

“The Gate of Gornje Podunavlje”

NGO “Podunav” Bački Monoštor, Serbia



- Non government organization for the establishment and development of rural eco-tourism
- Main aim is the promotion of natural beauty, culture and tradition of Backi Monostor and its surroundings
- Main activities of the NGO are ENVIRONMENT PRESERVATION and RURAL ECO-TOURISM DEVELOPMENT, as a base for sustainable regional development



Social and economic characteristics of Backi Monostor village

- Multiethnic heritage based on people living in harmony with the environment
- Environmental values of Special Nature Reserve "Gornje Podunavlje"



Main goal of the project is an sustainable development of whole region through eco and rural tourism development, which includes engagement of whole local community, causing a social and economic welfare with a nature and landscape preservation.

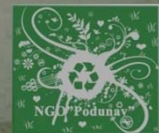
Connection of local culture and historic heritage in harmony with nature and its promotion as an eco and rural tourist destination provides a social, cultural and aesthetic sustainability. That is also a chance for a new quality development through new ways of nature preservation, tradition preservation and new jobs for a local community.

The project is a partnership between local and regional institutions, non government and civil sector, including local community.



Central aims

- Protection of the significant part of Danube middle flow (Special nature reserve “Gornje Podunavlje) – wetlands, forests, animal and plant species
- Cross-border cooperation with the neighbours sharing same complex of Danube flood valley (National park “Kopacki Rit” – Croatia and Nature park “Danube – Drava” – Hungary) as a element for regional development
- Promotion of Special Nature Reserve “Gornje Podunavlje” as a base for sustainable territorial development
- Promotion and preservation of local culture – multiethnic heritage
- Nature and tradition preservation through eco and rural tourism development
- Increasing awareness among civil society and public authorities of the value of landscapes using the educational methods
- Raising awareness about landscape values



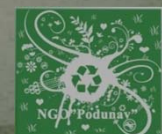
Main activities



- Education and seminars with a local community of protected plant and animal species
- Workshops with children and adults on environmental protection
- Education and seminars with the partners on Organic Agriculture
- Meetings with partners from Croatia and Hungary on the subject of connecting the integrated nature protection and cross-border cooperation
- Educational workshops on eco and rural tourism
- Construction of Eco-centre
- Monostor marked as Green Belt site
- Construction of Tourist Information Centre
- Creating an tourist offer for Backi Monostor
- Inclusion of youth in activities related to environmental protection
- Motivating local people to get involved with eco and rural tourism through example of good practice
- Building and raising rural eco-tourism facilities
- Organizing festivals that promote the natural and ethnological contents of Backi Monostor



- Motivating young people to involve in traditional crafts
- The promotion of local traditional foods and the creation of brand
- Connecting with similar organizations in order to cooperate and integral protection
- Joint cross-border eco-tourism offer with Croatia
- Reception of tourists from Serbia and abroad, and their introduction to the Special Reserve and village tradition
- Collaboration with local and city institutions in order to increase the budget for tourism infrastructure
- Connecting all individuals and institutions involved in eco tourism offer of Backi Monostor and surroundings
- Appearances and presentations at fairs and festivals
- Creating promotional materials - leaflets, maps, travel documentary movies
- Raising awareness about landscape values through media presentations on TV



Outcome

- Special Nature Reserve "Gornje Podunavlje" recognized as significant protected area and a part of a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Mura-Drava-Danube
- Increased awareness of local inhabitants about importance of landscape thanks to the Educations and environment protection workshops
- Joint projects with partners from Croatia, relating to cross-border protection and development of eco-tourism
- Educated service providers in rural eco-tourism (hosts of guest houses, caterers, owners of the cottages, craftsman)
- Tourist Information Center - starting point for any visitor of Backi Monostor
- developed eco-tourism offer of Backi Monostor and its surroundings - the established visiting programs (day trips, weekend deals, multi-day programs ...)
- involved young people in the organization of environmental and recreational events



- Placement of domestic agricultural products
- New jobs
- 50 registered beds for tourists accommodation (12 households)
- two ethno - houses that are involved in tourism and receiving guests
- marked bike lanes – Euro Velo 6 and Via Pacis Panonie
- Marked walking path “ Strbac”
- Registered cottages to accommodate tourists
- registered old craft shops
- Events that have assumed a traditional character - are held regularly every year and are of great importance to regional and national level – Bodrog fest, Danube Day
- preserved tradition of all ethnic groups - the dialects, dances, songs
- Young people who are dealing with some of the traditional crafts
- The well-known dishes (noted in all competitions, local and regional levels)
- Hosted several thousand visitors of Backi Monostori (the individual, or groups)
- Backi Monostor marked as a tourist destination on the tourist map of Serbia and the region
- Connected all individuals and institutions involved in eco-tourism offer and between
- Identifying Backi Monostor at fairs, festivals
- leaflets, maps, travel documentary film



Exemplary value

Project and initiatives for the protection of the environment by developing eco-tourism is an excellent example of good practice that can be applied to all similar sites, especially in Vojvodina (talking about Serbia), because it is multi-ethnic and each ethnic group cherish its customs and traditions. It is significant to emphasize the openness and cooperation will of Backi Monostor inhabitants in achieving the objectives of the project.

Connections between all actors in the eco-tourist industry, local residents (owners of accommodation facilities, caterers, Ethno house owners, old crafts, farmers ...), as well as local institutions (manager of SNP "Gornje Podunavlje" - Public Company Vojvodinasume, Municipality of Sombor, Sombor visiting board ...) contributions stable and sustainable development of the region by creating new value. Promotion of natural and ethnological values greatly contributes to their preservation and is an excellent example of good practice.



Public participation

The project is based and depends directly on the active participation of local people in each of its segment. This includes participation in the development and of implementing eco-tourism through the involvement of rural population in the formation, implementation and development agenda, as well as direct participation in the touristic offer - the engagement of people at the reception of guests and the good of the local community. Also, participation is present in the joint work to protect and preserve the environment and SNR Gornje Podunavlje, through education, as well as concrete measures of protection. Each ethnic group has a significant role in tradition preservation by promoting it thru festivals, fares, presentations to the tourists...

Project and activities of Touristic association "Podunav" of landscape preservation and rural development are in accordance with a local and regional development plan (Backi Monostor development plan, Master plan of Gornje Podunavlje, development plan for Sombor municipality, Strategy for rural tourism development of Vojvodina, Forestry Development Strategy of Serbian Republic, Policy of sustainable development referred to in the National Investment Plan, as well as other documents that are currently adopted in the Serbian Parliament). It is significant to mention that the activities of the project are a part of international initiatives like WWF and IUCN.





Awareness raising

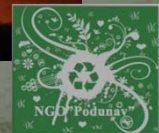
From the very beginning of the project, all activities are based on sustainable development, which are aware of all the participants in the project - and that is the whole local community. The importance of environmental and ethnological value through sustainable development presented to the public through trainings, seminars, workshops, media, publications (brochures and a documentary about Backi Monostor), as well as concrete examples of the good practice - largely contribute to spreading society awareness about the preservation of the landscape. Development of eco-tourism stopped a migration of young people from village to the urban cities; each young man has found its place in the project, through the volunteering or new jobs. Through the project, residents of Backi Monostor became aware of their European identity and, unlike many, are proud to promote their village, no matter what it comes to rural areas.

Implementing the local population in the project, there is a raise social consciousness, resulting in the formation of civil associations and non-governmental organizations for youth, women, and association of old crafts, as well as informal groups - clubs, art and craft workshops. Increased engagement of cultural and artistic associations of Roma, Croats (Šokci - ethnic group), Hungarians, because a large part of their activities aimed at promoting Backi Monostor as harmonious multi-ethnic community.





BODROG FESTIVAL





“REGERERATION OF THE DANUBE”
ECO MUSIC FESTIVAL





NGO Podunav
Backi Monostor
ngopodunav@gmail.com
www.backimonostor.rs
www.skituljko.webs.com

