADER II programme in the Salento peninsula of southern Italy,

the Local Action Group made a deal with the owners of a dozen disused houses in the small historic town of Specchia. The owners did not have the capital or the confidence to renovate these buildings. The Action Group has taken a 10-year lease of the properties; has restored and converted them into modern dwellings, with LEADER funds; is marketing them as tourist flats, with the net income going to the owners; and will hand them back after the 10 years to the owners, who can then choose whether to keep them in tourist use or to devote them to other purposes. In the Navarra mountains of Spain, the Cederna-Garalur Development Agency has created a "tele-library" for drawing in information on tourism facilities, services and projects and for providing distant booking services to almost 30 remote villages in the area; and a "virtual incubator" to support the creation of new enterprises and products in the tourism sector by providing on-line help.



Questions, arising from chapter 6, for you to reflect upon

We invite you to focus upon the rural area in which you work, or upon a specific rural area with which you are familiar.

1. **What** is the character of the tourism industry in your chosen rural area? What kinds of enterprises are involved? Do they include many individual or family businesses? and small companies? and larger companies?
2. **Would** you say that there is a strong culture of entrepreneurship in the area? If so, how is this expressed, in relation to rural tourism? If not, how might such a culture be created?
3. **What** is being done to stimulate enterprise in rural tourism in the area, in any of the ways outlined in paragraph 6.12?
4. **Is** there good cooperation between rural tourism enterprises in the area? If not, how might such cooperation be promoted?
5. **Are** there examples of social entrepreneurship in rural tourism in the area, in the sense defined in paragraph 6.15?

Case study 6.1

Koskenkorva Banquet Catering Service, Finland

Koskenkorva Banquet Catering Service is an example of an enterprise based on opportunity, in this case the fine setting of a traditional manor house.

The Catering Service has its main facilities in an old farm manor house, built in 1886 in a style typical of the Southern Ostrobothnia region. The hostess Paivi Koskenkorva started the enterprise in 1997, with her husband Martti. Her idea was to use the setting of the manor house to offer banquets, family parties and all other festivities in traditional style, but tailored to suit the occasion and the group concerned. Her catering has become famous for its traditional but distinct food: she emphasises the quality of her products, and uses only Finnish ingredients produced by herself or supplied by small local entrepreneurs.

The catering service is available all year, but only by order and for groups. The customer always has his say in the planning of the occasion. Summer is the busiest season, when for example weddings and birthday parties can be arranged for up to 230 persons, and up to 30 people can also stay over night. Groups travelling by bus and visiting the summer festivals of Southern Ostrobothnia can enjoy a pleasant lunch with special entertainment and even stay overnight. In winter, groups of up to 50 people can be entertained.

The setting of the manor house, with its gardens and outbuildings, is an experience in itself. Meetings, dances and performances are held in the great barn, with the host and the hostess leading the games to make people laugh and relax. Guests can enjoy a sauna, a walk down to the river for a swim, or rides through the countryside on a cart pulled by an old tractor.

Mrs Koskenkorva is now considering further investment to create more overnight accommodation and more space for entertaining groups in the winter.

Contact: <http://www.trahteerl.com>



The great barn



Organising Banquets in a traditional style

Case study 6.2

Women's Cooperative, Agios Antonios, Central Macedonia, Greece

This Cooperative is an example of social entrepreneurship, focused on adding value to local products and traditional skills through sales of food to residents and visitors within a rural region. Agios Antonios is a small village in the region of Central Macedonia, near the city of Thessaloniki. It has about 600 permanent residents and is in a relatively poor area in the mountains.

The Women's Agricultural Cooperative of Traditional Food Products in Agios Antonios was formed in the summer of 1999. Its aim is to enhance the family incomes of its members, to promote traditional high-quality food products, and to encourage initiatives in agrotourism.

The first step was taken by five local residents, who took part in a seminar organised by the Greek Ministry of Agriculture on "Processing and Standardisation of Traditional Products". They immediately realised the opportunity for their village. Many of the village people are second-generation immigrants from the Black Sea region, who brought with them traditional domestic recipes. These recipes might be the basis for enabling the village women, who are low in self-esteem and have no income of their own, to develop their personal skills and to create products which could appeal to a 'niche' market.

During the period 1997 to 1999, the women took part in a pilot project, working voluntarily and financing their own activities through an informal cooperative. They had to endure the suspicion of the rest of the villagers, mainly the men, and to fit the extra hard work into their daily lives: but they showed great enthusiasm and a strong determination to succeed. They had the active advice and support of the LEADER Development Agency of East Thessaloniki, and encouragement from the Centre for the Study of Women's Issues set up by the Ministry of Internal Affairs under the NOW Initiative.

The real breakthrough came in the summer of 1999, when the Greek Employment Organisation gave them a grant of 82,000 Euro to start the formal cooperative. They moved into empty warehouses owned by the Regional Agricultural Cooperative, and started producing a variety of traditional food products, such as hand-made pasta, pastry sheets, jams, fruit preserves, biscuits and cakes. They focused on quality rather than quantity, emphasising hand-made products and using old techniques of preparation, traditional equipment, and local raw materials such as flour, fruits, cereals etc. The cooperative now has 26 members. They have taken part in training programmes organised by the Ministry

of Agriculture on hygiene in food production, organisation, marketing and operation of a cooperative, use of computers etc. In this way, they have increased their self-esteem, secured for

the first time a supplementary income, and learnt how to collaborate and organise their activities. The cooperative has a five-member administrative committee. All the members attend regular monthly meetings, when payments are made, and an annual assembly when they discuss problems and opportunities.

The cooperative runs a charming shop, used by local people and by day visitors from nearby towns, and they also have about 30 wholesale customers. They receive school groups, and demonstrate food preparation to the children. They recently expanded their activities to include catering, mainly for events organised by prefectures and other public bodies: this provides them with work during the summer, when they are not visited by schools and when day-visitors usually prefer to go to the seaside. They have published a recipe booklet funded by LEADER.

They are planning to give their visitors a more 'hands-on' experience, allowing them to roll out pastry or join other steps in the food production process. They also hope to create a small animal farm, to allow children and young people to familiarise themselves with countryside animals which are not present in cities. They wish to promote organic farming methods in their area, since there is a growing awareness among consumers about the origin and quality of agricultural products and the impact of farming on the environment. They have managed to raise funds to buy land, and intend in due course to move to more modern premises.

They are reputed to be an exemplary cooperative, and are visited by a growing number of schools from all over North Greece and delegations from Balkan and Mediterranean countries who wish to share and learn from their experience. The cooperative members have made a conscious effort to extend and to transfer their knowledge, by taking part in tourism and rural development fairs, by presentations in TV documentaries or press releases, and by meeting people from other localities who wish to set up their own cooperatives.

Contact: Ms Despina Ioannidou,
President of the Cooperative, tel +30 23960 41807



Traditional handmade pastry

Case study 6.3

Szelle Stableyard, Hungary

This is an example of a family enterprise, which has evolved from personal skills into a high-quality tourism business.

Hungary has a worldwide reputation as an equestrian nation. After the political changes of 1990, many entrepreneurs realised the opportunity for tourism development offered by horse-riding. The country has an extensive network of riding trails or open areas, in a varied and beautiful countryside.

The Szelle Stableyard, now a flourishing tourism enterprise, has evolved from the long-established interest in horses of Kornel Szelle, his wife and their two daughters. Mr. Szelle's parents were farmers, so his love for horses started in childhood. He studied agriculture at Szarvas College, and then worked for an agricultural university while raising chickens at home. At this time he and his wife kept "hobby horses", so their two daughters have been near horses since they were born. In 1990, they began to breed horses, using the 2 hectares of land which Mr Szelle had inherited. From 1994 they had a livery stable, and they began to offer lessons in riding. In 1998 they decided to move into the tourism enterprise, and opened the Szelle Stableyard, which has been operating successfully since then. It is situated in a beautiful part of Western Transdanubia. They built a guest-house for 12 people, with six comfortable double-bed rooms with bathrooms, and a common mess-room where the guests can cook and eat. Nearby are the two stables, housing 15 Kisberi Halfbred horses. They offer horse-riding tuition, horseback and carriage riding, riding tours and holidays. Much of the surrounding countryside is unenclosed, so riders can use it freely for trail riding.

The enterprise is run by Mr Szelle, his wife, their two daughters and a groom. The two men and one of the girls work with the horses: Mrs Szelle and the other girl do the housework and help the guests. Most of the guests are Hungarian in the summer, but in the other seasons there are more foreigners, mainly German, Austrian and Swiss.

Mr Szelle says that the main assets for their enterprise are the beautiful environment, the expertise with horses, the language skills and the connections they have made with clients, in particular through use of modern technology. 80% of the guests are informed through the Internet and book the rooms by e-mail.

The Hungarian Equestrian Tourism Association runs a qualification system, which gives from 1 to 5 "horse-shoes" for each equestrian enterprise. The criteria include environmental factors, horse keeping, aptitude, equestrian service and human skills. In 1999 the Szelle Stableyard got the highest qualification, 5 horseshoes.

The Szelle family have plans for further development of the enterprise. They want to build another stable and a building with coffee-place for guests who do not stay overnight. The older daughter is studying agriculture at university, and the other intends to go there when she leaves grammar school. They intend to continue the enterprise.

Contact:

e-mail szelle@axelero.hu, <http://www.go.to/szelle>



Horse-riding in Szelle Stableyard, Hungary

Case study 6.4

Gervide Gard, Gotland, Sweden

This is an example of a family-based enterprise in farm tourism, taking advantage of the special character of an island region.

Gervide Gard is a farm, lying at the centre of the Swedish island of Gotland (where the Euracademy Summer School was held). The owners of the farm used to have dairy cows: but in 1988 ill-health obliged the farmer to give up milk production and to consider alternative ways of using the farm. The family decided to move into rural tourism.

Today there are many activities at the farm. They still have a variety of animals, including horses, and horse-riding is one of the main activities offered. Also available are clay-pigeon shooting, a Gotlandic variety of pentathlon, sulk driving with local 'russ' horses, relay riding, axe throwing and tractor driving. The farm also hosts the only museum on Gotland on the russ, the local horse breed, as well as the tallest horse living in the world today. There is a restaurant in saloon style, and food and accommodation are offered.

The owners have bought some neighbouring houses, and an old school, and have converted them together with some other buildings into tourist accommodation. Every week during the peak season, there are 9 families living at the farm as tourists. Occasionally large groups come to the farm: up to 2,500 persons have been received at one time. The farmland contains the remains of an Iron Age village, and one of the projects has been to build a replica of an Iron Age farmhouse near the site; in it, feasts with historical meals are offered, in a setting of traditional meadowland.

When starting a tourism enterprise, one must identify the market "niche" to appeal to; in this respect, Gervide Gard has taken advantage of the unique culture of Gotland. The only marketing has been a homepage on the Internet.

The amount of work at the farm varies considerably. The team is focused on the owners. They can call on local people for occasional work, and on a wider circle of people when needed. In this way, they avoid having a large wage bill. The capital needed to start up and develop the business has come from the family's savings and the profits of the business.

Running a business like Gervide Gard is a way of living: the family are part of the experience offered to the visitors. The development of the farm has been closely connected to their own development and their personalities. They have developed the enterprise step by step, and have felt comfortable throughout the



The tallest horse in the world

process. They are content with the current scale of the enterprise, and are not striving to increase its size further. Their message is that one should preserve available resources, both in nature and in oneself, and proceed from there to realise one's visions.

Contact:

Eva & Tore Fahlstedt , tel +46 498 590 37,
<http://www.gervidegard.com/>



The First Summer School participants having a go in the Gotlandic pentathlon

Case study 6.5

A Sámi entrepreneur in northern Finland

The Sami people of northern Finland have traditionally lived as herdsman of reindeer. Nowadays many of them gain a significant income also from tourism, and this activity is based in their long-established understanding of the seasons and the wildlife of that remote territory. They speak of eight distinct seasons, unlike the four seasons that many urban Europeans recognise. A Sami couple living beside the Teno river, which flows between Finland and Norway to the Arctic Ocean, may be taken as an example. Most of their annual income of about 25,000 Euro comes from receiving guests in their cottages, catering for these guests, and guiding trips for visitors. The first British salmon anglers started to come in the 1950's. At that time, the family built their first guest cottage, and have continued to receive guests since then. The guests, who represent many nationalities, usually stay for a week or two: most of them return year after year.

The activities of the entrepreneur and his wife vary according to the season. In the spring winter (April to May), they collect reindeer calves for marking. In the spring, they accommodate and guide bird watchers in the mountains, and the husband also makes the wooden boats for the salmon season that lasts from mid-June to mid-August. During these hectic summer months, they accommodate and feed the fishermen, and the husband rows the guests to the best fishing from early morning to late, sunny night. They also receive occasional customers who stop overnight when driving along the scenic Teno route.

September and October bring the quail hunters, who want to train their dogs to find and point the birds. This is also the time when nature lovers gather to watch the blazing colours of the fall season, and when berries offer a rich source of additional income for eager pickers. The entrepreneur accommodates them and guides them into the mountains and the tundra or along the beautiful banks of the river Teno.

November to December are spent in organising and leading snow scooters, reindeer sledge trips or skiing trips for tourists. This is also the time for tending the reindeer which are collected from the mountains to be selected for breeding or slaughtered for the sale of meat. January and February are too cold for most tourists, and the entrepreneur has to seek income elsewhere, often working as a carpenter on building projects in Lapland, Norway, Sweden, Russia or Germany. In March and April, the high season of tourism reaches also the far northern mountains, and again the entrepreneur organises and guides snow treks by scooter, rein-

deer or ski.

This description shows how the activities vary with the season, and how they depend upon hard labour, varied skills and a mastery of the continuously changing circumstances and the patterns of nature. These skills and this mastery arise directly from the long-established traditions of the Sami people. One may say that there is here an economy based on the identity of the people. Many of the Sami wish to maintain their way of life herding the reindeers. But this tradition is severely threatened by over-herding, and the rising cost of feeding the animals. So, they recognise that they must also accept and use modern equipment, such as snow scooters and helicopters, to sustain the reindeer hus-



Skiing trips are often guided by local entrepreneurs

bandry and to complement this with tourism activity. They want to do this without losing their cultural identity. They can build upon the communal value systems within their community.

Extract from 'A note on identity economy', conference paper by Dr. Antti Haahti, Professor of Tourism, University of Lapland, e-mail Antti.Haahti@urova.fi, <http://www.utsjoki.fi>

CHAPTER 7.

The local community: how to involve and sustain the local people through Tourism

7.1 We emphasised in chapter 1 that the purpose of rural development is to improve the quality of life of the local population of a rural region. We suggested that rural development should be based on the interests, and the involvement, of the community living in the area, for the reason that:

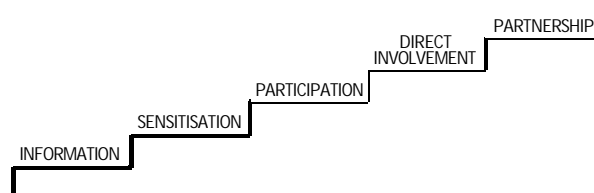
- they know best what are their problems and needs;
- they control many of the resources -land, buildings, local products -upon which development is based;
- their skills, traditions, knowledge and energy are the main resource for development;
- their commitment is vital (if they do not support an initiative, it will die).

7.2 Benefits and costs. These ideas emphatically apply to the development of rural tourism. As we explained earlier, tourism can bring real social and economic benefits to a rural area, but can also bring real problems. It is vital to ensure that the benefits are gained and the problems are avoided. That is best done by enabling the local people to understand what is proposed by way of tourist development. Indeed, local residents arguably have a moral right to be involved in the development of an industry which can bring both benefits and costs to their community. Moreover, the involvement of local people may encourage them to take a positive role in the tourism initiative. They may be more willing to ask, not only 'What can tourism do for me?', but also 'What can I do for tourism?'.

7.3 Involving the community. How, then, may the local people be involved in the process of tourism development? In many European countries, there is no strong tradition of what has been called 'participative democracy'. People in many villages and small towns are not accustomed to taking part in public discussion of proposals, even where these proposals will directly affect them. Moreover, public bodies may be reluctant to share decision-making with the people, because this implies giving away some of their power. But this trend towards participative decision-making, or 'bottom-up' development can be observed throughout Europe; and the process of promoting rural tourism can be used as

an opportunity to encourage participation. To bridge "bottom up" and "top down" approaches in a constructive partnership (as shown in the "Means of control" diagram) is a challenging and demanding task, which can guarantee though long-term continuity of sustainable rural tourism development.

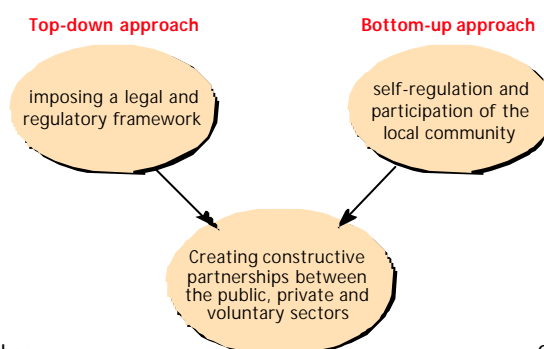
7.4 The 'ladder' of public involvement. Where local people are unused to public discussion of such matters, it may be necessary to move towards public involvement by easy steps. This idea was expressed by the American author Arnstein, who offered the idea of a ladder, which people could climb. The diagram shows this ladder, in a form which we have modified for the purpose of this Guide.



7.5 To explain this diagram:

- A first step may be **information**, by which people are told about what is possible in terms of tourism and what it might do for their area.
- The next step may be **sensitisation**, by which people are encouraged to reflect on the character of their area; the natural, cultural and human resources of the area; the ways in which these resources might be used for tourism; the kinds of visitors who might come; and the impact that tourism might have upon their lives and upon the local economy and environment.

Means of Control of Sustainable Rural Tourism



- This may then lead to active **participation** in the debate upon the development of tourism, and in the decisions which are made (we explain this process further in chapter 8).
- This in turn may provoke the **direct involvement** of people in pursuing and contributing to the tourism development programme, for example

in family enterprises or as employees of tourism companies, as volunteer guides and in other roles.

➤ This direct involvement may then form the basis for the creation of formal or informal **local partnerships** which may undertake aspects of the tourism development programme or of the protection and enrichment of resources which are associated with it.

7.6. A structured process. Among the various steps described above, sensitisation is the "key" to achieve a true "bottom up" involvement of the community in the development of tourism. Sensitisation may be defined as a process through which a community becomes aware of the capacities and talents of its members as well as the potential of the resources that are available to them. Then, the community may set a target for local development, including tourism, leading to activation and participation of community members in the development process.

7.7 We may also see sensitisation and activation of the local community as a sequence of changes brought about in many rural areas by the pressing need to move on to a new phase and to consider carefully the potential and prospects for future development. This necessitates a strategy that may include the following actions:

- developing a grassroots planning process including active participation of the community;
- establishing the objectives of tourism development in line with a concern for preserving community cohesion and the natural and cultural heritage;
- understanding the requirements of the tourism market in order to build an appealing tourism product acceptable to the community;
- creating a community-based tourism management mechanism to handle change, communication, business development, etc.

Glossa in the Greek island of Skopelos (case study 7.5)



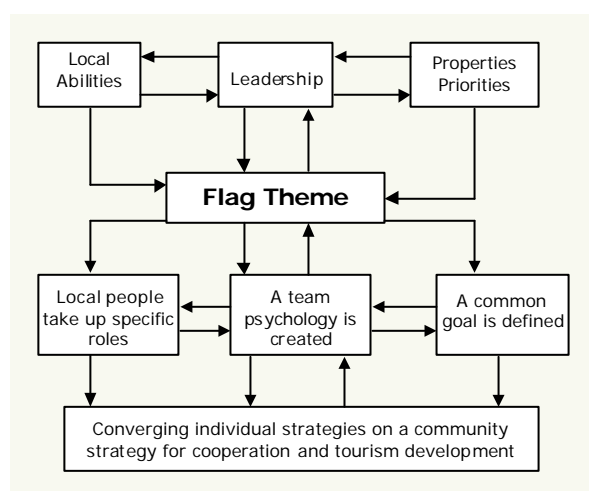
Involving the local community in a workshop, Malechowo, Northern Poland

gives a vivid example of a structured process, which led the local community, through the sensitisation and active involvement of a women's group, to win new jobs and income for community members and to revitalise the village.

7.8 Conflict resolution. In chapter 4, we described the conflicts which can occur between different elements of a local community, related to tourism; and the consequent need for efforts of conflict resolution. Case study 4.3 illustrates how the adverse impact of canoe tourism on a lake system in Sweden was resolved in a way that has been accepted by the tourists, the landowners and the authority responsible for nature conservation. Syvota (case study 7.4) illustrates how the enterprises in a community agreed on the action that was needed to remedy the adverse impact of tourism on the environment.

7.9 **The win-win-win model.** A creative approach to conflict resolution is the "Win-Win-Win Model" (presented during the First Summer Academy in Gotland by Leonidas Papakonstandinidis). Based on the "non-cooperative game" of John Nash and his "win-win" model (according to which both parties involved in a negotiation may formulate winning strategies), community involvement may be seen as a three-way negotiation. Taking part in such a negotiation, each member of the community should ask him/herself three questions: what is best for me? what is best for me and the others? and, what is best for me, for the others and for the community? Thus, "converging individual strategies" may be created, forming a solid basis for cooperation between community members.

Flow chart for the creation of a Flag Theme



7.10 Creating a "flag theme". The idea for co-operation tends to evolve naturally out of a common need or interest shared among the potential members of a group. It may be expressed in a shared vision or a 'flag theme', which motivates the group and sustains their active participation in the development process. A flag theme provides an "umbrella" for converging individual



A village community in England, receiving a multi-national party through the European Rural University

strategies; a central theme to build a local tourism product with distinct identity; and a pool to bring together the abilities, skills and talents of the group members. An example of such a flag theme is provided by the strong wish for economic independence and reinforcement of women's role in local society, adopted by the Petra women's agro-tourism cooperative in the island of Lesbos, Greece. This led the women to great success and made the cooperative a legendary model in its field throughout Europe.

7.11 Training and education. The process of public involvement can, indeed, be much assisted by training and education. Where people become interested in their local heritage, in possible entrepreneurial activity by themselves or in communal initiatives to promote tourism, they may become open to learning more. Training may then be offered -by local authorities, local development agencies, or non-government organisations- in topics such as leadership, management, problem-solving, group dynamics and building partnerships and links with other groups and organisations.

There may be opportunity for public education on tourism, with a focus on the benefits and costs of tourism, the ways of which enterprises can be developed, and how to cope with tourists from different cultural and language backgrounds. Desa (case study 5.4) and Morella (case study 8.4) provide examples of such public education.

7.12 Leadership, or animation. The key to the creation of groups and the pursuit of local initiative is leadership. There is no standard pattern for this. Leadership may come from the people who have formal roles on local communities, such as the mayor or the priest, or from some person, or team, who is formally appointed as animator. It may also come from those whom the Swedes call 'fiery spirits'-individuals of any age or position who feel the drive to improve the life of their com-

munity or to celebrate or protect a part of its heritage or social structure. This Guide is rich in examples of initiative taken by different people - perceived and valued by its own inhabitants (see, for instance, case studies 3.3, 5.4, 7.1).

7.13 Technical support. Leaders may also be chosen directly by local people through a democratic process. For example in Halsingland, Sweden, two-thirds of the 27 members of the Local Action Group (working under LEADER+) are chosen at a yearly Halsingeting, which is a countryside and culture festival. The Action Group supports people who have ideas for tourism projects. At first, the Group encourages them to develop their ideas by offering technical support with long-term analysis and assessment of the benefits and impacts of the proposed project in social, economic and environmental terms: this is the "Idea Development Process". This Process helps to secure better founded projects; to build the capacity of those involved in them; and to create networks of people who can work together.

7.14 Co-operative networks. Returning for a moment to the 'ladder' of public involvement described above, one might say that the top step would be co-operative action within a local community. In chapter 6, we described the idea of social entrepreneurship, and of co-operation among people in an area. Tourism, with its many small enterprises and the need to link together the many different services which a visitor may need, offers a natural ground for such cooperation through business networks. Typical examples of such networks are offered by the various "routes" or "trails" described in several case-studies. The wine route (case study 3.3), the art route (case study 3.4), the heritage trail (case study 4.2) bring together all those who would benefit from the spending of visitors along a route or trail, such as craftsmen, shopkeepers, restaurateurs, guesthouse owners etc. Such projects can only succeed through a collective effort of local businesses, once common goals have been agreed.



A public meeting in the village of Syvota, Greece, to discuss tourism development

7.15 Local pride. An initial interest in developing tourism can lead to an enhanced pride among the local people for the heritage of their place, including wildlife, local history, historic and archaeological sites, traditional art and crafts, ethnic and spiritual riches etc. Raising the "local sensitivity" level in this way can be a major factor in community development and in encouraging a sustainable approach in local life. The South Pembrokeshire Action for Rural Communities (SPARC) encouraged people in South Wales to come together to discuss the local features and traditions which they themselves value and which might be used as the basis for tourism. From this has risen a series of local trails which visitors are encouraged to follow and which are presented in a standard series of trail brochures published by SPARC. This initiative enabled villagers to appreciate their own heritage, become proud of it and join forces to guard it, drawing at the same time the economic benefits from visitors

through a planned tourism product.

7.16 Building local partnerships. Europe is rich in examples of local partnerships or "local action groups" that are formed with a view to manage local development in a democratic way, for the benefit of the community. Local action groups may be formal or informal. Sweden, for example, has about 4000 informal local development groups working on a village level. Many of these were set up in response to an offer of modest financial support from the local authorities, which encouraged villagers to meet and to make a simple development plan for their area. Making a plan might entitle the village to a small additional sum of money, and the plan could be a point of departure for finding additional support for its realisation. These plans stimulated local co-operation. Many of the local action groups in Sweden have projects relating to rural tourism.



**Questions, arising from chapter 7,
for you to reflect upon**

We invite you to focus upon the rural area in which you work, or upon a specific rural area with which you are familiar.

1. **In** relation to rural development generally, and to rural tourism in particular, what position on the 'ladder of public involvement' (see paragraph 7.4) has so far been reached by the population of your chosen area?
2. **Has** there been a deliberate effort to sensitise the local community in the area, in the field of rural tourism? If so, how successful do you think it has been? If not, do you think that such an effort would be useful, and how might it be undertaken?
3. **Are** there significant conflicts between different interests in the area, related to rural tourism? If so, what effects do these conflicts have? What efforts have been made, or may be needed, to resolve these conflicts?
4. **Who** is providing the leadership, or animation, for rural tourism in the area? What effect does this leadership or animation have? Is something more, or different, needed in this respect?
5. **Are** there networks of cooperation, or formal partnerships, for rural tourism in the area? Are they useful and effective? Is something more, or different, needed in this respect?

Case study 7.1

Hultsfred Rockparty, Sweden

A prime example of successful innovation in tourism is the Hultsfred Rockparty, which is now an annual festival of rock music that attracts some 25,000 people every summer and generates significant local income and employment. It illustrates how initiative may be taken by active local people, in this case a group of teenagers; and how a whole community may be actively involved in, and benefit from, a major tourist attraction.

The initiative started in 1981 when a group of teenagers, frustrated by the lack of facilities for youth in the small town of Hultsfred, decided to organise a rock concert. 1,600 people turned up for that first concert, and this encouraged the young people to continue and gradually expand the annual event, which has become the largest music festival in Sweden. The Rockparty has become a large business, based in the town, employing 12 people year-round and supported (before and during concert week) by about 5,000 local volunteers, who earn money for their local associations by doing this work. Its large building, in the centre of the small town, has become a major educational and developmental centre for the music industry.

During the first four years after the first concert, the members organised various musical events in the town. Then in 1986, they arranged their first rock festival. The following year, they made a loss on the event, but thereafter the growth in interest was explosive, because Sweden did not have a music festival of this kind. Now the festival has become one of the major rock music events in the country. After early scepticism, the Municipality has given strong support to the festival, which has helped Rockparty to secure capital for further investment.

The festival organisation has always been based on voluntary labour. In a small town like Hultsfred, with 5,400 population, it has been quite easy to generate a feeling among the local people that this is 'their' festival. Today, many of those who volunteered in the early days have children who now take part.

In 1991 Rockparty decided to build its own concert hall, again largely by voluntary labour. The Rockcity building now also contains a restaurant and other public spaces; and a series of offices and studios. These are occupied by Rockparty's 6 companies, which together have an annual turnover of 6 million Euros in the field of music, media and IT; and by other companies which have spun off from the Rockparty activities. In total, 15 companies with 70 employees are located in the building, together with Sweden's first state-supported Industrial

Development Centre for the popular music industry.

Rockparty is also involved in a variety of educational programmes, including a 3-year course in Music Management with the University of Kalmar; courses for event producers, with a folk high school and a study circle organisation; and courses for digital media distributors. Its members sometimes teach at the Hultsfred secondary school. The organisation seeks to inspire the youth of the local area to be creative and to find meaningful occupation.

Rockparty emphasises the importance of not forgetting one's roots. Although they now have paid staff and own several companies, the organisation still is, and will continue to be, a non-profit group based on voluntary labour. The fact that they are rooted in the Hultsfred area provides a good basis for their long-term development and for the realisation of visions of the members.

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Hultsfred Rockparty

Case study 7.2

Xàtiva, Spain: communal enterprise in tourism

An example of communal enterprise on an ambitious scale is provided by the Spanish town of Xàtiva.

This town, of 25,000 inhabitants, lies about 65 km southwest of the Spanish city of Valencia. About two thousand years old, it has high historic and architectural interest, and rich cultural traditions drawn from the Roman, Muslim and Christian periods of its history. It gained military importance in the 13th century, defending the southern border of the Kingdom; and reached its maximum splendour between the 15th and 18th centuries, before being destroyed by fire during the War of Succession.

Xàtiva is now the industrial and service centre for the Costera region, which is mainly rural. The town grew during the last century, with new buildings and roads which damaged much of its historical heritage. This caused the decline of the leisure and tourism sectors, which were practically non-existent until the last decade.

Nowadays, the situation has radically changed. The old part of the city is alive, thousands of people visit the city and its monuments, including foreigners. This change was initiated in 1995 by a small group of businessmen from the leisure and tourism sector, who were members of the Association of Businessmen from Xàtiva (ADEXA). They put forward the idea that Xàtiva should be nominated as a World Heritage site, in order to act as a focal point for revival of tourism and related economic activity. They gained the support of ADEXA and of the Town Council, and these two bodies then conducted a strong public awareness campaign. This included seminars and conferences on tourism subjects, involving the best national specialists and the regional institutions. This alerted the town's population, and the idea penetrated each house and each shop.

The alliance has been guided by three unwritten principles -the sharing of common objectives, the co-management of initiatives, and the participation of local authorities and local people. Many new activities have been introduced by the Town Council, with the support of the local entrepreneurs and the residents in general. The results have been impressive:

- The Castle, emblem of the town, is now managed jointly by public and private agencies as a tourist attraction. It receives 70,000 visitors a year, as compared with 30,000 in 1997. The hill around the castle has been replanted and several distinguishing features of the city, such as the shield, flag and traditions have been rediscovered.

- Several buildings have been restored in the town to house cultural and leisure activities, such as museums and libraries etc. Monument trails have been defined and signposted.

- Publicity material had been produced in different languages, to tell visitors about the attractions and history of the town. Xàtiva is included in the regional promotional material of Valencia.

- Many cultural events are organised each year in the town, including outdoor concerts, theatre performances, a cultural "fair", a rice-cooking contest, performances of mediaeval music, exhibitions and tasting of typical food of the Borgia era.

- Restaurants in the town embarked in a revival of native culinary specialities, finding old recipes with the invaluable help of the city's oldest women.

- A new enterprise network has arisen, formed by young entrepreneurs who have risked their savings on leisure initiatives and tourism. The number of pubs in Xàtiva has quadrupled in the last 7 years, and 90% of them are small companies set up by young people.

The "snowball" continues to grow. New investments such as a golf course and a theatre are in hand. The people of the city feel pride of their traditions, and confident that the city will not retreat to the days when that pride was forgotten. The arrogant blood-red flag of the 'maulets', patriots who defended the city and their culture from the Spanish troops, again flies above the castle. The campaign to gain World Heritage status continues.

Contact:

<http://www.ayto-xativa.org/default.htm>



Panoramic view of Xàtiva Castle, Spain

Case study 7.3

Pusztamérgek, Hungary: ambitious communal enterprise

This is a further example of communal enterprise on an ambitious scale. Pusztamérgek is a village at the south part of the Great Hungarian Plain, not far from the regional capital of Szeged. This territory is sandy, so the productivity of its agricultural land is low. Since the 1950s, the population has decreased and the village now has about 1200 inhabitants, including only 53 children younger than 15 years of age.

In 1992, a group of people in the village launched a rural tourism programme, with the active assistance of the mayor. Their aim was to promote long-term development of tourism in the settlement and in the micro-region, based upon the natural endowments of the village, and its farming traditions and life style. They identified a series of resources which could be used as assets for tourism. These included nature reserves, opportunities for riding and fishing, farm products such as fruit, wine and asparagus, and local foods.

The group realised that it was essential to gain the support and involvement of the local community, and of enterprises, civil associations and local authorities, all of whom would be direct or indirect actors of rural tourism. A starting point in gaining that support was the appearance of the village. The village leaders recognised that the beauty and well-kept look of the village was essential for success in tourism. The local authority therefore paid great attention to cleanliness and to decorating all parts of the village with flowers. They encouraged the villagers to take care on the public place in front of their houses by offering free water and collection of rubbish: this was effective in gaining the awareness and involvement of the people.

Public awareness of the opportunities presented by tourism is also promoted by courses and study tours for the inhabitants, organised by the mayor; by the revival of traditional customs, and by holding gastronomic and other events. These include a Festival of Stuffed Cabbage-cooking, a Festival of Cock Stew-cooking, a Harvest Festival, exhibitions in the community arts centre, concerts by the Women's Choir, and so on.

The result of these efforts has been a useful increase in tourism, with guests from Hungary and from Denmark, Germany and other countries. The local authority has set up a tourist information office, which promotes the accommodation and other services offered by the villagers and is linked to the national tourist information network.

The outward-looking nature of the village has attracted investment from abroad into the infrastructure. Thus



The Agricultural School in Pusztamérgek

the building of the agricultural vocational school was subsidised by Northrhine-Westphalia, to the tune of 750.000 Euro. A water processing plant were built partly from Italian capital. The efforts of the village have been recognised by the award in 1996 of first place in the competition Floral Hungary, and in 1997 of third place in the European Floral competition. In 1996, the village also won the Prize for European Village Renewal. These prizes have also strengthened the sense of community belonging.

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Flower beds in the village

Case study 7.4

Syvota, Greece: local action on the impact of tourism

Syvota offers an example of local partnership, including the raising of awareness among local people, related to the impact of tourism on the environment and the action needed to remedy this.

Syvota is a coastal village in the region of Epirus, North-West Greece. The area is designated as of outstanding natural beauty, with a fine coastline and many small islands. During the last two decades, it has attracted a growing number of tourists, both domestic and international. This has caused an influx of investment in construction of hotels and rented apartments.

The rapid development of the area, coupled with the unwillingness of local authorities to impose strict planning controls, has caused serious damage to the environment. Given that most of the investment capital is owned by local people, there is in effect a conflict between the local community and the protection of the natural environment which has sustained the very vitality of this community.

The regional and prefectural authorities of the area decided to join forces to make the local community of Syvota aware that they are acting against their own long-term interests. With the help of an EC programme, ECOS Ouverture, a strategy for sensitisation of the local population was designed, based on participation of community leaders and businesses. A local Consultative Committee was formed, which brought together representatives of the local and regional authorities, the local tourism businesses and all other associations active in economic or cultural fields in Syvota.

This Committee debated the issue of sustainable development in the locality, and defined the terms and conditions for sustainability, taking into account the view of the local entrepreneurs. The local town plan was discussed in this context, and an open meeting of all village inhabitants was organised in the village square. A collective decision was taken that the town plan must come into force as soon as possible, so that planning controls protecting the environment and the quality of life of the residents would be enforced. After a year of meetings and debate, a sub-committee was formed consisting of 5 local entrepreneurs, owners of hotels and tourist apartments. They worked out proposals for the environmental improvement of their village, including a number of measures that would improve the quality of the tourism product in their area.

Prominent among these measures was the formation of a Local Agreement on Quality Control (LAQC) on the model of Tzoumerka, a mountainous area of Epirus (see case study 3.5). This "quality contract" drawn among



Lack of planning controls affects a landscape of outstanding natural beauty in Syvota Bay

local businesses is designed to commit the entrepreneurs to maintain high standards of service, environmental protection and preservation of the local tradition and heritage. 25 tourism businesses have already registered their interest, acknowledging that business interests and environmental interests can be mutually supportive in areas like Syvota. The local authority responded positively to the entrepreneurs' need for better promotion of their area, funding a tourist brochure; and the Regional Authority undertook to design a heritage and ecology trail in Syvota and to publish supporting interpretive material for this trail.

The success of the Syvota project is based on two factors. Firstly, the involvement of the local entrepreneurs in planning their own sustainable development gave to the local community a different understanding of the development process. Indeed, it created an alternative vision for the future viability of individual enterprises and of the whole village, based upon the concepts of "quality" and "preservation". The setting up by local businesses of an association designed to safeguard the environment, and thus the long-term quality of the local tourism product was an important step, because the initiative came from the entrepreneurs themselves.

Secondly, a partnership has been formed between the local community and the authorities at local and regional level. This partnership has worked well, because all parties have shown willingness to contribute to the common purpose. The local entrepreneurs took the initiative to set up the association. The local authority supported this by producing promotional material and bringing forward the investment in vital infrastructures in the village. The prefectural authority undertook the cost of town planning in the village; and the regional authority established the heritage and nature trail. It is now vital to sustain the momentum already achieved both in terms of community involvement and partnership building.

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Case study 7.5

Community Sensitisation in the island of Scopelos, Greece

Scopelos is a "green" island in the Aegean Sea and is a popular destination for both Greek and foreign tourists. It has a long history dating back 4,000 years and was influenced by the Minoan civilisation. In ancient times, the emblem of the island was the grape and the locally produced wine was known all over Greece.

The village of Glossa is located where the ancient town of Knossos used to be. It is a picturesque place, set among pines and almond trees and featuring cobbled lanes and traditional houses. It adjoins the island Hora, an established tourist destination; but until 1999, Glossa was a small fishing village, with a few elderly inhabitants and a very low average annual income, between 1,500 and 1,800 Euro.

In 1999, the local LEADER project organised a 6-month training course for local women related to the challenges and opportunities of rural tourism development. 35 women took part, and this led to the formation of the Glossa Women's Agricultural Cooperative, which started with 24 members. The aim of the Cooperative was to support the local economy; to provide a supplementary income to women in the area; and to improve the social status and cultural level of women villagers.

The cooperative is mainly engaged in the production of traditional sweets, food and drinks with traditional recipes and pure material to provide authentic and unique tastes. Among the delicacies they produce are sweets based on almond crumb; jams and preserves made of seasonal fruit; pastries and other traditional food, such as meat or fish dishes and traditional twisted cheese pies. The cooperative also promotes local customs through organising weddings, christenings and other public celebrations, planned in a way that marks the island's cultural identity. They provide catering services to conferences in and outside the island. They run an exhibition hall, in the form of a popular art museum, where they show their products as well as traditional embroidery and other handicrafts.

Over the years, the women succeeded in building a team spirit encouraged by a small group of younger inhabitants, who acted as an "animators team" under the supervision of an outside expert. Through the game of "collective choice" they found their "flag theme", namely the home-made sweets to promote the local identity and "family games in preparing meals and sweets", which are offered during August as a cultural activity for tourists from Hora. Awareness of local problems, needs and resources was raised among the local community. People got involved in the decision making



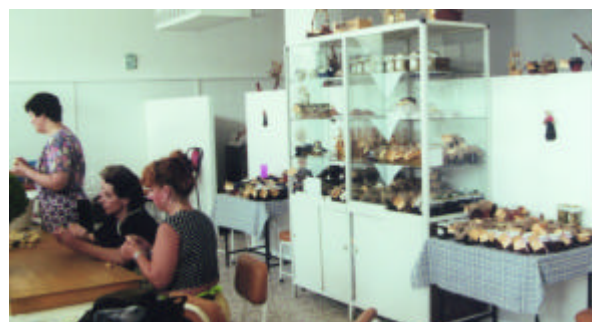
Members of the cooperative preparing local traditional twisted cheese pies

process regarding future development of their area through a "Business Plan" composed in the context of the LEADER Initiative, formed a "Local Action Group" and started to ask for financial resources.

Now, the Cooperative has 65 members, and the average annual income per family has increased by 3,000 Euro. Moreover, young people have begun to return to Glossa and the first wedding since November 1991 took place there in May 2001. The only primary school in the village, which was planned to close due to lack of children, has stayed open. The Cooperative also tries to create partnerships with other islands and rural areas.

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Exhibition of local traditional delicacies

CHAPTER 8.

Strategic planning: a formal approach to the long view

The purpose of planning

8.1 Planning is the process of preparing for the future. A person who has goals to achieve may make plans to organise his/her time and to realise those dreams step by step. In the same way, planning is needed for settlements, micro-regions, regions and whole countries. Such planning may be a complex process, concerning the community, the economy and the environment. Its aim may be to propose, and to achieve, those changes which can promote social well-being, economic growth, improvement of people's living standards, or environmental enhancement in the chosen area. It is one of the main means by which we seek to achieve sustainability, as outlined in chapter 1.

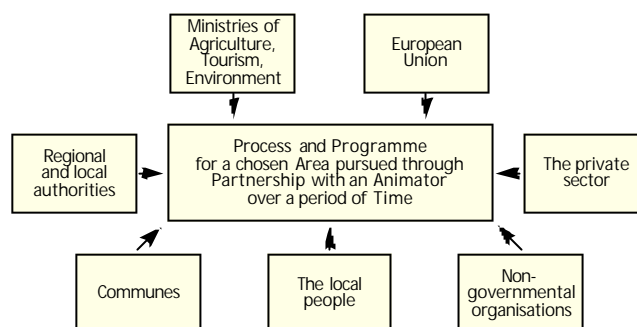
8.2 Space and resources. Planning is essentially concerned with the allocation of space and of resources. That is why we talk (on the one hand) of spatial planning, which is to do with the use of land; and (on the other hand) of economic or developmental planning, which is to do with the use of financial and other resources. Sometimes, these two types of planning are pursued separately, sometimes they are closely linked.

8.3 What geographic scale? Planning can be pursued at national, regional, sub-regional and local level. Indeed, it is needed at all those levels. A major challenge in all countries is to ensure a coherence between the planning activity that takes place at these different levels, so that (for example) projects at local level which depend upon a new supply of water can depend upon timely action at regional level to supply that water. Case studies 8.1 and 8.2 provide examples of planning at national and regional level which is designed to ensure coherence between these levels, and between tourism and other aspects of development.

8.4 We described in chapter 1 the growing emphasis upon regions, which are geographic units smaller than most states, and upon action and initiative at local level. Our concern in this Guide is mainly with planning at these two levels. We wish to focus upon those spatial plans, and economic or development plans, which contribute to the efforts of rural development, and particularly to the sustainable development of rural tourism. But we need to remember that these regional or local plans may be frustrated if they do not relate well to the plans at the level of the nation or the large region.

8.5 Sectoral planning. We should remember also that much planning is done on a sectoral basis, i.e. it relates mainly to one sector such as agriculture or indeed

tourism. Such sectoral planning is legitimate, and allows officials and others to focus on the particular issues of that sector. But it carries dangers, in that it can blind the planners to the links between sectors, the opportunities which one sector may offer to another or the adverse impact which single-sector development may have on other sectors or (for example) upon the environment. We have put this chapter last, precisely to encourage you to consider the links between tourism and the heritage (chapter 4) or between tourism and other economic sectors (chapter 5) before considering the role of planning.



8.6 Territorial planning. Sectoral planning needs to be complemented by area-based or territorial planning. This is needed because rural development, including the development of rural tourism, may depend upon the harnessing of resources from many different sectors. These may include Government Ministries or agencies, external agencies such as the European Union, regional and local authorities, the private sector, local self-governments, non-government organisations and the local people themselves. An effective way to bring all these interests together, in order to pursue a practical programme, may be:

- to define a chosen Area, which is recognised by the people and which is suited to solving the problems: it may be a village, a group of villages, or even a whole district;
- to set in hand a process of rural development for that area, and to develop a programme for that area, which calls upon the resources of all relevant bodies;
- to create a structure for effective partnership between the different actors;
- to put in place an animator (which may be an individual, or a team) whose job is to work with all the rel-

evant bodies and the local community, in order to make things happen; and

➤ to pursue the programme over a significant period of time.

8.7 The micro-region. This need for a territorial approach is reflected in the trend move towards planning at what may be called the micro-region level, in both the European Union and central Europe. For example, in the LEADER programme, through which (in the second phase of that programme) over 900 local action groups were set up in different parts of the EU, the emphasis was on rural areas each of which had a population of up to 100,000. In Hungary, the rural development programme has been elaborated for the country, for the seven regions and for the nineteen counties but also for 207 micro-regions, which contain on average a population of just under 40,000. The ZALA-KAR Association (case study 8.3) is an example of action at this geographic scale. Thus, in both LEADER and the Hungarian pattern, the area covered by a plan may be seen to be large enough to contain significant resources for rural development, and yet small enough to feel familiar and 'owned' by the people who live there.

8.8 **Local planning.** Where a particular locality, such as a historic town or coastal village, already receives or wishes to attract a significant flow of tourists, it may need to have a local tourism plan. This can help to ensure that all parts of the tourism product are in balance and that the tourism brings benefit rather than damage to the local people, the local economy and the environment. Examples of such local planning are provided by the initiative of the villagers of Pusztamerges (case study 7.3); the action of the local authorities and enterprises of Syvota (case study 7.4); and the local development strategy for Morella (case study 8.4).

8.9 Variety. So, planning is a very varied activity -spatial or economic; national, regional or local; comprehensive or sectoral. There is no single approach to it, nor any standard type of plan. To help you to think about it, we offer ideas about processes and techniques which can be used; and we then give a number of examples of planning in action, at different geographic scales and with different emphasis.

The planning process

8.10 A logical sequence. A crucial aspect of planning is the logical link that there should be between the aims of the plan and the proposals. This may be reflected in the presentational form of a plan, which (for example) may focus in turn upon:

- The strategic aims of the plan
- A vision for the future
- Objectives and priorities
- An action plan which leads to the achievement of the vision
- The tools and financial resources needed to carry out the action plan
- The role of the different actors.

8.11 A wide view. We emphasised in chapter 1 the width of the issues involved in sustainable rural development; and, in other chapters, the essential links between rural tourism and other sectors. This width, and these links, make it essential that planning processes take a wide view. Plans for a rural area, whether general or sectoral in scope, should:

- be embedded into the general spatial concept of the area, and into the national and regional plans for development or for tourism;
- have connections with spatial development docu-



Tourist development in the Haute Savoie, France: an example of incongruous design

ments of neighbouring areas;

- take account of every sector of the local economy;
- focus upon sustainability, by addressing the full range of criteria that are outlined in chapter 1; and
- involve the local community in the planning process.

8.12 A participative process. In chapter 7, we emphasised the importance of involving the local population in tourism planning. The same principle applies to any planning for an area. This means that the planning process should be an open and participative one, giving the local people a full opportunity to contribute to the thinking, to comment on options that are being explored, and to influence the proposals before they are formally adopted. A strong example of this is provided by the Slovenian Heritage Trail, case study 4.2.

8.13 The adoption of participative processes represents a particular challenge in countries and regions where centralised planning has been the norm. This characteristic is by no means confined to the former socialist countries of central Europe. The move into a participatory approach -what is sometimes called 'bottom-up' planning- can represent a challenge not only to the public bodies who are leading the planning process, but to the people themselves.

A participatory approach may demand more time and

patience than a more dogmatic or 'top-down' approach. But the reward for this can be not only a greater measure of public acceptance of the resulting plan, but also an active commitment by the full range of individual and organisations whose energy and resources are needed to carry out the plan. Examples of the building of this active commitment are provided by the Villány-Siklos Wine Route (case study 3.3), the Walloon ironworks (case study 4.1) and the Slovenian Heritage Trail (case study 4.2).

Techniques

8.14 Planners are trained to follow a classic sequence of work in preparing plans. This is based on three elements -survey, analysis and plan-making. We here outline some of the techniques that can be used at these three stages.

8.15 Survey. A first step in all planning is to understand the organism whose future you are seeking to influence. The famous British planner Sir Patrick Geddes used to speak of three great interrelated factors -'folk, work and place'- as the starting-point of any plan. By this he meant the three pillars that we emphasised in chapter 1 -the people or community; the economy; and the environment. These three aspects are likely to figure in the surveys that you need to do. For example, you may need to gather information about:

- People, or human resources -the demographic structure, income levels, education level, skills in foreign languages, the ethnic mixture etc
- The economy, including the proportion of jobs in agriculture, in secondary industries and in services including tourism, and the levels of unemployment
- Infrastructure -how accessible the area is, the transport system, water supply, electricity, waste management, sewerage, solid waste, telecommunications
- Institutions and services in tourism, including types of tourist accommodation, catering, commercial services, safety and defence services
- Environment and heritage -climate, quality of the environment, protected natural values, the built environment and cultural heritage, historic buildings, protected parts of town, ethnographical values, cultural habits, cultural programmes, and local specialities.

8.16 SWOT analysis. A very useful tool in the analysis stage is the technique of assessing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). This provides a framework for taking the survey material and considering what it may imply for action. It can be conducted at any geographic scale, from a single farm to a whole country, but is particularly useful when applied to a region or local area. One can analyse, in turn, the four elements:

- **Strengths**, that is the existing assets of the area, upon which a plan may be built. Examples of strengths relevant to tourism might include a beautiful land-



The town of Clervaux, Luxembourg, where the economy and environmental quality of the town centre has been transformed in a very positive way by building a bypass and removing the traffic

scape, or a rich gastronomic tradition.

➤ **Weaknesses**, that is the disadvantages affecting an area, which may need to be corrected in the plan. Examples might be a low level of education among the people, or an inadequate water supply.

➤ **Opportunities**, that is things inside or outside the area which might be exploited as future strengths, for example specific tourism markets which are not now attracted to the area, or the potential to add value locally (through tourism) to products which are now processed elsewhere or not effectively used.

➤ **Threats**, that is factors which could damage the potential development of the area and which must if possible be avoided or prevented. Examples might be the danger of forest fires (a common threat in Mediterranean countries) or of environmental pollution by industry.

A well-done SWOT analysis can point towards the sort of ingredients that a general development plan, or a tourism plan, might include.

8.17 Problem 'trees', and objective 'trees'. Another very useful tool for analysis is the '**problem tree**', by which one can put the issues that affect an area into a logical line and work out where the priority lies. For example, an area which already has some tourism may find that the tourism season is too short to allow the tourism enterprises to make any profit. This in turn will mean that the owners cannot invest in improving the facilities, so that they cannot compete with better-equipped enterprises elsewhere. It may also mean that they cannot get good staff, because the season is too short. This is a set of inter-linked problems. The problem tree allows one to analyse which is the **core problem** (in this case, the short length of the tourism season), the **causes** of that problem (i.e. the 'roots' of the notional 'tree'), and the **effects** of that problem (i.e. the 'branches' of that 'tree'). On this can then be built an **objective tree**, which takes the same diagram and applies an objective to every problem, cause or effect. These objectives can then feed directly into the plan-making stage.

8.18 Methods for participative planning. There are also methods designed to support joint analysis, visions and planning, and to spur public involvement and commitment in the development processes. Methods such as Planning for Real, Future Search, Open Space, Vision Work etc all offer ways of structuring communication within groups to move through the stages of participation outlined in paragraph 7.4. For example, Future Search was used in the Swedish county of Jamtland to involve both the communities and the officials at various levels of the local authorities in planning processes. These methods can be useful in the planning process, especially if they are seen not as one-time events but as part of the long-term planning and evaluation of local projects.

8.19 Impact assessment. During the planning process,



A local seminar bringing together planners and local inhabitants to discuss conflict between tourism and environment in Thesprotia, Greece

it is essential to keep an eye on the aim of achieving sustainable tourism. The proposals in the plan must be calculated to have a positive, not a negative, impact on the people, the economy, the environment and the institutions of the area to which they apply (see chapter 1 for an explanation of the criteria for sustainability). Often, people only realise that negative impacts are happening after they have occurred, as in the example of Syvota (case study 7.4). This is not good practice; one should anticipate possible negative impacts at the planning stage, and adapt the plan to avoid them. That is what impact assessments are designed to achieve. These assessments may apply to all aspects of sustainability; or may be focused on specific issues, using the detailed techniques involved in (for example) Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) or Social Impact Assessment (SIA).

8.20 Vision. The pivot or turning-point of any plan is the statement of a vision for the future. By 'vision', we mean the concept of what the place may be like if the plan is realised. The vision should meet the following key points:

➤ It should reflect the strategic aims of the plan, which are normally stated right at the beginning of the planning process, but which may be adjusted in the course of that process in the light of the realities revealed by the survey and analysis stages.

➤ It should be clear and easily understood.

➤ It should be agreed with all those who have a role in making it happen. This means that there must be intensive discussion, at the stages of analysis and plan-making, with all the key actors.

➤ It should be shared with the population of the area, in ways that were described in the previous chapter. The general public may find it easier to grasp, and to comment upon, that part of the vision that directly affects their own locality.

8.21 The Plan. The Vision can then be used as the starting-point for the logical sequence that we suggested earlier in the chapter, namely the statement of:

- Objectives and priorities
- An action plan which leads to the achievement of the vision
- The tools and financial resources needed to carry out the action plan
- The role of the different actors
- A programme of action, with targets for things to be achieved in a given order or by stated dates.

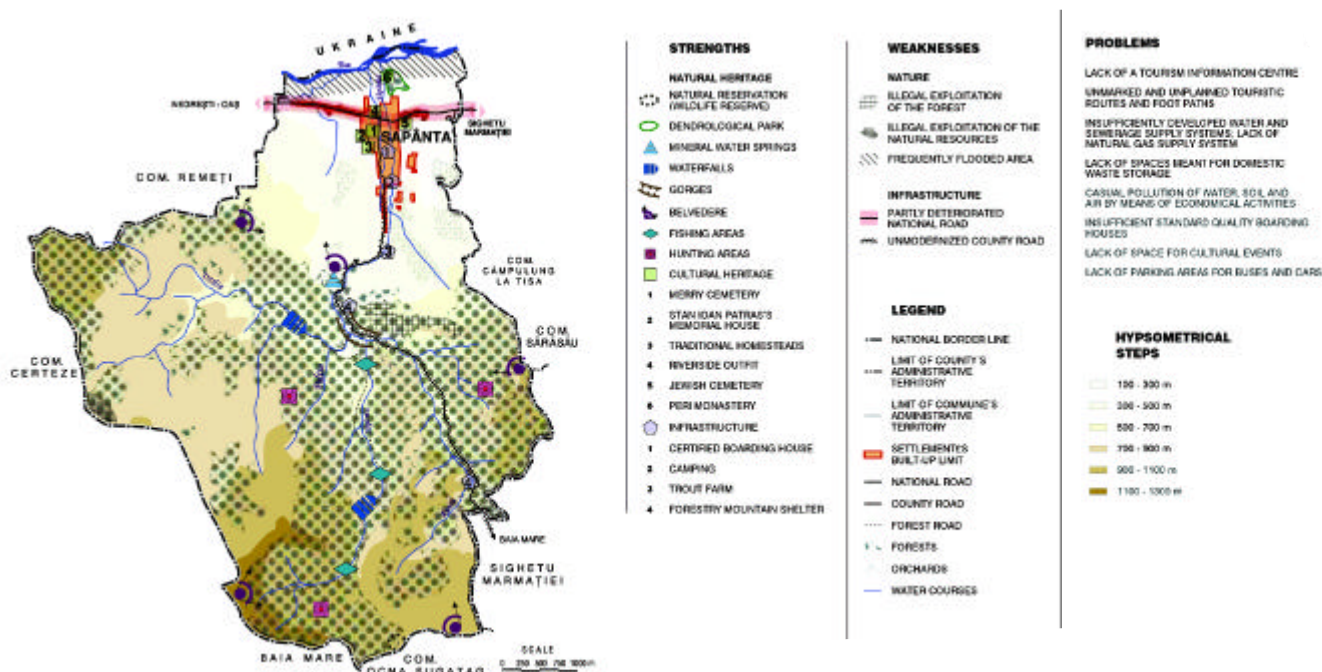
8.22 Implementing the plan. Throughout the planning process, it is vital to remember that the production of the plan is **not the end of a story, but the beginning**. A plan may be beautiful and logical, but it is useless if it is not implemented. Throughout Europe, too many plans have been produced and then 'put on the shelf' or only half implemented. That does not produce the results that we want. At the time the plan is finalised, there must be a clear commitment from the key actors to a process of implementation, with clear mechanisms of partnership and of action. Moreover, the action should include a monitoring process, by which the progress on the plan is checked at regular intervals. This checking of progress may be much assisted by agreement among the actors as to the **indicators** that should be used. For example, in Syvota (case study 7.4), alternative scenarios of future tourism development were evaluated by local people on the basis of a list of indicators, as follows:

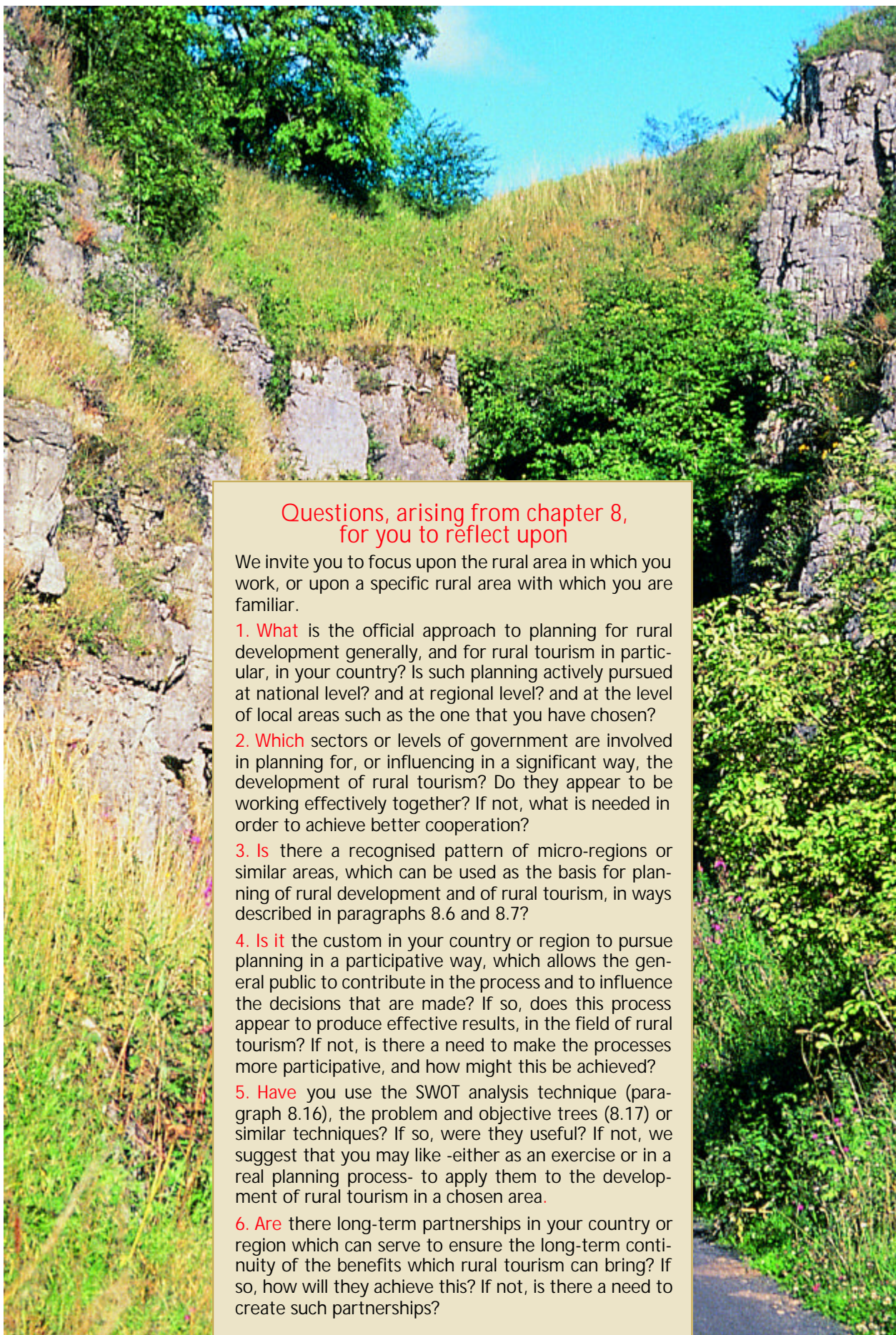
- annual tourist arrivals/increase
- Percentage of tourism-related jobs to total number of jobs
- Private investment in tourism

- Public investment from EC and local/national investment in the area
- Visitor stress (ratio of permanent residents to visitors)
- Health and care facilities
- Communal space per resident and visitor
- Carrying capacity of beaches and other sensitive areas
- Loss of agricultural land to tourism
- Pollution from tourism (seawater, noise etc)

8.23 Long-term partnership. We end this chapter with a renewed emphasis on the need for long-term partnership between those involved in the development and management of rural tourism in any given area. Local initiatives, particularly those which are launched with short-term funding, need to be linked effectively to existing and more permanent structures, such as local authorities and their tourism and development departments. Too many projects die at the end of their initial funding period, or when a dynamic animator leaves. It is not always easy to achieve a balance and effective partnership between 'bottom-up' private or community-based initiatives and the 'top-down' role of official bodies, but such partnership may be the best guarantee of long-term continuity of the benefits which rural tourism can bring to an area. Partnerships at national level can also do much to sustain the vitality and the constantly updated quality of rural tourism. Case study 8.5 provides a vivid example of this, from Estonia.

A SWOT analysis for tourism development transferred on a Master Plan for the Sapanta community, Maramures, Romania by planners of the National Institute for Research and Development in Urban and Regional Planning - URBAN PROJECT, Bucharest





Questions, arising from chapter 8, for you to reflect upon

We invite you to focus upon the rural area in which you work, or upon a specific rural area with which you are familiar.

1. What is the official approach to planning for rural development generally, and for rural tourism in particular, in your country? Is such planning actively pursued at national level? and at regional level? and at the level of local areas such as the one that you have chosen?

2. Which sectors or levels of government are involved in planning for, or influencing in a significant way, the development of rural tourism? Do they appear to be working effectively together? If not, what is needed in order to achieve better cooperation?

3. Is there a recognised pattern of micro-regions or similar areas, which can be used as the basis for planning of rural development and of rural tourism, in ways described in paragraphs 8.6 and 8.7?

4. Is it the custom in your country or region to pursue planning in a participative way, which allows the general public to contribute in the process and to influence the decisions that are made? If so, does this process appear to produce effective results, in the field of rural tourism? If not, is there a need to make the processes more participative, and how might this be achieved?

5. Have you use the SWOT analysis technique (paragraph 8.16), the problem and objective trees (8.17) or similar techniques? If so, were they useful? If not, we suggest that you may like -either as an exercise or in a real planning process- to apply them to the development of rural tourism in a chosen area.

6. Are there long-term partnerships in your country or region which can serve to ensure the long-term continuity of the benefits which rural tourism can bring? If so, how will they achieve this? If not, is there a need to create such partnerships?

Case study 8.1

Rural Tourism Working Group at national level, Finland

The Rural Tourism Working Group has been appointed by the Rural Policy Committee, which is a body appointed by the Council of State (Government) of Finland.

The composition of the Rural Policy Committee transcends the boundaries between different branches of administration. Its main task, implemented within a framework of inter-agency cooperation, is to co-ordinate rural development measures and promote the effective use of resources channelled into rural areas. To intensify the development processes on different fields, the Committee has appointed several Working Groups, of which the Rural Tourism Working Group was one.

The Rural Tourism Working Group had a term of office extending until the end of the year 2002.

Its tasks were:

- to draft a national rural tourism strategy and operational programme
- to organise the compilation of statistical data on rural tourism
- to put together quality-training programmes for the rural tourism sector
- to develop a nationwide reservation system for rural tourism products in collaboration with regional organisations
- to launch a marketing project and continue it until the year 2003.

The Working Group mediated information and facilitated cooperation between different development projects and developers at national level. It had set up co-operative relations with the co-ordinators and developers of national and regional projects in many parts of Finland. The network has been constantly expanded to include an increasing number of regional actors.

As a tool for strategic planning, the Rural Tourism Working Group collected information about the actions taken by key actors in rural tourism and passed it to the governmental level. It also offered guidelines and suggestions to the regional level and supervised the implementation of the national rural tourism strategy and operational programme.



Integrated tourism development in Finland

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Case study 8.2

A Tourism Theme Group at regional level, Finland

In the Region of South Ostrobothnia, the process of strategic planning for the period 2000-2006 includes thematic programming. There are 12 different theme programmes for the new period. Each of these is supervised by a co-ordinator working for the Regional Council, and by a steering committee. Members of the committee are representatives of different actors (administration, organisations, enterprises, NGOs etc) related to the theme. In addition to the Theme Group, the assistance of other experts is also used when needed.

This cooperative working method is seen as democratic - giving an opportunity for different actors to give their opinion - and effective. It allows similar projects and ideas to be brought together, and permits new ideas to be discussed and developed further on a larger forum. Tourism is seen as the most important of the 12 themes to be tackled in this way.

The programme of tourism is developed and co-produced by many interested parties and is written by the co-ordinator. It is based on the experiences from the previous programming period (which was the first one for Finland as a member of EU); on the results of the seminars and workshops for the different actors (project workers, entrepreneurs, representatives of educational organisations etc); and on other discussions with people working in or close to the field of tourism. The aim of the programme and the Theme Group is to organise tourism development in the region; to find the most important points of development and to direct the use of resources towards them; to support planning of new projects; to reduce overlapping of projects; and to create a permanent structure for the development, planning, support and follow-up of tourism in South Ostrobothnia.

As a tool for strategic planning, this method aims to connect in one region as many of the different actors of the tourism branch as possible and to give them a chance to take part actively in expanding their field of activity.



The Manor House

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Case study 8.3

Zala-KAR Association, Hungary

Zala county in Hungary provides an example of organised thinking about tourism development. This county has a complex structure of settlement, and (as a result) many civil and governmental associations who are interested in sustainable rural development. One of the oldest and most successful of these bodies is the Zala-KAR Micro-Regional Innovation Association, working at the north-east edge of the County in West Transdanubia.

This micro-region, containing 18 communes, is weak in socio-economic terms. It has no significant industrial activities, and the farm economy has been weakened by the collapse of the agricultural cooperatives. Unemployment is quite high, and the area has been losing population.

The Zala-KAR Association was established in 1993 by the 18 local governments. Its aim is to manage effectively the complex development of the micro-region both in the governmental, the economic and the civil sphere. The Association has initiated and implemented many programmes, some of which are exemplary in the field of rural development. The local governments provided the resources for a co-ordination office, which has grown as the programme developed.

In 1994, the Association introduced a programme for the development of rural tourism. There was no previous tradition of rural tourism, and it was therefore necessary to plan the whole process. The main elements in that process have been:

- Completing an inventory of possible tourist attractions
- Shaping the entrepreneurs' attitude towards tourism, ensuring their commitment
- Building cooperation with rural tourism organisations at county and national level
- Organising study tours in Hungary and abroad for the people who would act as hosts for the visitors
- Organising special courses for these hosts in languages, hospitality methods etc
- Preparing proposals for product development, with



Bridge in the Zala county

help from consultants

- Obtaining subsidies for this development
- Classification and quality control of the accommodation units
- Formulation and pursuit of a marketing strategy for the micro-region
- Elaboration of a complete tourism development plan.

The Association employs one person, with funds provided by the Business Development Centre of Zala County, to manage the concrete tasks of tourism development. In 1997 the hosts of this micro-region established an independent body, the "Association of the Hosts of Zala-KAR".

In 1996 the micro-region gained subsidies from the PHARE programme. Fifteen families have received PHARE funding to

improve the capacity of their accommodation or catering businesses. PHARE funds were also used by the local governments to publish tourism brochures and maps, to build unified bus stops and other street furniture, and to erect information boards.

Having established a culture of hospitality, the members of the Association turned their attention to specialised fields of rural tourism. In 1999, they started the development of eco-tourism as part of an Ecological Rural Development Programme. The centre of this programme is Dotk, the smallest village in the micro-region. At the same time, they started building the Zala Wine Route, with support from the strategic plan of the region, under which entrepreneurs were able to get interest-free loans to develop their services related to wine tourism. This wine route now crosses the border of the micro-region and is linked with other wine routes in Zala, Somogy, and Veszprem counties.

The future aim of the Association is the development of a thermal spa and pleasure spa with health services at the centre of the micro-region in Zalaszentgrot.

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Case study 8.4

Morella, Spain: strategic planning of local development

Morella provides an example of strategic planning of local development, with clear political leadership and strong participation of the local inhabitants. Tourism has a major role in this strategy, and is closely linked to the heritage of the town.

The town of Morella (2,791 inhabitants) is situated in the area of El Ports, the inland region of the Valencia Community (Spain). This region suffers from depopulation, a crisis in farming and other traditional economic activity, and damage to its historic and environmental heritage.

Throughout its history, Morella has been important culturally. It has a significant archaeological, architectural and cultural heritage. In 1965, Morella was declared a historic-artistic monument by the Ministry of Education, and it has recently been given World Heritage status by UNESCO.

Morella's mayor, Mr Ximo Puig, who is also a member of the Valencian Court, has provided the strategic vision, and social and economic leadership, for the development of the town. He took the view that revival of the town's economy should be based upon its environment and cultural heritage. In 1988, he set up an Environment Agency, to prepare and pursue a local development strategy. Later, this was complemented by the creation of the Centre of Integrated Economic Services. The development of the town has also been linked to the wider programme of rural development in the Ports-Maestrat district through the LEADER Initiative.

Over the last decade a series of projects have been pursued to promote protection of the heritage and the growth of tourism. These projects have included:

- Promotional activities based upon the historical monuments, such as the castle, walls and churches: this has included portable displays in museums, a mediaeval fair and international music festivals, university summer courses and the introduction of ecological walks;
- Creation of tourist accommodation through the renovation of traditional and historic buildings and homes (Cases de Morella), accompanied by a central reservation system;
- Promotion of outdoor activities for tourists, such as walking, mountain-biking and climbing, particularly in the summer months;
- Campaigns of tourism marketing, using modern technology such as web sites and webcams;
- Introduction of special training courses, in order to strengthen the skills of tourism and other enterprises-



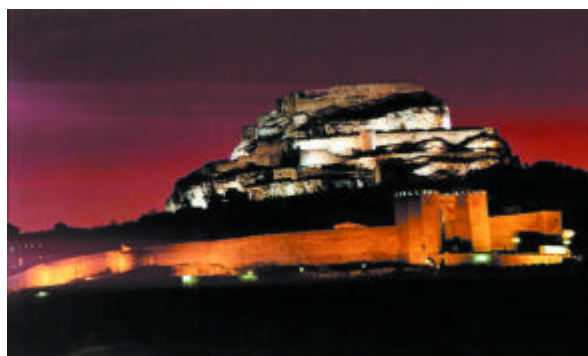
Historical church in Morella

languages and new technology are two key aspects of this training;

- The creation of a modern industrial park; and
- The support of small and medium-sized businesses, through provision of information and negotiation of subsidies where these are needed by businesses.

The awareness and involvement of the local population have been of high importance in pursuing this strategy. The town administration has made great efforts to inform and involve the people, through publicity, meetings and events such as conferences, exhibitions and concerts. Many different local associations have been involved in efforts to increase the awareness among local people of their heritage, the history of town and its future direction. The local community is now unified and ready to face the challenges of the future.

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<http://www.morella.net>



Night-view of the Morella Castle

Case study 8.5

A national partnership for rural tourism in Estonia

IN Estonia, a national project (DERTAEALUP 1998-2000) funded by the Phare programme found that rural tourism offered the best prospects for new economic activity in the Estonian countryside. The project experts suggested that a central, unified, professional and autonomous organisation should be established in order to achieve the sound and sustained promotion and marketing of Estonia's rural tourism product, both within the country and abroad.

In January 2000, 19 tourism entrepreneurs established the Estonian Rural Tourism Organisation (ERTO) as a non-profit body. ERTO starts from the belief that life in the countryside may be best preserved through the development of rural tourism. Its aim is to bring together Estonian entrepreneurs involved in fine rural tourism practice so that a common database may be created, accessible to everyone who is interested in the life of Estonian rural people and their history.

ERTO's efforts have been concentrated on developing the organisation and establishing trust in its activities; and on bringing together rural tourism entrepreneurs in order to market their activities and offer them new opportunities to sustain and enhance their operation. Training, counselling and marketing services are provided to ERTO members. The Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Environmental Affairs, Estonian Tourist Board, Estonian Ecotourism Association and local NGOs are ERTO's most important partners on national level. There is close partnership also with foreign institutions like the Latvian and Finnish Rural Tourism Organisation and the Scottish Agricultural College.

By the end of year 2000, ERTO had attracted 195 mem-

bers. The first 100 members joined the ERTO marketing scheme, which includes web site publicity, a published travel guide in 5 languages, and a hotline information service. ERTO's marketing strategy focused on a series of distinct products, aimed at targeted markets. These products included holidays on productive farms, nature and culture tourism, children and family tourism, health tourism, active holidays, seminars and parties. ERTO worked closely with its members to assure the quality of the package tours and other products that they offer, and this quality was constantly controlled and monitored.

In 2001, ERTO concentrated on further diversification and improvement of the tourist packages offered by its members, and on marketing them more effectively through tourism fairs and in neighbouring countries. 130 tourism entrepreneurs are now publicised through ERTO's marketing programme. By the end of year 2002, ERTO was planning to complete the first version of criteria for quality assurance of tourist accommodation facilities, similar to the "star system" used in hotels. During the last two years, 180 entrepreneurs have participated in ERTO's training programmes, including 3 specialised courses on active tourism, nature and culture tourism, and holidays on productive farms.

Today ERTO has 266 members all over rural Estonia. Of these, 210 are providers of tourist accommodation, which represents about 30% of such providers in Estonia.

Contact: Kaidi Nommerga kaidi@maaturism.ee



Scenic rural setting in Estonia

CHAPTER 9.

Further reading

We offer below a reading list, which may help you to go deeper into the background of the subjects covered in this Guide

WTO publications

Agenda 21 for the Travel and Tourism Industry (1996), A joint WTO, WTTC and Earth Council publication, outlines practical steps that governments and private companies can take to implement the goals of the Rio Earth Summit and make the tourism sector more sustainable.

National and Regional Tourism Planning: Methodologies and Case Studies (1994), establishes the principal guidelines for preparing tourism development plans at the national and regional levels with emphasis on the integrated approach, balancing economic, environmental and socio-cultural factors to achieve sustainable tourism.

Guide for Local Authorities on Developing Sustainable Tourism (1998), Local authorities responsible for counties, districts, cities, towns, villages, rural areas and attraction sites are increasingly becoming involved in developing and managing many aspects of tourism. This book provides them with valuable criteria and techniques for its adequate planning and management. First edited in 1992, and totally updated in 1998, besides the general volume, supplementary volumes are also available for Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Pacific and the Americas.

Sustainable Development of Tourism: A Compilation of Good Practices (2000). This publication contains nearly 50 case studies collected from 31 countries by WTO. The cases represent a great variety in terms of topics and types of stakeholders involved. A methodical presentation of these cases allows readers to learn about the background, success factors for sustainability and lessons derived from these experiences.

Sustainable Development of Tourism: An Annotated Bibliography (latest issue November 1999) the most comprehensive and periodically updated collection of books and articles on the topic, this publication is a valuable source for further information and research in the above field. A thematic index allows an easy search by topics.

What Tourism Managers Need to Know: A Practical Guide to the Development and Use of Indicators of Sustainable Tourism (1996) defines a set of key indicators, batteries of supplementary indicators for coastal, island, mountain, urban, cultural and natural areas, and describes a methodology to define site-spe-

cific indicators in order to measure the environmental and socio-economic impacts of tourism.

Guidelines for the Sustainable Development and Management of Tourism in National Parks and Protected Areas (1992). A joint publication of WTO, UNEP and IUCN in order to assist relevant authorities to achieve a sustainable use of their National Parks and protected areas, as prime destinations for ecotourism. A revised edition of this publication (first edited in 1992) will be available in 2001.

Other

Beyond the Green Horizon: Principles of Sustainable Tourism, ed. Shirley Eber (1992, Tourism Concern/WWF UK Ltd).

Community Based Sustainable Tourism: A Handbook by C Urquico (1998 ASSET, Philippines) - Sets out implications of a community approach to tourism and gives practical guidance on how to successfully launch and run community tourism projects in developing countries.

The Community Tourism Guide by Mark Mann (2000 Tourism Concern / Earthscan). - The Community Tourism Directory is a book with additional listings, expanded tour descriptions, useful responsible tourism contacts, chapters on the principles of community tourism, etc. The essential practical guidebook to community-based tourism around the world.

Conflict and Change in the Countryside by Guy M. Robinson (1990, John Wiley & Sons Ltd.)-The general theme of the book is the way in which rural areas have been affected by economic change and urbanisation in the post-war era.

Contemporary issues in tourism development edited by D. G. Pearce and R. W. Butler (1999, Routledge)-This book is at the cutting edge of a rapidly developing field and will be a valuable resource for all those interested in the changing face of tourism; it combines a study of contemporary issues in tourism development with a close examination of the approaches to tourism research.

IUCN, the World Conservation Union, 2002. **Tourism and Protected Areas**, Vol. 12, No 1 of 'Parks' magazine, IUCN, Gland, Switzerland

Parks for Life: Action for Protected Areas in Europe, published by IUCN-The World Conservation Union (1994)-This is one of a number of regional action plans being prepared by the Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas (CNPPA) as a result of the IV World Parks Congress (Caracas, Venezuela, 1992) and as a contribution to the implementation of the Caracas Action Plan.

Participatory Management of Natural Resources, Borrubu-Feyerabend, G. (1999), <http://nrm.massey.ac.nz/changelinks/pmnr.html>

Participatory Approaches to Natural Resource Management: the Case of Coastal Zone Management in the Puttalam District, Foell, J., Harrison E. and Stirrat, R.L.(2000) <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/CDE/research/coastal/sf.html>

Preserve or Destroy: Tourism and the Environment, Jonathon Croall (1995, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation)

Tourist Development by Douglas Pearce (1989, Longman Scientific & Technical, 2nd Edition)-This is a book of great value to students, lecturers and researchers in all aspects of tourism, as well as to professionals in the tourist/travel industry; the broader focus of this second edition also assists those involved in development studies and development agencies and organisations with interests in tourism.

Towards Quality Rural Tourism (European Commission, 1999), EC Brussels

World Commission on Protected Areas, 2002. **'Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas: Guidelines for Planning and Management'**. IUCN, the World Conservation Union, Gland, Switzerland.

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Fax +44 1242 543273, E-mail mdower@chelt.ac.uk)

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World Tourism Organisation (1998), ***Guide for local authorities on developing sustainable tourism***, WTO, Madrid, Spain

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Useful Internet links

<http://www.euracademy.org>

<http://www.agriculturaltours.com>

<http://www.agritour.com>

<http://www.agritourism.net>

<http://www.agritourism-guide.com>

<http://www.agri-tours.com>

<http://www.agroecoturismo.net>

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<http://www.farmholidays.com>

<http://www.farm-tourism.com>

<http://www.rural-europe.aeidl.be>

<http://www.ruraltourism.com>

<http://www.sustainabletourism.co.cr>

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<http://www.vikinggotland.com>

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PRINTED IN ATHENS BY NEREUS LTD, 8 LENORMAN, ATHENS
TEL. +30 210 5225229

LAYOUT: MARIOS DESTEFANOS

MARCH 2003