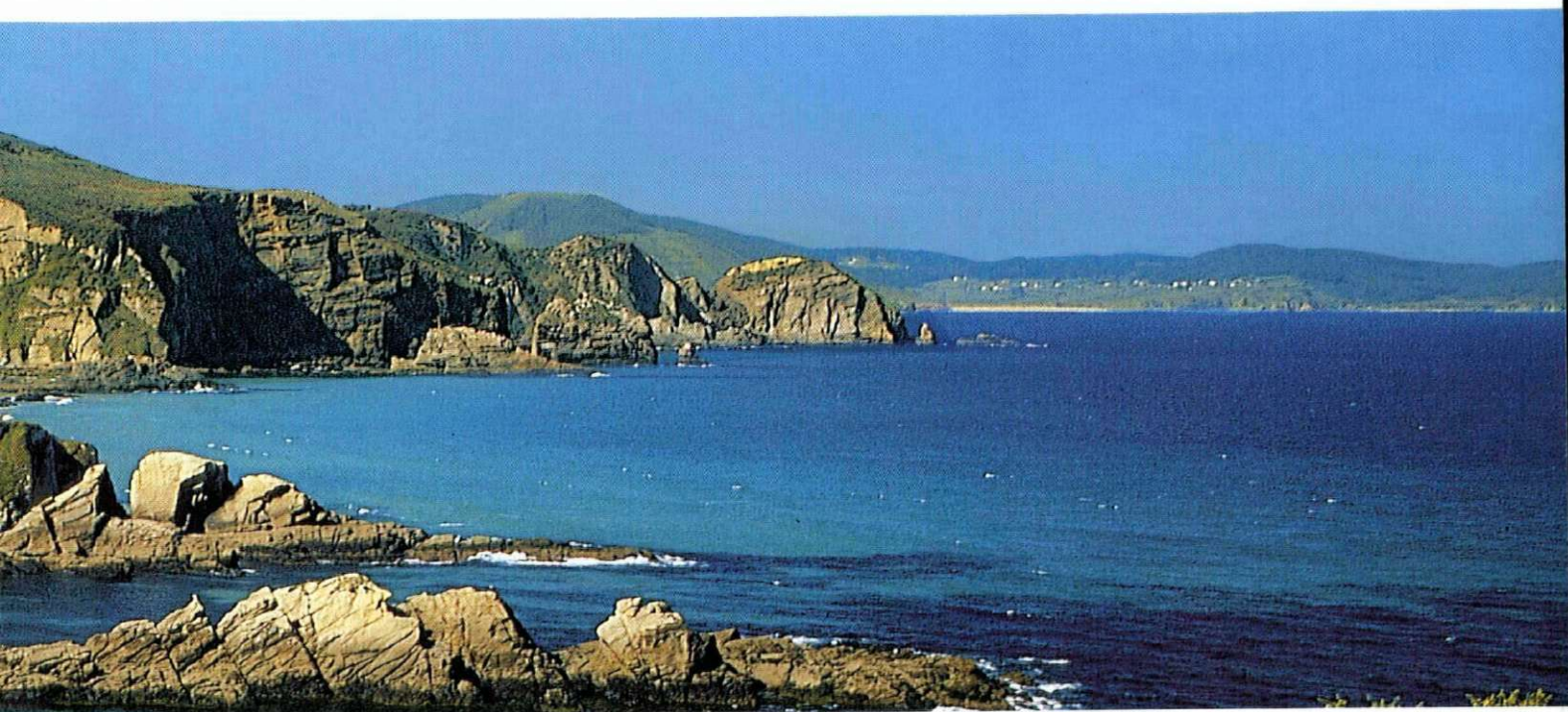




Naturoopa

COUNCIL OF
CONSEIL DE L' Europe





Naturopa

N° 84-1997

Editorial *A. Merkel* _____ 3

Principles and actors

Tourism and the challenge of sustainability *F. Frangialli* _____ 4

Integrating sustainable principles in the development of tourist projects *A. Ellul* _____ 5

A few concepts and definitions *S. Blangy* _____ 7

Respect for sites and local populations
Interview *C. Pinto* _____ 8

A collective challenge *S. Thibal* _____ 9

Co-operation and assistance
The Council of Europe's programmes *H. Bouguessa* _____ 10

Application and management tools

Environmental assessment *C. Zysberg* _____ 11

Cleaner production in tourism
From theory to practice *O. Perera* _____ 12

The European Prize: reinforcing the tourism/environment relationship *M. Vanden Abeele* _____ 13

Aiming for quality tourism
Environmental awards *H. Hamele* _____ 14

A European Charter for parks *S. Vautier* _____ 15

Role of training, education and awareness-raising

How to train tourism professionals *M. Wägéus* _____ 18

Are you familiar with the cultural routes of Europe? *M. Thomas-Penette* _____ 19

Lesiure activities and the environment: a winning combination!
An awareness-raising campaign in the Walloon Region *P. Jouret* _____ 20

Help for projects

Financing sustainable tourism *A. Hörhager* _____ 21

Practical European Union support
Protecting the assets upon which tourism thrives *M. Vanden Abeele* _____ 22

A few projects

Steps towards sustainable tourism in Greece *D. Matthews* _____ 23

The National Trust and sustainable tourism *M. Drury* _____ 24

Rural tourism in Taramundi *E. Lastra Pérez* _____ 25

The Abruzzi National Park
Ecodevelopment and ecotourism *F. Tassi* _____ 26

A Green Label on the island of Hiiumaa *T. and R. Kokovkin* _____ 27

New perspectives

Sustainable tourism and employment *C.-M. Mo* _____ 28

Towards new solutions *P. Keller* _____ 29

At the Council of Europe

Intergovernmental activities on tourism and environment *F. Bauer and J.-P. Ribaut* _____ 30

*Naturopa is the environmental magazine of the Council of Europe. It is published three times a year in four languages: English, French, German and Italian. Council of Europe, Centre Naturopa, F-67075 Strasbourg Cedex
Tel: 33-3 88 41 22 78
Fax: 33-3 88 41 27 15*

*Chief editor:
Jean-Pierre Ribaut*

*Conception and editing:
Marie-Françoise Glatz
e-mail: marie-francoise.glatz@dela.coe.fr*

*This issue's special adviser:
Anne Herberich
Consultant
Secretary of the European Environmental Management Association (EEMA)
La Chapelle
F-38710 Mens*

*Production:
Artegrafica Silva s.r.l., Parma, Italy*

Articles may be freely reprinted provided that reference is made to the source and a copy sent to the Centre Naturopa. The copyright of all photographs is reserved.

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Council of Europe.

Next issue's theme: Nature conservation and land use problems

Since 1993 Naturopa has been printed on chlorine- and wood-free paper.

A selective bibliography on sustainable tourism development, as well as a booklet "Tourism and environment" in the "Questions and answers" series, are available, free of charge, upon request to the Centre Naturopa.

*Cover page, from top to bottom:
P. Carbiener, X. Varela Vilariño,
Molavi/Sipa Image
Pages 16-17: A. Nouailhat*

Sustainable tourism development



Tourism has grown into one of the world's major industries and has thus also become an increasingly important, if complex, issue for environmental policy. Unless it is developed in a sustainable manner, we will be unable to achieve key objectives of global environmental policy such as the preservation of biological diversity, the prevention of climate change or the conservation of natural resources.

Tourism itself depends a lot on the existence of unspoilt nature and landscapes, as well as a healthy environment. If nature is plundered, landscapes are destroyed or water, energy and soil resources are over-exploited, the economic basis of tourism is also undermined. The needs of tourism do therefore overlap with those of environmental protection and nature conservation.

However, many trends in tourism are hard to reconcile with the goal of "sustainable development", which the representatives of over 170 states agreed to pursue at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and are posing new challenges for environmental policy at both European and global level.

On the one hand, for instance, tourists are becoming increasingly environmentally conscious and are looking to get back to nature and enjoy unspoilt environments when on holiday. On the other hand, however, the number of international tourists is growing constantly, having risen from around 180 million in 1971 to almost 600 million last year. The proportion of long-haul journeys is also increasing steadily, especially in the industrialised nations, where travel is now taken for granted as part of people's lifestyles and has become an important factor in social status. The many different types of travel and holidays are covering more and more countries and regions and, as a result, increasing numbers of previously unspoilt natural environments are being opened up to tourism. This applies equally to coastlines, small islands, coral reefs, rock formations and mountain regions. Various surveys have produced findings which in some cases are nothing short of dramatic:

- Between 1900 and 1990, for instance, Europe lost around 43% of its sand dunes to tourism, with the figure being as high as 75-80% in some Mediterranean countries.

- The amount of land used for tourism is huge; according to the "Blue Plan" for the Mediterranean region, on the north-west Mediterranean coastline alone, 4 400 km² are taken up by tourist accommodation and related infrastructures.

- In the Alps, too, which are visited by around 50 million tourists a year, valuable natural environments are having to give way to building and development projects.

There is growing recognition of the need for tourism to develop in a sustainable and environmentally friendly manner. Many countries have, for instance, introduced regulations which require environmental impact surveys to be carried out at least for larger tourist developments. Since the Rio Summit in 1992, there have also been more initiatives in support of sustainable tourism at international level. The European Union and the Council of Europe have developed specific activities in this area. In 1995, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP, Paris) published for the first time a collection of the environmental guidelines in existence throughout the world for the tourist sector. In April 1995, Unesco held a world conference on sustainable tourism in Lanzarote, in co-operation with the Spanish Government. The participants adopted an 18-point Charter for Sustainable Tourism, which has had a significant impact.

The first example of an international legal instrument can be found in the implementing protocol on tourism of the Convention for the Protection of the Alps, which commits the eight Alpine states to the goal of sustainable tourism in the Alpine region.

In my view, however, these are only first steps, which are not enough in themselves to ensure that tourism develops in a sustainable manner at global level. At the second conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Jakarta (Indonesia) in November 1995, I therefore called for the convention to be used as the basis for developing international principles and rules designed to bring the needs of tourism into line with those of nature conservation. Admittedly, the convention - like Agenda 21 - does not deal specifically with issues of tourism. Nevertheless, just as several chapters of Agenda 21 are of relevance to tourism, the Convention on Biological Diversity also offers important starting points for global agreements in this area.

To make the most of the opportunity offered here, I invited states from all over the world which are major international tourist destinations and also have great biological diversity,

as well as relevant associations and international organisations, to an international conference on biological diversity and tourism in Berlin from 6 to 8 March 1997.

The "Berlin Declaration" adopted at the conference reflects the first ever global consensus on the principles of sustainable tourism which respects both the environment and nature. The key principles are:

- Sustainable tourism allows for the rational use of biological diversity and can contribute to the preservation of that diversity.

- The development of tourism must be controlled and carefully managed so that it remains sustainable.

- Particular attention must be paid to tourism in ecologically and culturally sensitive areas, where mass tourism should be avoided.

- All parties concerned, including in particular the private sector, have a part to play in bringing about the sustainable development of tourism, and voluntary initiatives (codes of conduct, quality labels) should be encouraged.

- Particular importance should be attached to the local level, which is not only responsible for the sustainable development of tourism but should also derive particular benefit from tourism.

The "Berlin Declaration" is now being fed into the conference process of the States Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity with a view to achieving world-wide agreements on the sustainable development of tourism. It is also to provide the basis for back-up activities in the context of the extraordinary session of the UN General Assembly in June 1997 and at the UN Commission on Sustainable Development.

I hope that it will mark the successful beginning of internationally co-ordinated efforts to make tourism environmentally and socially sustainable so that many generations to come can continue to experience and enjoy the beauty of nature on our planet. ■

Angela Merkel
Federal Minister for the Environment,
Nature Conservation and Reactor Safety
Postfach 12 06 29
D-53048 Bonn

Tourism and the challenge of sustainability

Francesco Frangialli

If there is any single change that has characterised the tourism sector in the past two decades, it must be its attitudes toward the environment. Not so long ago, it was unusual to include environment on the agenda of a travel trade meeting. Environment was simply not considered a problem for tourism. Besides, it was stressed, tourism could always be relied upon to develop unassisted in harmony with the environment.

Today, all those concerned, from top management to local planners, are far more prudent. They know that rapid tourism development strategies for the purpose of reaping short-term benefits are no longer acceptable. Furthermore, they recognise that only sustainable tourism policies will ensure a steady stream of profits from the industry to the national economy.

Market level

At market level, the environmental movement has profoundly influenced consumer attitudes towards tourism, especially in main generating countries, such as Europe. This in itself is a reflection of the way UNCED - the Rio Earth Summit of 1992 - has integrated the global environmental movement into the mainstream of action for sustainable development. Whether tourists come from North America, Japan or Europe, they are today extremely conscious of their holiday environment and generally well-disposed to its conservation.

Furthermore, travellers' higher expectations of quality are also working in favour of environment. Since tourists have no prior commitment to revisit a destination, it is basically only quality that will attract them back as repeat visitors. That quality is based on both natural assets and on personal service, both of

which are important ingredients in any tourist product.

Travel trade

Turning to the travel trade, the change has taken place through two influences. First is the natural desire of tour operators to improve and enhance the quality of the products they offer. Second, it is the feedback the travel trade receives from its customers which is convincing travel professionals of the need for sustainability.

Governmental level

As to governments, the process has been institutional. After Rio, all government departments were asked to embrace Agenda 21. Since Agenda 21 is a lengthy document containing 40 chapters, they needed some assistance. For tourism, the World Tourism Organisation (WTO), the World Travel and Tourism Council and the Earth Council volunteered to produce a draft Agenda 21 for the travel and tourism industry with a set of recommendations aimed both at governments and the private sector. Agenda 21 for Travel and Tourism provides a kind of road map for national action and international co-operation. In essence, it sets the following main objectives for governments:

- to adopt measures both externally and in-house to bring about sustainability;
- to promote Agenda 21 through education and training;
- to encourage integrated planning for sustainability;
- to foster information and technology exchanges;
- to build sustainability into the design of new tourist products; and
- to measure progress in achieving the above.

Last February, in London, this Agenda 21 for Travel and Tourism was given a careful review by the three partners. In perspective, the review showed that considerable progress has been made in educating the travel and tourism industry about sustainability. While more needs to be done - in certain sectors of tour operations, in the procurement policy of enterprises, in encouraging clean technologies and above all in promoting environment-friendly transport - the reflex of "thinking green" is increasingly manifest in the travel business.

Fortunately, WTO is not alone in believing that the tourism industry has much to gain by being a leader in sustainable development. Europe-based international organisations such as Unesco, OECD, the EU and of course, the Council of Europe, are devoting considerable resources to this subject.

Ecotourism

In Europe and elsewhere there are an increasing number of practical examples of the tourism earnings of wildlife making a sizeable contribution to its conservation.

In July 1996, in Arusha, at a WTO regional seminar on finance and management of wildlife parks for tourism, H. E. Minister Juma Ngasaongwa, Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism of Tanzania, explained to participants how African countries are increasingly relying on tourism to generate revenue for protection of fauna and flora. Or, in the memorable words of H. E. President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of the Republic of the Maldives, addressing WTO's Asia-Pacific Members in February 1997, "Wildlife stays because wildlife pays".

European national parks are also experiencing the same benefits through conservation of their biodiversity. Tourism is being developed in park peripheries with a resultant boost to the local economy and earnings of residents. Simultaneously, populations of rare endangered species in the park core-zones are recovering and constitute attractions for visitors.

Top ten tourism destinations in Europe

Top ten tourism earners in Europe

1996	Country	Arrivals (000)	% in Europe	1996	Country	Receipts (US\$m)	% in Europe
1	France	61 500	17.7	1	Spain	28 428	13.1
2	Spain	41 295	11.7	2	France	28 241	13.0
3	Italy	32 853	9.3	3	Italy	27 349	12.6
4	United Kingdom	26 025	7.4	4	United Kingdom	19 738	9.1
5	Hungary	20 670	5.9	5	Germany	15 815	7.3
6	Poland	19 420	5.5	6	Austria	15 095	7.0
7	Austria	17 090	4.9	7	Switzerland	8 661	4.0
8	Czech Republic	17 000	4.8	8	Poland	8 400	3.9
9	Germany	15 205	4.3	9	Netherlands	6 256	2.9
10	Russian Federation	14 587	4.1	10	Turkey	6 000	2.8

Source: World Tourism Organisation (WTO)

Parks in northern Italy and France, among others, are examples of this trend. Members of WTO's Commission for Europe attending WTO's Heidelberg seminar on "Tourism and environmental protection" in May 1996 learned, for example, how tourism had created 1 500 new jobs and generated 200 000 bed-nights in the Cévennes National Park, which is also a World Biosphere Reserve.

WTO is also supporting work on a European Charter for sustainable tourism development in protected areas. The charter will be of assistance to WTO in its work to update the 1992 edition of its own "Guidelines: developing tourism in national parks and protected areas".

Heritage sites

Those responsible for Europe's built heritage also look to tourism to provide funds for conservation and enhancement of historic buildings and monuments. WTO has encouraged the trend for tourism and cultural administrations to work more closely together. WTO also applauds the move by many cities to work together to resolve the problems that large, often highly seasonal, numbers of visitors, raise for major heritage sites. Later this year, WTO and ICOMOS will jointly publish Guidelines specifically developed for sustainable tourism management of heritage sites. WTO will also contribute to the 4th international symposium of the organisation of World Heritage Cities: "Tourism and World

Heritage Cities: challenges and opportunities" to be held in Evora, Portugal, in September 1997.

In conclusion, sustainable tourism requires the right balance between government regulation and free market forces. Equilibrium between these often opposing forces can only be achieved through dialogue and co-operation - dialogue in each destination among all stakeholders in the tourism sector and more co-operation between tourist generating and receiving countries. ■

F. Frangiali
Secretary-General
World Tourism Organisation
Capitán Haya 42
E-28020 Madrid

Integrating sustainable principles in the development of tourist projects

Anthony Ellul

Tourism is increasingly becoming the world's main industry. International tourist arrivals for 1996 totalled 593 million, a substantial increase from the 25 million in 1950. International receipts for the same year topped US\$ 423 billion. The World Tourism Organisation (WTO) forecasts that international tourism will grow at the rate of 4% per annum and by the year 2010 international arrivals will exceed 970 million with receipts in the range of US\$ 1 500 billion.

These figures are enough to visualise the immense dimension of this phenomenon called tourism and its contribution to various economies. This also means that new destinations are likely to develop, as traditional destinations start to decrease their share of international tourist arrivals. These new destinations will face development pressures to provide the necessary tourist infrastructure to meet demand. On the other hand, some existing destinations will struggle to maintain their market share. This may also lead to new developments to attract new markets (e.g. golf courses, theme parks) and which may place additional pressures on the environment and its resources.

"Protecting the environment and successful tourism development are inseparable" (Inskeep, 1994). Therefore, in developing the tourism infrastructure (i.e. hotels, attractions, tourist facilities, etc) due attention must be given to the resource base that such development may affect.

Criteria

There are a number of criteria which have to be considered to ascertain the sustainability of a tourism development project. These criteria can be examined under the following categories: planning, design, marketing and operations.

Planning

The planning of any project is the initial stage of any development. The whole concept of the project is being planned and the objectives and goals being set. During this stage it is to be ensured that the development:

- will not destroy any significant ecological, geological and archaeological resources;
- will not constitute a potential threat to a protected area or areas both in terms of the development itself and the type of tourism activity the development will be attracting (e.g. nature tourism or mass tourism);
- can integrate itself with the capacity of the locality without adding significant pressures and impacts on the natural resources and the socio-cultural fabric of the area;
- is of a scale and mass that respects the town-

scape or landscape of the area it is to be located in;

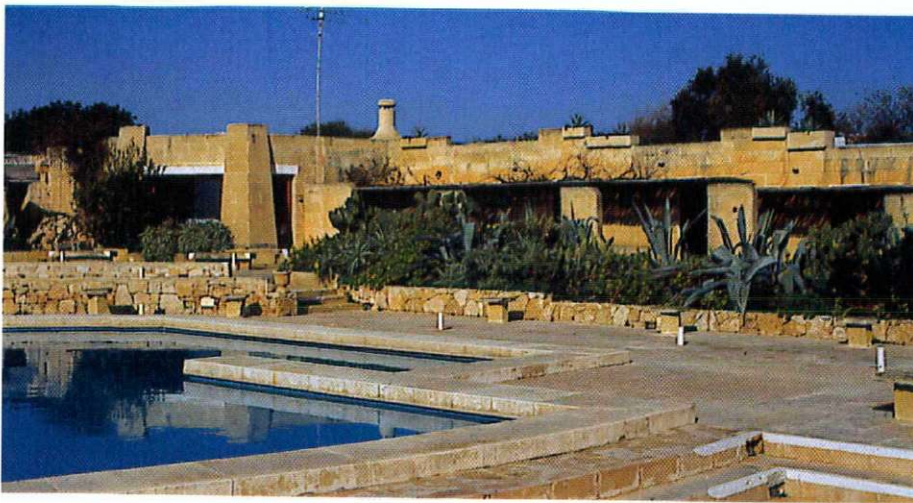
- can be economically viable without having to exert significant adverse impacts on the area;
- has received some degree of acceptance from the local community following adequate consultation and will benefit the local community.

It is also recommended at this initial stage that developers carry out an impact assessment of their proposed project to identify any significant adverse impacts and take any measures to mitigate such impacts. Such an assessment will have to address the likely impacts on:

- the natural environment and the socio-cultural fabric;
- the existing infrastructure both physical (roads, utilities) and human (availability of trained personnel);



Eka/Plurici



A. Ellul

Example of vernacular architecture in Malta with little visual impact on the landscape

- the tourism product being offered; the direct, indirect, immediate and long-term effects of the project.

Design

The design stage is when the planning stage is translated into drawings and plans by the architects and engineers. In designing a tourism development project the following criteria should be considered:

- respect for the architectural character and cultural identity of the area by adopting traditional architectural features in the design;
- capitalise on climatic conditions of the locality to reduce dependency of artificial lighting (e.g. maximise on the use of sunlight to light up public areas and guest rooms) and heating. This will depend on the climatic conditions of the various localities;
- make use of indigenous plants and trees in landscaping designs, and where possible heights of buildings should not exceed that of the highest trees so that the whole development is screened to minimise potential adverse visual impacts;
- take into account measures to reduce energy consumption, particularly through the selection of building materials, water conservation and waste water treatment;
- the sensitive integration of the development into the landscape by respecting the configuration of the land and the features present in the area.

Marketing

"Marketing that provides tourists with full and responsible information increases respect for the natural, social and cultural environments of destination areas and enhances customer satisfaction" (Eber, 1992).

Marketing is the process by which the customer is attracted to the product being offered. The right marketing will attract the right customer and thus avoid a situation of product-market mismatch. Marketing a project to achieve sustainability necessitates:

- the selection of appropriate channels of distribution (e.g. travel agents, tour operators, newspapers, magazines) in marketing the development. Selecting those channels that show respect to the socio-cultural attributes of the destination and its environmental resources, rather than being exploitative, will certainly lead to a better symbiosis between conservation and tourism activity;
- the marketing strategies should provide potential customers with information that will

enable them to understand better the destination, particularly the values and customs of the local community and other environmental considerations;

- the careful planning and design of the development, which takes account of the various environmental and socio-cultural elements of the location, are also other aspects which would enhance the development's marketing strategy and make customers more conscious of the sensitiveness of the locality they are visiting;
- marketing programmes should ensure that the level of tourist activity to be attracted is appropriate to the social and ecological capacities of the locality, particularly in terms of the numbers and types of tourists and the activity this will generate;
- collaborative marketing between developments in the same locality will also ensure a concerted approach to the overall marketing of the locality and not just the development itself. This is important in retaining a distinct and unified image of the locality enhancing the tourist's overall holiday experience.

Operation

The final aspect which is equally important in ascertaining a sustainable development project relates to the operational aspects of the development. This simply refers what measures the development has taken to ensure that its operations minimise the impact on the environment. This would include:

- carrying out periodical environmental audits of their operations to identify areas where environmental performance can be improved to minimise impacts;
- training of staff to be more knowledgeable and understanding of the environmental problems of the locality and thus be more aware of the impact of their work on the environment and seek to improve their methods to reduce any adverse impacts;
- the use of environment-friendly technology, where possible, to improve environmental performance particularly in the areas of energy saving, water conservation and waste water treatment and re-use;
- the reduction of waste produced by buying in bulk and making sure that unwanted packaging is returned to the supplier.

Worldwide examples

The International Hotel Environment Initiative brings together 12 main hotel chains which have committed themselves to make their developments more environment-friendly in their operations. Areas of interven-

tion include reducing pollution through waste water treatment and prohibiting the use of hazardous chemicals, waste reduction, energy-saving measures and water conservation.

The regulatory planning framework in Bermuda prohibits the use of neon signs on building facades and building regulations specify that new buildings must not exceed two storeys in height and must utilise local architectural styles.

Wimberly Allison Tong & Goo incorporates environmental considerations within its tourism development designs, from the materials used through to energy- and water-efficient buildings.

GrecoTel, the Greek hotel chain, works with both tour operators to develop collaborative programmes to protect and improve the environment, especially in resort areas, and with local businesses to improve overall environmental performance and improve the infrastructure for environmental responsibility.

The design of the Center Parcs holiday village in Sherwood Forest has ensured the careful siting of the villas and facilities, blending paths and roads into the landscape to enhance the natural qualities of the site and transformed an area which previously had limited ecological value into an area with rich aquatic flora, planting of 500 000 new trees and bushes, seeding of special grasses and wild flowers, together with the creation of a reserve for a herd of deer.

Major tour operator groups like Thomson Travel Group and TUI have asked suppliers of accommodation to improve their environmental performance. In fact TUI, voluntarily and as part of their commitment to environmental conservation, also undertakes environmental impact assessments for all new areas of development including socio-economic and physical environmental criteria.

The above are just a few examples of the type of actions being taken to make developments more sustainable. Developments must adopt sustainable criteria throughout the various development stages. No development is sustainable if it is environment-friendly in its operational aspects but on the other hand it has destroyed or degraded an entire ecosystem for its construction. A sustainable development needs to keep itself focused on its environmental performance at all stages of its development cycle, from the conceptual and planning stages through to design and operation. In this way tourism development and environmental protection can achieve a long-term harmonious relationship. ■

A. Ellul
Planning Authority
Floriana
P.O. Box 200
Valletta CMR 01
Malta

A few concepts and definitions

Sylvie Blangy

Ecotourism, sustainable tourism, nature tourism, rural tourism and green tourism - the confusion is such that we need to re-examine the content, the criteria and the coverage of these different concepts and illustrate each of them in terms of products and projects.

Ecotourism, a form of sustainable tourism

Ecotourism was born in North America around 1985 in the wake of the development of tourism for naturalists in the most remote and fragile areas of the world. At the time, environmental organisations, NGOs and the tourism industry were seeking to raise public awareness in an attempt to reduce visitor impact on these natural environments and on the communities living in them and to make quite sure that the money generated by such tourism went to support efforts to protect the sites and local cultures.

The most frequently quoted definition is: "Ecotourism is tourism in areas virtually undisturbed by human beings. It must contribute to nature conservation and the well-being of local populations" (The Ecotourism Society, USA).

Ecotourism is therefore based on observation of the natural world. The tourist products on offer are focused mainly on the southern hemisphere, on countries with great biological diversity and undisturbed natural environment and which have national parks, private reserves and local communities still practising their traditional activities. The markets from which these tourists come are North America and, more recently, Europe.

But ecotourism is first and foremost an approach to development that involves new forms of partnership between tour operators, agencies in the host countries, local communities, managers of protected areas, environmental organisations and scientific circles. All these partners sign a charter promising to minimise their impact on the environments visited, to inform travellers about local rules and customs, to join in any local programme aimed at the protection of wild species and their habitats and to give interested local communities the means to keep under control all facilities for the reception and assistance of tourists.

Sustainable tourism

Sustainable tourism is a more recent approach, an offshoot of the concept of sustainable development that emerged during the Rio Conference in 1992. It also sprang from concern about the future of fragile regions of the world, especially tropical forests. The "environment" component is therefore very important. But the concept of sustainable tourism is relevant to the tourist industry as a whole since it covers rural and urban areas as well as natural landscapes, incorporates the idea of cultural and architectural heritage and urges changes in behaviour at home and not just in the countries visited. It is a broader concept than that of ecotourism.

"By 'sustainable tourist development' is meant any form of development, provision of amenities or tourist activity that emphasises respect for and long-term preservation of natural, cultural and social resources and makes a positive and equitable contribution to the economic development and fulfilment of

people living, working or staying in these areas" (FNPNR, Charter of Sustainable Tourism).

The WTO has adopted three types of criterion of sustainable tourism development:

- the resources of the environment must be protected;
- local communities must benefit both economically and in quality of life;
- visitors must be given a quality experience.

Europe feels more at home with this terminology of sustainable tourism, which takes account of its particular limitations - man-dominated landscapes, over-visited protected areas, low biological diversity, urbanised mediterranean coastline, concentration of people in cities, pollution and damaging of natural sites used for recreation, management of abandoned farmland, pressure of hunting. In Europe, the concern is not so much to develop an elite tourism for experienced naturalists as to sensitise the tourist industry as a whole and persuade it to adopt environment-friendly practices.

The concept of ecotourism thus fits into that of sustainable tourism like a Russian doll. Although ecotourism is an older concept, it is one of the many facets of the philosophy underlying sustainable tourism.

Other concepts

In Europe, rural tourism is the meeting point between ecotourism and sustainable tourism since it is organised in relatively undisturbed natural areas inhabited by traditional communities. Rural tourism reflects a deliberate choice (based on the desire to escape, at least temporarily, from an urban life style) within the confines of the rural world. This approach calls for few physical changes to the places concerned.

This type of tourism embraces three kinds of activity: outdoor sports, exploration of the natural environment, and a restful change of surroundings; all attach importance to an unspoilt environment and may be practised without transforming that environment.

"Green tourism" is a broader concept than rural tourism and involves periods spent in rural surroundings; it includes the idea of "alternative" or "soft" tourism with its concern for and responsible attitude towards local sites and cultures. ■

S. Blangy
Ecotourism consultant
SECA
Parc Scientifique Agropolis
F-34397 Montpellier Cedex 5



J. Foot/Bruce Coleman Ltd

Respect for sites and local populations

Interview

Carlos Pinto, a member of the Portuguese Parliament and Mayor of Covilha, has often been confronted with the problem of respect for sites and local populations. This is his view of tourism in Portugal.

Naturopa:

How has tourism developed in your country?

• **Carlos Pinto:**

In Portugal, the first references to tourism date from the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries. A number of buildings bear witness to this period - the Hotel Lawrence in Sintra (1780), the Hotel Bragança in Lisbon and the first Parisian-style cafés such as the Marrare de Polimento, the Principe dos Botequins and the Majestic. Some seaside spa towns also date from 1810 onwards: Gerez, Vizela, S. Pedro do Sul, Caldas da Rainha and Estoril.

In the mid-1960s, the hotel capacity was 80 000 beds. The number of tourists entering Portugal jumped from 150 000 in 1953 to a million in 1964 and two million in 1968. By 1975, this figure had exceeded ten million and a year later it had reached 19.6 million. Today Portugal is among the top 13 tourist destinations in the world.

Does the presence of tourists present specific problems for Portugal?

• Yes. Given the seasonal nature of the demand (more than 45% of tourists come between July and September) and the high geographical concentration (the Algarve normally receives over 40% of the visitors, followed by Madeira and Lisbon, each with 15%) the main problems are water supply and the excessive concentration of tourists in a few regions, which typically do not have adequate waste management.

Municipalities and central government have therefore had to make enormous efforts, for example, to build new infrastructure, to provide water supplies through underground catchment systems and dams, to maintain the road network and provide new forms of transport and to treat or recycle waste.

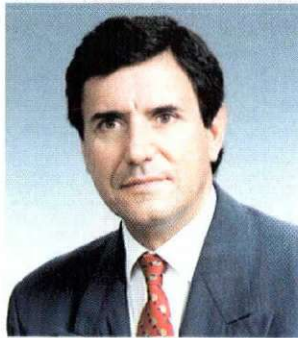
Has the environment been changed, or even damaged, by tourism?

• In spite of Portugal's considerable efforts, marine pollution and the erosion of certain parts of the coast have been extensive. This is mainly due to the excessive amount of building on the sea front; this has resulted in "urban jungles" which are currently being converted.

What impact does tourism have on local inhabitants?

• It has both an ecological and a socio-economic impact since:

- land normally used for agriculture, forestry and stock-farming has been taken over in order to build tourist and public amenities for mass tourism;
- economic activities associated with agricul-



ture (eg fishing, extraction of sea salt, fish canning factories) lose their labour force, which is attracted by better paid and less gruelling jobs in the tourist industry;

- the high spending power of tourists has driven up the price of goods and services in tourist areas;

- the local population's behaviour and values change when they come into contact with the lifestyles of tourists; at the same time, these social changes are leading to higher crime rates;

- the countryside and traditional activities are gradually disappearing because of standardisation.

Have you set a tolerance ceiling?

• For the last ten years, the government has been applying rules on land use. Municipal and regional master plans for the most sensitive areas have been drawn up, for instance in the Algarve, on the Alentejo and Douro shorelines and in the Sintra/Cascais nature park.

What steps have been taken to promote sustainable tourist development?

• Various legal instruments have set restrictions on land use as well as tolerance thresholds for tourist areas. A programme for the restoration of sites has been adopted. In this context, projects to restore coasts, towns and historic centres receive funding. For example, in 1995, the government approved a range of initiatives to improve the standard of beaches: they entail renovating existing local infrastructure, improving the cleaning and safety of beaches, controlling the use of water-borne vehicles, etc. More recently, development plans for coastal areas have been approved, for example the National Plan for Waste establishing a national network for collecting, treating and storing waste.

What improvements would you like to see in the future?

• The large number of problems linked to tourism in Portugal justify the political priority which this sector is being given, particularly the transformation of the existing Secretariat of State and Ministry.

The consequences of tourism in different economic sectors mean that closer co-ordination is needed at the highest levels of decision-making so that the measures necessitated by the development of the Portuguese economy can be taken.

C. Pinto
P O Box 185
P-6202 Covilha



Pasky



X. Varela Vilarinho

Pazo de la Touza, restored as a rural tourism office, Spain

A collective challenge

Suzanne Thibal

After Rio

Sustainable development is based on principles whose theoretical validity was officially recognised by many states throughout the world following the Rio Summit.

Sustainable tourism development, which seeks to implement this new concept of development, is based on the enhancement of natural, cultural and social resources, with the dual aim of improving the standard of living and quality of life of local residents, while satisfying the expectations and the needs of visitors, and preserving natural habitats and cultural identities for future generations. This means:

- making an inventory of potential available resources and assessing the extent to which they can be enhanced through tourism;
- identifying products and markets in line with the planned provision for tourists;
- devising an overall development programme based on co-ordinated individual schemes;
- mobilising and organising the various players whose involvement in tourism development is felt to be desirable;
- setting up legal structures capable of drawing in the available financial support, supervising the various stages of development, promoting the overall project and encouraging interaction between all the partners.

Clearly, these principles stem from the desire for sound management of a valuable asset in what is a buyer's market. Well before Rio, tourist facilities which were integrated into their environment and rooted in the local community were already being set up at the instigation of local authorities, cultural associations, producers' organisations, national campaigns, spatial planning bodies, etc.

However, the Rio Summit had the merit of highlighting the recent worldwide growth in awareness of how fragile the earth's resources are, and particularly how vulnerable they are to the destructive impact of unbridled con-

sumption - including the tourist industry. All of this, combined with the new aspirations of people in terms of quality of life and the emergence of a new sense of responsibility towards future generations, means that we can rightfully talk of a "post-Rio" effect in the field of development.

A general consensus

The European institutions (the Council of Europe and the European Union) preceded, accompanied and have since built on the Rio Summit in terms of the principles and values it set forth. This is particularly noticeable in the area of sustainable tourism development (human rights, culture and environment in the case of the Council of Europe, subsidiarity principle and Community funds in the case of the European Union).

All the evidence suggests that there is now a consensus on the need for sustainable tourism development as an approach to development and a goal to be achieved.

However, given that, by definition, sustainable tourism development has to be integrated into the environment and the local community, there is no standard model recommending which partners should be given prominence or what methods should be used.

Key partnerships

The nature of the development project and the content of the implementation programme will determine the type of legal instruments required for the purposes of spatial planning, setting up and running facilities, promotion and marketing, some of which will have to be created from scratch and some of which simply need to be adapted to the circumstances.

Similarly, depending on the circumstances, the project will either be the product of a single initiative or a combination of individual schemes and, once again, the legal instruments will be chosen accordingly.

The most important thing is to be able to choose the appropriate co-ordinating bodies and legal instruments to promote partnership:

- among the various local players,
- between local players and outside operators,
- between local players and the local authorities
- and between the local population and tourists,

so as to combine private and public property as well as private interests and collective needs in a process of interactive and systematic development.

From the outline above we can see the key role assigned to the local authorities, as guarantors of the public interest, mediators between conflicting interests and forums of local democracy, in this process of devising a sustainable tourism development project which benefits the local population as well as visitors and tourists and respects the collective natural and cultural heritage. ■

S. Thibal
Secretary General of Euroter
Tourism in Rural Europe
82 rue François Rolland
F-94130 Nogent-sur-Marne

Co-operation and assistance

The Council of Europe's programmes

Hélène Bouguessa

The Council of Europe has been concerned with sustainable tourism development for a number of years. Specific activities focusing directly on or linked closely with tourism have been developed both in the Organisation's intergovernmental sector and in the context of its assistance and co-operation programmes for the central and east European countries. It should also be pointed out that the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has held wide-ranging discussions on the subject of tourism policies and adopted Recommendation 1133 (1990) which gives a broad overview of all the aspects of tourism.

The co-operation programme

Thanks to a varied and often extremely well preserved natural environment, landscapes and sites which are new to many visitors, and a rich cultural heritage, the central and east European countries have been a major attraction since the fall of the Berlin Wall. Tourism represented an important and necessary source of currency for economies in transition. Consequently, it was easy to predict that tourism would become one of the main economic resources for many of these countries, as it is for many western European countries.

Right from the start of this process, the Council of Europe expressed a desire to contribute to the debate which was getting under way in the central and east European countries regarding the promotion of balanced tourism development. It wanted to help them establish the principles, rules and structures needed to

support this development, not only on the basis of the successes achieved but also in the light of the failures which had marked certain development policies pursued in western countries, particularly in the Mediterranean.

This back-up work consisted of:

- technical consultancy assignments on certain development projects;
- thematic colloquies aimed at central and east European experts.

Technical consultancy

Technical consultancy assignments for sustainable tourism development were organised between 1993 and 1996 at the request of the Slovakian, Albanian and Belarus authorities.

The technical assistance given to Slovakia was in response to a request from the Association of Slovakian Mayors and concerned the following two major projects:

- the development of an essentially rural form of tourism in the Danube valley near Bratislava;
- the adaptation and expansion of tourism in the High Tatras, with the emphasis on winter sports.

In Albania, the national authorities responsible for the protection of the environment asked us for our support and advice in connection with two tourism development projects on the coast around the localities of Spille and Golem in the district of Kawaja. The aim of the projects was not only to attract tourists to the seaside but also to develop the

hinterland and adapt and improve agricultural structures.

Finally, in Belarus, our co-operation and consultancy work enabled the relevant authorities to plan and implement tourism development schemes geared to the natural environment, first in the Berezinsky reserve and then in the Pripiatsky reserve. As a result, the Berezinsky reserve, which is extremely rich in flora and fauna, received its first groups of tourists who had not come as hunters, and will focus increasingly on this activity, from which the local population will also reap major social and economic benefits.

Colloquies

Since 1991, colloquies focusing on the following topics have been organised to enable exchange of ideas and experience between central and east European specialists:

- specific environmental problems arising from the increase of tourism in central and eastern Europe (Budapest, Hungary, 1991);
- tourism development and the safeguarding of deltas (Bucharest, Romania, 1992);
- tourism in mountain regions and the role of regional nature parks (Sofia, Bulgaria, 1993);
- Europe's forests (Warsaw, Poland, 1994);
- sustainable tourism development (Larnaca, Cyprus, 1995);
- sustainable tourism development: reconciling economic, cultural, social, scientific and environmental factors (Maribor, Slovenia, 1996). ■

H. Bouguessa
Editor of the *Strategy Bulletin*
Council of Europe



M. Grenet/A. Soumillard

The Council of Europe's assistance programmes endeavour to integrate the protection of the local cultural heritage into tourism policies

Environmental assessment

Claudine Zysberg

The organisation of tourism on a sustainable basis is one of the challenges of the 21st century for Europe. To ensure planned and controlled tourism development we need to apply environmental assessment to overall plans and programmes.

What is involved?

Environmental assessment encompasses the whole procedure of analysing the environmental impact of a proposal (a project or strategy) so as to gauge its environmental acceptability and guide the decision-maker. Environmental assessment therefore includes preliminary studies, consultation of experts, government and the public, studies and opinions to help decide whether to proceed with a project, and monitoring of project implementation.

The advantages of applying this approach, which is a repetitive one, to overall plans and programmes and not just to specific development projects are twofold. With impact studies of development schemes, the interests of the environment are taken into account too late in the decision-making process and it is not always possible to adopt alternative, more environment-friendly plans. Also, European Union policy on the environment and sustainable development stresses that an overall approach of this kind is important to information supply between states (eg in a transfrontier pollution incident). The Union is preparing a Council directive on the effects of certain plans and programmes. The draft directive deals with plans and programmes adopted by a competent authority or by act of parliament and covers not only town and country planning but also a whole range of sectors including transport, waste disposal, management of water supply, industry, telecommunications, tourism and energy.

Adjusting to plans and programmes for tourism

In volume, tourism is the biggest economic sector in Europe. The very existence of the range of services that comes under the heading of tourism depends on the building and operation of transport infrastructure - airports, ports, hotels, leisure facilities - for all of which an impact study is now mandatory (under Community Directive No. 85/337 of 27 June 1985 on the impact assessment of certain public and private projects affecting the environment, amended by Directive No. 97/11 of 3 March 1997). But such infrastructure is all too often constructed piecemeal, with no overall plan to guide the expansion of tourism in the particular region, and could damage or even destroy the natural and



Nicolas/Sipa Image

Environment assessments are applied to all infrastructures involving tourism

cultural heritage of a town, country or region even though it is exploring that very heritage that is the basis of tourism.

The tourist trade is also a prey to fashions (skiing, golf, sun worship and, more lately, outdoor activities) and this makes investments riskier. For a long time tourist regions lacked - and some still lack - genuine plans or programmes for tourism development.

Why is assessment necessary?

There are a number of reasons for building environmental assessment into the design of plans and programmes.

The first reason is to encourage the drawing up of tourism plans and programmes. To be workable, such plans or programmes need to include a strategy, take account of an area's natural and cultural potential and its limits, be carefully targeted, estimate the economic resources of the town, country or region and its inhabitants and decide what amenities it is really necessary to construct.

Environmental assessment will help draw up the plan or programme by means of an initial inventory of the environment and of tourism, and then refine and improve it by applying four criteria:

- how can the environmental capital be preserved?
- what is the advantage to the country, town or region?
- what are the benefits to local people?
- is the programme or plan realistic in terms of technical and financial feasibility?

Environmental assessment also plays an essential role by involving the general public,

all too often left out of decisions relating to tourism. Since it incorporates a monitoring procedure it can be useful throughout the life of a programme.

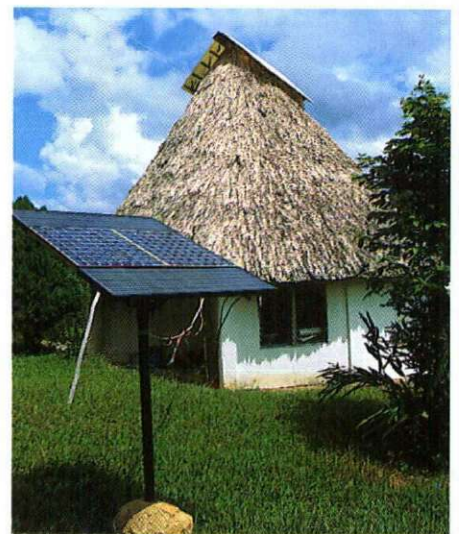
In conclusion, environmental assessment of plans and programmes could become a worthwhile way of reconciling the development of tourism with nature conservation. It is not the only method but it has the advantage of being comprehensive and of giving equal importance to ecological and economic implications. It can be adapted to any tourism plan or programme, whether local or regional.

A method of this type provides a better response to one of the priority actions of the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy laid down at the Sofia Conference in October 1995: "to integrate nature and landscape conservation objectives into tourism and recreation policies and stimulate their sustainability".

C. Zysberg
Ministère de l'Environnement
20 avenue de Ségur
F-75302 Paris 07 SP



A. Bouchet/Pluriel



A. Davies/Bruce Coleman Ltd

Cleaner production in tourism

From theory to practice

Oshani Perera

Cleaner production is producing goods and services so that the production of pollution and waste is avoided or reduced and resources are used efficiently. It aims to reduce pollution from the very onset, and not simply deal with waste and emissions after they have been created.

For tourism, cleaner production is the design and delivery of transport, accommodation, catering, leisure, and entertainment services which:

- are placed, designed and constructed with minimum environmental impact;
- integrate environment management into daily operations;
- systematically monitor environmental performance and improvement.

The benefits are multiple. Using less water and energy and producing less waste will directly cut costs. Through improved maintenance and servicing of equipment, the use of resources can be further optimised.

Siting, eco-design and low impact construction

Instead of always building new structures, the possibility of renovating and refurbishing existing facilities should be fully explored.

Resource inventories and environment impact assessments should be used to direct development to areas of least ecological importance, and to determine factors like building densities, and minimum setback distances from rain forests, mangroves, rivers, and coastlines. Eco-design elements include size, layout, solar orientation, daylighting, maximising the use of recycled, non-toxic and less resource-intensive local building materials. During construction, waste disposal, landfill choices, erosion, and ground water depletion are important issues.

To retain heat in the winter and reduce heat gain in the summer, the National Audubon Society headquarters in New York upgraded the insulation system using non-toxic CFC-free

materials and incorporated "heat mirror" sheets in double-paned windows. This transparent wavelength-selective material allows light but little heat in summer and retains heat in the winter. Windows and skylights maximise daylighting and reduce energy loads. Recycled building materials were also used.

At the Mövenpick Dead Sea Resort in Jordan, vernacular architecture, i.e. stone walls, canvas-shaded pathways and courtyards, reduce heat gain and stimulate natural air flow.

Environmental management

Before starting action, a preliminary audit has to be conducted to know where to begin. This will vary from facility to facility based on the operations characteristics and customer base, existing and impending legislation, and local and regional environmental priorities.

Environmental management in hotels calls for a seven-point action programme:

- water: minimising water use, waste water treatment and recycling;
- energy: minimising energy use and switching to renewable energy sources;
- solid waste: reduce, reuse and recycle;
- purchasing environment-friendly and recycled products;
- emission control and reduction;
- support measures: staff training and visitor communication;
- monitoring and reporting.

Water

Simple measures such as flow reducers and low flush systems bring substantial water and cost savings. The Mandarin Oriental in Jakarta, Indonesia, reduced water use by 14% through a six-step programme, from low-flow shower heads to reusing treated waste water in the cooling towers.

Energy

Most hotels have found that through good energy-housekeeping measures alone, energy consumption and related costs can be reduced

by 7-10%. These include motion detectors, individual thermostats, time relay control systems, key card master switches, and energy recovery in swimming pools and laundries. At the Hotel Inter-Continental Nairobi, Kenya, the condenser from discarded chillers was reused to install a flash steam recovery unit. The cost of a new unit was reduced by 90%, while the recovered energy equals US\$ 34 000 per annum.

Solid waste

Unhandled solid waste is unattractive and reduces the overall quality of the destination. Waste minimisation is about the "3Rs", reduce, reuse and recycle. Hotel Guestline Days in Thirupathi, India, composts and reuses organic waste as fertiliser, makes a cleaning agent from left-over juices and wines, and reuses old linen as cleaning cloths.

Purchasing environment-friendly and recycled products

Changing purchasing practices in areas which are highly visible to guests, e.g. biodegradable soaps, recycled stationery, wooden furniture carrying a sustainable felling stamp, and natural fibre textiles and linen, etc., can be good starting points.

Emissions

Emissions from tourism facilities include emissions from fossil fuel boilers, CFCs from refrigeration and air-conditioning systems, and halon fire extinguishers. CFC alternatives are available on the market and wet scrubbers can be used to reduce the carbon monoxide emissions from boilers. Habitat Suites, Texas, has eliminated the use of chlorine in the swimming pool through a copper and silver ionisation system.

Support measures

Co-operation and participation of staff is vital. Many hotels have set up a "green" committee to co-ordinate environmental effort and ensure that staff are well briefed on objectives and results.

Monitoring and reporting

Regular monitoring should be put into place from the very onset. Scandic Hotels have developed a 14-point index for environmental performance monitoring within each property. Inter-Continental Hotels and Resorts published an environmental review in 1996. All Scandic hotels have now to include environmental costs and benefits in financial reports.

Cleaner production in tourism From theory to practice

There is no single formula or blueprint for environmental action. Each facility, depending its size, location, and market conditions,

has to identify its own environmental priorities and develop its own action programme. The environment is tourism's most important resource, an unhealthy environment means bad business. To ensure its own prosperity, it is urgent that tourism industry wakes up to its environmental responsibilities and takes immediate action. The results will certainly be worthwhile.

To help in this process, UNEP IE has produced several guides on eco-efficiency in tourism, in particular:

- *Environmental codes of conduct for tourism*, 1995;
- *Environmental action pack for hotels* (jointly published with IHEI and IH&RA), 1995;

- *Case studies on good environmental practice in hotels* (jointly published with IHEI and IH&RA), 1997.

A guide on reducing, avoiding, replacing or eliminating the use of ozone-depleting substances in hotels is under preparation and should also be published in 1997. ■

O. Perera
Consultant
United Nations Environment Programme, Industry and Environment (UNEP IE)
Tour Mirabeau
39-43 quai André Citroën
F-75739 Paris Cedex 15

The European Prize Reinforcing the tourism/environment relationship

Michel Vanden Abeele

The first European Prize for Tourism and the Environment was launched by the European Commission in 1995. The aim was to raise awareness of the importance of taking the environment into account in tourism development. The competition was open to tourist destinations that could show accomplishments in terms of sustainable tourism policies and practices in the 17 participating countries of the European Economic Area.

Significant efforts were made all over Europe to ensure that the Prize was a success. A total of 269 candidates applied and national selections took place in the 17 participating countries. Discussions were plentiful during the application and selection procedures in numerous committees consisting of tourism and environment experts at the local, regional,

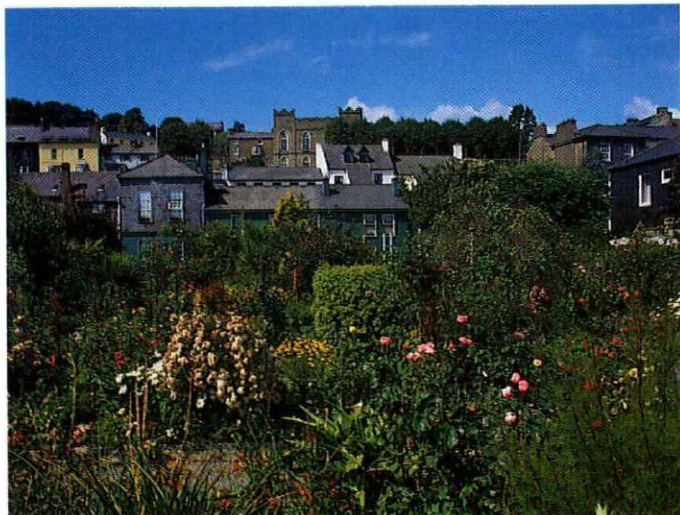
national and European level. Some candidates stated that the Prize was of great importance to their destination, even if they were not selected, as it was an impetus to collect important information for demonstration, which would not have been done otherwise, and that participating in the competition generated new ideas and tourism products. For the participating states the competition was an opportunity to make an inventory of existing best practices nationally and for some it gave impulse to consider the organisation of a national prize.

Throughout the application and selection procedures, sustainable tourism development was subject to significant attention also in the media. Many exemplary tourism policies and best practices contributing at the same time to a destination's economy and employment, while protecting the natural and cultural environment, were presented.

A total of 57 candidate destinations were put forward by the national juries to be judged at the European level. Among four finalist destinations, the European Jury selected on 22 November 1995 the medieval town of Kinsale in Ireland as *Winner of European Prize for Tourism and the Environment 1995*. The jury also awarded eight special jury prizes to destinations with outstanding practice in specific fields of activity.

Given the success of the initiative the European Commission intends to organise a second Prize in 1998, building on the experiences made during the first competition. ■

M. Vanden Abeele
Director General for Enterprise Policy,
Distributive Trades, Tourism and Cooperatives
European Commission
DG XXIII
Rue de la Loi 200
B-1049 Brussels



European Commission/DG XXIII

European Prize for Tourism and the Environment 1995 - Winners

Winner: The Town of Kinsale, Ireland (see opposite)

Other finalists: Parc National de Cévennes, France
The Weissensee region, Austria
Peak District National Park, United Kingdom

Special Jury Prizes:
Touristisches Zielgebiet Colbitz-Letzlinger Heide, Germany: Active involvement of the population in the planning of tourism projects
Oscos Eo, Spain: Effective involvement and collaboration between public and private sectors
Päijänne Lake District, Finland: Management of natural resources
British Waterways, United Kingdom: Management of natural resources
Historic Centre of Corfu and Vido Island, Greece: Renovation of the architectural heritage
Veluwe Mobility Plan, Netherlands: Visitor and traffic management
Açores, Portugal: Management of natural resources
Ponte de Lima, Portugal: Renovation of the architectural heritage



B. Needleman



H. Hamelc

▲ Logo of the German competition to reward tourist resorts which respect the environment

◀ "One of France's most beautiful villages"

Aiming for quality tourism Environmental awards

Herbert Hamelc

What sort of tourism do we want?

"Great! Visitors figures up again by 5% in 1996, a 3% increase in turnover!" But how long did these tourists stay? What did they actually bring to the regions they visited? What did they leave behind? It has been a long time since tourist success has been measured solely in terms of how much tourists spend or how many hotel or guest-house beds were occupied. Of prime concern today are the signs that the available resources are used to the full with minimum impact on the environment.

The way ahead is the one outlined by the Secretary General of the German Environment Foundation in his welcome address to the EcoTrans forum on "Sustainable tourism: the key to success", held last March during the Berlin international tourism fair: "We want to see future holiday-makers choosing means of transport which are economic in terms of energy consumption and hotels which produce little waste. We would like to see them consuming local products, choosing destinations nearer to home and staying longer. We expect tour operators to take greater account of the concept of sustainability in the products they offer."

Environmental awards

Can the various environmental protection awards conferred upon tourist resorts and regions, "eco-seals" or "eco-labels" awarded to hotels and restaurants and "eco-audits" carried out among tour operators play a decisive part in bringing about such a change? In theory they can, provided the conditions are right and enough people are involved.

In the tourism sector, there are at present over 30 environmental awards conferred at local,

regional or inter-regional level, ranging from the Kleinwalsertal's "Silver Thistle" to the European Grand Prix or from the German Tourist Board's "Tourism and environment" award to British Airways' "Tourism for tomorrow" award¹.

These awards and labels should represent a "soft" approach to regulating the market. Authoritarian action, whether at national or European level, should be avoided as long as there is a spontaneous reduction in damage to the environment as a result of self-regulatory practices on the market. Service providers take environmental protection measures and invest resources in the hope of being awarded a prize. In return they count on an improved image and positive economic spin-offs, while the public can find out about the ecological practices and commitment to the environment of establishments or resorts - factors which should be high on their list of choice criteria.

Significant and lasting effects

It is essential that tourism service providers engage wholeheartedly in these environmental award schemes. In order to encourage them to take part, there has to be large-scale outreach to the public in order to publicise the awards or tourist products which qualify for eco-labels.

The criteria for awarding these labels have to be laid down so that they offer just reward for the genuine efforts taken in the most important fields of action. They should not be merely an environmental "gloss". If environmental awards are accompanied by appropriate measures, in particular guidelines, checklists and advice (eg on how hotels could be re-organised) for candidates, they can have considerable effect, leading to numerous initiatives to reduce water and energy consumption, waste production and various traffic-related problems, and to preserve biodiversity and the beauty of the landscape.

For this investment to be worthwhile, the label or award must not be just a marketing ploy, but must have a lasting effect. The project must therefore be carefully thought out with a pragmatic strategy enabling the short-term and long-term objectives to be achieved.

Eco-labels and eco-audits

Eco-labels are a guarantee that a given product or service satisfies a specific level of quality. It is perfectly feasible for tourist establishments such as hotels, golf clubs, ski resorts or marinas to be awarded an eco-label.

In order to confirm the quality of their practices, firms should soon have access to the European eco-audit scheme. This is also applicable to tour operators as shown by the Studiosus Reisen München company.

Prizes and competitions are well suited to tourist resorts which make an active commitment to the environment, such as Weissensee in Carinthia, Calviá in Majorca and Heidelberg in Germany. Such awards refer not to the actual state of the environment but to the success of innovative protective measures taken. The competition launched in Germany in 1996 to recompense environment-friendly tourist resorts has been a major testing ground at European level. It is unrealistic to think that an eco-label can give an accurate picture of the air and sea-water quality, of the diversity and quality of wildlife, waste management, drinking water and energy consumption and sewage disposal in resorts. The expectations of visitors, the situation and the level of resistance of the environment, and the resort's possibilities for action are too disparate for a common denominator to be easily found. Moreover, consumption and pollution measurements mean different things depending on whether they refer to mountain regions, coastal areas, towns or the country.

Public reaction

Whatever the formula chosen - label guaranteeing the quality of the environment or economic use of resources, an award attesting to a particular commitment to the environment or the official eco-audit procedure - the most important thing, apart from the intrinsic quality of the services thus acknowledged, is to reach the public. Here, the results obtained have been somewhat disappointing. The vast majority of holiday-makers are virtually unaware of the existence of the environmental awards in the tourism sector. And it is unlikely that any tangible results will be obtained while the major tour operators, tourist clubs, tourism information and reservation networks, the press and TV fail to publicise more actively the thousand or so hotels and restaurants which were given such awards in 1996. Eco-labels could serve to lay down minimum environmental standards below which it would be inaccurate to speak of "quality tourism" and which, in conjunction with social, cultural and economic criteria, would make it easier to identify European areas which practise "sustainable tourist development". ■

H. Hamele
Ecotrans e.V.
Berliner Promenade 7
D-66111 Saarbrücken

¹ *The book of seals and ecolabels in tourism*
(<http://www.wttc.org/ECoNETT>)

A European Charter for parks

Sandrine Vautier

For the first time ever, nature parks and the tourist industry have joined forces thanks to an agreement committing them to develop a form of tourism which respects nature and people. They will work together to foster economic and social development in their respective areas while at the same time preserving the environment and the quality of life in nature parks.

The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas was drafted by a steering committee composed of an equal number of representatives from the tourist sector, managers of parks and groups and individuals working in the fields of tourism and the environment. It draws directly upon the experiments carried out in ten parks in Europe taking part in a pilot study. These parks (in Italy, France, Spain, Belgium, Britain and Austria) have initiated a joint project with representatives of the tourist industry in their respective regions so that they will be ready to sign the Charter at the end of 1997.

This Charter comprises principles for sustainable tourism and has four aspects:

- an undertaking by protected areas;
- an undertaking by the tourist industry;

- an undertaking by tour operators and transport companies;
- principles for communication.

It is accompanied by an assessment programme for areas and companies. A European communications strategy will amplify the effect of the signatories' undertakings.

The French Federation of Regional Nature Parks which is running this programme sees this Charter as an opportunity to re-establish the purpose of travelling, namely to take the time to discover places and people, to contribute to the social and economic balance of areas and also to preserve the environment for current and future generations.

The Charter is one of the European Commission's "Life" Projects (DG XI). It is backed by the Federation of Nature and National Parks in Europe. ■

S. Vautier
Assistant with responsibility for tourism
French Federation of Regional Nature Parks
4 rue de Stockholm
F-75008 Paris

The development of tourism which respects nature is the aim of the European Charter for parks



B. Bischoff



Alexis
AFFÛT EN POLOGNE

How to train tourism professionals

Martha Wägéus

The Swedish Association for Promotion of Outdoor Life is a non-governmental organisation, with about 160 000 members in 500 local organisations and 18 000 guides trained in outdoor leisure activities. We took the initiative to lead a project called "Right of public access and tourism". The project's aim is to train tourist operators in order to diminish and prevent damage and wear on nature and private land caused by nature tourism.

Our partners are the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, WorldWide Fund for Nature-WWF-Sweden, the Swedish Tourist Authority, the regional tourist agency of Schonen - the southernmost province of Sweden - the Swedish Farmers' Association and two organisations for Swedish forest owners. All co-operating partners have contributed to the funding of the project.

Three steps

- The first step was to produce a training programme consisting of a video and a booklet.
- The second step was to train a team of 20 teachers during five days and we plan to educate a second group of the same number. Most of the teachers are non-commercial working guides in the Swedish Outdoor Life Association. Some of them are also tourist operators.
- The third step is organisation of one-day courses for tourist operators in the southern part of Sweden. These courses have two goals:

- . to teach the tourist operators about the Swedish right of public access to private land, its limitations and regulations;
- . (the most important) to increase their awareness of the extraordinary value of the Swedish right of public access to private land. With this we want to motivate them to teach their customers, i.e. the tourists, to obey the rules in relation to the right of public access and to take measures to prevent damage and disturbance to nature and on private land. We also invite local representatives for landowners and the local tourist authority to the courses for discussions on local problems and possibilities and for the promotion of a local co-operation network. The expected result of the course is a draft plan for every participating tourist operator, on how to solve their problems and develop their enterprise with full regard to the right of public access.

This third step started on a small scale last autumn and we count on training about 2 000 tourist operators. We plan to continue this training during the coming years.

Motives

Our main motive to take the initiative and lead the project was to protect the Swedish right of public access to private land. This right is the main condition not only for almost all of our own activities, but also for a wide range of leisure activities carried out by most Swedes in their everyday life, for example the Sunday walk in the woods, berry-picking and mushroom-gathering. This kind of activity is an important part of the Swedish way of life and important for Swedish people's wellbeing, both physically and mentally. There are many scientific reports showing this.

Though nature tourism is still of limited proportions in Sweden, it is a fast growing market. An investigation initiated by the Swedish Tourist Authority last summer indicated that the greatest attraction in Sweden for tourists is nature. 52% stated the Swedish nature was an important reason to visit Sweden, and 25% that nature was the main reason.

Tourist operators use private land for activities according to the right of public access, but there has been increasing abuse and transgression. This creates disrepute for the right of public access, creates conflicts and leads to requests for regulations and limitations from landowners, environmentalists and authorities.

But such limitations would hit everybody, not only the abusers but also well-behaved outdoor-loving people, tourist operators and their

clients. So instead of such limiting regulations for everybody, we want to diminish the problems by preventing them.

A tough start

So far, in April 1997, after the first tentative autumn - the only possible season for this kind of course - we have involved a total of 25 trained teachers. We have arranged half a dozen courses in southern Sweden with a couple of hundred participants, but only a few were tourist operators. Our teachers had planned another half a dozen courses, but they had been cancelled because of lack of participants. In other words, we have had a hard start. There may be many reasons. We think that we can do better marketing, but it is also difficult to reach the tourist operators. The business is strongly divided into small firms with one or few employees. They are widespread, the operators work hard and they do not make much money. This means that they have very little time to spend on training or development. After all, we require them to spend a whole day with us.

Long-term perspective

I think that we should have patience and should see this project in a longer perspective than we did at the beginning. However, our experience so far is that those operators who did take part in a course were quite satisfied with the day, and almost all of them wish for

The public's right of access to nature: a training theme for tourism professionals in Sweden

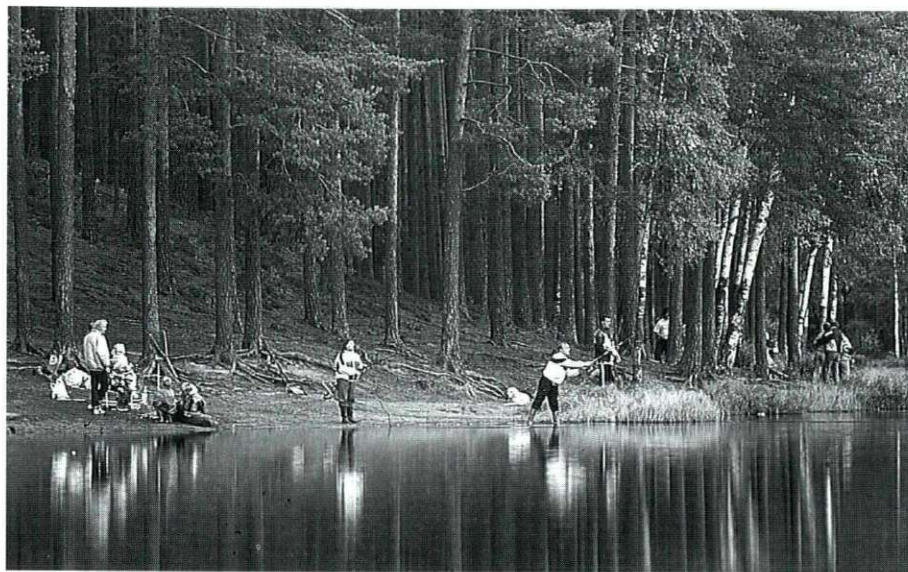


H. Parent/Plumel

more courses. They want to know more about the right of public access and to share other experiences. They also appreciate getting to know people involved in the region and in the tourist business.

Several courses are planned for this autumn. We are improving our marketing, should reach more tourist operators and so we might see fewer problems during the summer 1998 tourist season. ■

M. Wägéus
Swedish Association for Promotion of Outdoor Life
Strömsbergsvegen 71
S-553 08 Jönköping



J. Jurka/Bruce Coleman Ltd

Are you familiar with the cultural routes of Europe?

Michel Thomas-Penette

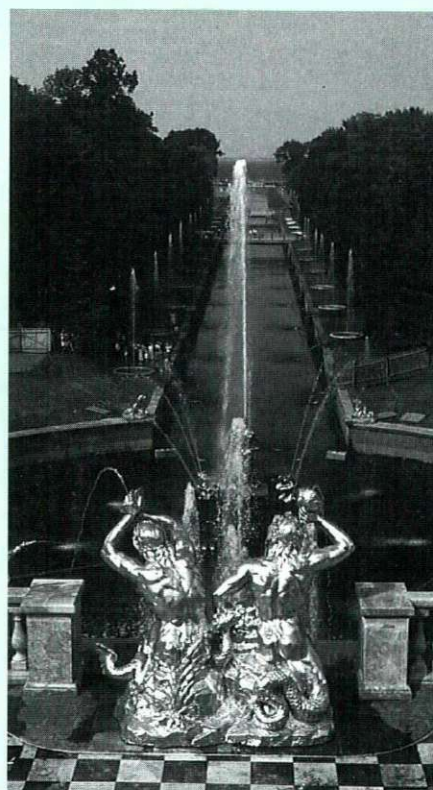
In 1987 the Council of Europe, on the recommendation of its Parliamentary Assembly and following the discussions of the Second European Conference of Ministers responsible for the Architectural Heritage, proposed that the Santiago de Compostela Pilgrim Way should become the first European cultural route. In giving this project a symbolic element, the Council of Europe hoped that cultural routes would help to foster European citizenship and that, in particular, they would make it possible to protect and enhance the European heritage so as to improve people's surroundings and promote cultural, economic and social development.

Thus cultural routes grew up on the basis of a dozen or so action themes which give the citizens of Greater Europe new opportunities for fulfilment in their leisure time by giving priority to cultural tourism and sustainable development. This goal was reaffirmed by the Conference of Ministers responsible for the Cultural Heritage, held in Helsinki on 30 and 31 May 1996 on the subject "Heritage in society": "Cultural tourism policies and strategies must be carried further, seeking a balanced and sustainable use of the heritage which preserves its useful potential for future generations. It is important to work out specific models for the development of cultural tourism which do not duplicate the usual patterns of mass tourism".

Ten years after the routes were first established, it is striking to note that this ambitious project has achieved most success in rural areas ("Architecture without frontiers" routes), nature parks and relatively mountainous areas ("the Silk Routes" in the Cevennes), industrial areas undergoing economic conversion (the textile route) and even in urban areas in which an ecological approach to urban development is necessary (parks and gardens route). It is now clear that cultural routes are a coherent enterprise which inseparably combines cultural heritage, natural heritage and the human ecosystem. Thus, in the years to come one of the priorities in establishing cultural routes adapted to sustainable development must be to link cultural tourism and eco-tourism. This priority should be pursued in the next stage of the project which involves a partnership with the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg from 1997 onwards through the foundation of a European Institute of Cultural Routes. ■

M. Thomas-Penette
Programme Adviser
Cultural Routes
Council of Europe

Garden in St Petersburg



Council of Europe

Leisure activities and environment: a winning combination

An awareness-raising campaign in the Walloon Region

Patrick Jouret

The Walloon Region (Belgium) has a range of outstanding natural assets which are attracting ever-increasing numbers of outdoor leisure enthusiasts in search of unspoilt landscapes and exciting new experiences.

Scientific studies and field observation show that leisure activities have a major impact on natural habitats, even though this is not always obvious in the short term.

The Walloon authorities have therefore decided to take a number of steps aimed at regulating these activities: a decree on forest traffic now regulates the movement of all users of the region's publicly and privately owned forests, whether in motor vehicles, on bicycles, on horseback or on foot, who are only allowed to use certain roads and paths. These have been arranged in categories according to a grading system and provided with appropriate signposting. Draft regulations on the social use of rivers and streams have been drawn up along similar lines.

Scientific studies have also shown that the impact of an activity can vary greatly depending on the behaviour of the people involved. However, people in general tend to be wary of any interference by the public authorities in their leisure activities, an area which they regard as the last bastion of individual freedom. It is for this reason that, alongside the legislative changes, Wallonia's Environment Minister, Guy Lutgen, has decided to launch an awareness-raising campaign on the theme: "Leisure activities and the environment: a winning combination!".

Aim of the campaign

Initially the aim is to combat two extreme viewpoints: the "environmental fundamentalists", who regard anyone entering the Walloon Region as a potential invader who is going to destroy everything in his or her path, and those who reject all restrictions and regulations, whose position is reflected in the slogan "my spare time is my freedom".

Both approaches impede not only the development of a responsible attitude towards the environment, but also the growth of facilities offering more environment-friendly activities.

How it will be organised

The awareness-raising campaign has been divided into three stages. The main events will occur over a period of 14 months from July 1997 to September 1998.



Vresse-sur-Semois, Belgium

First stage

The first stage took place in summer 1996 and involved distributing a trilingual leaflet (in French, Dutch and German) as a first step towards building an awareness of the issues among holiday-makers. This leaflet offered the following advice as to the best way of visiting the region: "We should behave like guests. Wallonia is there for us and for others. Let's share it!"

Second stage

The second stage involves producing some 40 fact sheets explaining, for each sporting, cultural or recreational activity, what form of behaviour is in closest harmony with nature, the heritage, the local population and other users.

These "codes of good environmental practice" are designed to promote a progressive change in thinking with the support of the most environmentally-aware groups and organisations. For instance, potholers, who perform their activities in a highly vulnerable environment, are already heavily committed to putting into practice the recommendations they issue to the members of their groups.

The fact sheets will be distributed in holiday resorts throughout the 1997 tourist season by sports federations and the Ministry of Physical Education and Sport.

Third stage

The third stage of the campaign will be aimed at professionals. A handbook describing previous experience in this field and offering

practical advice will be prepared on the basis of contacts with professionals (operators of tourist and leisure facilities, tourist federations and offices, managers of sports facilities, etc.)

The aim here is to get across the message that the recent growth in the area of outdoor holidays and the increasing demand from the public, and particularly Scandinavian visitors, should ultimately lead to new products and bring changes in existing ones. Therefore, behind this growing environmental awareness, which is now an established fact, there is also an economic side to the problem since the tourist industry represents 4% of Belgium's GDP.

The handbook will also provide practical advice on topics such as the environmentally-aware consumer, waste management, energy consumption, etc.

An ant as emblem

The emblem chosen for the campaign - a happy, smiling ant - provides a very good illustration of how the model visitor should behave: leaving no traces of his presence behind him. This is the precondition for sustainable development of leisure activities, a process which should combine the following elements:

- respect for and enhancement of the natural environments which provide the setting for these activities;
- efforts to influence the behaviour of visitors through regulation and education;
- a trend in leisure provision towards activities which incorporate environmental protection.

P. Jouret
Atelier 50 SA
Espace, Environnement, Communication
Drève du Duc 50/6
B-1170 Brussels





Spanish RENFE railways have benefited from several EIB loans

Financing sustainable tourism

Axel Hörhager

Even the most ardent supporters of sustainable tourism are constrained by the fact that the direction in which the tourism sector as a whole will develop is determined by the investment at the margin, that is to say by the development of the next generation of tourism projects. A key element in this process is the mobilisation of the financial means required to create an asset. The manner in which asset creation is performed can be of fundamental importance in determining whether tourism development is truly beneficial in a longer term perspective.

Financial institutions, particularly if their mission is to represent the public interest, have a special responsibility in the investment process. They are key facilitators in the implementation of development schemes, and guardians of the broader public interest with a more or less explicit mandate to promote only those ventures which are ecologically sustainable in the longer term. In principle, therefore, such institutions will have to have the means of analysing the various aspects of the proposed investment decisions, and be capable of selecting those that satisfy criteria reflecting its objectives. Even if the criteria are similar to those found at the level of the individual promoters or public administrations, the unique contribution that financial institutions can make in the process is a result of their relative independence in exercising their judgement.

Financing criteria of the EIB

The financing of tourism projects by the European Investment Bank (EIB), the long-term financial institution of the European Union, may illustrate this point. The Bank, set up as part of the European Communities to further regional development and European integration, has been successful for almost 40 years in directing substantial flows of capital into the tourism sector, amounting to loans of some 6.3 billion ECU, thereby acquiring significant expertise in the identification, appraisal and evaluation of such projects. Additionally, smaller schemes are

financed via financial intermediaries, in the context of so-called global loans, in which a credit line is allocated to a local financial institution that selects projects according to pre-specified criteria. These activities cover both the European Union and countries elsewhere, such as the Mediterranean region, eastern Europe, or the many overseas countries with which the European Union has co-operation agreements.

In selecting and appraising projects, the Bank considers several key criteria. Legislation in the region and country in which the project is located must be satisfied, as must European Union legislation in the member states. The assessment, however, goes beyond the formal aspects, since its purpose is to establish whether a project is indeed viable in a practical sense. The financial and business plan must be realistic, technical aspects in particular relating to the investment, its cost and implementation schedule must be satisfactory, and the economic feasibility of the project must be confirmed on the basis of sound analyses of demand and profitability, including the consideration of externalities where possible. There must be analysis and judgement on environmental issues, frequently necessitating specific impact studies. Projects may have as prime objective tourism sector development in general, for which the environmental impacts must be assessed, or have a specific, direct environmental objective, such as waste water treatment or air pollution abatement for existing tourism facilities.

A critical aspect of the economic assessment is the analysis of the market and demand for the services offered by a project. All too often, promoters neglect the demand aspects or do not offer realistic forecasts. Investments which are premature or over-dimensioned can be among the most undesirable features not least from an environmental point of view, causing great harm to future prospects of the tourism sector, as well as constituting a drain on public resources. The involvement of the Bank, although of course no substitute for the roles of the promoter and the regulators, is maintained to the extent possible throughout the project cycle by regular project monitoring during disbursement of funds and the life of a loan.

Pre-investment studies

Another means which serves to underpin the Bank's strategy of promoting sustainable tourism development is the series of regional environmental studies, which generally address issues of tourism development where relevant. An important initiative in this regard is the Mediterranean Technical Assistance Programme (METAP), which the European Investment Bank launched together with the World Bank in 1990, and which with the assistance of the other partners such as the European Union and the United Nations Development Programme is currently entering a successful third phase bringing it to the year 2000. A specific METAP study sponsored by the EIB examined the ecological dimensions of tourism development in Tunisia. In northern Morocco, a study on industrial and domestic water resource pollution was motivated by the need to safeguard the tourism potential of the region.

Project appraisal

Important conclusions from the Bank's work are that:

- careful analysis and diagnosis are key ingredients of project appraisal, to allow the identification and implementation of sustainable projects;
- there is an interdependence between the various aspects of project analysis which is especially relevant for the stringent objectives of sustainable tourism projects, and this delicate balance needs to be maintained throughout the project cycle;
- environmental best practices, including legislative assessment, public participation procedures and impact analysis should be built into projects from the outset as a process;
- a strategy of favouring sustainable tourism needs to be formulated and nurtured, so that long-term results can be achieved - a process that the Bank is still engaged in. ■

A. Hörhager
Deputy Economic Advisor
European Investment Bank
100 boulevard Konrad Adenauer
L-2950 Luxembourg

Practical European Union support

Protecting the assets upon which tourism thrives

Michel Vanden Abeele

Few industries depend as much on the natural and man-made resources as the tourism industry, and the profitability of tourism is dependent on protecting, in the best possible way, environmental and cultural assets. The European Commission recognises the need for sustainability within tourism and supports, through a number of practical projects and initiatives, throughout the Union.

It is evident to all of us that uncontrolled tourism development at destinations all over Europe can seriously damage the natural and man-made environment that presently attracts visitors. At the same time, though, it is recognised that tourism has a formidable potential to raise funds which can be used, and indeed are often used to protect, preserve and enhance priceless assets. These non-contradictory sides of the same issue underscore the importance of recognising the following three key objectives: to maintain a profitable tourism industry, to satisfy the needs of tourists, and to preserve our shared natural and cultural resources.

Strategic and integrated planning, together with the selective use of certain techniques to address particular problems, can make an important contribution to the sustainable and balanced development of tourism. The Commission therefore supports projects which are designed to test innovative techniques in this field.

Having "success" in tourism was in the past often regarded as directly corresponding to recorded increases in the number of visitors to destinations, sites and monuments, thus, a fixation on volume was evident. Today, "success" has come to mean sustainability, in economic terms and in terms of managing the environment to the benefit of visitors and residents alike as well as preserving assets for the use of future generations of European citizens. Now, in the light of strong increases in the number of visitors, it becomes necessary to develop and apply planning and management solutions that address the problems of over-development, congestion and pollution. With the objective of identifying and developing best practices and encouraging the spread of information about such practices, the Commission selected eight demonstration projects for the period 1995-97. All aim at developing innovative techniques in the field of visitor management and/or assisting in the development of tourism related traffic management policies (see box).

The dissemination of best practices and the multiplier effects of such actions are important in terms of giving the necessary added value to these actions.

The Commission is aware that one of the best techniques for contributing to the implementation of sustainable tourism development throughout Europe is through the dissemination of quality information related to tourism

and the environment; this can provide valuable guidance to the tourism industry, to the public sector and to other interests. With this aim the Commission decided in 1995 to provide a financial contribution to support the development of a major pan-European network during three years, an initiative that gave birth to the ECoNETT project (European Community Network for Environmental Travel and Tourism, World Travel and Tourism Council).

The ECoNETT tourism and environment database is now accessible via Internet (<http://www.wttc.org>) and other distribution mechanisms. The Commission invites all concerned to play their role in the dissemination of good practices, publications, and other relevant information in the field of tourism and the environment. ECoNETT provides an invaluable instrument for realising this aim. ■

M. Vanden Abeele
Director General for Enterprise Policy, Distributive Trades,
Tourism and Cooperatives
DG XXIII
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
B-1049 Brussels



N. McAllister/Bruce Coleman Ltd

Gestratur: intermodal tourist transport

The project aims at improving the flow of tourists, and more precisely, the arrival and departure of passengers and aeroplanes at tourist airports. One hopes to improve the profitability and the productivity of the companies involved in the project. Success through these actions will come to mean raising the quality of the offer, the airport and the destination. Actions spring out of the establishment of mechanisms that facilitate collaboration between various stake holders, namely airports, tour operators and airlines. The output of the project is hoped to be techniques and strategies that better stagger landing and take-off hours. The experience is being tested at Palma de Mallorca Airport, one of the best examples of tourist airports in Europe.

Traffic problems in Alpine regions

This project pertains to visitor management in regions of the Alps in Austria, Germany and Italy, regions in which nature and small towns are strained by a great influx of tourists and motor vehicles.

Partners include local mayors, tourist board representatives, regional officials and consulting firms.

The bottom line of the project is to improve the quality of life for local inhabitants, to raise the quality and thus the competitiveness of the offer by managing the visitor flow better. Moreover, an overall goal is to protect the vulnerable Alpine environment in line with the concept of sustainability. The intensity of tourism in regions with a specific topography has sparked a need for new and innovative solutions, and a need to incorporate innovative practices into local and regional tourism planning.

Prior to the start of the project, local and regional authorities had committed themselves to "low car" and "car free" tourism concepts. The finesse of the project is its ability to come up with simple, yet powerful actions and innovative thinking that can benefit Europe as a whole.

Voluntary financial schemes

In this project, one is seeking to demonstrate the potential of voluntary financial schemes within the European tourist industry, that is, generating financial contributions from visitors towards conservation efforts at destinations, and the funding of actions within visitor management. It is foreseen that the project will develop funding mechanisms that encourage tourists to contribute to and assist in environmental conservation. The pilot areas are situated in England, Sweden, Spain, Greece and the Alps.

Steps towards sustainable tourism in Greece

Donald Matthews

Sustainable tourism is a complex programme almost as difficult to think through in its details as it is to put into effect. To be successful, the three sectors (governmental, private and the citizen in his community) must set new standards and promote new and better co-ordinated plans. Greece has made a start in these areas which, while only a beginning, points to how tourist activities might better be developed in the future.

In Greece 90% of tourist activity is focused on the coast and a great deal of this is on the islands. The rapid development of recent years has put great pressure on natural systems, and authorities are now trying to create tools for effective coastal management. Larger communities now have to install sewage disposal systems; big hotels must now be built further back from the beach; municipalities, like the towns of Rhodes and Corfu this year, are setting up recycling programmes for aluminium, paper and glass (a difficult project for distant and isolated islands). Building sites are challenged, as at Malia, Crete, where one hotel being built on a wetland site has been stopped. Small steps, but they are indicative of a new attitude.

Some interesting initiatives

In the area of nature conservation, some islands have established important checks. On Rhodes, for example, the valley near the village of Theologos has been organised as a nature reserve where thousands of tourists can come and see the butterflies (Jersey tiger moths) without disturbing these insects' aestivation. On Zakynthos interesting initiatives are in the works to protect the loggerhead sea turtle. A marine park is likely to be established soon; speed boats have been forbidden in the Lagana Bay, stopping all turtle-collision deaths these last two years; the WWF has bought a large section of the beach (Sekania); tavernas at another point of the beach (Daphni) have been closed, and turtle breeding numbers at this spot have increased. The attitude of local people towards the turtle is more positive today. In the national park of Samaria, Crete, now one of the best organised in the country, nature co-exists with many thousands of visiting tourists. These conservation advances come only after the hard work of many people and environmental groups, but they do promise the compatibility of tourism development with some protection of nature.

In the private sphere, other initiatives are promising. The chain Grecotel, with many hotels in Crete, has promoted recycling, water and energy conservation, eco-audits and conservation measures to protect the loggerhead

turtle near Rethymnon. They have stimulated other groups to take similar steps towards sustainability.

The Blue Flag Programme

Important and interesting work has been undertaken by the Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature, the co-ordinator of the Greek Blue Flag Programme. This programme requires small communities to organise and equip their beaches with signposts, first aid facilities, life-guards, showers and WCs, to collect all garbage, and to maintain standards of seawater purity in front of their beaches. It also requires from each beach community five educational environmental activities annually. Just what these are is left up to each community to decide by itself according to its own needs and potential. The idea is that the various groups in a town (authorities, schools, environmental organisations, etc.) meet, and by their common communal activity, stimulate greater environmental awareness, co-operation and vigilance. Thus communities have undertaken garbage collection, nature walks, tree planting, educational seminars, creation and protection of wetlands, path making, nature exhibitions and research.

On Rhodes, the management of one Blue Flag beach is urging government and forestry officials to declare an area close to it as protected. It has also promoted environmental education with primary schoolchildren, recycling of paper, a "Green Day" with visits of children

and tourists to gardens and orchards, the care of wounded animals, and the drawing up of an environmental code. Ierapetra, Crete, has created a pond and its inhabitants, including schoolchildren and girl-guides, have planted the area with trees and shrubs. Panagia, Thassos, has involved tourists and locals in nature discussions and trips, harbour officials have given lectures to children on sea pollution, and volunteer groups have been set up to monitor garbage control. In this way the Blue Flag Programme has encouraged environmental awareness in more than 350 communities in Greece.

These steps may be small in themselves, but cumulatively they constitute the fundamental groundwork for the sustainable tourism we need.

D. Matthews
Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature
24 Nikis Street
GR-105 57 Athens

Information kiosk on turtles in Rethymnon



M. Gaethlich



National Trust Photographic Library/R. Truman



National Trust Photographic Library/M. Williams

▲ Kynance Cove in Cornwall has been managed by the National Trust since 1936

◀ Every year 180 000 people visit Chartwell, Kent

The National Trust and sustainable tourism

Martin Drury

The National Trust's purposes are encapsulated in the words conservation and access. The essence of its task is to strike a sustainable balance between the two at each place in its care. When in doubt, however, it adheres to the maxim enunciated long ago by John Bailey (chairman 1923-31): "Preservation may always permit of access, while without preservation access becomes for ever impossible". That principle is as valid today as it ever was; in the last resort, conservation must always take precedence over access. For the Trust it reflects its statutory responsibility to ensure that its properties survive for the inspiration and enjoyment of future generations, but it also reflects something more elusive and of profound significance for the cultural heritage of all nations: our responsibility as guardians of the spirit of each place. It is essential that the many small things that together make one place different from another are not sacrificed to the short-term needs of today.

Management plans

A management plan must be drawn up for each property, which opens with an assessment of the distinctive historic and aesthetic qualities of the place. It draws on research into the expectations and reactions of visitors, explores the property's potential for educational and social activity and goes on to prescribe what may be done to meet - better still, exceed - visitors' expectations in ways that enhance, and certainly do not compromise, the spirit of the place. Finally and in the light of this exercise, the plan assesses, year by year, the resources that will be available to carry out what needs to be done.

As a result of this process is that some properties are promoted to attract large numbers of visitors. At these a restaurant, gift shop, perhaps an exhibition will be provided and special events such as open-air concerts and *fêtes*

champêtres are organised. Other places, because they are small or because their atmosphere or their historic contents are fragile, are left to be discovered by more adventurous visitors. On these places the Trust aims to lay the lightest hand and, if there is a restaurant or shop at all, they will be small and unobtrusive.

How these principles are applied is illustrated below, at two National Trust properties.

Chartwell

Chartwell (Kent) was the home of Sir Winston Churchill and is visited by 180 000 people a year. It comprises a country house of medium size with many small rooms set in a large garden surrounded by 50 acres of park. Churchill was an accomplished painter and his studio in a separate building in the garden is also open. At some distance from the house is a group of modern buildings providing a restaurant and large gift shop.

A careful assessment was made of the number of people the house could comfortably take at one time. To prevent overcrowding and the risk of both damage and a disagreeable experience, groups of 60 visitors are admitted at 15-minute intervals. Admission is by ticket purchased on arrival, which gives the time of entry to the house. There is no advance booking and the number of tickets sold is varied according to circumstances on the day. There is usually only a short delay before visitors are admitted, but on busy days visitors can spend their time enjoying the garden, studio, grounds, shop or restaurant, comfortable in the knowledge that they will be admitted at a specific time. This system has been successful in reducing queuing, controlling wear and tear and enhancing visitors' enjoyment.

Kynance Cove

Kynance Cove (Cornwall) is a famous beauty spot on the Lizard Peninsula. It is a wild and

magnificent place with high cliffs and, below them, a sandy beach among rock outcrops. It has been owned by the Trust since 1936 and is visited by 250 000 people a year. Twelve years ago this popularity had caused gradual erosion of the cliff-top and progressive destruction of vegetation, exposing bare soil and rock. Above the cove, and not owned by the Trust, were a car park and an ugly and intrusive group of buildings providing shop, cafe and lavatories. Visitors were funnelled past these buildings on their way to the beach, causing intense wear to the footpath and the land on either side of it.

The solution to all this was incorporated into the management plan, one of the long-term aims of which was to acquire the car-park and buildings and thus control of the site. The opportunity to do this arose in 1986 when car-park and buildings were purchased. The car-park was then moved back from the cliff edge and a hedged bank created around it. The ugly buildings were demolished and new footpaths created. As a result, erosion has been halted, visitors now have a choice of routes down to the beach, capacity has increased and the natural beauty of Kynance Cove has been restored.

These are two of many examples of properties at which the National Trust has successfully applied the principles of sustainable tourism. ■

M. Drury
Director-General
The National Trust
36 Queen Anne's Gate
GB-London SW1H 9AS

On the National Trust

The National Trust was founded in 1895 to acquire and hold places of historic interest and natural beauty for the benefit of the nation for ever. Today, the Trust owns 560 000 acres of the finest countryside in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, 560 miles of unspoiled coastline, 207 historic houses with their collections of works of art, 159 gardens and some 25 000 historic buildings of other types, including farmsteads, cottages, entire

villages, mills, lighthouses and buildings of industrial significance.

The National Trust is an independent, non-governmental organisation, established by Act of Parliament and principally supported by the annual subscriptions of 2.4 million members. Under this Act it has the unique power to declare property inalienable, a privilege shared with the National Trust for

Scotland. This means that land acquired for preservation cannot be sold, mortgaged or compulsorily purchased except by the express wish of Parliament. In 1995 the Trust's properties were visited by a total of over 11 million people. It is thus both the leading conservation body in Britain and the owner and manager of many of the places that attract visitors from all over the world.

Rural tourism in Taramundi

Eduardo Lastra Pérez

Taramundi is a small local authority (*Concejo*) of 82 km² located in western Asturias in northern Spain, 25 km from the coast and with an altitude varying between 400 and 600 m. It has a population of 975 inhabitants living in 56 villages. The primary sector dominates, employing some 52% of the working population, followed by the tertiary (29.5%) and secondary (17.8%) sectors.

In 1983, the municipality decided to act in response to the sharp decline in the local population (from 35.8 inhabitants/km² in 1900 to 12.6 inhabitants/km² in 1993) and accordingly contacted the Higher Council for Scientific Research (CSIC) and the regional government. These initial contacts resulted in the signing of an agreement between the Principality of Asturias and the CSIC, which led in turn to the drawing up of a "Plan for the conservation and development of tourism resources in the *Concejo* of Taramundi". The plan involved establishing Taramundi as a centre for rural tourism, the first experiment with this type of tourism in Spain.

A favourable context

The *Consejo* had a number of assets on which it could capitalise to ensure the success of the scheme, including:

- a relatively unspoilt agricultural environment typical of western Asturias;
- undulating countryside ideal for walking, cycling and horse-riding; forests and rivers suitable for hunting and fishing;
- interesting vernacular architecture;
- a large number of very attractive small villages;
- distinctive local traditions, folklore and cuisine;
- an extremely varied cultural heritage: chapels, *mazos* (mills), old forges, farmhouses, *hórreos* and *cabazos* (characteristic grain lofts); local crafts including ironwork (knives and penknives), woodwork and fabrics.



Taramundi Town Hall

The aim was to establish a pattern of rural tourism based on local economic development, the enhancement of a neglected architectural and rural heritage, training opportunities for local people and improved public services.

A network of activities

Alongside the project, other activities were launched by the authorities: an integrated development plan was implemented in the district (*Comarca*) of Oscos-Eo, the road network was improved and schemes to install electricity and sewerage systems in the villages were devised.

Through an awareness-raising campaign aimed at the local population, contacts were established with local associations in order to get the inhabitants and small businesses of the *Concejo* involved. The regional government, the municipality and a number of local residents joined forces to set up a public limited company, "Integrated Development of Taramundi S.A.", which was put in charge of managing this first centre for rural tourism.

A major renovation effort

The cornerstone of the project was to be a range of tourist facilities including accommo-

modation, restaurants serving local dishes, and amenities of various kinds. To minimise their impact on the environment and preserve architectural harmony, these facilities were housed in existing historic buildings which were renovated using traditional local materials. An old presbytery was renovated and converted into a 4-star hotel with 18 rooms; other rural dwellings were converted into small flats to accommodate families, and two houses were leased to the development company for a period of 15 years on the understanding that they would be restored. This made it possible to attract tourists who were interested in the protection of the natural and cultural heritage.

A successful experiment

The Taramundi pilot project was such a success that it created a local and regional impetus which stimulated other similar development projects. With financial assistance from the Leader-I Programme, 25 projects were launched to provide accommodation in the surrounding villages, including four hotels, several flats, a number of guest farms and a campsite with 300 spaces.

The Taramundi project is now regarded as a model. It has won several prizes. Taramundi came eighth in the "Village I love" competition organised by Euroter and sponsored by the Council of Europe; its hotel was judged the best rural hotel in Spain and the *Comarca* received the only award made to a Spanish project under the 1995 European Prize for Tourism and Environment Scheme.

Our *Concejo* is now featured in the most prestigious tourist guides, which highlight not only the quality of its facilities but also their successful integration into the local cultural and natural environment. ■

E. Lastra Pérez
Mayor of Taramundi
Chairman of Oscos-Eo District Council
Plaza del Poyo s/n
E-33775 Taramundi (Asturias)



The Abruzzi National Park

Ecodevelopment and ecotourism

Franco Tassi

Located in the centre of Italy in the heart of the Apennines, two hours by car from Rome or Naples, the Abruzzi National Park was founded in 1922 to protect the marsican brown bear and the Abruzzi chamois. Today it protects a rich and varied fauna and flora. Nearly 7 000 species have been identified under the "biodiversity project", including 1 970 plants representing about a third of the Italian flora. Species present include red deer, roe-deer, the Apennine wolf and the lynx, as well as the golden eagle, peregrine falcon and white-backed woodpecker (Lilford sub-species), all living in dynamic equilibrium in a spectacular 444 km² region of mountains and forests surrounded by a protective peripheral zone of some 800 km².

The Abruzzi National Park has also been engaged in the establishment of ARVE (Abruzzi Regione Verde d'Europa), a network of new nature parks in central Italy and more generally of setting up a proper "system" of protected areas throughout the country. In co-operation with the Italian National Parks Committee, it has conducted an energetic awareness-raising campaign while at the same time promoting the 1980 "10% challenge", aimed at giving protection to at least one-tenth of Italian territory by the year 2000, and launching in 1990 with the WWF a major operation to make of Italy "a land of green parks" surrounded by a "sea of blue parks".

Situation in 1969

Since its creation, the Park has had a chequered history. In 1969 a new board of directors introduced new policies and in particular revolutionised the traditional ways of thinking. The revitalisation of the Park was achieved in spite of difficult initial conditions:

- little support from the government and the three regions concerned;
- an even less co-operative, indeed at times frankly hostile, attitude on the part of certain inhabitants, either because of interests in conflict with the Park's (eg in the case of property owners, builders, hunters, fishermen, poachers, woodcutters, shepherds or goatherds, etc) or above all, because they were poorly informed about the problems of nature conservation;
- an unfavourable landownership situation: the Park owned only 1% of its territory (ie 400 ha.), the rest being owned either by private landowners (farmland in the valley bottoms) or by municipalities (forests and upland pastures);
- an extremely complicated body of law (tens of thousands of laws existed in Italy) that was applied sporadically (an estimated 80% of environmental measures were not fully implemented in Italy);

- the need to deal with both public bodies (ministries, regions, provinces, mountain communities, municipalities, universities and other research institutions, police and forest services) and private individual interests (the local people, visitors, shepherds, farmers, hunters, fishermen, providers of services for tourists, politicians, administrators, associations and trade unions), often in conflict with the Park or among themselves and all wishing to have a say in its management;
- funding that was insufficient, unreliable and more often than not delayed.

A new strategy

In a situation like this it was obvious that the only way of achieving the Park's real aims was to bring about radical change by seeking co-operation with a wide array of partners and promoting the progressive involvement of municipalities in a new reality - a Park that was active, up-to-date and sensitive to other interests. The basic elements of this new strategy rested on a series of positive factors, including:

- a new zoning system aimed at reconciling the requirements of conservation with those of development (or "ecodevelopment", as it was soon called) and partly based on ecotourism;



Abruzzi National Park

The Abruzzi National Park was created in 1922 to protect the marsican brown bear and the Abruzzi chamois

- a growing number of visitors increasingly interested in nature, who are familiar with the environment and have a minimal impact on it;
- the idea that nature, flora, fauna, forest and mountain, have not only material and biological value but also spiritual value necessary for the equilibrium, regeneration and inspiration of modern man;
- the clear evidence that the Park is of economic benefit (as a source of income, jobs,

etc) to those living in and near the protected area;

- creation of direct sources of income for the Park to finance part of its cost or at least certain activities (visitor centres, for example);
- setting up of a number of related activities through "satellite" bodies to draw attention to and explain certain projects (eg the "Italy Wolf Group" operation), enhance the Park's image and encourage quality ecotourism (this is what the Park's Centre in Rome does).

This strategy, which has served as model for the new parks recently created in Italy, has proved effective but not enough. To overcome present difficulties we are finding it necessary to open up the international dimension, encourage the participation of different groups, pay more attention to partnerships, and instigate debate and discussion on the advantages of and constraints imposed by the Park and on the role of local municipalities.

One highly suitable formula is to make the most of exceptional circumstances, such as the fact that 1997 is the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Abruzzi National Park.

Advantages for everybody

Having attained its main purpose of protecting the fauna and the landscape, the Park has, for the first time in Italy, clearly demonstrated to all outsiders not only the cultural, scientific and ecological benefits, but also the social, economic and political benefits generated by up-to-date methods of nature conservation.

Its main ambition is now to share its experience and use it to meet with success the "10% challenge" and to protect the most beautiful areas still intact in Italy for Europe and the third millennium. ■

F. Tassi
Director of the Abruzzi National Park
Co-ordinator of the Italian National Parks Committee
Parks Centre
Viale Tito Livio 12
I-00136 Rome

A Green Label on the island of Hiiumaa

Toomas and Reet Kokovkin

The island of Hiiumaa in the West-Estonian archipelago belongs to a large biosphere reserve. As tourist facilities are insufficient and natural areas predominate in the landscapes of the island, one may state that almost anybody visiting the island is a kind of nature tourist.

Biosphere reserves are a special type of protected area, where one of the primary objectives is to reconcile nature protection with the sustainable development of the area. With this background, it seems obvious that nature-based tourism is one of the appropriate solutions for the economies of communities in the biosphere reserves.

Resources to be protected

But tourism is an industry as any other. Each industry is using resources to sustain its own functioning. For instance, forestry uses timber, fisheries use fish stocks, agriculture exploits soil fertility etc. The question is: what is the resource for tourism? The answer is not obvious, but one possible answer is "attractiveness".

"Attractiveness" means difference, new information, diversity, variability. Hence, nature-based tourism is oriented towards the attractiveness of natural areas. It means that nature

tourism uses a specific resource: variability of nature, i.e. diversity of species, ecosystems and landscapes.

As any industry, in the course of profit production, the tourism industry is very probably exhausting its resources. Nature tourism brings in elements of disturbance, "culturisation", loss of diversity, environmental degradation. Finally, nature tourism is not necessarily a sustainable one.

Positive co-operation

A considerable attempt to approach sustainable solutions in the tourism of the island was made in 1995-97 through the creation the "Green Label of Hiiumaa". The Hiiumaa Councils for Tourism and Environmental Protection, the Biosphere Reserve office, the Hiiumaa Tourism Association and firms participated in this process. Several seminars took place where the Eco-islands project was introduced, Hiiumaa potentials for environment-friendly tourism and Green Label criteria were discussed.

During these meetings it was brought up that the economic situation for tourist firms has been extremely unfavourable during the past two to three years. This is because of growing competition with large mainland and international companies and the unstable price levels in Estonia. While searching for their own

niche, local tourist enterprises found that co-operation with nature protection institutions was a vital precondition. This understanding led to the idea of establishing the Green Label which would be used to identify the environment-friendly managing tourist firms. It was decided that accommodation or restaurants willing to obtain the label must accept the following six criteria:

- waste management focusing on separation of paper, organic matter and hazardous waste;
- reduction of plastic packaging through increased consumption of local products, because food in small and plastic packages is usually imported;
- saving water by reducing water use in WCs and showers, checking for leaks, informing guests and training employees;
- saving electricity;
- identification of chemicals, such as washing detergents containing phosphates, aerosols containing freon, etc., preferring those more environment-friendly;
- consumption of local products to improve the Hiiumaa image and help local farmers market their production, local food being an attraction for visitors and island farmers and fishermen hoping for a market on the island.

Encouraging results

To evaluate the influence of the Green Label on the Hiiumaa island, a poll was carried out among tourists during the summer of 1996. The results were surprising and encouraging: 50% of visitors to Hiiumaa were aware of the Green Label. Out of these, 70%, while looking for accommodation, had made their choice according to the Green Label. ■

A. Nourilhat

T. Kokovkin
West-Estonian Archipelago Biosphere Reserve
EE-3200 Kärkla

R. Kokovkin
Hiiumaa County Government
EE-3200 Kärkla



Sustainable tourism and employment

Chul-Min Mo

Unemployment continues to be a dominant policy issue within the social and economic framework of OECD member countries. Tourism is a powerhouse in terms of employment, ranking among the major sources of jobs and an important source of job creation. The sectors dependent on tourism have grown faster in employment than the economy as a whole. The OECD's 1996 publication *OECD tourism statistics* calculates that employment attributable to tourism expenditure is about 5% for Austria, 4.3% for Canada and 2.6% for Spain. This is based on the Tourism Economic Accounts which OECD has been developing with a view to providing a comprehensive analysis of the economic impacts of tourism. Other research conducted in 1994 showed that tourism is already a major source of employment, accounting for between 5 and 10% of the total workforce in most OECD countries.

Looking at current growth forecasts for the industry well into the 21st century, its future employment potential is likely to be even greater. However, there is a common recognition that tourism's contribution to employment has been underestimated in member countries.

Sustainable job creation

According to the results of the recent OECD tourism conference in Mexico in 1996, policy-makers in OECD member countries have paid special attention to sustainable tourism development in an effort to harmonise the conservation of environmental resources with economic growth objectives. The sustainable approach is not anti-growth and it helps preserve - even in the long run - the tourist assets on which current economic benefits, including job creation, accrued from tourism development are dependent. Sustainable tourism development puts more emphasis on increasing employment opportunities for local people at tourist destinations. Generating such opportunities for local people makes a considerable contribution to enhancing the economic benefits for local communities because the wages and salaries can remain in the local economy. It is also noteworthy that pluriactivity can be a valuable by-product, especially in rural areas, and can be seen in an employment structure where a person has more than one type of job, for example, a farmer providing accommodation. This can also help guard against recession in any one sector.

Employed labour in the tourism industry comes particularly from among women, the young, the unskilled and visible minority groups, highlighting the fact that tourism generates jobs for those at the very core of OECD's unemployment. A study conducted by the OECD Tourism Committee on tourism strategies and rural development shows that

tourism development has provided increased employment opportunities for women, consequently resulting in increasing the power and improving the role of women.

However, a certain number of jobs in tourism are relatively low-skilled, often part-time and seasonal. The decrease in the number of nationals of member countries especially in unskilled jobs and the recruitment of foreign or part-time labour may result in segmentation of the labour market. Although tourism is not seen as a panacea that can right all ills, there are signs that its implications for the wider economies of member countries might be more far-reaching than had previously been realised. The Tourism Committee is therefore continuing its analysis of the tourism labour market. This reflection includes searching for new ways of generating sustainable tourism development and employment initiatives and gaining a better knowledge of employment characteristics in the tourism industry.

Job creation potential

Given its significance to member economies, the issue of sustainable tourism development and employment will continue to be a major focus of the Committee's work programme and activities. An on-going project on the characteristics, prospects and economic possibilities of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) will shed a special light on employment and education and training for employees in SMEs. SMEs are the dominant force in the tourism business and the smallest businesses (ie less than 10 salaried employees) in the accommodation and catering sector account for approximately 60% of total employment in the tourism sector. This year's OECD conference, "Towards strategic and innovative partnerships in the field of tourism: opportunities and challenges", will highlight the roles the public and private sectors play in job creation in tourism. This is an area where partnerships have often been used to counter rising unemployment and to revitalise local economies in many member countries. In addition, the Committee will examine changes in the employment structure brought about by information technology, which creates a demand for more skilled, but fewer, employees in the tourism industry.

The Tourism Committee is conducting research on employment statistics with the aim of establishing a reliable statistical framework and methodological guidelines. This work helps to identify the present situation and characteristics of those employed in the tourism industry and the impact of changes in tourism expenditure on employment levels. It should provide further insight into the understanding of tourism's contribution to employment.



Michael/Pluricel

Key policy initiatives

The OECD Tourism Committee agrees that what is now required is a greater recognition by governments of the importance of sustainable tourism development as a generator of employment. This should be supported by appropriate government policies and measures in such areas as education and training, infrastructure and transport planning and labour market problems.

Certain key issues will continue to be addressed, including:

- improving statistical data collection and analysis, harmonised across OECD member countries, to facilitate governments' understanding of the linkages between sustainable tourism development and employment and assist them in their policy decision-making;
- continuing liberalisation and the reduction of barriers which help to reduce rigidities within labour markets (ie facilitate movement of workers especially for the unskilled and seasonal jobs which are rejected by nationals);
- continuing study into what constitutes labour productivity and how to improve it through technology and other means;
- strong emphasis on human resource development through education and training programmes which improve skills and the quality of services;
- partnership between employers and employees to improve working conditions in tourism, help define occupational standards and ensure that the education system delivers skills that meet those standards; and
- recognition that the industry provides, with its part-time, seasonal and casual jobs, much needed work experience for new entrants to the labour force, for young people, students, women and immigrants.

These key policies should increasingly be developed in partnerships with the private sector of the tourism industry. At a time when employment is of prime concern to governments and has been firmly placed at the top of their agendas, it clearly makes sense for OECD members to look more closely at the job creation potential of sustainable tourism development with a view to helping maximise the industry's contribution to reducing unemployment. ■

C.-M. Mo
Tourism Policy Section
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
2 rue André Pascal
F-75775 Paris Cedex 16

Towards new solutions

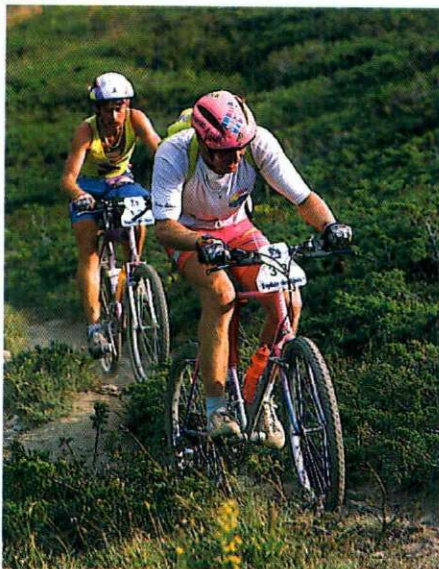
Peter Keller

Increasingly frequent travel, shorter tourist trips and new forms of outdoor sports are all signs of changes which lay us open to new ecological risks. Service providers in countries with a tourist industry are under ever greater pressure from international competition, which could lead to still further environmental degradation. There is therefore a pressing need to find new ways of achieving sustainable tourist development, solutions which are not handed down from on high but are based rather on the agreement and active participation of the public and the business community.

Planning tourism on a human scale

As globalisation gains ground, the international community is not concerned only with specific ecological problems, such as the greenhouse effect, which hang like the sword of Damocles over our future. Particularly in Europe, the challenge is also to preserve the uniqueness and biodiversity of threatened heritage landscapes. The mistakes made in the industrialised countries of western Europe following development which was often too fast and too extensive should not be repeated by the new tourist destinations of eastern Europe.

One idea is gaining ground: the notion that environmental protection begins with people making their own assessment of environmental issues. The extent to which people become aware of these issues and what they do about them depends upon their knowledge of the environment and of ecology. Not many people know, for instance, that popular sports such as canoeing or mountain biking are not the only ones likely to damage biotopes in the long



S. Cordier

term but that the same applies even to less invasive outdoor activities, such as jogging or rambling.

Intervention by the authorities to prevent the slow destruction of the countryside can only be effective if tourism is once again organised on a human scale: at the end of the day, what we need to aim for is tourism at the pace of those who are on foot.

Environmental protection adapted to specific types of natural environment should:

- entail preventative measures: zones should be demarcated for particular purposes, infrastructure should be developed, and environmental education should be provided;
- include steps to control the influx of tourists: facilities for informing and educating visitors, technical means of channelling visitors and taxes and prohibitions.

Imitating the natural ecological cycle more closely

Consumers are becoming increasingly aware of ecological problems and are prompting the business community to produce tourist amenities and services which more effectively respect the environment and the countryside, ie which are less polluting (see Illustration No. 1). Complying with the needs and expectations of customers is a tried and tested strategy for economic survival. Managers of tourist agencies now possess the skills to imitate the natural ecological cycle more closely and to produce without polluting when they set up or modernise amenities for tourists and tourist resorts.

In European countries with tourist industries, there are numerous examples of companies which avoid wastage of resources and which recycle waste, particularly in respect of accommodation. Nevertheless, it must be said that fierce competition between service providers, combined with the absence of government restrictions, does not make it easier to internalise ecological costs and pass them on to tourists.

Making tourist destinations more ecological is even more difficult. Such a strategy calls for new forms of partnership between all companies involved in tourism at local and regional level. State intervention is generally needed to encourage this kind of cooperation.

Using the market to achieve ecological goals

The rarer heritage landscapes become, the higher their economic value. Nowadays, an unspoilt environment is regarded as having economic growth potential. Ecotourism is a form of tourism which takes advantage of this

new gap in the market. The fact that greater importance is attached to the countryside than to comfort does not prevent it from being lucrative.

In contrast to global "industrial tourism", this kind of tourism which sets great store by nature and the countryside encourages intrinsic growth and generates income and jobs locally. Provided that high-quality tourist products can be produced and targeted at gaps in the market, such growth can help to strengthen cultural identity.

A sound understanding of market forces also makes it possible to use the market to achieve ecological ends (see Illustration No. 2). By allowing the influx of visitors to be spread more evenly over time and space, marketing strategies, for example, help to reduce pressure on the environment. Today it is impossible to protect the countryside and the environment without knowing and understanding the rules governing the market economy. ■

P. Keller
Department of Tourism
Federal Office of Industry, Arts, Crafts and Labour
Bundesgasse 8
CH-3003 Bern

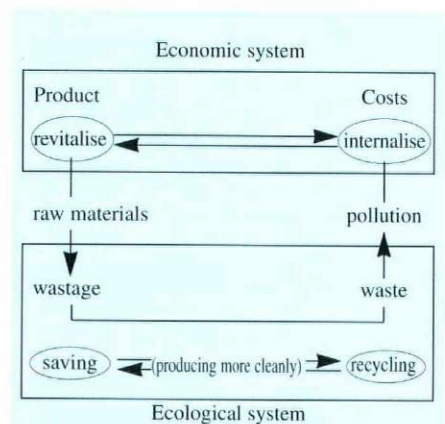


Illustration No. 1

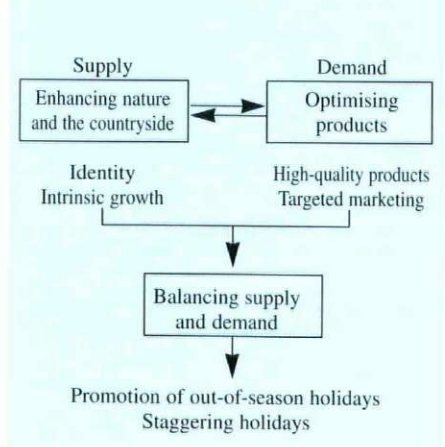


Illustration No. 2

At the Council of Europe

Intergovernmental activities on tourism and environment

Françoise Bauer and Jean-Pierre Ribaut

In addition to the activities of the Parliamentary Assembly and the intergovernmental technical assistance co-operation with countries of central and eastern Europe, the Council of Europe has developed an in-depth methodical study of the tourism-environment tandem, particularly with regard to:

- the impact of tourism on the environment;
- the requisite principles to ensure both the preservation of the natural heritage and an economically and socially acceptable and equitable type of tourist development.

With this in mind, Council of Europe specialists were mandated to "determine the principles and conditions to which tourism projects shall conform so that support of European or international financial institutions could be justified in terms of respecting environment".

The experts were also invited to "define the actions to be undertaken by the Council of Europe in order to reconcile the long-term interests of tourism and environment protection and nature conservation and prepare a draft Recommendation to this effect". The group's work resulted in the elaboration of several recommendations.

One general recommendation

Recommendation No. R (94) 7 of the Committee of Ministers on a general policy for sustainable and environment-friendly tourism development. After outlining the principles of sustainable tourism development, the Committee of Ministers invites national, regional and local authorities to comply with them, pointing out that they should be implemented at three levels. They stress the importance of impact assessments in order to guarantee appropriate environmental protection.

Two specific recommendations

Recommendation No. R (95) 10 on a sustainable tourist development policy in protected areas. This text stresses the importance of integrating protected areas into an overall tourist development strategy, and invites those responsible to provide appropriate responses to the increasing public interest in such areas. It also strongly advocates developing dialogue and genuine co-operation among all those concerned, in the interests of all, especially future generations. It invites tourism professionals to accept the constraints of a sustainable pattern of tourist development and to make a direct contribution to the conservation of protected areas.

Recommendation No. R (97) 9 on a policy for the development of sustainable environment-friendly tourism in coastal areas. Coastal areas are particularly fragile ecosystems with enormous biodiversity which are being subjected to increasing pressure and speculation. Consequently, the traditional approach is sometimes called into question. This is why the experts recommend implementing a complex series of measures including, obviously, controlling development, monitoring and combating pollution, diversifying tourist services, using economic and financial instruments and incentives, education, training and research, and lastly co-operating at all levels (local, regional and national).

A seminar on tourism and the environment was held in Strasbourg from 21 to 23 November 1996, aimed at developing a new code of ethics in tourism based on the various operators' environmental responsibilities.

Practical applications

The Council of Europe is making practical use of the conclusions of all these activities, par-

ticularly in central and eastern Europe, where there is considerable potential for tourist development. Unfortunately, the scope for Council of Europe funding is extremely limited. This is why we are attempting to associate certain states and foundations with specific pilot projects aimed at enhancing the heritage with a view to environment-friendly tourism. Switzerland, France, Liechtenstein and the Northern Vosges Regional Natural Park have all implemented original projects which could be used as models.

The following projects were launched recently:

- A pilot project is currently emerging for tourist development of the karstic areas of the Apuseni mountains in Romania. The subterranean complexes are attracting increasing numbers of visitors, and this necessitates the implementation of strict development regulations and meticulous supervision.

- A project is proceeding in the Carpathians, especially in a number of exceptional natural sites which have applied for the European Diploma. Very little has ever been done with most of these sites, and so there is a great deal of scope for some very interesting "experimentation", especially since no negative developments have been inherited from the past. Three protected areas in Ukraine, Poland and Slovakia which are part of the trilateral reserve of the Eastern Carpathian biosphere are currently involved in this ambitious project.

- A third project concerns the development of a coastal area in north-western Latvia (Vidzeme region). A zoning plan will also be proposed in order to determine the zones which must be excluded from any tourist development plans.

Gone are the days when nature could be systematically put on the back burner. We welcome the fact that the ecological dimension is increasingly being taken into account in development projects, but this should not blind us to the importance of nature reserves and other appropriately protected areas. Modern man has such a craving for development that we sometimes have to say no.

As is often the case, the important things are balance, complementarity and harmony. Sustainable tourist development is no exception to this rule. ■

F. Bauer and J.-P. Ribaut
Environment Conservation and Management Division
Council of Europe



B. Irrmann

National Agencies of the Centre Naturopa

ALBANIA

Environmental Protection and Preservation Committee
Ministry of Health and Environmental Protection
Rruga "Bajram Curri"
AL-TIRANA
Fax 355-42 652 29
e-mail: cep@cep.tirana.al

ANDORRA

M. Casimir ARAJOL FARRAS
Ministeri de Relacions Exteriors
c/Prat de la Creu 92-94
AND-ANDORRA LA VELLA
Fax 376-86 95 59

AUSTRIA

Mr. Michael KHÜN
Verbindungsstelle der Bundesländer beim
Amt der Niederösterreichischen Landesregierung
Schenkenstrasse 4
A-1014 WIEN
Fax 43-1 535 60 79
e-mail: vstvw-oe-laender@tboxa.telecom.at

BELGIUM

Région Flamande: De Heer S. TYS
Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap
AMINAL-Dienst Natuurbehoud
Belliardstraat 14-16-18
B-1040 BRUSSEL

Région Wallonne: M. Jacques STEIN
Ministère de la Région Wallonne
DGRNE - Service de la Conservation de la Nature
Avenue Prince de Liège 15
B-5100 JAMBES (Namur)
Fax 32-81 32 12 60

Région Bruxelloise: Mme NAULAERS
Institut bruxellois pour la gestion de l'environnement
Gulledelle 100
B-1200 BRUXELLES

BULGARIA

Division des Relations Internationales
Ministère de l'Environnement
67 rue W. Gladstone
BG-1000 SOFIA
Fax 359-2 52 16 34

CROATIA

Mr Miho MILJANIĆ
Department for Nature Conservation
Ministry of Civil Engineering and Environmental Protection
Ilica 44
HR-41000 ZAGREB
Fax 385-1 43 15 15

CYPRUS

Mr Antonis L. ANTONIOU
Environmental Service
Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment
CY-NICOSIA
Fax 357-2 36 39 45

CZECH REPUBLIC

Dr Bohumil KUCERA
Agency for Nature and Landscape Conservation
4-6 Kališnická
CZ-130 00 PRAGUE 3
Fax 42-2 27 24 60

DENMARK

Ms Lotte BARFOD
National Forest and Nature Agency
Ministry of the Environment
Haraldsgade 53
DK-2100 COPENHAGEN Ø
Fax 45-39 27 98 99

ESTONIA

Mr Kalju KUKK
Ministry of the Environment
24 Toompuiestee
EE-0100 TALLINN
Fax 372-62 62 801

FINLAND

Ms Anna-Maria MAUNU
Ministry of the Environment
P O Box 399
SF-00121 HELSINKI
Fax 358-0 1991 9453

FRANCE

Mme Sylvie PAU
Direction de la Nature et des Paysages
Ministère de l'Environnement
20 avenue de Ségur
F-75302 PARIS 07 SP
Fax 33-1 42 19 19 92
e-mail: s.pau@environnement.gouv.fr

GERMANY

Mrs Helga INDEN-HEINRICH
Deutscher Naturschutzring eV
Am Michaelshof 8-10
Postfach 20 04 25
D-53134 BONN
Fax 49-228 35 90 96
e-mail: dnr@bonn.comlink.apc.org

GREECE

Mr Donald MATTHEWS
Hellenic Society for Nature Protection
24 Nikis Street
GR-105 57 ATHENS
Fax 30-1 32 25 285
e-mail: hspn@hol.ath.forthnet.gr

HUNGARY

Mrs Louise LAKOS
Department of European Integration and International Relations
Ministry for Environment and Regional Policy
P O Box 351
H-1394 BUDAPEST
Fax 36-1 201 28 46

ICELAND

Mr Sigurdur Á. THRÁINSSON
Ministry for the Environment
Vonarstraeti 4
ISL-150 REYKJAVIK
Fax 354-5 62 45 66
e-mail: sigurdur.thrainsson@umh.stjr.is

IRELAND

Mr Dave FADDEN
Heritage Promotions Unit, Department of Arts,
Culture and the Gaeltacht
51 St Stephen's Green
IRL-DUBLIN 2
Fax 353-1 66 10 747

ITALY

D.s.s.a Elena MAMMONE
Ministère des Ressources agricoles et forestières
Bureau des Relations Internationales
18 via XX Settembre
I-00187 ROME
Fax 39-6 48 84 394

LATVIA

Mr Uldis CEKULIS
Head, Public Relations and Education Division
Ministry of the Environment and Regional Development
25 Peldu Str
LV-1494 RIGA
Fax 371-7 82 04 42
e-mail: infoeduc@varam.gov.lv

LIECHTENSTEIN

Mrs Regula IMHOF
Liechtensteinische Gesellschaft für Umweltschutz
Im Bretsch 22
FL-9494 SCHAAN
Fax 41-75 237 40 31

LITHUANIA

Dr Kestutis BALEVICIUS
Ministry of Environmental Protection
Juozapaviciaus 9
LT-2600 VILNIUS
Fax 370-2 72 80 20

LUXEMBOURG

M. Jean-Paul FELTGEN
Ministère de l'Environnement
18 Montée de la Pétrusse
L-2918 LUXEMBOURG
Fax 352-40 04 10

MALTA

Mr John GRECH
Environment Protection Department
M-FLORIANA
Fax 356-24 13 78

MOLDOVA

To be nominated

NETHERLANDS

Drs Peter W. BOS
Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries
Division for International Nature Management
P O Box 20401
NL-2500 EK's GRAVENHAGE
Fax 31-70 379 3751
e-mail: p.w.bos@agro.n.nl

NORWAY

Ms Sylvi OFSTAD
Ministry of Environment
Myntgaten 2
P O Box 8013 DEP
N-0030 OSLO
Fax 47-22 24 27 72

POLAND

Mr Marcin HERBST
National Foundation for Environmental Protection
ul Krzywickiego 9
PL-02 078 WARSAW
Fax 48-22 25 21 27

PORTUGAL

Prof. Eugénio SEQUEIRA
Liga para a Protecção da natureza
Estrada do Calhariz de Benfica 187
P-1500 LISBOA
Fax 351-1 778 32 08

ROMANIA

Mme Lucia CEUCA
Direction Relations Internationales, publiques et presse
Ministère des Eaux, Forêts et de la Protection de l'Environnement
Bd Libertatii 12, Secteur 5
RO-70542 BUCURESTI
Fax 40-1 410 63 94

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Dr Nina DOBRYNINA
International Co-operation Department
State Committee of Environmental Protection
B. Grusinskaya str. 4/6
123812 MOSCOW
Fax 7-095 254 82 83

SAN MARINO

M. Leonardo LONFERNINI
Directeur de l'Office agricole et forestier
Via Ovella 12
Valdragone
RSM-47031 SAN MARINO
Fax 378-88 51 15

SLOVAKIA

Mrs Jana ZACHAROVÁ
Department of Nature and Landscape Protection
Ministry of the Environment
Nám. L. Štúra 1
SK-812 35 BRATISLAVA
Fax 42-7 516 20 31

SLOVENIA

Mr Janko ŽERJAV
Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning
Zupaničeva 6
SI-1000 LJUBLJANA
Fax 386-61 22 45 48

SPAIN

Mme Carmen CASAL FORNOS
Ministerio de Medio Ambiente
Secretaría General Técnica
Centro de Documentación ambiental
Despacho BS 09
Plaza San Juan de la Cruz s/n
E-28071 MADRID

SWEDEN

Mr Ingvar BINGMAN
Head of Information Department
Swedish Environment Protection Agency
Blekhölmsterassen 36
S-106 48 STOCKHOLM
Fax 46-8 20 29 45
e-mail: ibi@environ.se

SWITZERLAND

M. Jürg KÄNZIG
Pro Natura
Wartenbergstrasse 22
CH-4052 BÄLE
Fax 41-61 317 91 66

"THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA"

Office of the National Agency "Naturopa"
Ministry of Urban Planning, Construction and Environment
Skopska Crvena Opština bb, 3/62v
91 000 SKOPJE
Fax: 389-91 145 512

TURKEY

Mr Hasan ASMAZ
Turkish Association for the Conservation of Nature
and Natural Resources
Menekşe sokak 29/4
TR-06440 KIZILAY-ANKARA
Fax 90-312 417 95 52

UKRAINE

Dr Tetiana HARDASHUK
Green Ukraine
National Ecological Centre
P O Box 89/7
252025 KYIV
Fax 38-044 269 9925

UNITED KINGDOM

Mrs Sharon GUNN
English Nature
Northminster House
GB-PETERBOROUGH PE1 1UA
Fax 44-1733 45 51 88

In order to receive *Naturopa* or obtain further information on the Centre Naturopa or the Council of Europe, please contact the National Agency of your country (see above list).

