“The Gate of Gornje Podunavlje”

Special mention of the CoE Landscape Award

Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection

Biljana Filipovic
Gornje Podunavlje Special Nature Reserve
Special Mention of Council of Europe Landscape Award to the NGO “Podunav”

• NGO Podunav represented Serbia on the project proposals for European Landscape Award in 2011 and 2013, receiving twice the special recognition of the Committee of Ministers.

• Main aim: promotion of natural beauty, culture and tradition of Backi Monostor and its surroundings
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”
Project Goals

- Sustainable development of the entire region through eco and rural tourism development, which includes the engagement of the whole local community,
- The connection of local culture and historic heritage in harmony with nature and its promotion as an eco and rural tourist destination
- The project is a partnership between local and regional institutions, non-government and civil sector and 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 ethnomological 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
Outcomes

- 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
- 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 through better tourist offer (preserving ethno houses for tourism)
- Marked bike lanes, for sustainable biking – Euro Velo 6 and Via P. Panonie

- 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)

- Backi Monostor is marked as a tourist destination on the tourist map of Serbia and the region

- Identifying Backi Monostor at fairs, festivals
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.

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... contributes to stable and sustainable development of the region by creating to new values.

excellent example of good practice, that may encourage similar initiatives.
BODROG FESTIVAL
Public participation and awareness raising

Active participation of local people in each segment

Project and activities of landscape preservation and rural development are in accordance with a local and Regional Development Plans Strategies and programs.

Activities of the project are a part of the international initiatives: WWF and IUCN

Raising awareness and capacity building about the cultural and landscape values is presented to the public through educational trainings, workshops and media campaigns, largely contributing to the main goal: informing the general public about their roles, rights and responsibilities in transparent and democratic decision making for future development.
“REGERERATION OF THE DANUBE”
ECO MUSIC FESTIVAL
Thank you for your attention

Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection
Department for International Cooperation and Sustainable Development
Ms. Biljana Filipovic, national focal point to the ELC

e-mail: biljana.filipovic@eko.minpolj.gov.rs