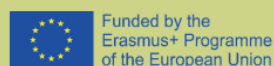




# MANUAL FOR ECOTOURISM PROMOTION



EEFEct: European Education Fostering Ecotourism

# **Manual for ecotourism promotion**

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## Foreword

Environment is a key factor for tourism industry success. If we consider nature a product of the tourism industry, it is obvious that the product will no longer be purchased by consumers, if it begins to have a low quality. This is why all stakeholders of the tourism business should be aware of the importance of preserving the environment and natural resources. Hence the need to promote and stimulate ecotourism consumption.

Tourism specialists are assigning the emergence of alternative forms of tourism, such as sustainable tourism, cultural tourism, adventure tourism, ecotourism, etc., to the significant negative impact of mass tourism on the environment, the economy and the socio-cultural elements of society. Among the forms of alternative tourism, ecotourism is distinguished as an option to mass tourism leading to an economic development using and protecting the natural resources of an area.

Ecotourism combines the pleasure of discovering and learning about fauna, flora, and spectacular cultural sites with educational accents, environmental, and local community benefits. Ecotourism, that is properly designed and managed, leads to a balance between nature conservation and the need for tourism development.

Due to growing demand, the eco-tourism market is becoming more and more diverse, so for businesses operating or seeking to operate in this market the need to know ecotourists' behaviour is becoming increasingly important in order to "manage" more efficiently both ecotourists and their experience.

There have been also changes in tourists' behaviour, who began to focus towards more personal, intense experiences, and as a result the consumer feels "enriched" after an ecotourism experience, at the expense of mass tourism.

Thus, understanding the needs and attitudes of ecotourists who spend their holidays in protected areas can contribute to the development of tourism marketing strategies and plans.

In this context, the following paper reveals some important aspects regarding the characteristics of ecotourists behaviour together with solutions that marketers can apply to stimulate the consumption of ecotourism.

# Chapter I

## Marketing strategies for ecotourism promotion

### 1.1 Italy

#### Marketing strategies for ecotourism promotion in Italy and the Umbria region

#### 2019: The Year of "Slow Tourism"

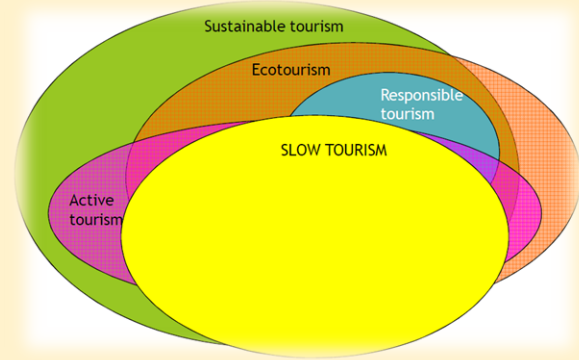
If 2016 was the National Year of the Paths, 2017 of the Villages and 2018 of Italian Food, 2019 is in fact the Year of Slow Tourism. Tourism in 2019 will be dedicated to those who want to travel in Italy at a slow pace, marked by slow, intelligent and sustainable itineraries.

This is a further way to promote Italian territories less known by international tourism and relaunch them in a sustainable way, encouraging innovative travel experiences, starting with panoramic historical trains, cultural itineraries, trails, cycle tracks, and horse-riding trips.

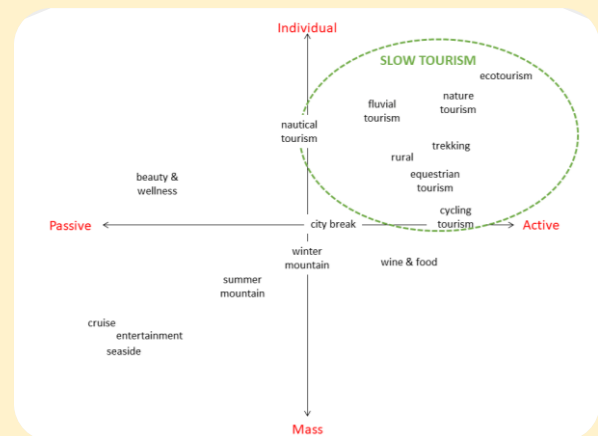
The origin of "Slow movement" dates back to 1986, as a cultural and gastronomic movement founded by Carlo Petrini. The aim was to propose a change focused on reducing the speed with which life flows: greater slowness fosters greater awareness. The culture of speed had been discredited in favour of a return to the roots through slowness. It all began when in 1986 Carlo Petrini demonstrated against the opening of a McDonald's in Rome's Piazza di Spagna. From that event he decided to create the Slow Food organization. Over time this concept began to be applied to different fields, including tourism.

**Slow Tourism is therefore opposed to mass tourism**, to that "hit and run" typical in large cities. Living a slow travel experience means being able to immerse yourself in the local culture, respect nature and look at the world with greater awareness. In Italy there is a real association that unites all these principles in a Manifesto. **The values of Slow Tourism encourage the involvement of travellers within the local community and the planning of tourism as a driving force for development in the smaller areas.**

In Italy the concept of Slow tourism is perhaps more well-known than ecotourism, even if they partly coincide.



*Slow Tourism and other Ecotourist products*



*Slow Tourism products*

Slow tourism is defined as an approach to the offer and use of tourism products that operates following these principles:

**Contamination:** when we are slow tourists, we have an interaction with the community in which we are guests. The relational sphere between people who are bearers of different experiences, beliefs, knowledge, cultures and the ability of the supply system to create fertile opportunities for exchange between them merges with the tourist who is immersed and contaminated by the culture of the host population.

**Authenticity:** every place has its own specificity. With slow tourism we have the ability to offer non-standardized products and services that are able to enhance the differences, emphasizing the peculiarities and excellences of that place. Every place is unique and with slow tourism it is possible to discover this uniqueness.

**Sustainability:** thanks to the minimal impact on the environment. The impact of tourism activities on the local environment is important, reaffirming the need for a long-term ecological,

sustainable and ethical approach to local communities.

**Time:** the planning of the activities helps to improve the quality of the service. The business and territorial organization takes time and requires a strategic orientation with explicit short-medium-long term planning. Planners need time for analysing, understanding and making improvements for the activities, services and destinations for those who benefit from it as visitors and for those who work there.

**Slowness:** if you call it slow, we cannot fail to mention respect for slow rhythms. The construction, promotion and offer of services and products of slow tourism, from non-frenetic, non-massed rhythms, able to make the guest participate in a complete, deep and involving experience, which allows him to gradually assimilate the links with the local reality, and to see it is a fundamental characteristic to be respected.

**Emotion:** the involvement of all five senses is the basis of every experience. The ability to generate memorable moments, which make the guest different from when he arrived, marked by a truly engaging and rewarding experience. It inspires the desire to return there and gives rise to word-of-mouth reports, and visitors who return changed and enriched, grateful for what they saw and felt.

## Slow Tourism Association

Slow Tourism is also a national Association, based in Umbria, which promotes welcoming tourism in Italy and abroad.

Thanks to the active involvement of **travellers, tourism entrepreneurs and local communities**, it safeguards and promotes the growth of territories, even those which are poorly known, and makes them valuable tourism destinations.

Slow tourism invites **travellers** to tourism at a reduced pace: one that is sustainable and responsible, and to discover new destinations while respecting them. It invites tourists to get to know places, to live and “taste” them while at the same time promoting their protection as patrimonies of inestimable worth, as a richness to be safeguarded for our common wellbeing.

Tour operators and agencies offering this type of holiday are increasingly numerous in Italy and in the world, because they are requested by travellers.

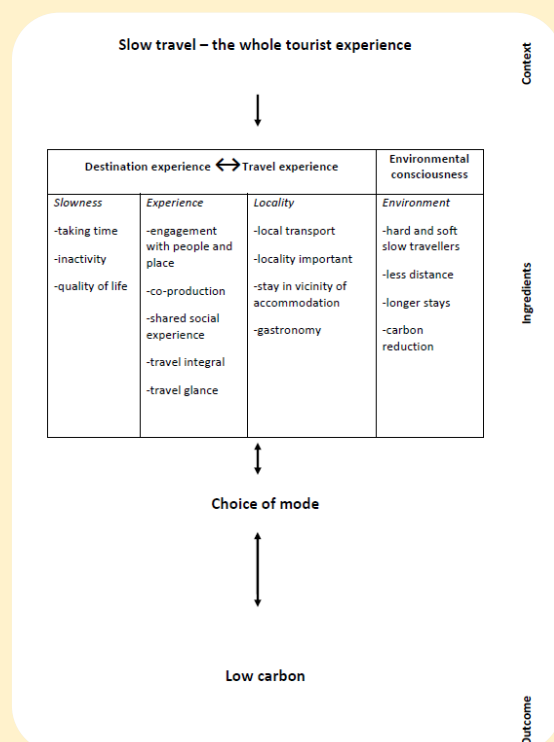
**The Association cooperates with tourism operators** active in the promotion of territories and local cultures to better facilitate encounters with local cultures and **improve the quality of the hospitality offered**. It offers courses for tourism operators in order to make locations (big cities or small towns) **welcoming places for promoting the return of tourists**.

The Association also **cooperates with people and with businesses** to showcase the local history, culture, and typical products of all participating places. They will be Italy’s “best kept secrets” no longer.

## Slow Tourism Label

The Association also created a **national label** for tourist accommodation, attributed according to respect for criteria such as quality, environment, adherence to a code of conduct and promotion of products of the territory.

The aims of the label are: the **promotion of sustainable and responsible tourism**, through the dissemination of good practices able to improve the quality of reception and hospitality and to safeguard the environment, and improving the information of both the “traveller” and resident communities, in order to develop a



kind of tourism sustainable for the territories and for the local communities.

Quality indicators have been developed for the various types of accommodation facilities. The main, common to all tourism companies, are:

- Reception of the guest with courtesy and availability;
- Guest information;
- Knowledge of the territory;
- Use of typical local products;
- Bicycles for customers;
- Use of recycled and recyclable paper and products;
- Waste recycling;
- Reduction of energy waste.

The Slow Tourism label for tourism businesses is issued only after they carry out the **self-assessment**, an instrument through which each structure identifies the good practices already implemented, and after it commits itself to acquire all the Slow Tourism quality indicators within a given period of time.

Through this label tourists/travellers have the opportunity to consciously choose, for their holidays, accommodation facilities that actively participate in a **continuous improvement of the quality of reception and environmental protection**.

On the other side the businesses can take advantage from the **promotion on the website of Slow Tourism Label** with two promotional pages, one in Italian and the other in English, accompanied by a photo gallery, a direct link to the site of the buildings, and the publication of the Self-Assessment Test. They will also have the opportunity to become the blogger of the **Daily Slow** writing articles, publishing photos and videos related to their territory and initiatives and events not to be missed. They can make known through the **Daily Slow** the innovative activities, natural and cultural resources, and the travel experiences generally achievable in the place where the enterprise is located. This is a way to get in touch with many tourists-travellers who might be interested in staying at the accommodation. The structures and initiatives organized are promoted both through the Slow Tourism **social media platforms** - Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest - and through a **monthly newsletter** for the associated travellers.

On the website there is also the **Slow Minute section**, where travellers can find accommodation offers and initiatives.

### Ecotourism labels in Italy

There is **increasing pressure for the tourism industry to become more sustainable**. The development of a variety of labels to inform consumers and other stakeholders that specific sites are attempting to reduce the negative impacts of tourism has been noted for around three decades.

Originally developed for hotels and beaches, there are now **environmental and sustainability certifications** for all types of tourism businesses and destinations. In addition to the original environmental objectives, many of their standards also encompass social, cultural and economic objectives.

**The marketing in this field is very important** to raise awareness of certificates and to promote the certified businesses as the better choice. Sustainable tourism will only become mainstream when consumers can easily find this information and it is credible. Currently there is little consumer take-up.

In 2017, more than 40 international and national labels were certifying the environmental and sustainability performance of accommodation providers and campsites worldwide with almost 17,000 certified businesses on the European continent. Of those, 12 labels were operating on a global, 9 on a European and 21 on a national level.

In Italy, **Legambiente**, the most widespread environmental association at national level, launched the **"TurismoBellezzaNatura" ecological label** in 1997.

This quality label distinguishes all the accommodation facilities and tourist services that take measures to reduce the impact of their activities on the environment and to promote the surrounding area. The general objective of the LegambienteTurismo proposal is to reduce the load on the territory by reducing the environmental impact of tourism, **encouraging more conscious holidays rich in quality and comfort; involving local operators and tourists in a durable and informed choice**.

Thanks to the ecological label "TurismoBellezzaNatura"(Tourism Beauty Nature) **tourists can search all over Italy for the environment-friendly structures and discover offers and advantages.** So, the visitor can access a circuit of tourist/accommodation facilities throughout Italy that are friendly to the environment and sustainable tourism.

There is the **added value** that LegambienteTurismo awards the best Italian structures with the ecological label "TurismoBellezzaNatura", which makes them "Recommended exercises for commitment in defence of the environment". The tourist can explore the map on the website and choose the best offers in a variety of structures throughout Italy.

There are 10 parameters to be respected, which are then constantly checked, to become part of the TurismoBellezzaNatura label: waste, water, energy, food, gastronomy, collective transport, light mobility, noise, natural and cultural heritage, and communication.

From these 10 principles arises a specific disciplinary for each type of structure that provides mandatory and voluntary measures, each one associated with a score. To obtain the label, members must comply with all mandatory measures and achieve a score of at least 20 points by choosing among other measures. Every year checks are carried out in the associated accommodation facilities in order to verify the continuing compliance with the requirements.

The associated structures are included in **a map of Italian hospitality** and in the *Blue Guide of the Touring Club*, participating in the *TripAdvisor Ecoleader program*. Connected to the structures there are then summer camps for children, volunteer camps, national initiatives and other activities related to Legambiente. The tourist is more and more carefully looking for places and structures that transfer the emotion linked to the trip, and in this matter the environmental sustainability is one of the most attractive parameters. Precisely for this reason, **the goal of LegambienteTurismo is to meet supply and demand, putting the environment and quality first.**

There are various forms of accommodation within the network: hotels, relays, farmhouses, B&Bs, country houses, organic farms, shelters, diffused hotels, environmental education centres and even bathing establishments, sports centres, restaurants, camping, villages and even an astronomical observatory.

### The Italian Touring Club and the "Bandiera Arancione" brand



## Touring Club Italiano

The Italian Touring Club is a non-profit association, founded in 1894 in Milan, for the **promotion of tourism throughout the Italian territory.**



The **"Bandiera Arancione"** (orange flag) is a **tourist-environmental quality brand conferred by the Italian Touring Club (TCI) to small towns in the Italian hinterland (maximum**

**15,000 inhabitants) that stand out for their excellent offerings and quality hospitality.**

The idea was born in 1998 in Sassello (in Liguria), from the need of the regional agency to promote and enhance the hinterland. The TCI, therefore, developed a model of analysis (called territorial analysis model or MAT) to identify the first worthy locations. The brand was then promoted nationwide, identifying small towns of excellence in each region: the region's hidden gems.

The group in January 2018 included 227 villages. Nine of these are located in Umbria: Bevagna, Città della Pieve, Montefalco, Montone, Norcia, Panicale, Spello, Trevi and Vallo di Nera.

This project is the only Italian one chosen by the World Tourism Organization among the successful programs for sustainable development of tourism all over the world.

The Municipalities certified with the Orange Flag may also request to join the **Network TCI Orange Flags**, thanks to which they will be able to:

- take advantage of numerous **communication opportunities**, diversified and targeted to reach both the Italian and foreign tourist markets potentially attracted by this type of offer; enjoy special opportunities for **relations**



with the media, both general and sector, to showcase their destination;

- access promotion and communication opportunities that can actively contribute to raise the profile of the location and the surrounding area as an excellent tourist destination.

### The promotion of responsible and ecologic tourism by Tour Operators: the example of WWF Travel

WWF is the largest, most widespread and authoritative international independent organization for the active conservation of the environment, thanks to a network of national offices and programs.

The strategic **priorities of WWF in tourism** are the promotion and development of responsible tourism, especially in the natural areas affected by the phenomenon of mass tourism and those with an eco-tourist vocation.

The WWF Italy has produced since 2002 the Charter of quality of responsible tourism, disciplinary dedicated to responsible eco-tourism. Several tour operators collaborate with the WWF for the organization of the activities that are presented in the portal <http://viaggiwwfnature.it/>.

They are all accredited by the WWF on the basis of their Quality Charter.

The operators also manage some facilities such as guest houses, hostels, farms and CEA (Environmental Education Centres) or some WWF Oasis.

The TO (?Tour Operators, or something else?) are formally and directly recognized by WWF Italy as interpreters of Responsible Tourism according to the principles and guidelines of the Italian Responsible Tourism Association AITR ([www.aitr.org](http://www.aitr.org)), a Non-profit Organization that works to promote, qualify, disseminate, research, update, and protect cultural contents and the consequent practical actions related to the term "responsible tourism," promoting the culture and the practice of Responsible Tourism.



Through the promotion and cultural diffusion and the coordination of TOs, WWF Travel carry out educational activities for tourism and environmental sustainability, always faithful to their own values.

For the control and monitoring of the responsible tourism activities, to maintain the know-how of the WWF, and to follow the international tourism guidelines they have structured a standardization system that defines some fundamental elements that the responsible tourism manages in a substantially different way from the conventional tourist industry:

- Training methods
- Educational methods
- Service delivery processes and flows
- Aesthetic and ecological value of the programs
- Educational and ecological value of communication
- Food quality and local products
- Quality of the structures in terms of environmental sustainability.

In the portal there are different options and travel packages for adults, families and summer camps for youngsters from 7 to 17 years old, in Italy and all over the world.

**Web sites for the promotion of sustainable and ecologic tourism** The web is a great help in collecting, connecting and promoting experiences, products, places and people who work for sustainable tourism.



**Ecobnb.com** is an Italian web portal created in 2015 and dedicated to those who want to travel in harmony with nature, respectful of the environment, places and local communities, at reasonable prices. For a **"pop" Responsible tourism**, to dispel the myth that "green" is more expensive, **avoiding greenwashing and deceptive marketing**.

In the Ecobnb.com blog you can find slow travel itineraries, such as trekking with donkeys, and discover alternative ways to stay, how to become a farmer for a day and receive free hospitality at the farm and learn how to reduce the ecological footprint of your holidays.

Each location is verified by the Ecobnb team, which certifies the quality, and by the travellers who stay there.

### GREENWASHING

A major problem for true ecotourism businesses is a practice called **greenwashing**. This term refers to a business that presents itself as "sustainable", 'ecological', 'green', 'responsible', 'ecotourist', etc., when it doesn't comply with generally accepted standards, or worse, it is in contradiction with them. For those who are really trying to do their best to comply with all ecotourism standards, the businesses that falsely use the term 'ecotourism' compete unfairly and damage the credibility of the whole industry. **One way of determining which businesses are truly practicing ecotourism (or sustainable tourism in other market segments) is certification.**



**BookinGreen** is a portal born in 2017 with the aim of allowing tourists to easily create a real **eco-friendly holiday**. In this website it is possible to choose how to reach a place, where to stay

and what activities to do, all strictly selected, among all the offers in the tourism sector, which prove to have **verified requirements of eco-sustainability**.

From these assumptions the **collaboration between Legambiente and BookinGreen** is born. The accommodation facilities with the ecological label are shown on the portal, an important showcase to be known by tourists interested in these issues, but also to catch those who are still sceptical.

### The promotion of (Eco)tourism in the Umbria region and San Venanzo

The positioning of the Umbria region for the whole tourism sector is focusing on sustainability, as we can immediately understand from its traditional marketing slogan: **"Umbria, the green heart of Italy"**.

In fact, Umbria has the opportunity to give original answers to the questions of those segments/niches of holiday demand that are characterized by global attention to the reduction of the environmental footprint of tourism consumption; offering holidays in contact with nature, in a landscape of high aesthetic quality, where culture, history, traditions, quality agriculture and gastronomy, can offer endless possibilities for the **construction of integrated tourism products, based on harmony between tourist and environment and on integration with cultural resources and local identity.**



**Umbriatourism.it** is the official Umbrian portal for the promotion of tourism, created in 2015.

The contents of the portal have been created using the latest trends in persuasive copywriting and with a reduction of textual information, in favour of emotional narration linked to images and local storytelling. Indeed, in online tourism marketing, emotional stimuli are able to generate suggestions on the primary elements of the destination offer. The power of iconographic communication becomes more relevant every day, while the textual part, especially in mobile

use, becomes linked to practical information and immediate use.

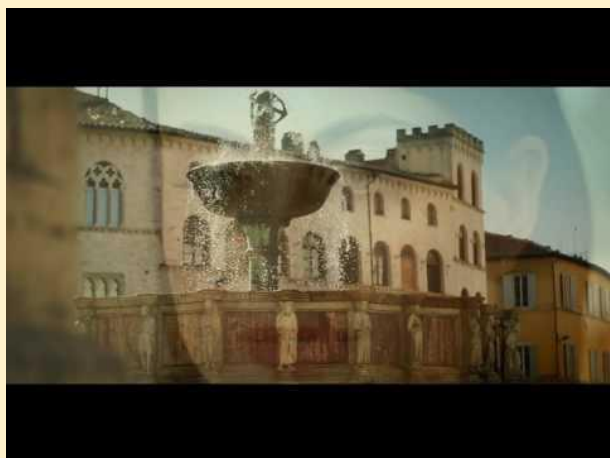
The portal shows all the faces of the territory, with several interesting places to visit and itineraries, organized also for different holiday themes, as well as a section for the promotion of the events.

The portal also contains a **Tourist Offer Management platform**, where the Umbrian Tourism Operators can publish their offers independently and at no cost, a further tool for their online promo-marketing without being in competition with any other channels of booking/sale already used.

Regarding ecotourism in particular, in the section "Landscape", you can discover all itineraries and activities linked to the natural beauties of the region, from lakes and waterfalls to the mountain area and the natural parks, from the sites for birdwatching to the beautiful rivers for rafting.

The large photo and video gallery can be very helpful to attract visitors interested in discovering this beautiful region and its natural places that maybe less widely known than others. The website also provides a chance to download a brochure of the region.

Umbria Region also invests in promotion through **social media**, using **Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube**, in order to reach a larger number of potential visitors.



*Umbria, il tuo Cuore Verde – Umbriatourism*



*Umbria MTB, explore the Region: the Spoleto Norcia trail – Umbriatourism*

The **Municipality of San Venanzo**, as well, is improving the online promotion of its territory, places of interest and tourist accommodations, in order to reach a larger number of potential visitors and describe appropriately all its resources, with a strong accent on its natural beauties and their historical and cultural value.

On the website [www.visitsanvenanzo.it](http://www.visitsanvenanzo.it) you will find also a list of the ancient paths of the Natural area of Monte Peglia, recently awarded as MAB Unesco site (Man and the Biosphere), and of other parts of the territory of the Municipalities of San Venanzo or Marsciano, that you can download and use through Google Maps.





## 1.2. Romania

### Ecotourism and its current prospects

Romania is located at the Eastern border of the European Union and offers a tourism potential that is especially attractive, considering at least the following arguments:

- the Romanian tourism potential represents – for the majority of Western tourists – a great unknown, something that is less talked about, due mainly to, on the one hand, the names in sports, art, music and literature that have brought us fame, and, on the other hand, to the less desirable „fame” brought to us by beggars, prostitutes and the gangs that rob banks and cause trouble abroad. Can this perception change? There is only one answer: YES! Change can be brought about through an effort of thinking and through will to act, through establishing feasible objectives and persevering in the actual realisation of the actions initiated. We can offer originality through the tourism products we are so accustomed with as not to appreciate them to their full potential, but which foreigners discover and value greatly, by which they are pleasantly surprised and on the subject which they drew our attention to the fact that we have treasures we don't know about and we don't know how to make them known to the rest of the world. In order to move out of the strictly theoretical, I would like to point to a few of the jewels Romanian tourism has, but is not promoting properly:

- the most densely inhabited mountains in Europe, which can be visited year-round, with a less polluted environment, but in danger of being degraded by the unchecked and irrational exploitation of sub-alpine forests;

- the country with the most mineral water sources with exceptional therapeutic properties;

- an area with endemic natural environment, century-old forests, caves and salt mines, areas with naturally ionised air – very rare in Europe – hills with potential for turning into ski slopes, renowned vineyards, original folklore and diversity in ethnography etc.

The international touristic demand registered a diminution tendency due to some causes such as the relatively low level of the touristic services, the touristic program nondiversification, the reduced amusement possibilities. The official satisfactions regarding the external touristic circulation offer data whose relevance is relative as they register

also the persons who practice frontier traffic.

The tourism industry is one of the main driving forces of the global economy, playing an important role in regional and tourism destinations development. A successful tourism activity can generate significant external exchanges, population employment and many opportunities for local communities. However, despite the benefits, mass tourism has a negative long-term impact, causing environmental and socio-cultural degradation. In the process of finding solutions to balance the negative and positive effects of mass tourism, ecotourism, a symbiosis between environmental conservation and the maintenance of tourism as a profit-generating industry has been developed.

Two categories of tourism activity can be delimited. First, there is mass tourism that represents the activity of a large group of people looking for a replica of their own culture in an organized setting. In other words, mass tourism is the traditional travel in which tourists are visiting places that have a certain link with their culture (the same country or a similar country). The second form of tourism is called alternative tourism, representing tourism activity carried out in a sustainable manner. Ecotourism is one of the socially and environmentally benign alternative forms of tourism, representing, according to The International Ecotourism Society, that form of responsible tourism carried out in natural areas that protects the environment and improves the living standards of the local population.

Ecotourism is that segment of the tourism industry that attracts environmental conscious individuals, having a low impact on the environment and at the same time contributing to local economic activity. Also, ecotourism is a sustainable alternative to mass tourism involving:

- Traveling to a natural area with a traditional culture;
- Profit reinvested in local environmental protection activity and in the involvement of the local population;
- Assimilation of the principles of biodiversity conservation by the local population and tourists by minimizing the impact of visitors and promoting the education of tourists;
- Visiting relatively protected natural areas to enjoy nature.

Since the 1980s, ecotourism has become one of the fastest-growing segments in the tourism

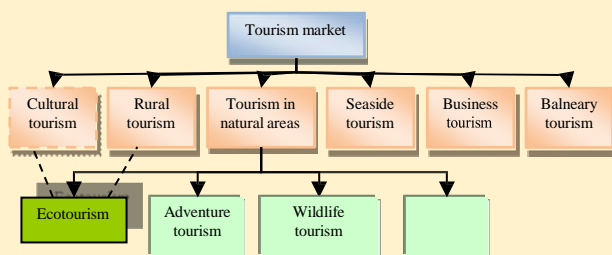
industry with an annual growth rate of 5%, reaching 5-10% of the global tourism market<sup>1</sup>. The main principles underpinning ecotourism are represented by:

- Non-destructive use;
- Protecting and restoring biodiversity;
- Promoting environmentally sustainable development;
- Education and awareness;
- Direct economic benefits for the local population, combating poverty;

Health and well-being for all parties involved.

Figure 1 shows how ecotourism integrates into the wider tourism market. Thus, ecotourism is a segment of tourism carried out in natural areas alongside adventure tourism, camping and wildlife tourism. In addition, ecotourism is linked to cultural and rural tourism, distinguishing itself to a certain extent from tourism developed in natural areas.

Figure no. 1. The place of ecotourism within the tourism market



Among the ecotourism activities we can include:

- adventure activities such as rafting, canoeing, equestrian tourism on pre-arranged routes, bicycle trips on arranged trails, etc.);
- guided trips/hikes;
- trips for nature (flora, fauna) observation;
- trips for nature conservation activities;
- trips to local communities (visiting cultural objectives and traditional farms, watching traditional cultural events, eating traditional food, buying traditional non-food products etc.).

Activities that are carried out in nature but have a clear negative impact on the natural or socio-cultural environment cannot be considered as being ecotouristic activities. Ecotourism focuses on local culture, wildlife adventure, volunteering, personal development, and the assimilation of a new way of living on this vulnerable planet.

Ecotourism is not a marketing plan and it is not a scenic journey in nature, it is an approach that

creates a variety of high-quality tourism products, environmentally friendly or environmentally sustainable, economically viable and socially and psychologically acceptable.

The ecotourism product varies between two extremes, represented on the one hand by products focused on various elements of an ecosystem, such as the wolves of the Zarnesti reservation or the bison within the various reserves in Romania (Slivut-Hateg Bison Reserve, "Valea Zimbrilor" Bison Reserve etc.), and on the other hand, by products covering the whole ecosystem from a certain area (holistic products).

Romania's ecotourism potential is significant if we take into consideration the fact that our country is the only European country in which 5 (alpine, continental, panonic, steppe and pontic) of the 11 European biogeographical regions can be found, the (still!) low level of natural resources exploitation compared to other European regions, 47% of the country's territory is represented by natural and semi- natural ecosystems with a great diversity of flora and fauna reflected by the 783 identified types of habitats in 261 analysed areas across the country with 3700 plant species, of which 23 are declared nature monuments, 39 are endangered, 171 are vulnerable and 1,253 are rare together with 33,792 species of animals. In Romania there are 28 major protected natural areas of national interest represented by the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, 13 national parks and 14 natural parks, the total area of protected natural surface in Romania (excluding Natura 2000 sites) covering over 7% of the terrestrial area of the country. Along with the natural environment, Romania benefits from a rich original and authentic ethnographic and folkloric potential.

Despite the important tourism potential represented by various natural resources and the cultural heritage of our country, ecotourism is still under-exploited due to poor local cooperation, poor development of infrastructure for ecotourism activities carried out in the protected areas, poor promotional activities, rather limited and undiversified offer, poor staff training in the field, etc. In addition, ecotourism is an area almost unknown to Romanian travel agencies.

Forecasting studies show that in 2020 there will be 1.5 billion international tourism travels and Central and Eastern Europe will exceed the volume of tourism services in Western Europe. In this

respect, strategic investments in tourism are being made in Romania, concentrated mainly in the Prahova Valley and Poiana Braşov, on the Black Sea coast and in the Danube Delta. Business development in tourism will, however, depend on the quality of the natural environment, representing a priority for managers and marketers from tourism companies.

And if we take into account the World Tourism Organization's forecasts on tourism trends within the timeframe spanning up to 2020, according to which the number of tourists concerned about environmental protection will increase, we can consider ecotourism to have a spectacular evolution during the next period. Taking this into consideration, we can conclude that studying tourists' behaviour should be considered an extremely important activity by ecotourism operators. By understanding the reasons and their impact on the intentions of ecotourists, operators can develop better offers for specific tourists' needs, and at the same time manage more effectively the relationship between product development and the environment of the ecotourism destination. Also, beyond sightseeing, opportunities for other forms of ecotourism support can be identified, such as volunteering and making donations. And last but not least, consumers can be persuaded to choose an eco-tourism product through adequate promotion.

### **Ecotourists and their behaviour**

According to specialists, the most important feature of ecotourism and, by extension, of ecotourists, is the protection of natural resources. Ecotourism emphasizes on the sustainable development of the environment and a responsible behaviour towards the environment is a mechanism for environmental conservation. The environmentally responsible behaviour of tourists contributes to limiting or preventing the destruction of the environment. Thus, behaviours such as volunteering within an environmental conservation association, adherence to ecotourism principles, and consumption of local products can give us an idea of who is a "true" ecotourist and who is not. Ecotourists are those tourists who are guided in the travel choices and their participation in those trips by the principles of ecotourism. The current ecotourist cherishes nature and a clean environment, and at the same time understands the local population and its

culture. The ecotourist has a sustainable lifestyle even when traveling.

Ecotourists are individuals who show increased intellectual curiosity and seek to enjoy in depth the experience offered by the destination, being, according to some studies, mainly women, having a medium age and a high level of education and income. Also, the ecotourist is an experienced, more aware and active traveller in terms of environmental protection preferring individual tourism or in groups of up to 25 people and low-capacity accommodation. Ecotourists are individuals who visit a natural area with the intention to observe, learn and experience nature. There are also opinions that argue that ecotourists can be divided into two groups: "born ecotourists" and "made ecotourists". "Born ecotourists" are those visitors who have an internal predisposition to in-kind travels, while "made ecotourists" are those visitors who are not familiar with this type of tourism but can be involved in ecotourism through an effective marketing activity. This classification points to the fact that even tourists unfamiliar with ecotourism can participate in eco-trips and can thus be called eco-tourists. In addition, the likelihood of identifying themselves with the concept of ecotourism will increase.

Experts in the field even argue that there is little evidence to suggest that the notion of ecotourist is qualitatively different from that of a mass tourist in terms of motivation to choose ecotourism over other forms of tourism.

### **MARKETING STRATEGIES IN ROMANIAN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY**

The adopted marketing strategies must presuppose regaining the touristic market which has been lost in 1980-1989: Germany, France, Belgium, Holland, USA, Canada etc. Nowadays the major touristic reasons which attract the foreign tourists in Romania are The Black Sea, The Carpathians, business activities, cultural-historical circuits (such as the monasteries from Bukovina). Without any fiscal facilities, without an aggressive provocation, without quality services, without a modern infrastructure, the Romanian tourism remains a perpetual chance. It is certain that for Romania tourism represents a great opportunity which must be exploited at the beginning of the third millennium.

One of the possible ways of tourism relaunching constitutes the elaboration of some efficient

marketing strategies and politics starting from a marketing environment analysis. This must presuppose:

- the rise of the services quality level offered to tourists especially for the services where it is required their diversification;
- the enlargement of the Romanian tourism agencies supplies in order to succeed in drawing the attention of a greater number of tourists; this is how the focus will be on the introduction or the conception of some touristic products to correspond to the motivational tourist profile;
- re-dimensioning the connection between the service quality and their price such as to be justified all the taxes;
- the intensification of the touristic products and actions of service promotion choosing modern ways to promote like the Internet; this is how the possibility of tourist information on the touristic services is created.

Unfortunately, as a Horwath British firm specialized in consultancy has pointed out, Romania is for the foreign tourists “an expired touristic product, an inadequate offer for time spending, which reflects the lack of investment.” (Nedelea, 2003). Thus, Romania has reached an expensive touristic destination.

The National Authority of Tourism has established a series of strategical objectives at the national level:

- the improvement and the touristic product consolidation in those areas, stations, localities, which are the most familiar for the Romanian and foreign tourists and where there is already a certain structure;
- the development and modernization of the touristic product in such a way that Romania would distinguish itself from another countries;
- the rise of the standard level of services in accordance to the touristic category and the used payment.

Therefore, we can adopt four main types strategies of the Romanian touristic product:

I. As far as the differentiation strategy is concerned, we believe that it is recommended to have as a starting point the originality through which the Romanian tourism must be characterized without being able to compete with the experienced countries. In order to confer originality to the touristic products we recommend the combination of the circuits and

sejours in the mountain area with those from the Danube Delta, Bukovina, Maramureş, the Black Sea, the balneoclimatelic stations, the centre of Transylvania, the monasteries area in the north of Oltenia etc.

II. Adopting a diversification strategy in the hospitality industry in Romania presupposes the demand satisfaction of more tourist segments by conceiving some varied touristic activities and forms. If we take into consideration the varied and complex character of the native touristic potential we consider that the following could be particular touristic products: the seaside sejour, the mountain and cultural circuits the rural tourism, ecotourism (the green tourism), the business tourism, the sports practising tourism, and other sports and activities, the scientific tourism etc.

III. As far as the quality growth strategy we could mention the existence of the Q Mark Application National Program which has criteria allowing the full quality measure and of all factors which can assure a high degree of client satisfaction.

The recommended system has in view the valorification of some associations from the hospitality industry to promote quality marks. In order to become members of such an association the operator should respect a certain quality standard. The association will have to respect a certain quality standard. Its members will own a quality mark which will certify the existence of a certain standard. That association will also have the role to promote this mark and the touristic structures.

### Tourism in Romania

Type of tourism	Short presentation
<b>Black Sea Coast</b>	Accommodation structures represent 40% of the entire accommodation offer in Romania, and this type of tourism represents 25% of the total request. Most of the buildings here are built in the early '70s.
<b>Tourism for treatment and wellness</b>	Romania has over 70 watering areas, 20 destined to international tourism. The international request decreased in the past few years and the standards are also insufficient for international



	markets (except for some new spa and wellness centres as Bazna )
<b>Winter sports tourism</b>	The most well-known tourism areas for winter sports are Poiana Brasov (Brasov), Sinaia/Platoul Bucegi (Prahova, Dimbovita), Busteni/Babele (Prahova, Dimbovita) and Pestera/Padina (Dimbovita). As second important areas, mostly visited by Romanian tourists, we mention: Stina de Vale (Bihor), Borsa (Maramures), Semenic and Muntele Mic (Caras Severin), Păltinis and Bilea Nord (Sibiu), Predeal (Brasov) and Lacu Rosu (Harghita).
<b>Mass tourism / road trips to main cultural attractions (organized through tour operators from Romania or abroad)</b>	The main themes promoted for foreign tourists are: cultural tourism, pilgrimage (monasteries from Neamt and Suceava counties). These destinations are included in itinerant trips that depart from Bucharest, the Black Sea Coast or Transylvania (to the cities and to the fortified churches).
<b>Business tourism</b>	Bucharest has the best infrastructure for this kind of programs that combine the business activity (events, seminars, conferences) with tourism.
<b>Active tourism (off road, hunting and fishing, trekking, mountain biking etc.)</b>	Most of active tourism programs are organized in the mountains and the Danube Delta.

Romania has all the natural conditions to become one of the most important European tourism destinations. The most visited regions are: the Black Sea Coast, Bucharest, Prahova Valley (Sinaia, Busteni, Azuga, Predeal), Poiana Brasov, Moldavia and Bucovina Monasteries from Neamt and Suceava counties, wooden churches - Maramures, Danube Delta, Bran (Dracula Castle), medieval cities (Brasov, Sighisoara, Sibiu, Medias,

Deva, Cluj, Alba-Iulia), watering resorts (Baile Felix, Baile Herculane, Baile Tusnad, Calimanesti-Caciulata, Olanesti, Sovata, Vatra-Dornei, Eforie Nord etc.), a lot of caves.

The main destinations for the foreign tourists are the Black Sea Coast, the Carpathian Mountains, the wellness resorts and the destinations for business tourism.

### Ecotourism in Romania/ Discover Eco-Romania



There are spectacular areas in Romania that are worth to be discovered! By visiting them, one feels good in the midst of nature, one is introduced to the local culture, still vibrant with vitality, one is offered high-quality local services and products... and they make one's vacation turn into a small "investment" into a local economy that starts to work by integrating nature preservation and local culture in the economic equation through ecotourism.

AER (The Association of Ecotourism in Romania) is a partnership for nature conservation and tourism development in Romania, bringing together tourism associations, non-governmental organizations or projects focused on local development and nature conservation, and tourism agencies. The innovative concept promoted by AER starts from creating a partnership between the public sector and the private sector, empowering all nature conservation actions and contributing to the long-lasting development of ecotourism. The Association's main purpose is to promote the best ecotourism services and destinations in Romania.

The Association of Ecotourism in Romania and its partners invite you to discover 12 destinations where ecotourism becomes the engine for development. These destinations use the innovative concept of ecotourism, combining the attraction of protected areas (e.g. national parks, nature parks or Nature-2000 sites), with the enjoyment of discovering the real lives of traditional local communities. These communities are encouraged to develop family businesses in tourism (e.g. guesthouses and guiding) and to use local products. In this way, the destinations begin to develop a unified tourism identity, using images of nature and the local communities. Thus, respect for nature and the local people becomes the essential value of local development, both for the business sector and for the local administration.

The status of Ecotourism Destination is officially granted by the National Tourism Authority (ANT) following an evaluation according to criteria developed on the basis of international expertise in the field of ecotourism. For 10 years, the Association of Ecotourism in Romania has been supporting the development and promotion of various micro-regions in Romania, by applying the ecotourism destination model. Two destinations are already officially recognised by ANT, and the others are currently undergoing the necessary measures in order to fulfil the requirements for nomination as ecotourism destinations.

### To do's in marketing regarding eco-tourists' behavior

The communication strategy includes communication approaches with key messages, means of communication, information, engagement and interaction with the target groups. Determining the effective communication channels of the right messages is the result of the analyses carried out in the exploratory part of the previous activities.

A special relationship with the tour operators and travel agents is foreseen, because they are an important channel as they still have the greatest impact on the tourist market.

The marketing applied in the field of ecotourism falls within the category of **social marketing**, given that in practice this approach is an attempt to mediate between tourists' preferences and the long-term interests of the host community.

In the advertising strategy, different channels and tools are available to advertise the route, which in turn will also popularize individual sites and settlements, part of it. The advertising strategy framework will identify the possible channels for interacting with potential target groups. Appropriate advertising tools and channels for promotion of the ecotourism are:

- PR, information and promotional materials and publications in regional, national and European media; Regular publications on the advantages of the route throughout its development; Invitations to journalists to visit and report; Segmenting the media and selecting the most appropriate ones in which to publish information;
- Participation in tourist fairs and exhibitions, mainly on European tourist fairs;
- Direct Marketing - E-mail - and with a personalized message and opportunity to subscribe to a regular newsletter; Using the services of a specialized marketing agency that has a database and direct marketing;
- Specialized magazines - articles and advertising pages with the ability to precisely address target audiences;
- Brochure and flyer advertising - distribution in accommodation locations
- Outdoor advertising
- Radio advertising in local
- Digital positioning among potential tourists;

Recommended sites are:

<http://www.aboutromania.com> (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.rotur.ro> (only Romanian language)

<http://www.incdt.ro> (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.deepinside.ro> - (only Romanian language)

<http://www.romturism.ro> - (only Romanian language)

<http://www.romaniatourism.ro> (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.romaniatravel.com> (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.infotourism.ro> (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.infotravelromania.ro> (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.turism.ro> (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.pensiunituristice.com> (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.mara-tour.ro> - Mara International Tour Travel Agency (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.alpinet.org> - mountain guide

(ROM+ENG)

<http://www.mountainguide.ro> (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.skiresorts.ro> (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.sportextrem.ro> (only Romanian language)

<http://www.paragliding.ro> (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.turismaventura.ro> -mountain adventure tourist program (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.escalada.go.ro> -present some of the climbing areas in Romania (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.romaniaclimb.com> (English version)

<http://www.xsports.ro> (only Romanian language) – extreme sports

<http://www.agrotour.ro> - rural tourism (English version)

<http://www.rural-tourism.ro> - (only Romanian language)

<http://www.rural-center.org> - The Center for Rural Assistance (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.ruraltourism.ro> - (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.speologie.ro> - speleology - (only Romanian language)

<http://srsc.speologie.ro> - The Romanian Speology

<http://www.frspeo.ro> - The Romanian Federation of Speology (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.eco-romania.ro> -The Initiative Group for Ecotourism (English version)

<http://www.aqmr.go.ro> - Romanian Association of Mountain Guides (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.discoveromania.ro> - travel company specialising in rural and ecological tourism (English version)

<http://www.apuseniexperience.ro> - Experiences in Apuseni Mountains

<http://www.retezat.ro> – Retezat National Park (only Romanian language)

<http://www.riding-holidays.ro> -equestrian tourism in Transylvania (English version)

<http://www.clcp.ro> - The Carpathian Large Carnivore Project (English version)

<http://www.roumanie-ecotourisme.com> - (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.deltadunarii.ro> - The Danube Delta (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.pronatura.ro> - Association for Action in Protected Areas (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.ecologie-sport-turism.ro> – Ecologie-

Sport-Tourism Association (only Romanian language)

<http://www.escapeecotours.com> – Escape Eco-tours (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.carpat-events.ro> - Off road in Romania (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.zalmoxisaventura.com> - Eco tourism Agency (English version)

<http://albamont.greenagenda.org> - The Ecologist and Mountain Touring Club Albamont (ROM+ENG)

<http://www.nnv.ro> - Nord Vest Travel Agency (ROM+ENG)

In the category of tools and strategies commonly used to boost sustainable tourism consumption, such as eco-tourism, we can usually find rewards, eco-certification, awareness and educational campaigns.

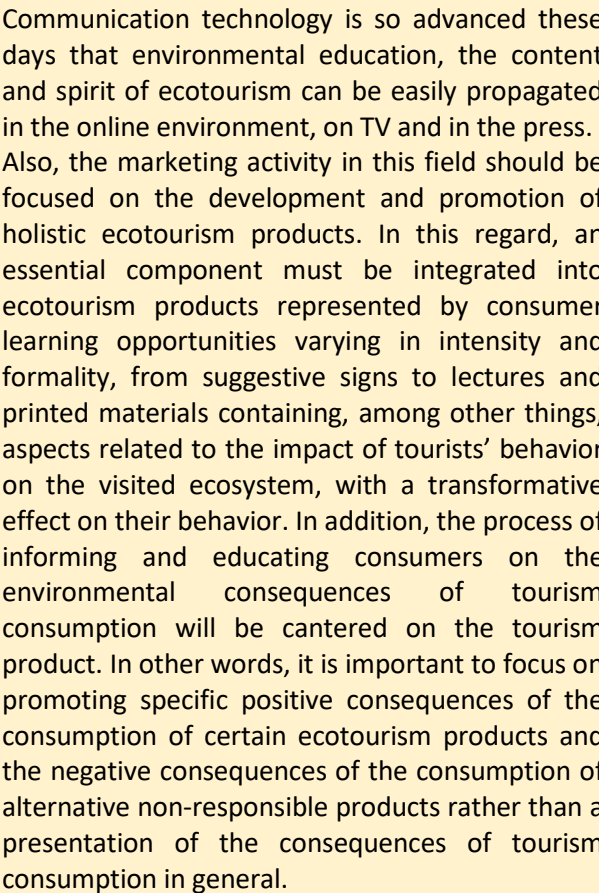
&



The success of marketing in ecotourism is reflected not by the number of tourists visiting a particular destination but by the level of consumer satisfaction and their intention to return in the future.

Information is essential for the success of the ecotourism industry. In order to choose the destination to which they want to go and the various services they wish to purchase (accommodation, transport, activities and routes, etc.) consumers need information. On the other hand, in order to develop a sustainable tourism-oriented consumer behavior, organizations from various relevant sectors need to carry out a sustained marketing activity aimed at educating the public on environmental conservation and ecotourism.





participation intentions of ecotourists. Travel guides should be considered key intermediaries between ecotourists and the environment, having a significant role in shaping consumer behavior.



The real challenge for eco-tourism marketing is not primarily to develop a strategy to attract as many tourists as possible, but rather to educate tourists in the spirit of responsible consumption, consumption that follows the principles of sustainable development. To this end, it is necessary to introduce elements such as guided activities, leisure facilities development, maintenance of destination's environmental quality and providing an authentic ecological experience.

Also, the ultimate goal of any tourism marketing activity should be to protect the environment of the tourist destination through a positive interaction between all involved, resource managers, tour operators, local population and tourists.

**Green tourism**, or ecotourism, is focuses on activities that respect the environment. Laetitia Santos, editor-in-chief of the sites Babel Voyages and Voyages pour la planète, says that “France is very active in ecotourism, thanks to the great variety of its landscapes and its many labelled accommodation options and committed agencies. In recent years, the growth of the sector has been between 10 and 20% annually.”

Green tourism attracts both foreign visitors and French travellers as, according to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), 56% are prepared to pay more for environmentally friendly holidays. The WTO also says that, of the 173 million annual



stays in France, 50 million are in protected natural spaces (national parks and nature reserves).

### **Eco-friendly transport**

In concrete terms, “green holidays” start with transport. Tourist travel accounts for 6% of France’s greenhouse gas emissions, or 30 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year. The aim is therefore to prefer eco-friendly transport, such as cycle paths and greenways. The 800km La Loire à Vélo tour, for example, is one of the most remarkable cycle routes. It follows the valley of France’s longest river; whose banks are an inexhaustible mine of natural and architectural treasures. More than 800,000 cyclists, a third from abroad, take the route each year.

### **Eco-friendly accommodation**

Labels also exist for accommodation, such as the Hôtels au naturel eco-label and La Clé verte. To be eligible for these labels, hospitality establishments must notably meet criteria for optimal water usage and strict pollution limits.

The Accueil paysan association attracts tourists who want to combine self-catering accommodation and farm visits. Hosts share their know-how and knowledge with holidaymakers, as well as seasonal local produce, because ecotourism is also a matter of food!

### **A great variety of offer**

Firstly, there are national and regional parks. In 2017, visits to these sites led to 12 million stays in France, totalling 86 million nights.

Tourists can also choose labelled sites, such as Pavillon bleu beaches, municipalities with the Station verte label, which promote nature tourism, and ski stations with a sustainable development charter.

In recent years, sustainable development industry actors have also proposed an offer whose success is undeniable: donkey-trekking, which is very popular amongst families with children.

Green tourism is therefore an innovative sector, involving local stakeholders and promoting the sustainable economic development of their territories. This is an absolutely necessary commitment.

### **Industry figures**

- 50 million stays per year
- 280 million nights in accommodation
- Annual growth of 10% - 20%

St. Anne stands out in the landscape of Martinique by its commitment to ecology and environmental protection. The municipal team that arrived at the helm of the city in 1989 is mainly composed of environmental activists who led major battles for the safeguarding of natural and historical heritage of Martinique in the ASSAUPAMAR (an environmental group very committed politically). This situation is somewhat paradoxical, because the commune of Sainte-Anne is the most touristic of the island. There was a reaction from the local population who refused to get overwhelmed by tourism development that would asphyxiate its living space.

Since 1995, the municipality has initiated a reflection for the development of a sustainable and inclusive development plan (PMA) in Sainte-Anne to undertake sustainable development projects likely to support the economy and employment while respecting the identity of the place and protecting natural areas. Indeed, the uncontrolled urbanization has led to a diffusion of individual homes, often with a tourist function (secondary residence or various locations) to the detriment of the fragile ecosystem. The territory of St. Anne, open to the Atlantic coast (west coast) and the canal of Dominica and the Marin Bay (southern and eastern coasts), identifies four ZNIEFF (Zone naturelle d’intérêt écologique faunistique et floristique - natural area of ecological interest for fauna and flora) three APB (Arrêté de Protection de Biotope - Biotope Protection Order), four natural reserves, a bird sanctuary and the only RAMSAR site of Martinique. The issues around the environment and biodiversity protection are fundamental in this county which is home to the most popular beaches of Martinique, foremost among them the Salines beach (with nearly 2.5 million visitors per year, it is the third most visited natural monument of France).

Of the twenty-five most visited beaches of Martinique, twelve are located on the only commune of Sainte-Anne. The tourism and real estate is a considerable pressure on this territory which is fundamental for the natural heritage of the entire Martinique. Since 2001, the town of Sainte-Anne has implemented its PDDS (emphasizing the solidarity dimension too often neglected in the policies of "sustainable development"). In 2003, St. Anne launches First

Agenda 21 for Martinique in the continuity of PDSS. Actions involving social, economic, cultural and environmental dimensions and requirements are defined and supported financially within the framework of this strategic thinking Agenda 21. This consultation led at the heart of the local community, led the following year, 2004, to the definition of an environment Charter of the town of Sainte-Anne. Tourism is of course at the heart of the concern, as an economic sector likely to support the development of the commune and as a factor of degradation of natural resources.

As part of the Environmental Charter and Agenda 21, the local community opts for diversifying its economy. This involves favouring several economic niches likely to support the local economy and develop synergies between business sectors. Thus, the program aims to support local agriculture, through small farms that favour a sustainable approach, both in breeding and citrus production, positioning itself on the organic market. In this context, wetlands (see photo 8) are rehabilitated that disappear under the influence of urbanization. Now, besides the richness of their environment, they prove to be valuable outlets when it comes to absorbing the brutal rains that flood the town. The artisanal fishing sector has also helped in connection with the requests of some small local restaurants; the municipality is working to provide premises for commercial purposes in very favourable terms to support the activity of the village and local employment. Seasonal rentals are networked and promoted by the town. Agritourism, as a form of farm activities' diversification is also included in an integrated tourism approach stimulating the networking of local producers.

The hotel occupies the peninsula of Point Marin at the end of the Bay of Marin. This former mangrove area replanted with coconut trees is particularly exposed to coastal erosion that requires a regular reloading of its beach with sand that opens to the Diamond Rock; this is a must-postcard landscape for the tourist crossing to Martinique.

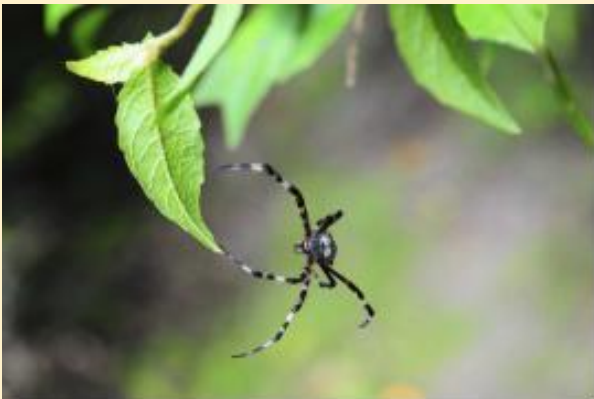
### Presqu'île de la Caravelle



Formed more than 10 million years ago, the peninsula of Caravelle is, with that of Sainte-Anne, the oldest part of Martinique. Located on the Atlantic coast, it forms a break of about ten kilometres in the ocean. Its end is now a protected nature reserve which depends on the Regional Natural Park of Martinique. Due to this advanced situation it is significantly less watered than the rest of the island and has a special ecosystem of dry forest. The diversity of its landscapes is absolutely remarkable. The large Caravelle trail that makes the complete tour of the reserve starts with a nice stony forest road that is quite shady. The slope is light but steady and we progress quickly towards the highest point of the route, the Lighthouse of Caravelle (157m) dating from 1862, reached at the price of a last portion of much higher rise. The 360 ° panorama is magnificent and the orientation table makes it possible to quickly identify the visible places with in particular in the foreground the Bay of the Treasure, just below, or definitely further the Mountain Pelée, the Mountain of Vauclin, the cliffs from Basse Pointe or the Loup Garou islet ...

The hike continues by briefly returning on its steps then by turning right towards the Weather Station. After 700m descent in a straight line we leave the tarmac road (closed to traffic) for the coastal path that goes on the right. The landscape then changes radically, and one discovers a cut, tormented coast, beaten by the powerful waves of the ocean. The Candlesticks and Greenwood handles that follow one another allow to admire the seabirds that nest in the cliffs. The trail then rises through the Recumbent Woods - shrubs that owe their name to their curved form, shaped by the wind - to reach the summit of the Caracoli

Point (90m). After admiring the view again, we start a fast descent towards the Baie du Trésor. The trail then follows the seaside while remaining undergrowth for 800m before turning right to get around the mangrove. It is then possible to deviate a little and to join in a few steps a small wild beach where the water is particularly calm. A stop really appreciable after 2 hours of walking. The route that continues along the edge between the dry forest and the mangrove can observe many crabs as well as terrestrial hermit crabs. Beware of the few mancenilliers on the course ...



The last segment of the hike climbs into the forest before joining the road at the entrance of Chateau Dubuc. From this point a final 500m climb is still waiting for the walkers before arriving at the departure car park.

### THE NATURAL RESERVE OF THE CARAVELLE

Located in the territory of the municipality of Trinité, after Tartane, the Natural Reserve of Caravelle is managed by the Regional Natural Park.



### Geology

The peninsulas of St. Anne and Caravelle are two reliefs emerged from the ancient arc. In both cases, it is the accumulation of materials (ash and lava blocks) constituting the basic complex. These very altered formations could belong to the Miocene or the Oligocene. This conglomerate is intersected by faults and dykes sometimes elbow resulting from a double network of fractures N-S and E-W. Alongside these formations that are gradually emerging, coral formations develop around these highlands. This volcanic activity is interrupted by periods of lulls, marked by hydrothermalism which sets up a procession of minerals: jasper, chalcedony, silicified wood, zeolites, barite, quartz. This hydrothermal and fumarolic activity is a reflection of the in-depth presence of uncooled magmatic masses. The lands crossed by the hot waters enriched with iron oxides and magnesium take ochre, white or purple tints.

Later, the resumption of volcanic activity builds the peaks of the Caravelle such as the Morne Pavillon. These formations constitute the last eruptive episodes of the Caravelle. It will be relayed by the volcanism of Vauclin.

Uprisings carry altitudes of reef formations up to nearly 70 m.

### Climate

The nature reserve of the peninsula of Caravelle presents on 388 ha a pallet of landscapes characteristic of the Martinican nature: herbaceous savannas, dry forests, mangroves, thickets, flora of the cliffs and forests of back beach. Originally dry tropical forest, the Caravelle was largely deforested to be cultivated then underwent a natural plant recolonization.





The tip of the Caravelle receives the lowest annual rainfall of the island. Swept by the trade winds, the undeveloped reliefs offer no dam to the clouds. The rainfall hardly exceeds 1.50 m per year. These climatic conditions favoured only the installation of a xerophytic vegetation and stunted on the coast against the winds.



Not far from there stand, in a beautiful setting, the remains of the castle Dubuc, an old sugar house of the eighteenth century today classified as historical monuments. In addition to a beautiful view of the Treasure Bay, there is a small museum devoted to the history of places.

## Conclusions

Ecotourism is involved in a reinterpretation of resources and allows undertaking a new territorial planning: it promotes the dissemination of tourism practices towards the inland, on the mountains; in the forest... Ecotourism will not replace seaside tourism but is meant to reorganize tourism in small island territories.

Host communities experiment new tourism products, with different approaches, with other relationships related to the host. The involvement of local populations and the redistribution of tourism income to the benefit of local communities are the two essential aspects of the project. This approach places the "encounter" in the core of the tourist experience. The idea is not to set a too rigid framework that would discourage the initiatives of local actors who offer alternative products. It is rather meant to stimulate the imagination and initiatives of host populations who offer their own integrated-tourism services in their living environment. In this scope, beyond the "ecotourism" denomination, these approaches better match the integrated-tourism practices to the host territory and societies, as part of a sustainable development approach.

The host territory is no longer seen only as an available support to host any kind of tourist consumption. Ecotourism is thus at the core of an endogenous development and becomes one of the unifying themes that mobilizes various local actors (farmers, fishermen, merchants, hosting providers, artists ...) in a sustainable development approach.

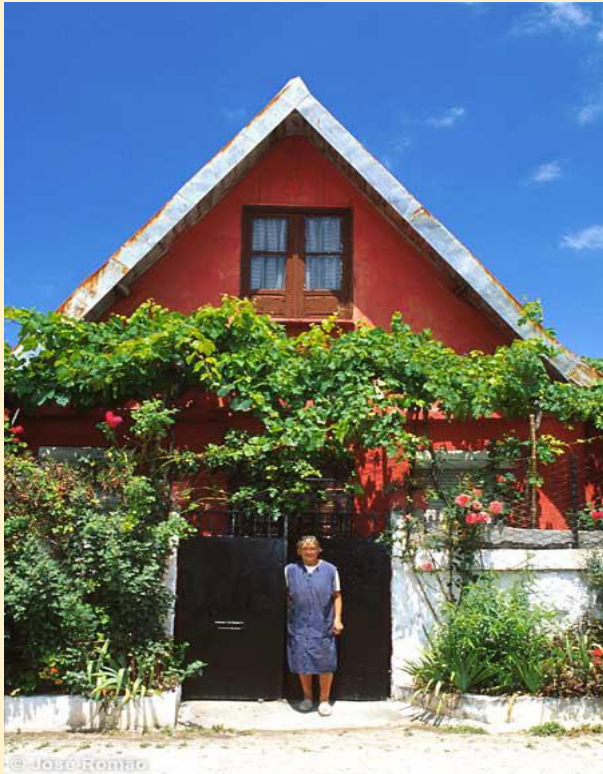
### 1.4 Portugal

#### Environmental Preservation:

In the context of the globalization process, Tourism in general has been a sector and instrument of particular relevance, having always been present in the formulation, elaboration and execution of many economic, social and cultural policies of several countries.

The desired balance between human activity, development and protection of the environment requires a fair and clearly defined distribution of responsibilities with regard to consumption and behavior towards natural resources. This implies the integration of environmental considerations into the formulation and implementation of

economic and sectoral policies, the decisions of public authorities, the operation and development of production processes, and individual behaviours and choices. It also implies the existence of real dialogue and collaboration between partners.



In addition to the growing concern with the conservation and management of resources, certification of the tourism sector also comes from the existence of a "new tourist", who selects his vacation destination based on environmental and social criteria. Although tourism linked to nature was already a rule, ecotourism came to link some differences, especially with regard to the attitude of the tourist. The growing demand for tourism experiences in relatively intact natural environments has made Ecotourism become the segment of the international tourism market with the highest growth rates. The concept emerged in the 80's, associated with a certain type of specialized trips and linked to nature. It has become a desired label and is currently used by numerous tour operators. On the consumer side (the ecotourist) there is a desire to learn about the destination visited, especially about the environmental, cultural, historical and related issues.

At the national level policies increasingly converge to this concept, Portugal's tourism integrates

nature tourism into its offer and is one of the anchor products.

At the regional level there is also a growing concern for ECOTOURISM, since it allows the design of an activity that promotes the sustainability of local populations and the environment.

At the local level, Arcos de Valdevez, is part of an immense natural territory that promotes sustainable and environmentally friendly tourism. Throughout this chapter we will refer to this behavior.

### Promotion of the Country

#### Tourism strategy

Portugal is one of the most required countries in the world, so, its image abroad is extremely positive. This image is built at the expense of a lot of work around the promotion of the country and the emergence of several quality hotels. Allied to these factors contribute the immense natural heritage that our country presents giving increase to a huge diversity of landscapes. This natural heritage allows the development of ecotourism, an expanding sector.

The 2027 Tourism Strategy intends to position Portugal as one of the most competitive, innovative and sustainable tourist destinations in the world, a reference in the production of goods and services for tourism worldwide, a country where work is valued and where capital is invested human.

A destination to visit, invest, live, study, investigate and create companies. The goal is to make Portugal the leader of tourism of the future, affirming destiny as a hub for economic, social and environmental development.

With the definition of lines of action, operationalized through concrete actions aimed at the short / medium term, a tourism development is based on the conservation and enhancement of the country's natural and cultural heritage, with a widespread search throughout the territory and throughout the year.

By 2027, the goals of this strategic benchmark aims to increase tourist revenues to 26 million euros and from overnight stays to 80 million euros.

In this strategy, the contribution of nature tourism was not forgotten, which finds in the country a growing demand, driven by a new tourism mentality that is growing around the

world, Ecotourism.

To this end, the work of Turismo de Portugal is based on five strategic axes:

### **Territory value**

Increasing the enjoyment of the historical and cultural heritage, preserving its authenticity, promoting urban regeneration, economically enhancing the natural and rural heritage, affirming tourism in the sea economy and structuring tourism supply are some of the objectives of this Hub.

Examples of this are specific programs to support the valorisation and qualification of the destination, such as the Valorize and Revive Programs, as well as Lines for Support to Inland Tourism, Affordable Tourism and Wi-Fi Projects in Historical Centres.

In terms of sustainability, Turismo de Portugal develops, with national and international partners, a set of measures for the sector, such as the Sustainability Support Line (financing for initiatives that promote social and environmental sustainability in tourism), the ALL for ALL inclusive tourism program, the Portuguese Waves (sustainable beaches management project 'surf spots'), the Portuguese Trails (enhancement and sustainability of the Cycling and Walking anchor lines of the tourist regions), the Sustainable Tourism Observatory of Alentejo and other partnerships with NGOs to promote the environmental awareness of the agents of the sector.

More important is the concept of Ecotourism, since it is the tourism activity that develops without altering the balance of the Environment, thus avoiding damaging the nature. It is a trend that seeks to reconcile the tourism industry with the values of environmental sustainability. The valorisation of the territory and its preservation is a line that allows this concept to promote.

### **Boosting the economy**

Corporate competitiveness, simplification, reduction of bureaucracy and reduction of the costs of context, attraction of investment, qualification of supply, entrepreneurship and innovation are absolute priorities in the strategy for the future of tourism.

In this sense, programs are developed to foster a culture of entrepreneurship in the sector, such as the Tourism Program 4.0 - Tourism Innovation

Center, which aims to promote Portugal as a global hub for innovation and digital development in tourism.

Turismo de Portugal, in its own name or in partnership with the entrepreneurial ecosystem, assures incubation programs for startups and new companies that aim to develop business ideas in tourism, such as the Tourism Creative Factory and Open KitchenLabs acceleration programs, developed by the Network of Portuguese Tourism Schools.

Positioning Portugal as a reference country in the production of goods and services for tourism activity on a global scale and an international specialized hub for tourism are ambitious but feasible goals.

Another of the vectors of this strategy is the development of ecotourism to design the national economy.

### **Leverage knowledge**

The objectives of this Axis are the valorisation of the tourism professions, the training of human resources, the training of entrepreneurs and managers, the diffusion of knowledge and information and the affirmation of Portugal as smart destination.

Training in the Portuguese Tourism Schools is an important pillar of action. The qualification of human resources is essential for the consolidation of the competitiveness of tourism, which is why Turismo de Portugal has been adapting the training offer, integrating the requirements and market trends, namely soft skills and communication.

The Portuguese Tourism Schools form more than 3,000 students per year and around 3,800 professionals of this activity, aiming at a growing prestige of the tourist professions. By 2020, Turismo de Portugal wants the 12 Schools to reach the maximum training capacity (4,000 students) and an average employability of 90%, thus stimulating the creation of more jobs and more qualification in the sector and reducing regional asymmetries.

### **Generate networks and connectivity**

The priorities of this Axis are the reinforcement of aerial routes throughout the year, mobility in the territory, strengthening the involvement of society in the process of tourism development, networking and joint promotion among the



various sectors.

In recent years, to promote competitiveness and diversification of markets, new air operations have been developed, which are broad throughout the year, many linked to new destinations, with air capacity increased by almost two million seats.

With the objective of generating new demand and increasing attractiveness, Turismo de Portugal has created a Program for Capturing International Congresses and Corporate Events, through the platform [www.meetingsinportugal.com](http://www.meetingsinportugal.com), which aggregates relevant information about events in Portugal and the revitalization of a Fund for Capturing Events and Congresses.

In terms of thematic products such as surfing, the schedule of international competitions was extended, with Portugal becoming the only country to receive all the World Surf League (WSL) events.

In the field of culture, the program 365 Algarve announces the cultural events between October and May, aims to combat seasonality in this region. Also available is the Portuguese Music Festivals platform that brings together the entire range of national music festivals.

Religious tourism is another of Turismo de Portugal's bets, aimed at increasing flows outside the high season, and attracting tourists from non-traditional markets, making known the resources linked to the main religious manifestations and promoting itineraries associated with the Catholic religion, Jewish and Islamic in Portugal.

In the field of internal tourism, in 2017 the "Put Portugal on the Map" and "Put Portugal on Your Map" campaigns were implemented, which mobilized the Portuguese to share the best of Portugal and become active agents in promoting the country.

Within the scope of nature, the valuation of a set of natural areas and the creation of itineraries that allow activities to develop within these landscapes, following the rules of environmental preservation (Ecotourism), are other of the attractivities of the country.

## PROJECT PORTUGAL

This Axis has as priorities to increase the country's notoriety in international markets, through Turismo de Portugal teams, promoting a destination to visit, invest, live, study, hold major events, positioning tourism as a factor of

competitiveness and development economic.

Turismo de Portugal has 21 Tourism Teams operating in 21 issuing markets, which are considered priorities for external tourist promotion, in which it develops its permanent action of exploration and implementation of its own actions, or in coordination with the Regional Agencies for Tourism Promotion.

In 2017, with the aim of projecting the image of Portugal and increasing its reputation in international markets, the "Can't Skip Portugal" campaign was launched, exclusively in digital media, from 20 strategic markets, being the most viewed campaign ever.

"Can't Skip Facts" is a spin-off of the international tourism campaign, aimed at those looking to invest in Portugal, aggregating the main indicators of the various regions of the country and showing why it is increasingly the companies and entrepreneurs that select Portugal.

The challenge of Turismo de Portugal is to ensure that the tourism sector continues to be one of the most competitive in the world, being one of the goals of the 2027 Tourism Strategy.

Portugal is today an increasingly sought-after destination. The good results of recent years are proof that, with a focused, articulated and joint work with all the agents of the sector - public and private - and clear objectives, tourism has the capacity to be an activity to develop throughout the year, ensuring that the wealth produced extends throughout the country, stimulating innovation and digitalization throughout the value chain of this activity so relevant to the national economy.

We have the conditions to have more and better tourism.



## Portugal (Features)

The mild climate, 3000 hours of sunshine a year and 850 km of splendid beaches bathed by the Atlantic Ocean make Portugal a perfect destination for all seasons, just a few hours' drive

from any European capital.

In this country that has the oldest borders of Europe, there is a great diversity of landscapes within walking distance, many leisure activities and a unique cultural heritage, where tradition and contemporaneity combine in harmony. This is a great destination for developing ecotourism.

The gastronomy, the good wines and the sympathy of the Portuguese complete an offer of quality tourist services, whether for a weekend or for a longer holiday.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

Portugal is situated in the extreme southwest of Europe and includes the archipelagos of Madeira and the Azores in the Atlantic Ocean. In the European continent, the Portuguese territory occupies an area of 88,889 km<sup>2</sup> (218 km wide, 561 km long, 832 km of Atlantic coast and 1,215 km of land border with Spain). Located near the Atlantic Ocean, between the European continent and the North American, the Azores archipelago has an area of 2.355 km<sup>2</sup> and is made up of nine islands - São Miguel and Santa Maria in the Eastern Group, Terceira, Graciosa, São Jorge, Pico and Faial in the Central Group, and Flores and Corvo in the Western Group. The connections with continental Portugal are assured by air, in about 2 hours flight.

The Madeira Archipelago with an area of 741 km<sup>2</sup>, is situated in the Atlantic Ocean about 500 kms from the African coast and 1000 kms from the European continent (1h30 flight to Lisbon). It consists of the islands of Madeira and Porto Santo, and the uninhabited islands of the Desertas and Selvagens (which are Natural Reserve Areas).

## **CLIMATE**

### **Continental Portugal**

The climate in Portugal varies significantly from region to region, and is influenced by the relief, latitude and proximity of the sea, which provides mild winters, especially in the Algarve.

In the areas of Oporto and North and Center, especially in the areas closest to Spain, the winters are colder, although temperatures are moderate when compared with the rest of Europe. There is some snowfall, which is more frequent in Serra da Estrela, where the highest point of mainland Portugal (1991m) is situated and conditions for skiing can be found. The summers are hot and dry mainly in the interior

and coastal regions, the heat is moderated by the maritime influence. During the autumn there are often sunny days with mild temperatures.

### **Azores**

Influenced by the latitude and regulatory action of the Gulf Stream, the climate of the Azores is characterized by mild temperatures throughout the year. These influences also condition the temperature of the sea water, which remains very pleasant both in winter and summer, allowing the practice of various marine sports.

### **Madeira**

With subtropical characteristics due to its geographical position and mountainous relief, the climate in the Madeira archipelago is exceptionally mild, with average air temperatures ranging from 24°C in summer to 19°C in winter. The sea water also maintains a very pleasant temperature throughout the year due to the influence of the hot current of the Gulf, oscillating between 18 °C (winter) and 22 °C (summer).

## **POPULATION**

Portugal has a population of 10,562,178 inhabitants (according to the Census made in 2011).

The highest population density figures are in Lisbon, the capital of the country, and in its surroundings, where about 1.9 million people live. The second largest city in Portugal is Oporto, located in the north of the country. In general, coastal towns have greater human occupation than the interior of the country.

## **RELIGION**

The Portuguese people are mostly Catholic, but the Portuguese Constitution guarantees religious freedom, which reflects in the presence of various cults in Portugal.

## **LANGUAGE**

Of Latin root, Portuguese is spoken by about 250 million people in all the continents, being the fifth most spoken language in the world and the third if we consider only the European languages.

The Portuguese-speaking countries spread throughout the four corners of the world. Portuguese is spoken in Africa (Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique and Sao Tome and Principe) in South America (in Brazil), and in Asia, in Timor-Leste, the youngest country in the world, being an official language in the Macao Special Administrative Region.



In Portugal a good part of the citizens have communication facility in English, French and Castilian.

### Nature Tourism (Protected Areas)



In a small territory, Portugal concentrates a variety of landscapes and species, turning any trip, however small, a pleasure of discovery.

From the imposing mountains to the vast plains, from the endless sandy beaches where the waves melt slowly to the jagged shore bathed by the impetuous ocean, the country has a little of everything.

And there are also the islands of Madeira and the Azores, an oasis of calm and tranquillity in the middle of the Atlantic, with lush vegetation, extinct volcanoes and caves full of natural sculptures.

Wherever you are, we can count on the presence of the sun that shines all year round, making the climate mild, ideal for enjoying nature and the outdoors. Through the site we can observe the policy of promoting the activities that can develop in the nature (ECOTOURISM), although it is only one of the slopes of the existing tourist offer in Portugal. On the site below we can a set of protected areas can be found and allow the development of ecotourism.



### Regional Marketing Strategies



The importance of tourism in the Northern Region has been growing in the last decade, reaching more than 3 million guests and about 5.4 million overnight stays in the tourist enterprises of Porto and Northern Portugal (PNP), to which is added the positive performance of RevPAR (revenue per available room) and the occupancy rate. According to the survey of the profile of international tourists at Sá Carneiro Airport, average consumption in the region reached 872 EUR.

The natural beauty, the location of the destination and the accommodation are the three main reasons indicated for the choice of the region.

The region has at its disposal a set of opportunities to explore, such as the diverse range of natural and heritage resources, the existence of renowned products and brands and the investments that have been made in recent years are also an attraction for the development of rural tourism and ecotourism.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES TO BE ACHIEVED WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TOURIST MARKETING STRATEGY OF THE PNP (PORTO AND NORTH PORTUGAL PROGRAM):

1. Increase the attractiveness of the destination and raise its levels of notoriety.
2. Harmonize and consolidate transversally the quality of supply, enhance and protect natural spaces.
3. Improve tourism indicators and reduce asymmetries, through tourism, in particular ecotourism, which aims to promote a local development source.
4. Encourage a collaborative spirit among stakeholders to adopt an approach aligned to the level of development and promotion of the

destination. The achievement of these objectives presupposes a strategy aligned to different levels, namely: the definition of the portfolio of tourist products available, the identification of bet markets with a greater probability of success and the intended positioning. The marketing strategy of the PNP (Porto and Northern Portugal Program) is based on a policy adjusted to the level of product, price, distribution and communication of the destination.

The operation of the tourism strategy of the PNP (Porto and Northern Portugal Program) includes the implementation of three action programs to be implemented within six years:

- P1: Harmonization and consolidation of tourism
- P2: Communication and notoriety of destiny
- P3: Monitoring of destination and markets. The implementation of the strategic and marketing options to be implemented in the action programs intends to present itself as a process of involvement of the actors and stakeholders of the destination, in favour of a balanced and harmonious development of tourism in the region.

Throughout the territory, the tourist products gain a differentiated prominence, evidencing different levels of priority in the bet and the development in the plan of the sub destinies. Notwithstanding the highlight of one or more tourist products, the wealth of resources offers to each sub region or sub destiny a set of anchor and complementary products that allows the experience of diverse experiences, if the visitor considers in his stay only one of the sub destinies. On the other hand, the complementarity between sub destinies allows the visitor to experience specific experiences and associated with a unique tourist product, making it richer and more comprehensive of the singularity of the territory.

The Tourism Marketing Strategy of Porto and Northern Portugal - Horizonte 2015-2020 was developed based on the extensive analysis of the sector and its dynamics between supply and demand, not only through results and official data, but also of the analysis of the perspective of different stakeholders of the destination. The collection of contributions has thus made strategic and marketing planning a participatory and transparent process. Thanks to all the entities that kindly gave their contributions, such as City Councils, Tour Operators, Tourism Offices, Interactive Tourist Shops, Sector Associations and

other Stakeholders.

### Touristic Offers

#### MINHO

PRODUCTS ANCHOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature (active tourism / Ecotourism)</li> <li>• Cultural and Landscape Touring</li> <li>• Religious Tourism</li> <li>• Nautical Tourism</li> <li>• Gastronomy and Wines</li> <li>• Golf</li> </ul>
COMPLEMENTARY PRODUCTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and wellness</li> <li>• City e Short breaks</li> <li>• Sun and sea</li> </ul>

One of the strategic axes of tourism in the Porto / Norte region, is based on nature tourism (Ecotourism), developing a responsible contact with natural habitats. There is a growing demand for these types of tourism, hence a segment to bet on in the future.

To welcome and satisfy our visitors by providing them with unique, authentic experiences of superior quality while taking into account regional dynamics and social and territorial sustainability. The destination Porto and North of Portugal should provide the visitor with a holistic experience in the region's experience: historical-cultural resources, natural resources, people, infrastructures and characteristic and related services. The development of tourism should contribute to the preservation and improvement of the natural, economic and social environment of the region.

### Local Marketing Strategies

#### Promotion

#### Arcos de Valdevez Town Hall

The town hall of Arcos de Valdevez has one of its main concerns in the environment, as we can see on the website below.

The municipality, aware of its commitment to the future, has carried out all its action in the

development / valorisation / promotion of the territory, based on environmental and sustainable values, since this is the only way to project ECOTOURISM.

There are several institutions that promote this type of tourism as described in the following pages (Peneda Gerês National Park, Portas do Mezio and Porto Norte Program).

The Deputy Minister of Economy of Portugal, Pedro Siza, visited Incubo in Arcos de Valdevez, where the Mayor of Arcos de Valdevez, João Esteves, presented the work carried out in the area of economic development and attracting investment to the municipality, listing the various advantages of investing in this territory. João Esteves also mentioned the importance of local products and tourism to the local economy, adding that there was an increase of 14.3% in overnight stays in this territory that is considered by Trivago to be one of the main Emerging destinations in Nature Tourism and Ecotourism.



## Natural spaces



## Natura 2000 Network

In the Natura 2000 network Ecotourism finds here a supporter, the tourist has the conditions to practice sustainable tourism, as long as the natural spaces are respected.

The Natura 2000 network is an ecological network for the European Union's Community area resulting from the implementation of Council Directive 79/409 / EEC of 2 April 1979 (the Birds Directive) - repealed by Directive 2009/147 / EC of 30 November - and Directive 92/43 / EEC (Habitats Directive) aimed at ensuring the long-term conservation of Europe's most threatened species and habitats, helping to halt the loss of biodiversity. It is the main instrument for nature conservation in the European Union.

The Natura 2000 network, which also applies to the marine environment, is:

Special Protection Areas (SPAs) - established under the Birds Directive, which are essentially intended to ensure the conservation of bird species and their habitats listed in Annex I thereto and migratory bird species not listed in Annex I and whose occurrence is regular; Special Zones (ZEC) - set up under the Habitats Directive, with the stated objective of "contributing to biodiversity conservation through conservation of natural habitats (Annex I) and habitats of species of wild flora and fauna (Annex II), which are considered to be threatened within the European Union".

In these areas of Community importance for the conservation of certain habitats and species, human activities should be compatible with the preservation of these values, aiming at sustainable management from an ecological, economic and social point of view.

The guarantee of the pursuit of these objectives necessarily entails the articulation of the nature conservation policy with the other sectorial policies, namely agro-forestry, tourism or public works, in order to find the mechanisms for spaces



included in the Natura 2000 Network to be lived and managed in a sustainable way.

In the Municipality of Arcos de Valdevez there are four zones of the Natura 2000 Network, one SPA and three Sites of Community Importance of the Atlantic Biogeographic Region.

### World Biosphere Reserve



Arcos de Valdevez, located in the Lima Valley, is a scenario of pure beauty, where you can breathe fresh air and traditions.

A territory classified as a World Biosphere Reserve. Undoubtedly another award where it is possible to verify the importance of this territory, Arcos de Valdevez, in the panorama of the development of ECOTOURISM.

According to Unesco, Biosphere Reserves are "living laboratories" for the "conservation of landscapes, ecosystems and species, sustainable development on a social, economic, cultural and ecological level". They are also "platforms for research, monitoring, education and awareness".

The Gerês-Xurês Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (RBTGX) was declared on 27 May 2009 by UNESCO and is located in the Autonomous Community of Galicia (Spain) and in the Northern Region of Portugal. It covers a total area of 267,958 hectares.

It includes the territories of the Peneda-Gerês National Park and the Natural Park of Baixa Limia-Serra do Xurês and covered municipalities on both sides of the border.

Territory characterized by the Galician-Portuguese mountains and plateaus and by a dense network of water lines, from which stands out the broad valley of the river Lima. The orography, the altitude, the geological characteristics and the great availability of water give way to habitats of great floristic richness, from which stand out formations of forests, heaths and marshes. There are 117 species endemic to the Iberian Peninsula and 2 exclusives to this area. In the fauna, there

are 204 species protected at national and / or international level and 71 species with threat status. The historical heritage includes a variety of representations of the Neolithic occupation, an important representation of the Roman occupation and numerous examples of medieval architecture. Curious settlements, terraced architecture, parishes of granaries, meadows of lime, among others, reveal an ingenious adaptation of the inhabitants to the characteristics of the environment.

The high value of the natural heritage, the diversity and beauty of the landscape, the topographic characteristics of the mountain and the climatic conditions give the region a strong tourism potential.

It meets the conditions favourable to the development of economic activities related to endogenous resources, namely agriculture, livestock and nature tourism, promoting the promotion of sustainable development.

### Promotion Arcos de Valdevez



### Parque Nacional Peneda Gerês

The Peneda-Gerês National Park (PNPG), with approximately 70,000 hectares, stretches from the Amarela plateau to the Castro Laboreiro plateau including the Peneda, Soajo, Amarela and Gerês mountains. It is a mountainous region, essentially granite in whose zones of high altitude are visible the effects of the last glaciation. Deep and embedded valleys support dense hydrographic network.

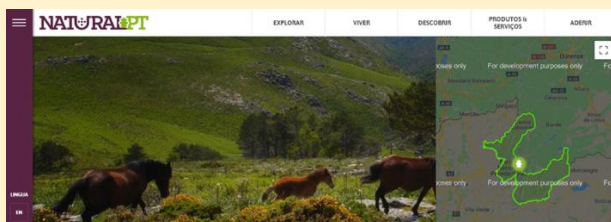
Remarkable botanical diversity - woods, grasslands, riparian vegetation and peat bogs in addition to wet marshes - highlighting the presence of several rare and endemic species. The PNPG houses are made of the most important Portuguese oaks. Interesting semi-natural habitats.

Diversity of faunal species with differentiated statuses: endemics (salamander-lusitanian), endangered (Iberian lobo), species of limited distribution (cartaxo-nortenho) ...

In the agricultural mosaic stand the meadows of lime and slough.

Rich historical and cultural heritage (megalithic necropolis, vestiges of romanization, castles, granaries, mills, watering, terraces ...), in addition to the curious implantation of the mountain villages and the presence of well-preserved traditional architecture nuclei.

The national park's mission is to protect all this vast natural / social / cultural heritage and in this sense promotes environmental sustainability and the development of tourism throughout its territory.



### Sistelo - National Site of Interest



Sistelo was originally a medieval location, whose period seems to survive traces in elements such as the implementation of the cruise, the fountain or the organization of the house. The most outstanding architectural element is, however, much more recent. It is called the "House of the Castle", a revivalist palace of rectangular plan, with two towers with battlements to cross the frontispiece and a Neogothic deposit. The whole, which dominates a natural landscape of undeniable beauty, was built in the second half of the nineteenth century by a native of the parish returned from Brazil, and first Visconde de Sistelo, Manuel A. Gonçalves Roque. Another attraction of rare beauty are the terraces of Sistelo. Terraces arise due to the need to increase agricultural area and to counter slopes. They are more or less flat platforms of deep and fertile soil, built on the slopes of the mountains, superimposed on each other by steps and supported by great stone walls. These structures would allow the

development of subsistence agriculture of extreme importance for the survival of rural communities. Associated with these platforms, channels were built to transport water from the highest points of the mountains, wells and waterways, to the fields. These channels, which in some cases extend for tens kilometres, are called irrigation systems and are fundamental for the subsistence of crops in the summer months.



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### ECOVIAS

Arcos de Valdevez has two ECOVIAs one that is along the river Vez and another located in the Parish of Ermelo, near the river Lima.

#### ECOVIA-Rio Vez phases

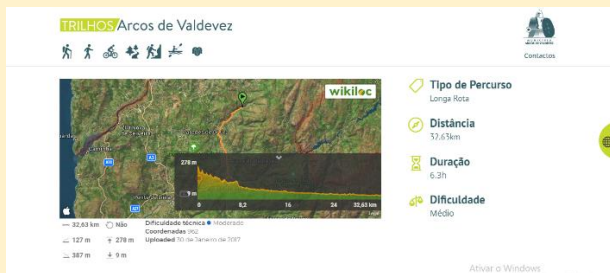
Ecovia do Vez consists of three stages already completed, starting in Jolda de S. Paio and ending in Sistelo, the total route is approximately 33 kms.

The municipality of Arcos de Valdevez is part of the World Biosphere Reserve, declared by



Unesco, the territory has unique natural values that we must preserve and value. River Vez and Lima River are included in the list of Sites of Community Importance of the Natura 2000 Network (European Union Ecological Network). These areas are classified as protected because of the importance and rarity of their fauna and flora.

## Rio Vez - ECOVIA



## Lima River-Ermelo



The Ermelo Ecovia is a type of pedestrian / bicycle route with a distance of 5.2 km and with an easy degree of difficulty, being prohibited the circulation of motor vehicles. The Lima river, in this point, is, in fact, a reservoir, formed by the dam of Touvedo, located 5 km further down. It is worth following the small section southwest of here, about 0.6 km. You will be rewarded with beautiful scenery and good opportunities to observe wildlife. Another trail continues a little after the end of the Ecovia, but has quite high vegetation, so it is not so advisable. The main section, near the foothills of the Serra do Mezio, runs northwest through several streams with fast currents that feed the Touvedo reservoir. This stretch is still one of the few places where the otter, the wild buck and the heron can be seen. This whole section is quite woody, so it is possible to enjoy some shadows if temperatures are high.



As you approach Ermelo, you will notice the first signs of cultivation, and small terraces, vineyards

and olive groves become more and more evident. Orange trees delimit the path and, already in Ermelo, it is possible to find them everywhere. If it is their time, try an orange and you will soon realize why the oranges of Ermelo have such a good reputation. In the village of Ermelo (4.6 kms) it is well worth going up to the church. This classified as a national monument was built on the site of a 13th-century Cistercian monastery, which in the past was connected to the village of Soajo and from there to Peneda and Melgaço, and of which there are still some vestiges. The most obvious parts of the original structure are its triumphal arch and rosacea window, both visible from the outside.

The old route to the Soajo can be found following Ecovia to the end (4.8 km), then following upstream, from Ermelo. Following this way along 400 meters is a beautiful and old bridge of the seventeenth century, which crosses the “ribeira da Ponte”.



### Ardal and Portas do Mezio



Porta do Mezio, one of the five gates of the Peneda Gerês National Park, is the gateway to the magnificent immensity of the mountains and valleys of Soajo and Peneda. A territory so magnificent that UNESCO considers it a World Biosphere Reserve! At the gate, in addition to getting to know all the necessary details to venture through the forests and hills, you can

spend moments of relaxation and great fun with family and friends.

We have 3 hectares full of spaces for youth and our staff will make the mountain your home!

The theme of the Gate is the Conservation of Nature and Biodiversity. Here you can find activities and spaces of interpretation of the natural and cultural wealth that surrounds us and that we want to be the scene of your adventures and memories.



The tourism sector has been increasingly affirmed in Oporto and North of Portugal as a strong motor of the economy, supported by a unique natural, cultural, historical and architectural heritage, which has unleashed in an extraordinary way the growing interest of domestic and foreign visitors.

### Environmental Certification of Tourism Companies

It is worth noting that nowadays there are times of transformation, it is moving from a bureaucratic model, provider and service concessionaire, to an entrepreneurial model, of social responsibility, to which the State must provide decisive collaboration together with private enterprises and social organizations. Increased corporate responsibility for environmental problems, voluntary environmental audits, eco-labels that support eco-friendly products and the expansion of eco-business can in themselves lead to environmental quality.

The society has given increasing importance to the sustainability of tourism activity, which translates into the implementation of several certification programs that meet environmental, social and economic parameters.





It is in this sense that environmental certification has proved to be an important instrument of environmental policy, helping the consumer to choose products and services less harmful to the environment, and serving as a marketing tool for companies that differentiate their products in the market.



### Benefits:

- Optimization of the technological processes of the companies;
- Decrease in the specific consumption of energy, raw materials and natural resources;
- Minimization of the environmental impact of the company's activities;
- Improvement of the image before public opinion;
- Access to certain markets and tenders where environmental certification is mandatory;
- Improvement of the competitive position vis-à-vis non-certified competitors;
- Improvement of internal organization;
- Increased motivation and involvement of internal collaborators;
- Reduction of risks and reduction of audits by other entities.

### Difficulties:

- Compliance with legal requirements (basis of any Environmental Management System);
- Sensitization / internal training for the need to change habits (from top management to organizational bases);
- Issues that do not depend on the companies themselves: formalization and speed of the licenses.

### Certification in Portugal



APCER created in Portugal a specification of service requirements that defines a qualification model for Tourism in the Rural Area, based on ISO 9001: 2000 as well as other normative references, adapted to Tourism in the Rural Area, in the modalities of familiarity - Tourism of Housing, Agro-Tourism, Rural Tourism and Country Houses.



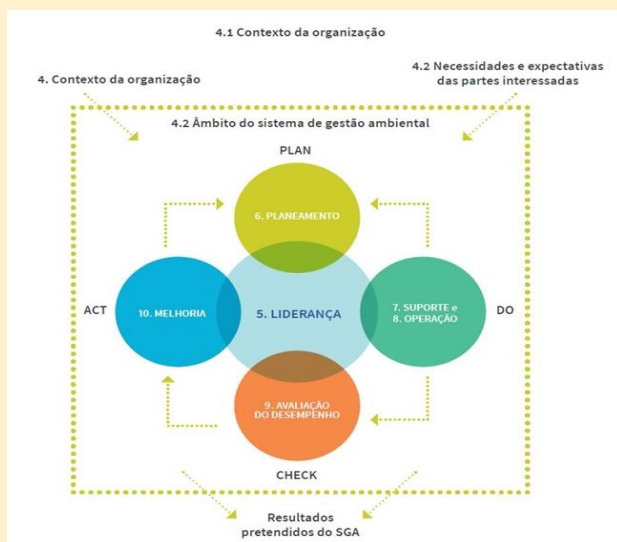
In 2015 ISO 14001 appeared

ISO 14001: 2015, the world reference for environmental management systems, was published on September 15, 2015.

The certification of environmental management systems supported by the ISO 14001 reference standard is an essential tool for organizations that want to achieve greater trust from customers, employees, the surrounding community and society, by demonstrating a voluntary commitment to continuous improvement of their environmental performance.

ISO 14001 adopts the process approach, which incorporates the continuous improvement PDCA cycle, and integrates risk-based thinking and the life-cycle perspective. It can be adopted by any organization, public or private, regardless of its size and sector of activity.





#### Legend:

	Planning	4.	Context of organization
	Improvement	4.1	Context organization
	Performance Appraisal	4.2	Needs and expectations of stakeholders
	Support and evaluation		
	Leadership		

Key benefits of implementing and certifying an environmental management system:

Achieving strategic objectives by incorporating environmental issues into the organization's management and increasing the involvement of top management and employees in environmental management;

Reducing the probability of environmental hazards, such as emissions, spills and other accidents;

Reduce costs by improving process efficiency (reduction of consumption, minimization of waste and effluent treatment, reduction of insurance premiums and minimization of fines, among others);

Competitive advantages arising from an improvement of the organization's image and its acceptance by society and the market.

Because certification of environmental management systems should be a credible and transparent process, APCER makes available the ISO 14001: 2015 User's Guide with the aim of promoting the dissemination of the standard and helping to adopt good Environmental Management practices. The guide is a shared vision and incorporates APCER's experience in certification, transmitting its perspective of use to organizations that adopt an environmental management system.

#### Eco-label



Usually the eco-label is awarded to products whose characteristics allow them to contribute to environmental improvement. In this context, the requirements for the award of the eco-label to tourist accommodation services have recently been approved, becoming the first service sector to benefit from the advantages of this label. In order to be awarded the label, tourist accommodation services should be covered by the definition of their product group and meet the ecological criteria set out in Commission Decision 2003/287 / EC of 14 April 2003.

#### 1.5 Greece

Overshadowed by its millennia-long history, Greece is often associated with its ancient marvels and its endless museums. Then there is the blue and the bright, sea and sun is what this country is made from. But there is a lot more to that, especially for the ones who stray out of the touristic paths.

For visitors there is a range of options, found across the web, directed at diverse target groups and using different marketing techniques to reach their visibility.

TravellersGreece

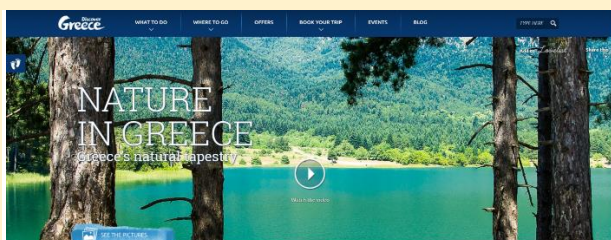
(<http://www.travellersgreece.com/gr/>) is a web portal which offers all kinds of thematic tourism gateways in Greece. Visitors can find different forms and services of alternative tourism in Greece; They can also have a look at what

different counties of Greece have to offer, search for accommodation or use “unusual filters” to match their ecotourism interests, nature, mythology, tradition and local tastes are some of them. This website is mainly in Greek, so it is directed mostly to internal ecotourism.

AlterTourism (<http://altertourism.gr/>) is an initiative of individuals and businesses from all over Greece with the main objective of developing and promoting alternative and thematic forms of tourism all over the country. The Network includes dynamic businesses and individuals who represent a wide range of different business activities in the tourism sector. The purpose is to design and develop new integrated and distinct tourist products and services of special interest, including Greek products / services of alternative and thematic tourism to promote, certify and disseminate information in Greece and abroad.

Discover Greece

(<https://www.discovergreece.com/en/nature>) is an interactive platform which wants to be a strategic pillar for marketing Greece. The website promotes a complete portfolio of tourism products, acts as a sales tool, providing product interconnection with online booking machines, and helps create and develop online communities and campaigns across social media. The visitor can browse between the riches of the country and try different types of ecotourism destinations. If you want to see the different regions of the country, or prefer to roam the nature in different seasons, but then again even if you want to see the most popular destinations of Greece, this website has it all. Discovergreece.com is currently on air in English and Greek, German, Russian and French.



For those travellers who are looking for an alternative, but are also keen to learn more on history, deontology and the context of ecotourism, Ecoclub (<https://ecoclub.com/>) is for them. Ecoclub is an ecotourism portal and professional network established in 1999 in Athens, Greece, today with Members worldwide. The founders of Ecoclub understand genuine ecotourism as ecological tourism, a tourism which incorporates the scientific and political principles of ecology. Inspired by the Global Greens Charter, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the wisdom of Epicurus, they believe that Ecological Tourism may contribute to a gradual, peaceful transition to a better and happier world, [...] that respects the fundamental rights of all people and other life forms.(...) In short, we advocate Ecology Through Tourism!

But again, if you wish to live an element of surprise or...the level of laziness, one can have ready tailor made tours in Greece, through Natural Greece (<https://www.natural-greece.gr/>). Bear tours, birdwatching tours, marine eco tours, walking tours, wildflower tours are some of the options, and if you're lucky, you may find a special offer for your dates!



The motto of Ecotourism Greece (<https://ecotourism-greece.com/home/>) is “**Experience Greece differently**”. If this is not appealing enough, then here is a more detailed description: Ecotourism Greece aims to become the leading online travel portal and reference for the undiscovered wealth of Greece, from eco-friendly activities and heritage to local food, archeology and outstanding landmarks. Its aim is to showcase alternatives to the outdated model and empower small and medium enterprises (SMEs) all across rural Greece by highlighting what they have to offer. To promote sustainable

business practices to tourism-related businesses across Greece and strengthen local economies, building a network of eco-friendly members under the banner of Ecotourism-Greece.com. They also wish to enrich the lives of people and visitors to Greece through cultural and eco-friendly activities that will introduce them to a world of nature, local culture, wildlife, ecology, history and heritage, advancing a more sustainable model of what life in Greece and the Mediterranean is all about...

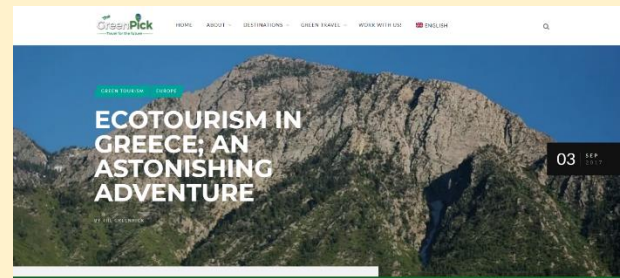


#### Visit Greece

([http://www.visitgreece.gr/en/in the mood for/ecotourism](http://www.visitgreece.gr/en/in_the_mood_for_ecotourism)) invites you already by the address of its' webpage! It is the official portal of Greek National Tourism Organisation. Roaming through the website you can get a good glimpse of the country's history, geography and more. Visit Greece is a site which gives you the chance to be informed about the ecotourism in Greece from the North to the South. You can also explore different moods, either you are looking for a romantic gateway or an energetic activity to forget the lost romance of your life. For more visual types there is a youtube channel to explore Greece's unique sights, travel through its beaches and mountains, marvel at its history and culture and discover a great land through the eyes of its visitors.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/visitgreecegr/featured>

If you want to make that ecotourism trip you are planning in Greece an astonishing adventure, then <http://www.thegreenpick.com/ecotourism-greece/> is the right place to visit!



Don't know what to choose, between islands and mainland? Maybe you like both, and maybe you just want to know what each place is offering to you. Then you need All around Greece (<https://www.aroundgreece.net/>) where you will find everything you need to plan and organize your holidays to Greece including destination guides for all of the Greek islands and mainland regions hotels and accommodation , entertainment, activities and sports, tourist attractions, transport and much more. Stunning landscapes , magnificent archaeological sites, golden sandy beaches, deep blue and turquoise seas, delicious cuisine, and so much more is waiting for you when you arrive.



For more ecotourism holiday options, check out Greeka (<https://www.greeka.com/greece-holiday/ecotourism/>), where they promise to offer you an extraordinary Greece travel guide! Sailing and diving, mountains, forests, rivers even caves are some of the destinations you can choose.





Some many travellers wish to explore the mysteries of Greece. That's why the insider's travel guide by Mysterious Greece (<https://www.mysteriousgreece.com/Travel-Mood/ecotourism/>), is a destination platform offering an infinite guide for what they say, everything a sophisticated travellers need to know about Greece. Are you in the mood for agrotourism, hiking, windsurf, or something else? Check! Along with a wide range of travel blog daily tips Discover Greece with an insider's point of view.

Go Greece your way ([www.gogreeceyourway.gr](http://www.gogreeceyourway.gr)) is a guide to activities and adventures in the astonishing Greek nature. Go Greece Your Way is also a blog for people to find lots of info and inspiration for their dive into the Greek culture and ancient history. They wish to support the Greek population by giving insight into the special beauty in the variety of Greek nature and culture and the opportunities to enjoy leisure travelling to Greece.

Blogs are an interesting way of approaching ecotourism through the eyes of other travellers. For experiences of such kind you can also take a look at Mozaik Hospitality Blog (<https://www.mozaikhospitality.com/blog/hospitality-news/ecotourism-sustainable-tourism-trends/>)

Finally, an instance of storytelling at its best and a personalized ecotourism experience, on an island which embodies the essence of Greek life, you should check Live-Bio (<http://www.live-bio.net/>), the lifestyle expression of Magdalena and Periklis, two entrepreneurs who decided to drop professional life for the love of nature, locally grown food and people-centered experiences. An illustrative example of millennials abandoning the buzzing lifestyle of the city.

For professionals of ecotourism, the options may not be as abundant, but still there are options out there, for those who wish to improve their services and become quality ecotourism agents.

Medventure now [www.medventure.eu/en/](http://www.medventure.eu/en/) wishes to combine its strengths in web content with the topoGuide ecotourism mobile app

developers Anadigit. Medventure offers a suite of apps that offer maps, routes and photographs that take travelers on amazing adventures. Both in the city and beyond, the apps feature walking tours, hiking tours, cycling tours, road maps, and cultural tours, as well as natural and archaeological attractions. Together, MedVenture and Anadigit can produce professional ecotourism maps for both public and private organizations, whether a hotel or a public authority that wants to promote its region.

#### HELLENIC SUN EDITIONS

(<https://www.alternativegreece.gr/WebForms/CategoryDisplay.aspx?ID=50>) was founded in September 1999 by executives with many years of experience in the field of tourism promotion. HELLENIC SUN EDITIONS offers complete proposals and solutions for international projection, print and electronic projection with unique tourist, conference and thematic editions, such as the one we now present to you with the alternative forms of tourism, aiming at the effective promotion of Greece and professionals internationally. They invite professionals to contribute to common goals in the qualitative upgrading of Greek tourism and the emergence of the country as an ideal and unique destination for alternative forms of tourism and not only.

Also, the UK-based (<https://ecotourism-greece.com/providers/travelife-certification/>) sustainability certification scheme has reached many corners of the globe and is considered one of the most serious certifiers in the field of sustainability within the tourism sector. There are a couple of hundred hotels in Greece that adhere to one of these two levels (Gold and Excellence), mostly large seaside properties that cater to package groups. Many of these fine hotels are also suitable as bases for ecotourism, especially when it comes to families who want a green resort experience. If you wish to join their network, you can simply visit their website and get in touch!



## **1.6 Conclusion**

Tourism and marketing go hand in hand, marketing provides a tool for advertising and communication, without which tourism would not exist, in addition to contributing to the very definition of the service. Ecotourism is a segment of tourism, which over the last few years has come to be considered as one of the most promising sectors of tourism worldwide. It is expected that its growth will triple this decade in relation to the last decade, generating numerous business opportunities, progressively collaborating for the sustainability of life on earth, since ecotourism is guided by principles that propose the preservation of natural and cultural resources, motivating the educational aspect. The main objective is to understand which marketing strategies should be used to improve the results of ecotourism services companies and to strengthen their competitiveness, since marketing is a fundamental part of the success of companies in the days that run. It is important to understand which marketing strategies are most appropriate for ecotourism companies, so they will have to define their positioning. The differentiation strategy is the most suitable for ecotourism companies, which should include in their service aspects of the cultural, educational and environmental dimensions. The environmental part cannot be put aside because through it, tourism takes on a new form, ECOTOURISM.

## Chapter II

### Ecotourism seen through learners' experiences – interviews



Marina and Aris Andreea, Italy

*"This training course was unique and amazing experience and now we can see ecotourism themes in a different way."* – Aris Andreea

*"I would like to tell him or her [person who wants to be an eco-tourist] to be in contact with nature and to live the world as a better place than they have found."* - Marina

Watch the full video here:

<https://youtu.be/zVZ2mcDYSks>



Maria Grazia, Italy

*"In Italy, the ecotourism is still growing, we can say that our country has many places to exploit. I think that ecotourism in Italy can be improved through the help of private associations. By making projects like this one (EEFect), by cooperating with municipalities and the various provinces of our region."*

Watch the full video here:

<https://youtu.be/YI3lQAaxAgo>



Calin, Italia

*"From Portugal training course I think I learnt many things, in terms of promoting ecotourism. I learnt a lot about the bond between local authorities and people who want to promote this kind of activities, I think this model could be applied in Italy as well, to make more publicity for ecotourism."*

Watch the full video here:

<https://youtu.be/GOECYvb38rk>



Matei and Georgiana, Romania

*"This form of tourism is not the greatest concern of the people who are able to take decisions, because we are not dealing well with waste and the number of trees, we are cutting every year is not sustainable."* - Matei

*"On this training course we have learnt to combine ecology and tourism and the way we can socialize with other people in order to acknowledge the fact that ecotourism can be the real fact and can be developed in many countries."* - Georgiana

Watch the full video here:

<https://youtu.be/VrrOSPvxc0>



Malina & Andrei, Romania

*"Romania is very rich when it comes to nature, but we don't have policies that will help enhance the development of ecotourism. We also think that more festivals and focusing on the social part, would make Romania more known to other people." - Malina*

*"[I would advise an aspiring ecotourist to] Be patient, be supportive, ecotourism is still a new industry, so changes can be made, and you should bring your opinions and your input to it, as long as you don't damage the environment and have constructive criticism to offer." – Andrei*

Watch the full video here:

<https://youtu.be/zxfdFZAEq50>



Larisa, Romania

*"Romania has a lot of potential for developing ecotourism, but its' potential is not discovered yet. During this course I've seen that ecotourism is much better promoted here (Portugal) than in Romania. Here in Portugal, I noticed that people do take care of what they have, they don't modify things like we do, we want to get everything modern and get rid of old stuff."*

Watch the full video here:

<https://youtu.be/7O09nhoj0Cs>



Vasilica, Portugal

*"Ecotourism in my country is not really developed, but it has potential. And because of that I think that ecotourism in our country should be more promoted. I think my mentality has changed a little bit on this training course."*

Watch the full video here:

<https://youtu.be/E9brNcCnZJO>



Ioana, Romania

*"I think ecotourism is not really developed in my country and the promotion of ecotourism can be improved through social media, ecotourism offers and festivals. On this training course (PT) I learnt a lot about ecotourism but the most important part I learnt is that we need equilibrium between nature and human".*

Watch the full video here:

[https://youtu.be/RG1akB2\\_cx8](https://youtu.be/RG1akB2_cx8)





Andra, Romania

*"Ecotourism is not so developed in Romania, and there are just few laws about preserving nature, I know there are some ecotourism associations that are trying to promote ecotourism, but personally I haven't seen much of it. But participating in this course (PT) gave me an opportunity to have an insight of what ecotourism means, because before this course I didn't know much about ecotourism."*

Watch the full video here:

[https://youtu.be/yBWJc7oA\\_Cc](https://youtu.be/yBWJc7oA_Cc)



Marlene and Adriana, Portugal

*"I liked the training course (Greece) because I've got a chance to meet people from different countries and different cultures. The topic is interesting."* - Marlene

*"This training course (Greece) is a great opportunity to get aware of other cultures around us."* - Adriana

Watch the full video here:

[https://youtu.be/1-A\\_pDbmrG0](https://youtu.be/1-A_pDbmrG0)



Maurane and Olivia, France

*"Ecotourism in Martinique is starting to develop; it would be nice to have more festivals about ecotourism. I think it is really important to know the lifestyle of the country you are travelling to."* - Maurane

*"We can use social media for communication and to make influence on people about ecotourism. Ecotourism can help you to discover new cultures."* - Olivia

Watch the full video here:

<https://youtu.be/8kVk8WEwzr4>



Andre, Portugal

*"Development of ecotourism is starting in education and in promotion of importance of this concept. Through ecotourism we can understand the importance of the nature around us."*

Watch the full video here:

<https://youtu.be/dxrKPOoqZ4s>





Andriana, Greece

*"I believe that ecotourism in Greece is still in premium stage. Greece has a big number of tourists, but I think that eco way of travelling in Greece isn't promoted enough among those tourists. I see young people as opportunity to develop ecotourism with projects like this one (EFFECT)."*

Watch the full video here:

<https://youtu.be/zvf27XtIYWk>



Maria, Greece

*"I was impressed to see the passion and commitment of the people of Arcos de Valdevez. They love their place and they are using what nature gave them, and while promoting ecotourism, they are trying to offer something to everyone: to the visitors and to the local community. I would love to be able to share my experience with my own community and try to make it happen in my country as well."*

Watch the full video here:

<https://youtu.be/XCM8sS8yUY0>

## Chapter III

### Good practice example in partner countries (Local Projects)

#### 3.1 Italy

#### ECO-WALK: An ecological walk along the banks of the Fersinone



*Poster and leaflet for the promotion of the event*

In pursuing the main objectives of the project "E.E.F.Ect. - European Education Fostering Ecotourism", such as the **promotion of environmental education** among young people and adults, implementing in particular the **development of ecotourism**, as a starting point for the **development of active citizenship**, each project partner organization has carried out some activities/initiatives at local level, directly involving other local partners and stakeholders as well.

The Travelogue Association, in particular, has organized an Ecological Day for waste collection and a walk in the area called Vocabolo Cantine, not far from the centre of Marsciano (PG), along the Fersinone stream, which took place on the morning of Sunday 7 April 2019.

The project was carried out in collaboration with the students of the IIIA and IIIB classes of the **Comprehensive Institute Salvatorelli-Moneta of Marsciano** and with the **Association Il Pozzo**, carrying out an inspection of the area and a research on the environmental and cultural resources insistent on the area of the route, such as the Fersinone stream and the inhabited centres of Marsciano, Civitella dei Conti, Poggio Aquilone and Migliano, drawing on resources found on the web and in the Municipal Library of Marsciano.

The final event (ECO-WALK) which took place on 7 April 2019, was carried out under the **patronage of the Municipality of Marsciano** and in collaboration with **S.I.A. Società Igiene Ambientale** (Environmental Hygiene Society), with a collection of waste in the area and a walk of cultural/naturalistic interest, with information provided by the students of the Comprehensive Institute Salvatorelli-Moneta, in which various citizens of the area took part.

The event therefore had an ecological and tourist connotation, to obtain a re-evaluation of the area on multiple fronts, stimulating young people to observe and live their territory with other eyes. Some students from the E.E.E.K. Institute of Volos (Greece), a training centre for students with disabilities or special educational needs also took part in the walk. The students have been hosted for two weeks by the Travelogue Association for the project "Professional Qualification Development in young students with special needs in Floriculture and Cooking", funded by the Erasmus + Program.

The students of the High School have also collaborated in the realization of a roll-up entitled "The Decalogue of the Ecotourist", with textual contributions and images, to indicate a list of correct behaviours to keep along the path, which was presented during the event and will also be used for other events in the area, both directly linked to the "E.E.F.Ect. - European Education Fostering Ecotourism" project or not, but which are nevertheless aimed at **encouraging the development of ecological and sustainable tourism**, widely spreading awareness of ecological and environmental issues.

The event was promoted in collaboration with the Press and Public Relations Office of the Municipality of Marsciano. It was organised in



one of the two days of the "Fiera Verde 2019" event and included in the related program, participating also in the presentation day of the fair at the Dynamic Museum of Brickworks and Terracotta of Marsciano.



**XXII EDIZIONE DI FIERA VERDE**

<p><b>VENERDÌ 5 APRILE</b></p> <p><b>ORE 17.30</b>  <b>MUSEO DINAMICO DEL LATERIZIO E DELLE TERRECOTTE</b>  <b>ANTEPRIMA FIERA VERDE 2019</b>          Con L'Associazione Strada dei vini del cantino e gli studenti delle classi 3A/3B dell'Istituto Omnicomprensivo Salvatorelli-Moneta.          Buffet offerto dalla pasticceria Trequattrini con degustazione di vini delle cantine del territorio</p> <p><b>SABATO 6 APRILE</b>  <b>ORE 9.00 - 20.00</b>  <b>MOSTRA MERCATO DI PIANTE E FIORI</b>          Attrezzature per agricoltura e giardinaggio, fiori-vivaistica, arredi da giardino, degustazione dei prodotti tipici locali, enogastronomia mercato dei prodotti agricoli locali. Mercatino di primavera con artigianato, hobbistica e collezionismo con la presenza degli studenti dell'Istituto Omnicomprensivo Salvatorelli-Moneta</p> <p><b>ORE 12.00</b>  <b>PIAZZA DELLA VITTORIA</b>          Inaugurazione della mostra mercato Fiera Verde</p> <p><b>DOMENICA 7 APRILE</b>  <b>ORE 9.00 - 20.00</b>  <b>MOSTRA MERCATO DI PIANTE E FIORI</b>          Attrezzature per agricoltura e giardinaggio, fiori-vivaistica, arredi da giardino, degustazione dei prodotti tipici locali, enogastronomia mercato dei prodotti agricoli locali.          Mercatino di primavera con artigianato, hobbistica e collezionismo con la presenza degli studenti dell'Istituto Omnicomprensivo Salvatorelli-Moneta</p> <p><b>AREA GIOCHI PER BAMBINI</b>  <b>SEGRETERIA ORGANIZZATIVA</b>          PROLOCO Marsciano - Leonardo Iaccopoli          3349740551  <b>ORGANIZZAZIONE COMUNE DI MARSCIANO</b>          Giuseppe Bianchi tel. 0758747252 - 3346628669          E-mail: fieraverdemarsciano4@gmail.com          web: www.comune.marsciano.pg.it          prolocomarsciano</p>	<p><b>DOMENICA 7 APRILE</b></p> <p><b>ORE 9.00</b>  <b>ECO-WALK</b>          Una passeggiata ecologica lungo le sponde del Fersinone.          Ritrovo in Voc. Cantine, all'inizio del sentiero che costeggia il torrente Fersinone, poco dopo il Crossodromo Ciciano, per una passeggiata con finalità culturali/turistiche, con informazioni fornite dai ragazzi delle classi IIIA e IIIB Liceo, ed ecologiche, con la raccolta dei rifiuti lungo il sentiero.          Il percorso ha una lunghezza di circa 5 km, invitiamo i partecipanti a dotarsi di gilet catarifrangente, saranno forniti guanti e sacchi per la raccolta dei rifiuti; i partecipanti possono utilizzare l'area parcheggio del Crossodromo.          L'evento fa parte del progetto "E.E.F.E.C. - European Education Fostering Ecotourism", co-finanziato dal Programma Erasmus+ e coordinato dall'Associazione Travelogue. Realizzato con il patrocinio del Comune di Marsciano ed in collaborazione con l'Istituto Omnicomprensivo Salvatorelli-Moneta di Marsciano, Circolo Il Pozzo e SIA Società Igiene Ambientale S.p.a.,</p> <p><b>ORE 16.00</b>  <b>MUSEO DINAMICO DEL LATERIZIO E DELLE TERRECOTTE</b>          Laboratorio creativo con la carta "dolci bouquet".          Bambini 4 / 10 anni</p> <p><b>LABORATORI E GIOCHI</b>          Durante la fiera saranno attivati dei laboratori e sarà presente un'area giochi per bambini</p> <p><b>MUSEO DINAMICO DEL LATERIZIO E DELLE TERRECOTTE</b>          Il Museo di Marsciano aderisce al BIGLIETTO UNICO del circuito TERRE &amp; MUSEI DELL'UMBRIA, che consente l'accesso ai 16 siti museali delle 32 città che ne fanno parte.          Il biglietto per il Museo dinamico del laterizio e delle terracotte è <b>GRATUITO</b> per i <b>RESIDENTI</b> nel Comune di Marsciano.          Orari e informazioni:          ore: 10.30-13.15 / 15.30-18, gio: 10.30-13.15 / 14.15-17          0758741152 - marsciano@stetnomuseo.it</p>
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XXII edizione

# Fiera Verde

## Tradizioni e Sapori

6
7
aprile 2019

dalle 9:00 alle 20:00  
Marsciano (Pg)

Leaflet Fiera Verde 2019





Roll-up: The Decalogue of the Ecotourist (80x200 cm)



### 3.2 Romania

#### CEDRA TOUR SRL

#### MARAMURES ECO-TRIP



In pursuing the main objectives of the project "E.E.F.Ect. - European Education Fostering Ecotourism", such as the **promotion of environmental education** among young people and adults, implementing in particular the **development of ecotourism**, as a starting point for the **development of active citizenship**, each project partner organization has carried out some activities/initiatives at local level, directly involving other local partners and stakeholders as well.

**CEDRA TOUR** has organized an eco-trip, which took place between 16<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of April 2019. Students from **Nicolae Vasilescu-Karpen Bacau Technical Communication College** had the opportunity to discover this amazing land, to explore the authentic Romanian lifestyle, crafts, traditions, local gastronomy and get closer to nature.

By doing **Maramures eco-trip** they were introduced to the local culture, still vibrant with vitality, were offered high-quality local services and products... and they make their vacation turn into a small "investment" into a local economy that starts to work by integrating nature preservation and local culture in the economic equation through ecotourism.

The north-western Romanian region of Maramures is home to many villages where century-old traditions are still part of daily life. The inhabitants of this area have preserved, to an amazing extent, the rural culture and crafts of their Dacian ancestors.

Maramures villages are distinguished by their unique wooden churches with tall spires and shingled roofs. Woodlands still account for more than four-fifths of the land surface of Maramures.

#### Carved Wooden Gates

The local craftsmanship can be best observed in the monumental Maramures gates, guarding the entry to the houses. Supported by three columns, they feature traditional ornamental motifs, including the sun and the twisted rope - both symbols of life and continuity. Some of the most beautiful wooden gates are found in the villages of Vadu Izei, Desesti, Giulesti, Budesti, Sarbi, Barsana and Oncesti. The villages of Barsana and Oncesti have, perhaps, the greatest number of impressive gates.



It is understandable, therefore, that wood has long been - and continues to be - the medium of expression for the region's artisans. Elaborate woodcarvings decorate the eaves, entryways and windows of houses. The local handiwork is also seen in the hand-woven carpets and intricate embroidery that adorns folk dresses still worn by the locals.

### Wooden Churches

As it has for hundreds of years, social life in Maramures continues to revolve around the village church.

The Wooden Churches of Maramures) - in Surdesti, Plopiș, Rogoz, Ieud, Poienile Izei, Barsana, Budești and Deșești - have been recognized by UNESCO as some of the most important sites of world heritage.

Unique in shape and ornamentation, they have characteristic high roofs and tall, narrow, pointed steeples, often collectively described as 'the Gothic style of Maramures.'



The primary wood material used by the artisans who built them was local oak, which has survived the elements with sturdy elegance until today. The interior walls of the churches were painted by local artists, with biblical scenes often juxtaposed against the familiar landscape of the village.

The spiritual philosophy of the people of Maramures is perhaps nowhere more apparent than in Sapanta. The town folks' ancestors considered death as a beginning, not the end, and this faith is reflected in the carvings in the town's unique **Merry Cemetery**. Blue wooden crosses feature a carved scene and humorous

verses that endeavour to capture essential elements - both the good and the imperfections - of the deceased's life. Even without benefit of translation, visitors can appreciate the handiwork of sculptor Stan Ion Patras, who began carving these epitaphs in 1935, and his successors. Patras' house in the village is now a fascinating museum. Sapanta is also home to several wooden gates and one of the region's tallest wooden churches.



Also, Maramures is dominated by a landscape of mountains and rolling valleys. The Gutai, Lapus, Tibles Maramures and Rodnei Mountains are cut by passes named Huta, Gutai, Prislop, Setref, and Botiza. Three large valleys cross the region: Viseu, Iza and Mara. The Rodnei Mountains National Park, a natural reserve filled with a rich diversity of flora and fauna, has been awarded biosphere status by UNESCO. Here, chamois leap between rocks, the cry of eagles' rings out overhead and as the snows recede in the spring, crocus and other flowers create swathes of dazzling colours.

**Mara-Cosău – Creasta Cocoșului** (ecotourism destination since 2014): between the valleys of the Mara and Cosău rivers, bordered by volcanic mountains to the south, lies an «island» of authentic traditional life, part of the historic region of Maramureș, which still dazzles ethnographers and philologists. The mosaic-like landscapes with alpine pastureland, meadows, brooks, orchards and century-old forests line up harmoniously alongside wild areas, which host brown bears and lynxes, chamois, wild boars or wolves.





Our students had the opportunity to visit the Horses' Waterfall in Rodnei Mountains surrounded by a breath-taking scenario and tranquillity, the Nature Reserve of Pietrosu Rodnei (2303 m), glacier lakes and Ocna Șugatag which is located in the Mara River Valley and it is popular for its salty mineral waters which provide health benefits



The event therefore had an ecological and tourist connotation, to discover the natural resources, the historical and geographic heritage and to enhance their environmental knowledge, inducing them to develop favourable attitudes toward the environment, and making them take

environmental actions to reduce the impact of tourism.

For this Eco-trip the students have documented about the destinations they have visited, how they are promoted to tourists.

After the eco-trip they created a brochure, available in English and Romanian, and which will be used by CEDRA TOUR promote this destination to other tourists.

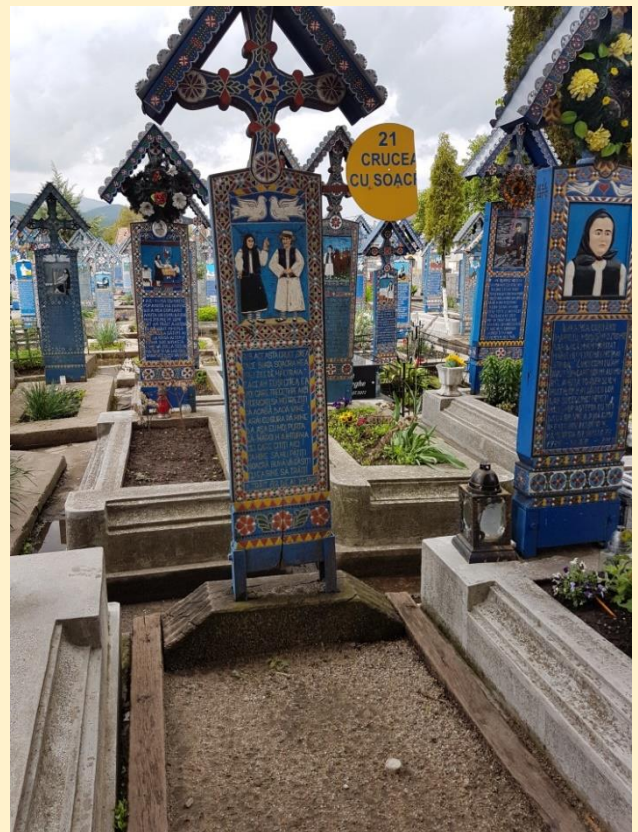


## “Emi Racoviță 2000” Youth Association

Our eco-trip combined light walking and picturesque sightseeing in the beautiful Maramureș villages with a day of slightly more challenging hiking in the scenic Gutâi Mountains nearby.

Maramureș is a region in northern Romania, surrounded by mountains and full of picturesque meadows and valleys, where people still wear their traditional clothes every day. The region is famous for the small timber houses with huge wooden entrance gates and for the wooden churches competing to reach the sky.





**Duration:** 4 days/ 3 nights

**Period:** 02-05.05.2019

**Itinerary:** Vaslui – Roman – Gura Humorului – Borsa –Vatra Dornei – Targu Neamt - Roman – Vaslui

**Main touristic attractions:** Hiking on Pietrosu Rodnei Mountain, Stiol Lake, Horses Waterfall, Merry Cemetery in Săpânța, Wooden Monastery at Barsana, TransRarău

Friends have asked about our trip and we always start by trying to describe the magic that we felt while in Maramures. It is like no other place to which we have travelled. All countries have great museums of which they are proud, of wonderful architecture to be photographed, of interesting history to be told, and of nature of great beauty. Indeed, Romania has all of that. But it has something that the other places we visited do not have. It has **Maramures**.



Of course, we appreciated the trip to the museum in Sighetu Marmatiei and the Merry Sapanta Cemetery. And we were amazed by the beautiful UNESCO wooden churches.



You can see the waterfall from pretty far away and you start to realise its scale. The waterfall is **90 meters high**. The water gathers in something similar to a pool on top of the mountain and from there it falls on the limestone mountain side, known as **Horses Bridge**, in several stages making it the biggest waterfall in Romania. We admired it from far away and from a close distance and took many photos.

We stayed tens of minutes there. There were quite a lot of tourists here as well. I recommend you take this trail back too because you have the opportunity to see some more picturesque landscapes typical of Rodnei Mountains. It takes no more than **30 minutes to get form the waterfall back to Borșa Resort**, so this trail is also quite short. Like a walk in the park.



This trip allowed us to develop a more responsible attitude towards nature, we became more aware of the importance of preserving environment.

We also created a brochure, which will be used by “Emi Racoviță 2000” Youth Association to promote this destination to other tourists.

The trip to Maramures was so successful, that members of our Association decided to take another trip to another famous touristic area in Romania, **Prahova Valley**. This trip lasted 3 days, between 17 and 19 May 2019.





Our main touristic objectives were: Sfanta Ana Lake, Valea Cetatii Cave, Dimitrie Ghica Park, Peles Castle, the old centre Brasov and, of course, hiking and admiring the nature.







Lake Sfanta Ana (near Băile Tuşnad) is one of the most magnificent natural treasures of our country, the only volcano lake in Central and Eastern Europe, formed in the bottom of Ciomatu Massif southern crater. Near the lake, in the northern crater, the Mohos peat bog is, where rare Ice Age relic plants are located. Both sights are part of the Mohos Nature Reserve. The area of the craters is protected, being included in the Natura 2000 network.



### 3.3 France

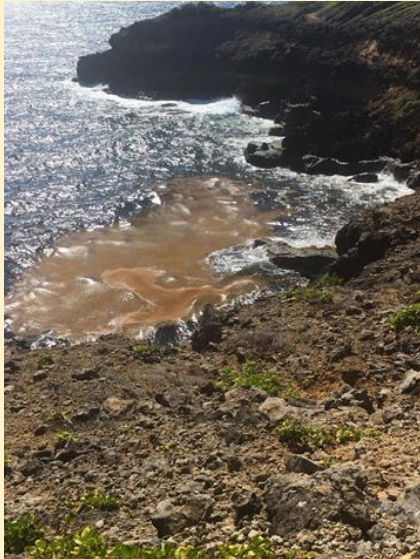
#### Practical activities in the context of eco-tourism

In recent years, we are facing an ecological problem. Martinique is invaded by algae (Sargassum) that fall on the east coast. The departmental authorities have alerted the government, which has not yet found the solution to this natural problem.

At our level, we try to clean the beaches of the territory close to our association by picking them up. Some of our members use them by putting them at the foot of citrus fruits to help them grow.







#### Cleaned shore

The reduction of waste is rather worrying in Martinique; this non-citizen approach is further accentuated by our insular (not to say carefree) temperament and it is therefore important to develop initiatives related to recycling.

The idea is to recycle used veils of round hulls around a project that would consist of recovering used sails from big yoles and baby yoles and giving them a second life by making various accessories.



This transformation would be performed our young people, hoping to recycle 80% of the sails and hulls to make unique pieces, we will not see anywhere else. It's also a way to extend the history of pound-robin races in the future. Rest of the skiff and its members on the beach. we take care of collecting them, recovering them for recycling







Result after transformation



### 3.4 Portugal

#### 3.1. Activities Developed During the First Months of the Year 2019

##### 3.1.1. Trail of the Soajo 2019 -24/02/19

Soajo Trail was a Trail Running event that took place on unique landscape courses that invite you to challenge and adventure in full contact with nature.

The promoter was the Sports Academy of Arcos de Valdevez in partnership with the Parish Council of Vila do Soajo and the Arcos de Valdevez Town Hall.

This event aims at the promotion of sports and nature tourism / ecotourism, giving to know the historical, cultural and environmental heritage of our region.

This event was held between the famous Espigueiros and Serra do Soajo, a unique beauty integrated into the mountainous system - the Peneda / Gerês Natural Park.

The test began in the millenarian village- O Soajo.



This proof follows the cooperation protocol signed between EPRALIMA and our cooperating Arcos de Valdevez Municipal Council.

This activity is in line with the concept of ecotourism, which is to practice responsible tourism in the wilderness and bring a benefit to local populations, since the proceeds from this event will be used in the reforestation of the burned areas.

One of our collaborators, Prof. Ana Carolina participated in the event on behalf of Epralima.



### 3.1.2. Hugs to the Forest

More than 1,700 students participated, on Wednesday, March 21, in the "Embrace to the Forest", at Porta do Mezio in the National Park of Peneda Gerês (PNPG), an environmental awareness initiative promoted by the Chamber of Arcos de Valdevez.

In a statement, that municipality said that the action, which covered students of various educational equipment intended "to raise awareness for the preservation of the environment, making them more active participants in the protection of natural values, namely, the PNPG's natural values.

The "Abraço à Floresta" was held at 12:00 at Porta do Mezio, located 13 kilometres from the village of Arcos de Valdevez, and six from the village of Soajo.

Porta do Mezio, one of the five entrances in the PNPG, is a visitor reception structure for that protected area.

During the event, preschool and first cycle students developed activities and planted trees.

Already the students of the second cycle visited the mamoaas, the students of the 7th and 8th years of schooling carried out the Mezio rail and the 9th year went to the Gião.

This initiative arose under the protocol of cooperation signed between EPRALIMA and the Arcos de Valdevez municipality, which aimed to develop actions that disseminate the values of sustainable development.



This initiative was very important because the young people will be our future and will live the

rest of their lives in the environment, so it becomes vital to know the rules and values of preservation and concern for nature.

<https://www.facebook.com/CmavArcosDeValdevez/videos/578667862609592>

### 3.1.3. Project "Caps for the Dinis"

EPRALIMA continues to support those in need of technical assistance, through the Program of Collection of Caps within the school community. The school community by depositing its plastic caps is contributing to the purchase of orthopaedic equipment and treatments for Dinis and the action of recycling is contributing to the environmental and social balance of the community.

This initiative promotes the environmental sensitivity of young people leading them to adopt behavior aimed at ensuring a better environment.

Environmental Awareness aims to inform and clarify people about environmental problems and their possible solutions, seeking to transform citizens into active participants in the protection of natural values. Sensitization is therefore a fundamental component for the reflection of a more sustainable model of society, indispensable for exercising full citizenship, aiming at preserving the environment, this is one of EPRALIMA's missions among young people.

The highlight of this initiative, occurred on 03/05/19, with the delivery of approximately 50kg of caps. This act will be repeated whenever a 50kg weight is reached, so that Dinis can dream again, acquire the orthopaedic equipment and be able to pay for the necessary treatments to assist in mobility.





### 3.1.4. Ecovia Walk (April 12, 19)

#### EPRALIMA promotes walk on the ecovia

On April 12, Epralima employees took a walk along the banks of the river once, one of the many activities included in the school's annual activity plan. This walk aims at sensitizing the school community to the practice of sustainable and responsible tourism. About 50 employees participated in this initiative, making their contribution by collecting traces of plastic and other waste near the riverbed, promoting a better environment and alerting to the practice of responsible tourism that does not harm nature, preserving ecosystems.

The river was once chosen to develop this activity, due to its high natural and scenic value, allowing a responsible use of this resource along the ecovia. It is considered one of the cleanest rivers in Europe.

The walk starts in the village of Sistelo, considered one of the seven wonders of Portugal. The village of Sistelo is part of the natural network and in 2009 this area was classified by UNESCO as a world biosphere reserve.

#### Walking leaflet



Photo of the school community (Epralima) in the village of Sistelo

Along the banks of the river once and in a way to sustain the movement of lands, preserving the ecovia, were used environmentally friendly materials and that are mixed with the vegetation, according to the example shown in the picture below.









During the course, the garbage was collected. We were surprised by the positive, since there was little waste to collect. We conclude that the visitors of this ecovia are friends of the environment and people aware of environmental issues. We aim, next year, when we repeat the activity, of not finding any "abandoned" waste. The world is changing mentalities and environmental problems have to be part of this change.

### 3.2. Local Ecotourism Project

"Quinta Lamosa - Ecotourism, accommodation, rural and nature tourism and activities in the Peneda-Gerês National Park, near the village of Sistelo a few meters from the catwalks of the Ecovia do Vez. Hiking, biking and horseback riding along natural trails around the property and water sports such as canoeing or stand-up paddle on the River Vez. All around the Quinta Lamosa and the village of Sistelo, the small Portuguese Tibet as many fondly call it. Rest in Gerês and in the stunning scenic environment of its unique nature." (<https://quintalamosa.com>)



As we can see from the image, ecotourism is promoted in Arcos de Valdevez, as an example we have the Quinta Lamosa, advertised on the ecovia.







*Quinta da lamosa-Casa do Espigueiro 1      Quinta da Lamosa-Casa da Árvore*

### 3.5 Greece

#### Ecotourism adventure

#### Workshop: How to plan your eco-trip?

Travelling was always present in the life of human beings, first travels or moving were for the fertile land, food, water and other sources. When we talk about travelling for fun and vacation its development increased with the industrial revolution and with the development of means of transportation. Development of tourism still lasts, but how much did we improve? And did we improve at all? Since people (we) are still not aware of eco-way of travelling and usually we all just follow the crowd, we got to the point of mass tourism that involves tens of thousands of people going to the same places often at the same time of year and usually has a lot of negative impacts on environment, local society, flora and fauna, and also it has a big impact on global warming. Mass tourism is totally the opposite of ecotourism.

During the workshop that was held in POS4work in Patras, Greece, participants had a chance to plan their trips, talk about travels and also about eco way of traveling. During this workshop an outcome of an EEFFECT were mentioned. EEFFECT was a project whose general objective is to promote the youngsters and adult's environmental education, especially ecotourism education as part of the education for an active citizenship.



The workshop started with an introduction and name game, participants were sitting around round table and each of the participants was supposed to say his/hers name and favourite travel destination. This short name game was at the beginning so that participants can meet each other and maybe think of with whom they would like to travel according to the same interests in the destination.

Following task for the participants was to plan a trip, so in small groups of two, participants planned their trips to the dream destination.

Instructions: In pairs with the help of internet participants were supposed to plan a trip with unlimited budget and time, following the question from the box below.

Aim: Objective of this role play is to give participants, in this case travelers the freedom of planning their travels. By giving unlimited budget and time we wanted to see how many participants will remember to pay attention on ecology and how many participants will choose eco way of travelling.

Task	Your answer	Explanation and prices
Destination (Where are you going?)		
Way of travelling (How will you get there?)		

Accommodation (Where will you stay?)		
Food (What will you eat, where will you eat...?)		
Places to visit (What will you visit? How will you visit, by yourself, by guided tour, by a local guide...?)		
Local transport (What kind of transport will you use?)		
Interaction with locals (Would you like to meet local people? How will you make contact with them?)		
Souvenirs*optional*(Will you buy some souvenirs, what will you buy and where will you buy them?)		

Considering souvenirs, most of the participants were focused on handcrafted things made by local people in the place they are visiting. Transportation was mostly with planes, while some of participants used buses and trains for travelling inside of the country they are visiting. Beside trip planning participants also tried to answer following questions -what is ecotourism and why is it so important?

After watching a [video](#) which presents 10 essential 'rules' how to be an eco-traveller, discussion developed even further on the core of ecotourism, are we already an eco-travelers, what are the pros and cons of ecotourism, it was also mentioned the development of ecotourism in Greece.

At the end the conclusion was made that if you want to be the sustainable traveller you have to live a sustainable life as well.



Later on, while discussing our choices in the group and presenting trip plans, we had a chance to see that most of the participants were talking about eating local food and interacting with local, while travelling and accommodation was not so much in the focus in the meaning of ecotourism.

## CHAPTER IV

### Ecotourism guide for partner regions

#### 4.1 Italy

##### Benefits of sustainable tourism

Tourism is an enormous and widespread industry. It is found all over the world, so its impacts, social, economic, and environmental, are also worldwide. These impacts can be positive, doing good, or negative, doing harm.

Sustainable tourism usually aims to have minimal negative impacts, to minimize harm, and to optimize economic benefits. Ecotourism is usually conducted in largely untouched natural areas, which tend to be both environmentally and often socially sensitive (especially if local indigenous groups are involved), so its potential impacts can be even greater, for good or ill. Ecotourism aims to extend the positive impacts, through a special focus on conservation, benefits for host populations, and the education of visitors.

Responsible tourism in Italy seems to have an increasingly solid underpinning, even if red tape sometimes makes progress slow. Popular tourist areas are making genuine attempts to reduce carbon emissions through energy conservation, recycling and cutting waste and pollution. A scheme in the Dolomites, for example, has seen only cable cars and methane-powered buses allowed as daytime transport, while hotels vie for green credibility and food comes as “zero km” as possible.

The preservation of regional culture, meanwhile, is proudly promoted via geographic denomination of traditional product, boosting agritourism’s and encouraging local crafts.

Efforts are also being made to draw visitors away from crowded destinations such as Tuscany to lesser-known areas to both reduce infrastructure strain and spread economic benefits more widely.

Italy is a country where historic cities and towns probably provide the major tourist draw, rather than its distinctive array of national parks and other areas of natural wonder, from the wolf-roamed Apennine hills to Sardinia's untamed interior. Years of austerity have also increasingly drawn people towards urban centres in search of

scarce work opportunities. The preservation of rural communities is therefore a pressing need as small-scale farming, country crafts and other rural activities become increasingly difficult to earn a living from.



This is where sustainable tourism plays an increasing role in providing vital economic support and demonstrating continuing interest in rural lifestyles that offers communities and individuals encouragement that this is a good way forward.

So, ecotourism ideally tries to benefit the environment in a positive way, through protection and conservation. It can also revitalize the social structure or culture of the community



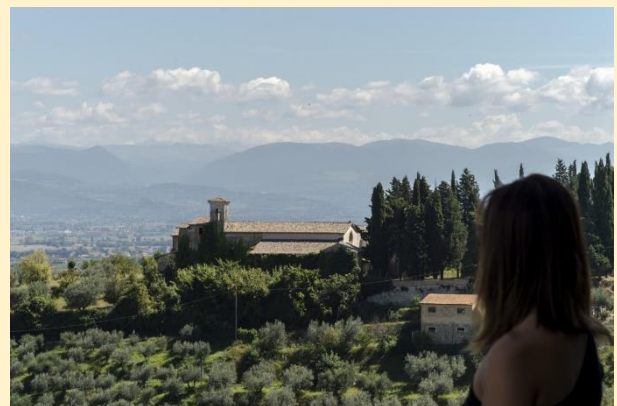
where it is practised and contribute to the economic well-being of the local community.



The **Slow Food movement** has drawn international attention to Italy as a place where food is still linked closely to its terroir – the land it springs from and the people who produce it – and culinary tours of Italy tap into that passion. Agritourism breaks are also enjoying a welcome expansion from their previous heartland of Tuscany into neighbouring Umbria and further afield to places like Cantabria and Sardinia. Holidays that give visitors a chance to actively engage with locals and traditional lifestyles – from crafts folk to fishermen – also provide vital support, helping preserve rural landscape, traditions and communities – a vital and thoroughly enjoyable way for tourists to help pay for the Italian landscapes and ways of life they love.



For the development of sustainable tourism, it is important first and foremost to make tourists aware of the enjoyment of Italy's cultural, natural, historical and artistic heritage, which can be achieved through the promotion of destinations “off the beaten path” or through the promotion of alternatives itineraries and a sustainable use of the territory.



The promotion of sustainable tourism or ecotourism could be helpful to **differentiate** the tourist offer of an area or a particular tourist destination, contributing to **increase the**

**competitiveness of tourist destinations** in general, and to **increase the value of mature destinations**.

In particular, this type of tourism can contribute to favouring the **deseasonalisation of tourist flows** of a tourist destination, but also to **improve the loyalty of tourists, encouraging them to return in the same place**.

As a result, there will be a **growth in the quality and skills of the tourist offer**, which will be pushed to provide services of ever higher quality, as well as adequately trained personnel.

It will therefore derive **benefits for the whole territory, also in economic terms, with an increase in income opportunities** for:

- for service companies.
- for subjects not directly involved in the tourism sector.

Improving and enhancing the cultural offer is also an important factor to encouraging the process of **social inclusion of the population**, that can become an active part in tourist planning and more inclined to welcome tourists.

### Tips for a responsible tourist

In order to improve a tourism that would be sustainable for the environment and for local populations, it would be enough for every visitor to commit himself to respecting a few simple rules and having some small precautions. Some tips are clearly similar and applicable to any potential tourist destination, but for some particular ecotourist environments/destinations you may need to respect some more rules, so that the environment itself is preserved in the best way and is not distorted due to a tourism irresponsible, keeping its identity intact, which is the main attraction of the destinations of this type of tourism.



1. **Before travelling, read, study, do your homework!** It doesn't take much to be prepared when traveling: read a book, rent a travel guide at your city library or watch a documentary about the country you're going to visit, then **learn some basic words of the local language** (*hello, please, thanks...* trust me, people will thank your effort with huge smiles!). Also, look online for the local tour-operators organizing excursions and daytrips, and go for one operating in a responsible way. On site, try and **talk to some locals** about the culture and the country traditions.
2. Reach, if possible, your destination by train or using car sharing. At destination, avoid as much as possible taxis and cars: local buses, bikes and simply walking are eco-sustainable transportation solutions, inexpensive and often more fulfilling.
3. Stay in **agritourisms, campsites or rent a house** inland generating a source of income for the local population and promoting sustainable development of the area. Stay in structures located at a **sustainable distance from the beaches and protected areas**.
4. Ask hospitality to the owners of farms and small craft businesses to get into the spirit of the place and learn how to carry out small activities. **Search for local traditional crafts/cuisine activities and workshops**, to live and enriching experience.
5. Respect the rules for the **separate waste collection** of the place where you are staying
6. Tap water is safe to drink in Italy. Bring **refillable bottles** and reduce your waste.
7. **Save energy and cut CO2** by switching off lights, fans and air conditioning when you are out of your room. Make sure your appliances are fully turned off and don't leave any chargers plugged in when not in use.
8. Buy local food and drink products whenever possible – look for

denominations like DOP, IGT, DOC, DOCG on products, as they indicate it is good quality and locally produced. If possible, buy zero km products directly from the farmer.

9. Eat in **smaller restaurants** and avoid places where the menus come with pictures of the food – it's not a good sign... Find places where the locals go and follow them! Prefer restaurants that use organic products from the territory on the menu.
10. Practice **outdoor activities** to get in direct contact with nature also practicing sports such as trekking, hiking, cycling, horse riding and rafting.
11. Familiarise yourself with the **rules for different parks or protected areas**. You may be expected to stick to the main trails, wild camping may not be allowed at all or only following certain guidelines, and bathing in rivers or lakes is not always permitted. Respect the environment and don't destroy it: do not pick up 'souvenirs' from national parks or archaeological sites. **Don't abandon your garbage**: keep it with you until you find a trash can and recycle, when possible. These rules are there to preserve the biodiversity and the natural beauty – please obey them!
12. Plan excursions to archaeological sites and historic villages to learn about local traditions relying on **local accredited guides**.
13. If visiting churches or convents, dress respectfully – no beachwear and not too much flesh on display.
14. Buy souvenirs that enhance **local craftsmanship**, contributing to the local economy.
15. When you go back home, **distribute your responsible travel tips**. In addition to telling family and friends about the wonderful memories you made, also consider sharing tips on how they too can positively impact the World while having an amazing journey. **Share your photos**.

Photos can say a thousand words. Use your social media or blog.

### Strengths and weaknesses analysis for the development and promotion of ecotourism

Umbria is located in central Italy and it is known for its beautiful landscapes, traditions, history, cultural heritage and high-value culinary products, such as wine, olive oil and truffle.

Umbria has a various landscape: it is surrounded in north, east and south-east area by the Apennines, but the territory is mainly hilly. The Sibillini Mountains are the most-known National Park, with

Furthermore, we cannot forget the Trasimeno Lake, the Tiber river valley and the Marmore waterfall.

Despite the wealth of natural and cultural resources that can promote the development of (eco)tourism, there are many critical issues and weaknesses that can be found and can sometimes limit it.

#### Strengths

- **Heritage** is a priceless treasure to Italy's tourism industry. Heritage tourism contribute numerous tourist revenue to the country and also spread Italian brilliant art and culture to tourists from all over the world
- Umbria has an extremely rich and important **environmental heritage**.
- Good presence of **protected natural areas**
- High presence of **historical and cultural resources** and rich architectural heritage
- Good ability to attract tourist flows
- **High quality of life**
- Presence of **folklore and cultural events** known at regional and national level
- Tourist offer also differentiated in the rural area
- **Quality of gastronomy and typical products**



## Weaknesses

- **Lack of national funding and international support**, in particular we can note a scarcity of resources allocated to culture
- **Lack of skilled experts** in the tourism sector. Current tourism training is inadequate for Italy's positioning on the market and for the ambition to offer quality Italian tourism to international tourists
- **Lack of inter-territorial and inter-regional cultural itineraries**, able to promote similar and close territories, but referring to different administrations, as a whole touristic product.
- **Low degree of accessibility** in terms of public and private transport (especially railways and airplanes)
- Low or inadequate presence of **road infrastructures** in some parts of the region
- High degree of "**seasonality**" of tourist flows and **low permanence** in the territory
- Shortcomings in the **tourist services** sector
- **Lack of coordinated communication initiatives** at the local level and integrated with regional actions

## Threats

- **Poor innovation** in the territorial cultural offer
- Greater **competitiveness of the neighbouring areas** in terms of tourism
- Proximity to regions such as Lazio and Tuscany
- **Poor protection and conservation** of the rich heritage
- Increasing competitiveness of neighbouring areas, with better infrastructures and from abroad

- **Progressive degradation of the environment and the landscape** due to the abandonment of agricultural activities in mountain areas and disadvantaged areas

- **Seasonality of tourist movements**

## Opportunities

- The heritage has an exceptional consistency of quality, quantity and geographical diffusion
- **Promote an integrated tourism services** to develop a sustainable tourism
- **Growth in tourist demand in rural and naturalistic areas**
- **Use of ITC and multimedia** to enhance and qualify the tourism offer, as well as for reaching a wider number of potential visitors
- **Creation of packages** and integrated culture-environment-events paths
- A great opportunity for the Municipality of San Venanzo can be represented from the recent **recognition as MAB Unesco Site**

## The future goals

In recent years, there has been a remarkable growth in particular segments of tourism demand, closely linked to local typical productions and the environment (food and wine tourism, nature, education/environment, cycle and equitourism, hiking, etc.).

The interventions aimed at enhancing the image of the territory and the typical agro-food products are an important tool to support the local tourist offer and to encourage the visitor to increase their stay in the area.

Therefore, the goal is to protect the landscape and enhance it under the "perceptive" aspect, and at the same time promote its image through the enhancement of the typical productions that identify it.

## 4.2 Romania

### Abstract:

Motto: *"Ecological and economic deficits are now shaping not only our future, but our present. The future is here."* Lester R. Brown (World on the Edge)

Romania has an outstanding natural and cultural heritage which is not yet valorised to its full potential through ecotourism. In order to do so, the existence of green tourism businesses is not enough to assure authentic ecotourism experiences. Ecotourism principles and guidelines need to be applied and reinforced by all stakeholders: businesses, governmental authorities and NGOs, with the aim of developing ecotourism destinations. In this context, the present paper uses a case study approach to outline the challenges of developing these ecotourism destinations in Romania. Several initiatives and projects are outlined as well as their work in progress.

In the last years, the tendency in the tourism industry was that of return towards nature and towards the authentic cultural values. Among all the forms of tourism, ecotourism distinguishes itself through the strongest connection with the natural and cultural environment, representing the most valuable form of manifestation of sustainable tourism, with the fastest growth rhythm worldwide.

Integrated in the sustainable development, ecotourism involves activities that directly contribute to the nature protection and to keeping the old human creations unaltered.

### Benefits of sustainable tourism

Romania, integral part of the European Union, of the European tourism market is and remains a special case of analysis for any lover of the tourism phenomenon, especially since the economic crisis, the rampant globalization, and not only, provides new opportunities, new metamorphosis to the tourism product, to the attractiveness and to the image of Romanian tourism, to which we all must work to improve it, to give it authenticity and uniqueness, to promote it in a Europe which disputes in a fast rhythm the tourism symbol areas.

Sustainable tourism is not and should not be just a "panacea" of governors. Sustainable tourism interests everyone from:

- various levels of government: regulations, protection of landscapes, legislation, etc.;
- associations and NGOs in the field of tourism: sustaining the tourism phenomenon, examples of good practices, animation for environmental protection, etc.;
- industrial objectives – to adopt new non-polluting and environmental protection practices;
- tourists: to know and apply the Ethical code of tourists (prepared by the WTO), to be responsible towards the environment and tourist destinations, to highlight and their value. Also to be noted is the Ecotourist's Guide drawn by the Public Policy Unit of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, which prepared this guide which presents simple and concrete practical tools, available for every tourist or any citizen to reduce the negative environmental impact; to have an eco-responsible behavior we must change our attitudes and habits at individual and group level.
- local population: which needs to show hospitality, knowledge of the tourist's code, it itself being involved in actions to safeguard and enhance the environment;
- up to all components of the tourism industry: starting with the tourist destination, regardless of size, to the types of tourism.

Sustainable tourism seeks not only the protection of the environment. When we say sustainable development, we say impacts (either environmental or socio-cultural, etc.), and sustainable development requires sustainable management of these impacts. It is a matter of achieving balance and harmony in a durable (even thriving) view on the long run.

Sustainable tourism is not a tourism product that can be sold to tourists. Sustainable tourism is a way to design, plan and manage sustainable tourism activities. At the same time, it implies a change in the management style, in behavior, attitudes and habits.

There are no "recipes" for success in the development of sustainable tourism, but we can take into account several "tracks" of intervention:

- promoting an action plan in partnership with "key" players in the development of

the tourism phenomenon, including the involvement of industry leaders;

- demystifying the meaning of sustainable development;
- communication in sustainable development;
- integration of sustainable development as a factor in the capitalization of the tourism industry and betting on the strong links between quality and sustainable tourism;
- integrating sustainable development into the training of future “managers” of the tourism phenomenon;
- recognition and promotion of successful cases of sustainable development;
- tourism education for sustainable development to make the best choices in the development of the tourism act.

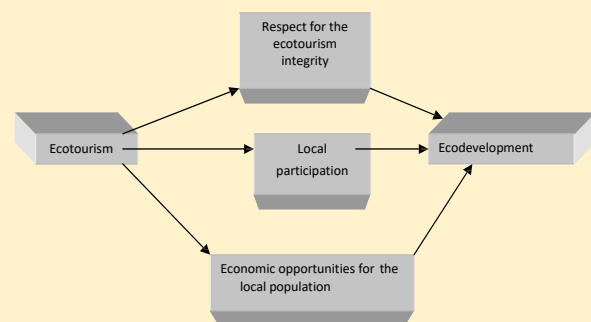
Tourism can contribute to sustainable development of territories because the territories themselves fall into an interactive, integrated and responsible relationship with the economic, social and natural environment of which they are dependent. Of course, much remains to be done, because the unbalancing, destabilizing and resistant to change effects, unfortunately, still persist, despite the massive involvement of the local community to a sustainable development. In sustainable development, tourism plays a vital role contributing highly to the economic relaunching and recovery of Romania. Raising the tourism product from the consecrated values to those corresponding to standards and preferences of foreign tourists means to initiate and promote actions to include, on the one hand, the undergoing of education and training processes of a mentality appropriate to the current type of development, and, on the other hand, increasing sustainable development in tourism regions.

In a global world one must live globally. Or integration is impossible without learning the rules of world tourism, without learning and observing the code of conduct. Especially one is not allowed to ignore that the effect of tourism looks only to the future. The present's sensations get sublimated, memories are of the past: a past that will determine future action. Tourism is not only a school for others, but determines how we live with others, what attitude we have. Our world, the one created by the producers of tourism is a global one, a single ethnicity: the

human race presented in its specificity, item by item for diversity.

Ecotourism supposes carrying out the tourism activities in an environment with landscapes unaltered by pollution and at the same time reassuring. It represents a model of sustainable exploitation of the tourism resource, due to the minimizing of the negative effects on the environment.

Figure 1. emphasizes the elements involved in developing ecotourism.



**Figure. 1. The elements involved in the ecotourism development**

**Source: F. W. Theobald (1998), *Global Tourism*, Butterworth Heinemann, Great Britain, pg.201**

The first elements involved in the ecotourism development, the **respect for the ecosystem integrity**, aims at emphasizing the importance of the environment in supporting tourism, maintaining the level of development at a small scale under the control and under the local management, using a specific local development, the compatibility of the development plan with the environment, using materials, know-how and local working force, using facilities and equipment which conserve the energy, practicing the recycling, capitalization and national use of resources, preserving vegetation, reducing the deforestations, using alternative, sustainable technologies.

**Local participation**, the second important element for developing ecotourism, aims at promoting the local participation as much as possible, creating opportunities for the host population, the transfer of property to the local community and its administration, creating opportunities for the group projects and local population as regards the control and administration of natural valuable resources, stipulating some alternative local measures, promoting the socio-cultural “pride” through the



organization of programs by the local community, complying with the local ideology and inheritance, stipulating opportunities for the interaction between the local population and visitors.

Regarding the third element involved in developing ecotourism, respectively **economic opportunities for the local community**, they refer to coordinating all the elements with the purpose of optimizing the benefits of the local economy, creating jobs for the host population, guaranteeing and protecting the local population, including the communities' ideas in the political decisions, the equitable distribution of the economic benefits, recognizing the local efforts/services, using the local materials and working force to keep the money into the local economy, keeping a decentralized management.

In all the tourism regions on the globe, the ecotourism development mainly aims at four aspects:

Economic, ecological, social and cultural, aspects emphasized through table 1.

<b>The main aspects of ecotourism</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing the degree of capitalization of resources, especially the least known ones in order to achieve a reduction of the pressure exerted on the intensely exploited resources.</li> </ul>
	<b>Ecological</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing and eliminating waste – if possible, recycling them; a more rational use of all the resources</li> </ul>

	<b>Social</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintaining some occupations, traditional professions of the inhabitants in the areas, which determine the increase of the number of jobs by attracting the population into practicing different forms of tourism</li> </ul>
	<b>Cultural</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capitalizing the civilization, art and culture elements that express a certain cultural identity and which develop the spirit of tolerance</li> </ul>

We can say that ecotourism represents the future of tourism only if combined with a rational, strong planning and management. It helps promoting actions for improving nature, the social, the cultural and the economic, for supporting the conservation efforts.

By ecotourism, the tourists are culturized through their involvement in direct experiences, and the ecological education of all the categories involved in the tourism activities (local community, governmental and non-governmental organizations and economic agencies).

Regarding ecotourism, OMT adopted a strategy that mentions the following:

The theories that ecotourism is based on, must be part of the tourist patrimony of the planet,

being considered of world interest; the territories with traditional lifestyles of the local populations must be respected with a special rigor;

- By ecotourism we are aiming at minimizing the negative effects on the local and natural environment, and on the local population as well.
- Ecotourism contributes to administering the protected spaces and improving the relationship between the local communities and the persons authorized to administer these protected spaces;
- Ecotourism favours an interaction between the host population and the tourists, determining a real interest for a sustainable development and protection of the natural area, both in the states which provide tourists and in the hosting countries;
- Ecotourism supposes extending the spectre of traditional economic activities (Agriculture, breeding of animals, fishing), without replacing them however;
- The local populations and the employees in the tourism industry must use the natural spaces in a sustainable manner and appreciate the natural and cultural valuable objectives.

Therefore, we ascertain that the main objective that ecotourism proposes is supplying a high-quality tourism in the conditions of protecting the natural areas, involving the host population and stimulating the local economies. We consider that these desiderates can be achieved by increasing the resources found in conservation, by achieving the environment education and involving the local authorities.

### **Tips for a responsible tourist**

While it remains a captivating time capsule of unspoilt nature and rural tradition, key Romania responsible tourism issues involve protecting these precious assets to avoid them being cheapened by commercialization or damaged by careless drives for modernity. Rural tourism is a vital supporter of wonderful traditions at every level - supporting characterful accommodation rather than bland hotels, encouraging protection of local species and environments, plus bolstering local crafts.

Animal welfare is another issue where Romania can benefit from responsible tourist input. In

particular, show your distaste at caged or performing bears, and pointedly shun places that have them. Visit/support the marvellous Liberty sanctuary and show an interest in other wildlife – and also native flora. All this shows your awareness of Romania responsible tourism issues.

### **Top 10 Tips for Environmentally Friendly Travel**

#### **1. Don't Bag It**

You want memories of your holiday to last for years but 500 years is way too long. Plastic bags can take up to 500 years to biodegrade so take a re-useable shopping bag with you when you go to local markets.

#### **2. Pack Light**

Every kilo counts when flying. The more a plane weighs, the more carbon emissions it produces. Pack only what you need - the environment will thank you.

#### **3. Share the Load**

Taking public transport is one of the best things you can do for the environment when traveling. It means you're not creating any additional carbon emissions from private transport. It will also add to your travel experience, providing you with opportunities to interact with locals.

#### **4. Travel Overland**

Cut out just one five-hour flight and your carbon footprint will be a tonne lighter. And you'll get to see more of the countryside too!

#### **5. Enjoy a Near Beer**

Drink a locally brewed beer and not only will you probably enjoy a high-quality ale, but your drink can be low-carbon by cutting down on 'beer mileage'. This applies to eating local produce too. Let your taste buds be adventurous - it's carbon friendly!

#### **6. Be at Home in a Hotel**

A great tip is to remember to act in a hotel like you would at home - avoid getting clean towels when not necessary, don't have long showers and something frequently forgotten is to turn off TV, lights and aircon when you leave the room.

#### **7. Choose a Carbon Offset Adventure**

Not all carbon emissions can be avoided whilst traveling. Intrepid Travel has a range of adventures that it has calculated the carbon emissions from, reduced wherever possible and offset what remains. The emissions from transport, accommodation, activities and waste

have been accounted for and the cost of offsetting is included in the cost of the trip.

#### **8. Avoid Bottled Water**

Plastic bottles account for a lot of waste. Intrepid Travel has worked with hotels in Asia to install water filters that travellers can use to fill re-useable bottles with safe water.

#### **9. Stick to the Path**

When hiking, always stay on marked trails and maintain a safe distance from any animals you encounter. Going off the beaten path could mean you trample on protected or endangered plants.

#### **10. Power in Numbers**

Smaller groups tend to have less of an environmental impact so travel with a small group tour operator that's environmentally responsible. Before you book, ask what size the group will be. While you've got their attention, why not also ask how the operator gives back to the community you'll be visiting.

### **RESPONSIBLE TOURISM TIPS**

Romanians can exhibit what can seem surprising candour and lack of conformity to some social 'rules' familiar to Western European visitors. People will happily smoke, smoke and talk where they aren't technically supposed to. You may also be surprised at what may seem overly personal questioning about your views on all kinds of subjects, how much you earn and other things. But they aren't being rude – it's just part of a Romanian belief in being open about what you think so they can understand where you're coming from!

At Responsible Travel, we do not support keeping dolphins in captivity. On Romania's Black Sea coast there is a dolphinarium where these creatures perform for tourists several times daily - which we urge you not to visit. For more information on our stance, and on where to see these marine mammals in the wild, take a look at our Dolphin watching guide: <https://www.responsibletravel.com/holidays/dolphin-watching/travel-guide>.

### **Strengths and weaknesses analysis for the development and promotion of ecotourism in partner regions.**

At the national level, ecotourism is at an incipient stage characterized through the existence of ecotourism “nuclei” in different areas of the

country. An important factor for supporting the ecotourism activities is represented by the increased interest for this type of activity. An increasing number of tourists tend to practice ecotourism and want to get involved in this sense, into nature conserving actions, for appreciating and promoting the traditional way of life, the valuable customs and traditions.

Romania has a huge potential as regards ecotourism, since it has the highest density of large carnivores from Europe (half the continental population of bears, a third of the wolves and a third of lynxes), pastoral villages and towns, extended fields, the Danube Delta (hosting 60% of the total population of dwarf cormorants at the world level).

From the beaches of the Black Sea to the skiing and mountain hikes and tourism based on nature in the Danube Delta, the natural patrimony of Romania offers unlimited opportunities for tourists, in general and ecotourism, especially. We have the seventh part of the world cultural inheritance sites, including the painted monasteries in Bucovina, the historical citadel of Bucovina, the Dacian citadels of Orăştie Mountains, Transylvania, a famous world because of its association with the legend of Dracula. The multitude of architectonic styles and the rich literary history are reflected in an ethnic mixture of Romanians, Hungarians, Ukrainians, Russians and Turkish. A different and unique population like the country landscapes together with a rich history offers the visitors an incursion into the present and past of Europe.

### **STRONG POINTS**

- The diversity of natural tourism resources (relief and special landscapes), wild areas unaffected by the man's intervention;
- The existence of a large number of protected areas (national, natural parks and reservations) included in the European network the Nature 2000;
- The Biodiversity present in all the areas – special flora and fauna (the population of large carnivores is recognized at the national and international level), with unique species in Europe;
- The existence of some tourism objectives



included on the list of UNESCO world patrimony (the monasteries with an exterior fresco) situated in the parks;

- Traditional manner of life and agricultural practices;
- Developing the capacity of accommodation in the agritourism pensions;
- The existence of important mineral sources both from the quantitative point of view and as regards the facilities offered by the balneo-climatic resorts;
- The diversity of ecological agro-alimentary products;
- Reduced pollution in the majority of rural areas;
- Traditional cuisine and regional specialties;
- The existence of an ethnographic and folkloric thesaurus of great originality with a rich calendar of traditional fairs and folkloric manifestations for the entire duration of the year;
- The traditional architecture and the special aspect of the country- side households from different areas of the country

#### **WEAK POINTS**

- The lack of a unitary system for administering the protected areas that allows to practice ecotourism in these areas;
- Reduced level of education of tourists and the population in the rural environment in view of practicing ecotourism;
- Insufficient exploitation of the natural and historical monuments;
- The treatment units afferent to balneary resorts have a high degree of attrition and non-adaptation to the European standards;
- The lack of an organized system of indicators for the tourism objectives and itineraries;
- Overexploitation of natural resources through inadequate grazing, land clearing, poach, uncontrolled tourism;
- The public transport to the tourism objectives is insufficiently organized and promoted;
- The cost of flights to Romania is high compared to other countries;
- The decrease of the number of foreign tourists who visit our country;
- The reduced use of the accommodation capacity (27.2 %) and the duration of sojourn in the country in relation with the existent tourism potential;
- The insufficient development/exploitation of

the recreation infrastructure;

- Low degree of the population occupied in tourism and the reduced training level of the guides from the ecotourism/specialty personnel who administers the accommodation structures;
- The absence of a fair in ecotourism;
- The inefficient ecologization of tourism areas;
- The lack of strategies that ensure the promotion of ecotourism in the protected areas.

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

- High international interest for ecotourism, agritourism, rural tourism, adventure tourism;
- Very good perspectives for exploiting the mountain areas for the entire duration of the year by hiking, equitation, alpinism, extreme sports, ski;
- The climate, with soft winters and cold summers, favourable for the tourist activity during the year;
- The increase of the number of tourists who have ecotourism as motivation;
- Implementation of tourism infrastructure projects by the local administration in some regions;
- The existence of international airports near areas of interest for ecotourism;
- The existence of a basic research, development and innovation infrastructure;
- The possibility to attract tourists and foreign investors by improving the cities' image, exploiting the historical, cultural, spiritual and traditional inheritance;
- Promoting some events based on "nature calendars" (the groan of deer, the blossoming of the mountain peony etc.)
- The existence of raw materials (construction and wood materials) capable to attract foreign investors;
- The possibility for the airports to support the business environment and become starting point for the tourism itineraries, through the airports' modernization;
- The forest regime, legally regulated, can have favourable effects on the environment and tourism;
- The existence of the legislative framework which allows the development of the protected areas and their conservation;
- The presence of webs in ecotourism within the Internet network.

## **THREATS**

- Strong competition at the destination level – external tourism destinations at similar prices and superior conditions;
- Degradation of the protected areas through the irrational exploitation of the natural resources and the non-ecological and irresponsible tourism;
- The infrastructure of utilities (water, sewage, waste management) inexistent or weakly developed in the rural areas;
- The transport infrastructure not adapted to the community standards;
- The inadequate image of Romania can affect its choice as a tourism destination;
- The urbanization of rural population involving the loss of authenticity and the local specificity;
- The lack of awareness regarding the role of introducing an environmental management system in the tourism sector;
- The existence of some areas predisposed to natural disasters (floods, landslides)
- The migration of the working force abroad;
- The continual growth of the poverty degree in some important regions for ecotourism;
- Loss of customs and traditions;
- Extending the built-up areas in the immediate neighbouring areas of the protected natural areas;
- The instability of the national currency;
- Precarious emergency medical services;
- Economic changes on the international plan;
- The intensification of the economical - financial crisis.

As a conclusion, we consider that practicing ecotourism, as an integrant part of the sustainable tourism development, is the most beneficial path to follow, apt to ensure a safe and unaltered environment, especially for the future generations. In this context, it represents a process whose development can be achieved without the degradation or exhausting of resources that make the existence of life on earth possible.

## **4.3 France**

### **Benefits of sustainable tourism**

#### **Advantages & disadvantages of ecotourism**

The International Tourism Company (TIES) defines eco-tourism as "Responsible natural spaces that preserve the environment and improve the wellbeing of local populations. A relatively new travel model, eco-tourism is trying to reduce the negative human impact on sensitive ecosystems, fragile crops and Third World economies. However, the benefits of eco-tourism remain mainly theoretical while disadvantages continue to plague eco-tourism as they do for the traditional tourism.

#### **Environmental impact**



The negative environmental impact of tourism on ecosystems creates a need for more enlightened tourism models. Advantages and disadvantages remain.

According to **TheBenefitsofEcotourism.com**, eco-tourism is minimizing the negative effects of tourism on local communities and the environment. If not properly monitored, the ecotourism industry cannot behave better than traditional tourism. According to TIES, eco-tourism is a "major threat" to natural habitats. BenefitsofEcotourism.com attests that, in reality, natural resources and ecosystems "rarely" enjoy preservation because the interests of companies in building tourist attractions further endanger the environment.



**Eco-tourism aspires to give indigenous peoples the opportunity to realize equitable compensation and raise them to extreme poverty.**

According to [BenefitsofEcotourism.com](http://BenefitsofEcotourism.com), ecotourism dollars could create an environment in which local residents enjoy the economic benefits of stretching natural resources.

In reality, investors and corporations earn financially and local poverty is often not mitigated.



When ecotourism agents are legitimate, ties ensure that ecotourism respects international labour standards and protects resources for future generations.

Unfortunately, Benefits of Tourism warns that tourism regimes abound. Be careful when choosing an ecotourism travel agent. Ask questions to make sure about the legitimate concern of the environmental officer and crops.

#### **Independent study demonstrates the social benefits of the FSC label**

FSC-certified forests for sustainable management offer more social benefits to local communities than non-certified forests, according to a new study of forest concessions in the Congo Basin by

the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR).

"This study in the Congo Basin proves that the Forest Stewardship Council's FSC certification engages logging companies in the path of remarkable social progress," said CIFOR Scientific Officer Paolo Cerutti.

Conducted in 2013-2014 in three countries of the Congo Basin - Cameroon, Gabon and Republic of Congo - this study supported by the WWF covers nine FSC-certified concessions and nine non-certified concessions. Its purpose is to compare the resulting social impacts of forest company practices on local communities. The study looks at indicators such as the living conditions of employees and their working conditions, the equitable distribution of resources, the presence of social infrastructure such as schools, or community buildings, or the respect of customary rights such as than agriculture and hunting.

This study is the first of its kind to specifically examine the social impacts of FSC certification. It demonstrates how the quality of life has improved in the living environment around FSC-certified concessions since logging companies are pursuing a demanding and responsible forest management, in accordance with FSC certification and audited by an independent third party.

In addition, the study reveals that these positive social outcomes result from FSC-certified forest companies maintaining a permanent channel of communication with local populations and fair financial support for development projects, unlike the non-certified concessions of the Basin.

In the light of the results of this study in the Congo Basin, WWF Forest Director Rod Taylor reaffirms WWF's commitment to support FSC certification. "This report confirms that FSC certification leads forest companies to adopt much more proactive social practices, and that this benefits communities living in and around certified forest concessions."

However, in terms of customary rights and access rights to forest resources such as agriculture and hunting or non-timber products, the study did not reveal any significant differences between certified and non-certified concessions. The study also highlighted a need to ensure that the



benefits of certification for communities are maintained.

According to the study, social benefits could be further improved if logging companies, certification bodies and the FSC went further in setting up clear written dispute resolution procedures, improving performance indicators, and improving Improved career planning to make the forestry industry a more attractive employment sector

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) was established in 1994, and the first certification in the Congo Basin took place in 2005. There are currently some 4.3 million hectares of natural tropical forest under FSC certification. Yet this represents only about 10% of all logging concessions in the sub-region.

There is an undeniable need to formalize the protection of a significant part of this region, one of the world's richest forests, both socially and ecologically. Yet the majority of them will remain outside protected areas. Therefore, well-managed selective forest concessions can protect these endangered areas, stop the disappearance of rare or endangered species and benefit the development of local populations. Responsible forest management, which includes both large commercial concessions and community forestry, has a key role to play in conserving global biodiversity, while preventing illegal logging and providing economic and social benefits to the people. of these pools of life.

### **L'ADEME en Martinique**



### **Agence de l'Environnement et de la Maîtrise de l'Énergie**

#### **Renewable energies**

The share of renewable energies in Martinique's final energy consumption is around 7% in 2016. Electricity production is mainly dependent on fossil fuels. The law for the Energy Transition for Green Growth (TEPCV) provides for an energy autonomy of Martinique by 2030. The Multiannual Energy Program (EPP) plans by 2023

a strong development of renewable energies to reach 58 % of electricity production (photovoltaic, wind and biomass).

### **Photovoltaic development in Martinique**

The Multiannual Energy Program (EPP) provides for the development of 90 MegaWatts.



### **Aeolian**

Background in Martinique Wind power is very underdeveloped in Martinique (only one power plant in operation of 1.1 MW in Vauclin), but several...

### **Water energy**

Martinique being an island, it benefits from a potential in energy of the seas. In 2007, the Regional Council of Martinique piloted a study on the thermal energy of the seas

### **Geothermal**

ADEME Martinique has been supporting the development of geothermal energy since the end of the 90s. It has supported numerous projects with its partners.



### **Research and innovation**

ADEME's support activity for Research and Innovation Development is part of the objectives of public policies in favour of energy and the environment, and in particular those of the energy transition.

As an agency of objectives, the ADEME is in charge of the orientation, the programming and the animation of the research in its domains of competences: energy and climate; consumption, materials and waste; landscaping and environments (soils, air).



### **Biomass waste**

In addition to the energy recovery of bagasse, historically used by distilleries for their own needs, biomass but also waste.

### **Hydraulic**

Hydraulic power is currently very little exploited in Martinique, while a potential exists. Only one pico-central is in operation.



### **Tips for a responsible tourist: the WWF strategy**

To better respond to the ecological emergency, WWF France has embarked on a broad review of its framework of analysis and action. The new strategy reflects the changes of the planet and will allow them to meet the great challenges of tomorrow.

#### **The fields of action**

#### **The objectives they pursue**

As part of their new strategy, they are conducting local actions across the world's crucial ecoregions, targeting five global goals.

They want to ensure that the world's most important ocean ecosystems and fishing areas are productive and resilient. In addition, they want the most emblematic and endangered species to be preserved and to evolve freely in the wild. They also advocate for the strengthening of the integrity of the most important forests, and the benefits to the well-being they provide. They are also fighting for food systems to be sustainable in the future and aligned with the criteria of food health. Finally, a global change for a low-carbon future is needed.



### **The levers of action to lead the change**

WWF France is focusing on three key levers to address environmental issues.

First, they act to transform international markets so that goods and services are produced and consumed in a more sustainable way to cope with the entry of 2-3 billion new middle-class consumers over the next 30 years. In addition, they support financial systems which, on the one hand, favour inclusive development and, on the other, the protection of natural assets. Finally, WWF France is attacking the unfair global governance system, where the vast majority of people affected by environmental change remain inaudible and unable to influence policy.



Politics is decisive for the future of our environment. To ensure that environmental concerns are taken into account in policy decisions and legislation, they work with government, policy, business and civil society at local, national and international levels.



### In financial institutions

The global financial system is critical to the future of our planet. By controlling financial flows in sustainable activities, the financial sector can undeniably change markets and bring about environmentally friendly savings.



Markets are one of the key factors in overall resource consumption. To make the market more sustainable, they influence industries and work with businesses to reduce their environmental footprint.

### Analysis of strengths and weaknesses for the development and promotion of ecotourism in the partner regions.

We've been talking a lot about ecotourism for a while. we have the impression that the population is aware of the phenomenon, but the reality is hard to accept. The definition of the term is itself a problem. There are no real plans for ecotourism development. Partial actions that want to respond to identified needs. The difficulty comes from the lack of a local or regional political project. Our association encourages the young people who frequent it to protect the nature reserve The Caravel. Educational outings are the support for training and information.

The recycling of the sails used for the practice of the yole is also a strong axis for taking into account the interest of ecotourism.

## 4.4 Portugal

### Benefits of sustainable tourism



Tourism is one of the economic activities that most depends on the proper understanding and practice of sustainability, especially in destinations that are characterized by natural

and cultural attractions, such as our small town, Arcos de Valdevez, which is part of the only National Park of the country. There is sustainability when the activity is able to harmonize economic results with respect for the environment, social justice and cultural valorisation.

Sustainability may also aim to maintain the status quo of a location, that is, maintain it as it is or improve the existing situation.

Tourism is a life experience, and nothing better than doing it in a healthy and ecologically preserved environment, and where there is respect for human and cultural diversity. If these conditions are not ensured, the location begins to lose its interest and fails to generate economic, social and environmental benefits.

Being environmentally sustainable is much more than being "green". The natural environment is important, but the built environment must also be preserved. We are committed to the preservation and conservation of Portugal's historical and cultural heritage, respecting the rules of use of the resources inherent in our business. We believe that the protection, conservation and management of these assets are essential for the survival and sustainable growth of the tourism industry. Tourism tends to be important for the economic progress of the local community.

However, it is also clear that the link between tourism and economic growth is not automatic. We have to think big. Not only should the community be involved in tourism, but also share with it the financial benefits that are obtained by offering a fair economic performance. We believe



that securing an economic benefit where costs are incurred is an important principle of sustainable development.

We seek to comply with the principles of Sustainable Tourism to create a better travel experience for both tourists and locals. We know that by working close with the community, residents are more likely to see tourism as having a positive impact, eventually developing some pride in it. Because we are aware of their wishes, we work to involve local people, promote cultural exchanges and preserve local traditions.

EPRALIMA with the application for this project ECOTURISMO, is in all its actions in support of sustainable tourism and used and disseminated the good practices of sustainable tourism. It is in its mission to contribute to the competitiveness and sustainable development of our village.

The pursuit of the valorisation of natural attractions, cultural heritage, including gastronomy, handicrafts and other local cultural manifestations and the opportunities generated for communities to benefit from tourism projects are the objectives of EPRALIMA's participation in the venture.

Research and studies show that the tourism economy has produced positive results in the national economy and in the local economy, as can be seen from the numerous investments that have been made in the hotel sector. The example of this is the town of Arcos de Valdevez which in recent years has contributed with a considerable range of rural tourism houses, available to all those who want to enjoy a unique nature in a zone of "good welcoming practices".



Image: Rural Tourism

Since one of the training areas of EPRALIMA is restaurant/bar, we have also contributed to quality as part of our tourism offer and increase the employability and opportunity for the young people of Arcos de Valdevez, thus establishing the population. The number of jobs generated by the hotel industry is another thermometer, which confirms the optimism of businessmen and women and entrepreneurs from national/local tourism.

The growth of the productive chain of tourism is also reflected in educational institutions, where courses are being created to train the sector's workforce, such as the numerous courses that our school (EPRALIMA) has opened in the hotel area.

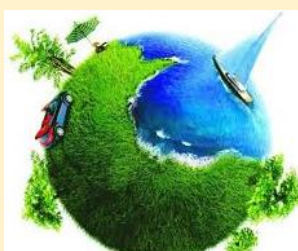
EPRALIMA has accompanied the employability in the sector, through the growing demand of students with training in the area of catering and we are proud to be contributing to the dynamism of the sector and to make part of quality tourism offers, thus increasing employability and opportunity of young people to develop their areas of expertise.



Image: Activity of hotel students

We can add that ecotourism is the tourism sector which requires sustainable environmental and socio-economic practices.

One of the objectives of ecotourism is to generate economic benefits. Ecotourism plays an important role in this regard by creating jobs in the most remote regions that do not benefit from economic development programs. Even when only a few jobs are created, it can have great significance at local level. Economic impacts may increase political and financial support for conservation and preservation and thus enable protected areas to be maintained. The economic impacts can be direct, for example, when the tourist makes an expense in a restaurant, indirect, when the restaurant makes the purchase of goods and food to other companies and induced, when restaurant employees are going to spend part of their wages on goods and services. Job creation and income through the sale of handicrafts are important economic benefits for local communities. Ecotourism can thus stimulate sustainable economic development in smaller regions, as ecotourists prefer to consume local products, thereby supporting local communities.



### Tips for a Responsible Tourist



If you want to be a responsible ecotourist/tourist do not forget to do your homework. Before booking your vacation, look for information on the internet or information guides

about the destination that you have in mind to visit.

1. When choosing a direct flight, the tourist saves time and reduces the carbon emissions;
2. Avoid staying in establishments built in Permanent Preservation Areas, such as riverbanks, lakes and beaches, steep hillsides or steep slopes, and other fragile ecosystems. Another tip is to stay in hotels near the attractions you want to visit to save on transportation and reduce the emission of pollutants and make sure that it presents an environmental quality certificate;
3. Look for routes that allow you to get to know the culture and the natural beauty and experience the local rhythm and if possible hire a local guide, you will get to know the history and local customs better;
4. Take a reusable water bottle instead of buying disposable bottles and increase waste production;
5. In natural environments, collect the garbage you produce;
6. Take special care with plastic bags on the beach, they can fly and be ingested by wildlife;
7. Give preference to public transport, rent a bicycle or walk on foot, so in addition to more easily connect with the locals and get to know them better, helps the environment with the lowest carbon production and, if you rent a car, choose the most economical model possible to reduce fuel consumption;

8. When packing choose clothes that do not need to be ironed, it is possible to reduce energy consumption;
9. When shopping during the trip, give preference to local products, this is a way to contribute to the generation of jobs and increase the income of the residents;
10. To save water just ask to change towels and bed linen in the hotel if it is really necessary;
11. Respect the legislation and the limits of the premises visited;
12. Value and seek to understand local culture and history;
13. Respect the natural, artistic, archaeological and cultural heritage visited.

### Strengths and weaknesses analysis

#### Local level



#### Strong points

Those who enjoy nature (almost) can sleep in the midst of nature and for fans there is a diverse offer, in consonance with the tastes and wallet of each one. Only between housing tourism, local accommodation, tourism in the countryside and hotels, there is, in the municipality of Arcos de Valdevez, 78 tourist developments, which comprise 727 beds distributed for 437 rooms. In recent times, a hotel implanted in the vicinity of the Porta do Mezio, with an offer of 25 rooms (and with authorization to double this capacity), and the (Luna Hotel) Arcos Hotel (130 beds) have reinforced the offer of accommodation in the municipality, where the Peneda Hotel is one of the main icons, while in the village of Soajo there is a hotel, although it is closed at this time. In addition, there are two other major tourism developments in the town of Arcos de Valdevez.

One of the keys to economic development lies in the natural and landscape richness that crosses the territory of Arcos de Valdevez. In this sense, and by way of example, the Municipality has made a strong investment in the network of ecovias (along the banks of the rivers Lima and Vez) and in the rails. In all, 300 kilometers of tracks are passable, although there are many sections without signalling and little or nothing valorised.

In order to foster environmental tourism, three projects (two buildings and one international classification) are being matured, based on the use of natural resources, whose achievements will mean a "leap" in the visitation to the municipality.

This is the case of the Biological Park at the Porta of Mezio, which is eligible for funding, which will house 27 native animal species (15 wild and 12 domestic), spread over 7 hectares. In the town, the creation of an Eco Park is being planned, as an interpretive space to be built in the surroundings of Campo do Trasladário, where the construction of three gardens inspired by the emblematic figure of Father Himalaya is being contemplated. Finally, the classification of the agricultural terraces of Sistelo as cultural landscape, according to the opinions of the Commission of the Regional Direction of Culture, is considered a feasible ambition, making this view, as beautiful as distinct, and in harmony with human action, another reason for tourist attraction.

We should also point out the huge area that our county has within the only National Park, where we can contact nature in its most primitive state, such as the Ramiscal integral area.

Between nature (mountains and river, in the front) and the built heritage, are good reasons to find in Arcos de Valdevez the dreamy evasions that tourists/visitors seek to practice Ecotourism. Another strong point at local level, and one that has been highlighted more at the present time, is the recognition of the village of Sistelo, as cultural landscape, by the Ministry of Culture, meeting the necessary conditions to apply for Community support in the context of CONSERVATION, RECOVERY AND DISCLOSURE OF ARCHITECTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL HERITAGE. Also considered one of the 43 villages chosen by the jury of the contest "7 Wonders of Portugal - Villages" and competing in one of the



seven categories, the Rural Village, being the only one representing the North of Portugal.

### Weaknesses

- Poor environmental control (nature guards);
- Depreciation of some ecosystems (fires);
- Low integration tourism due to the lack of supply structuring;
- Weak contribution of cultural and playful dynamics.

### Regional level



### Strong points

- Richness of endogenous resources as strategic factors of differentiation, with national and international dimension (eg wines).
- Vast and rich historical-cultural-archaeological heritage, conferred on 4 sites classified as World Heritage - UNESCO.
- Popular culture manifested in good hospitality, handicrafts and traditional events.
- Douro - The oldest demarcated and regulated wine region in the world.
- Region of the Country with greater offer of TER and Spa Resorts.
- Good interregional accesses North/South.
- Capacity of Francisco Sá Carneiro International Airport.

### Weaknesses

- Inability to secure visitors in the Region (reflecting low occupancy rates and average stays).
- Deficit of image and notoriety in the international markets.
- Absence or bad tourist signposting.
- The need for qualified human resources in the sector, having implications at various levels, namely in the engineering and design of the tourist product, in the provision of

tourist information services, hotels and restaurants.

- Incoming/Welcoming activity still underdeveloped.
- Difficulties of coordination between the various agents operating in the tourist market.

### National level



### Strong points

- Citizens (talents) national and foreign residents, from all areas. A huge and underutilized potential due to strong barriers to access quality education and employment, which many faces, making it difficult for them to achieve and maximize their profitability;
- Diaspora, about 5 million talents around the world, entrepreneurs, researchers, artists, managers, technicians, invaluable as "ambassadors" of Portugal, business partners, investors and even consumers of Portuguese products;
- Territory and natural resources, from the Minho to the Algarve and Islands, including our huge sea. A lot of it with infrastructures of excellence. It is not for lack of these resources that the country is not rich, but for the inability to make the most of them;
- European Union, to belong to the world's largest economic bloc (500 million inhabitants) and the most civilized (**environmental awareness**), market for our products, economic and military safety net is a huge advantage, which could still be better if it improved its operation;
- European Union, to belong to the world's largest economic bloc (500 million inhabitants) and the most civilized (**environmental awareness**), market for our products, economic and military safety net is a huge advantage, which could still be better if it improved its operation;

Construction of a new airport in the Lisbon area, in Montijo, scheduled to open in 2022, which will complement air traffic with Humberto Delgado airport, maximizing opportunities and gains for national development. The tourism offer here has the opportunity to expand.



Portugal was voted the World's Best Tourist Destination for the second consecutive year by the World Travel Awards, at a ceremony held on Saturday at the Pátio da Galé in Lisbon.

This distinction was first awarded to Portugal in 2017 and is now renewed.

The World Travel Awards awarded a total of 16 prizes to Portugal. By 2017, there had been seven and in 2016 Portugal received four.

### Weaknesses

- A very high external debt that makes us vulnerable to any national or international problem that may occur and will occur, and its deep and accelerated reduction must therefore be a priority;
- A seemingly blocked political-constitutional system that makes it difficult to obtain majority and consensus, and promotes a weak leadership that "weakens the strong people", unable to put the country at the forefront of minor interests;

- Confusing legislative and administrative architecture, promoter of slowness and injustice, too preoccupied with accessory - procedures, not essential - justice and development;
- Level of exclusion, educational, cultural and economic very high. Look at the waste of having 14% unemployment (official ...).

### Conclusion

Ecotourism has been promoted as a sustainable alternative to mass tourism. It is considered an instrument for the conservation of the environment and for the improvement of the well-being of local communities.

Although ecotourism projects are being implemented in various parts of the world, their application is mainly focused on developing countries due to their richness in natural areas and biodiversity.

The maintenance of the natural areas is carried out through the income from ecotourism. Ecotourists feel that they are contributing to the improvement of sustainability.

The participation of the local community is a very important factor for the success of ecotourism and this, in turn, brings great benefits to the development of the community, since it creates jobs and fixates the population in places of lower population density.

The mentalities are changing, as well as the habits, preferences and choices of those who like to know and "explore" what nature offers them, conserving and preserving it. Being able to contribute to a better and healthier world ...

### 4.5 Greece

*Is sustainable tourism starting with sustainable living or will sustainable living start with sustainable tourism?*

#### Benefits of sustainable tourism

With the industrial revolution and the rising of middle-class society, more and more people started to travel. With many opportunities for low-cost travelling, nowadays we came to the point where we are facing mass tourism. Mass tourism means that thousands and thousands of people are visiting the same place usually at the same time in the year. Making that place

overcrowded, over polluted and sometimes even destroying cultural heritage, disturbing locals living there, and leaving a lot of garbage after visit. Mass tourism came to the point where some of the places such as Santorini in Greece put limited number of visitors per year in order to reduce huge number of tourists who are coming and to control overpopulated touristy place such as this one in Greece.

#### *Santorini, Greece*



The period after 1980 could be considered as an interesting transitional period in tourist

development of the Greek islands. Unprogrammed mass tourism development which took place in the Greek islands in the '60s and '70s caused many problems in tourist development and the tourist "product" Greece offered at the time. This does not reduce the importance of factors supporting sustainability;

We have mass tourism on one hand and ecotourism or sustainable tourism on the other hand.

Ecotourism helps protect natural habitats and pristine environments, we have many landscapes under threat nowadays, but ecotourism helps in bringing tourists to those places, but still protects the environment at the same time.

Tourism has been good for many economies, but often at a high price to the environment and those people who are dependent upon it, but with sustainable tourism this could be changed, and travelling could be brought to balance again.

Talking about green tourism in Greece the focus is mostly on islands.

Finding info about eco way of travelling in Greece takes a lot of effort since development of sustainable travelling in Greece just has started,

many people who are offering services are still not aware of this possibility and stick to the old way of offering services. However, during the research the webpage [ecotourism Greece](http://ecotourismgreece.com). It offers information about accommodation and way of travelling around regions in Greece. Also, there are offers about tours, walking hiking and historical sightseeing. Good way to start exploring Greece. But still, at some points not completed, but it can serve as a good start.



One of the biggest benefits of ecotourism is that, with no negative impact being made upon the environment, the communities are picking up financial rewards without harming flora and fauna around them, just opposite, protecting them.

Ecotourism is not just the trend of these days, but it is a way of living. A way of living we somehow in the piles of information tend to forget. Ecotourism is not just about visiting natural beauties and indigenous communities, but also living the way we don't harm our planet. People say travelling is changing us, of course it does if we are open enough to accept something new.

Is sustainable tourism starting with sustainable living or will sustainable living start with sustainable tourism?

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines sustainable tourism as "tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities."

The UNWTO groups the goals—and benefits—of sustainability specifically as:

**1. Economic Prosperity** – Tourism accounts for hundreds of millions of jobs globally. Simply put, sustainable tourism's potential to reduce poverty and contribute to good financial and infrastructural development is substantial.



Supporting employment growth in remote and rural regions and among poor people, as well as the fair distribution of these earnings, are especially pertinent.

**2. Social equity and cohesion** – Founded on human contact, tourism inherently nurtures respect for—and understanding and acceptance of—cultural differences. By generating income grounded in local culture, it also inspires communities to take pride in and value their heritage, which, in turn, promotes its conservation. Among the benefits in this category, UNWTO's Global Code of Ethics for Tourism includes gender equality, cultural preservation, corporate social responsibility and the protection of children from exploitation in tourism. The list of these benefits is extensive and extends into health, education, cultural resources, politics—and even personal happiness and peace.

**3. Environmental preservation** – Ecologically and economically speaking, tourism's future is reliant on protecting life, such as natural areas, for its forthcoming use.

As part of its efforts to help the industry recognize and lessen its effect on the environment, UNWTO developed Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria, which are the minimum sustainability standards for which hotels and tour operators should aim.

By achieving those goals, eco business would engender healthy natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems, prevent deforestation, pollution and climate change, protect wildlife and landscapes, and conserve precious water and energy, among other wonderful benefits.

Enagron is one of the pioneers of ecotourism in Crete, Greece who are sharing and conserving the legacy of Crete, island on the south of Greece. Although the founders of this eco village were judged by the community they live in, they gave their shot and tried to do something in the field which, at that time, was about to be born in Greece.

"People were thinking that they are crazy." Says the founder of eco village.

Their main idea was to create something where they could share the things that are important for

them. The founders are explaining that many other villages around Enagron have profited from its business. First idea was to come out on Greek market, but then with the help of internet they started to expand their offers all around Europe. Now they mostly have guests from northern European countries.

Ecotourism gives us a completely different view of the world and challenges us to open our minds to different ways of thinking. Having people, who want to know more about their culture, tradition, way of thinking or food, as guests make those hosts very happy. Ecotourism brings you joy of the different varieties of music and styles of dress that you will be introduced to during your travels. People like to see how intriguing the interactions between locals can be. Many places have live outdoor performances where you can dance and mingle with locals who enjoy sharing stories and meeting tourists. You can spend the day in bathing suits and surfboards or in formal wear at opera performances. You'll notice that no matter where you travel, there are distinctive experiences to live.

### The benefits for the environment

-Tourism is nowadays part of those human activities to keep under control because it is considered "dangerous" for the environment. This claim is due to the pressure exerted by the rapid growth of tourism, over the past 20 years, on the environment, since tourism is currently a social phenomenon which moves thousands of people, driven by different motivations towards new and highly-developed places and territories. (*Sustainable Tourism: The Environmental Impact of Undetected Tourism*, Tullio Romita, University of Calabria)

In comparison to mass tourism, green way of travelling is focusing on how we travel, more than where we travel. How we travel in a meaning of nature, are we going to destroy something or to protect something. Shall we walk or use the taxi for a city tour. Are we going to ride an elephant, or we can help in the animal sanctuary? Those are the questions that sustainable travelling is bringing up—that travelling is not just about visiting new places, but it is also about taking care of the planet while experiencing something new. It is about self-

awareness at first and then when one is self-aware it can think about the others around.

With the development of sustainable tourism, negative impact of mass tourism could be reduced.

### **The benefits on local communities**

Nowadays, many countries worldwide are facing huge numbers of people leaving their small local communities such as villages, towns even smaller cities and moving to the bigger cities in searching for a better job and better living conditions. Further on it brings us to the point where big cities are overpopulated, polluted, crowded, noisy etc. Besides that, in big communities, people tend to lose not just their own identity but also the identity of the community they are coming from. People tend to easily forget about their tradition, customs, culture, food making even language if they have moved to another country.

By empowering ecotourism this could be changed in the future. If people have a choice to live in their communities and profit from let's say selling their tradition and culture, then this huge wave of people coming to big cities will decrease and tradition from the different regions will be preserved.

For example, founders of eco village in Crete use mostly local products, made by locals and when they need extra help they hire people from their community.

*"Sustainable development in the context of tourism could be taken as:*

*tourism which is developed and maintained in an area (community, environment) in such a manner and at such a scale that it remains viable over an indefinite period and does not degrade or alter the environment (human and physical) in which it exists to such a degree that it prohibits the successful development and well-being of other activities and processes. That is not the same as sustainable tourism, which may be thought of as tourism which is in a form which can maintain its viability in an area for an indefinite period of time."*

-Butler (1993, p. 29)

Local involvement in sustainable development and sustainable tourism is one of the crucial elements for developing this part of tourism

When a community is involved in the direction of tourism development it is more likely to become an active partner and to provide checks and balances since it has a particular stake in the region and commitment to environmental quality. The long-term viability of tourism depends on the support and involvement of the local community. Local involvement in tourism projects has been successful in the community of rural Greece (agrotourism).

**Agrotourism** holidays is a relatively new and yet undeveloped form of tourism in Greece. Although the country has large spaces of land and cultivations of many Greek products, this tourism form still has to be developed. Agrotourism holidays in Greece will offer to foreign tourists a deep insight in ecology, farming, regional gastronomy and local customs of the country. Away from mass tourism spots and large crowds, agrotourism offers the chance to come into contact with the Greek nature and be part of an authentic village community.

#### **Agrotourist farms in Greece:**

**Stella Vineyard** is found on the southern side of Kefalonia island. Visitors are welcome to attend and help in the wine making process in autumn. [www.stellavineyard.gr](http://www.stellavineyard.gr)

**Ikarian Wine** is an agrotourism farm on the island of Ikaria. It produces organic products and wine. The farm also offers wine and cooking courses. [www.ikarianwine.gr](http://www.ikarianwine.gr)

**Red Tractor Farm** is found on the island of Kea. Its guests can involve in wine and jam making, while over the last years the owners have started an acorn initiative. [www.redtractorfarm.com](http://www.redtractorfarm.com)

**Cinque Casa** is a village house in the village of Frantzi, in central Greece. Surrounded by a small vineyard, this is a great base to discover a totally rural side of Greece and occupy with activities of the Greek countryside. [www.cinquecasa.com](http://www.cinquecasa.com)

**Dalabelos** is an agrotourism estate located in Rethymno Crete, at the village of Ageliana. Its farm has an olive grove, a large vineyard, fruit trees, wild herbs and domestic animals. [www.dalabelos.gr](http://www.dalabelos.gr)

**La Maison Verte Amande** is located on the island of Kea. It is traditional house dating from 1880, extended with elegance and carefully restored, 15 km of the harbour of Korissia, one of the nicest island beaches, the bay of Spathi. [www.lamaisonvertamande.com](http://www.lamaisonvertamande.com)

### **Bioporos Organic Farm**

Bioporos Organic Farm is a farm spreading across an imposing olive grove of 70 acres at the Southwest part of Corfu island. In a unique location right next to Lagoon of Korission Lake, which is unspoiled as it is protected by Natura 2000, they claim to have created a small paradise for everyone to relax and get familiar with the natural beauty of Corfu. They cultivate olive trees, seasonal fruits and vegetables and they've also developed a small beekeeping unit, as they take care of a flock of sheep, a horse, a donkey and several poultries. Their love for the nature and the environment led them to develop mild and natural forms of farming without using any industrial fertilizers, pesticides or herbicides <https://bioporos.gr/about-us/>

Visitors to agrotourist farms in Greece can observe the agricultural activities and also work as volunteers if they want. Working with the land is a new experience for the city people who have no farming background or knowledge. Autumn is the period where most agricultural works are done in Greece. This is when people harvest the olives trees, press the olive oil, make wine, tsipouro or raki, gather seasonal fruits from the trees and vegetables from the earth, collect mushrooms and herbs from the mountainsides and make jams, spoon sweets and cheese.

Local involvement means more than employment in the usual low-paid, seasonal service jobs, such as waiters, barmen or gardeners. Instead of leaving doing jobs listed above people who stay in their local communities have a chance of receiving higher status and better paid management jobs.

Source: [www.greeka.com](http://www.greeka.com)

Beside preserving the nature, sustainable tourism can have a big impact on a development of rural area and on returning people from big cities to villages and starting their own small business,

continue farming in order not to lose the way we used to live.

### **Economic benefits**

First of all, we must consider that if on one hand there are continuous pressures of tourism on the environment, on the other hand we must say that these pressures will increase in the next 20 years if tourism production will not change radically adopting sustainability principles. According to the WTO, the number of tourists travelling around the world could triple in the near future going from 700 million to about 2 billion a year. It is evident that new markets, such as China or Eastern Europe, will open their doors to tourism. Thus, large masses of tourists will encourage economic operators to create new tourist destinations, new accommodation facilities, restaurants, harbours and airports, roads, amusement parks... -*Sustainable Tourism: The Environmental Impact of Undetected Tourism*, Tullio Romita, University of Calabria

Economically speaking development of tourism and especially green tourism will have huge impact on the economy of the developing countries.

Greece's struggling economy could definitely use tourism money, but rather than supporting the overcrowding of Athens or Crete, opt to stay on Alonnisos. This island of the Aegean Sea is one of the most sustainable travel destinations in the world. Enjoy the unspoiled charm of quiet fishing villages and incredible underwater adventures at the Alonnisos National Marine Park after a 1965 earthquake destroyed much of the island, this green destination stays low-impact by focusing on energy conservation.

### **Tips for a responsible tourist:**

#### ***How to take nothing but photos and leave nothing but footprints***

1. **Travel locally.** It is considered that you have to go on the other part of the world to have a meaningful experience, but first let's discover natural beauties we have around us. Let's think about where we could go for a hike, for a bike ride, canoeing or diving, before booking a flight.



2. **Accommodation** - you can choose eco resorts, eco bnb, hostels or hotels. But wherever you decide to stay try to take short showers and to save water, when leaving the room make sure to turn off the lights. There is no need to change sheet and towels every day. Bring your own soap instead leaving soaps from hostel half used, they are making great waste in our environment. Wherever you are staying ask your manager if they recycle and how the hotel is planning to go green. Sometimes feedback from costumers can start some new ideas.
3. **Avoid air travel whenever possible.** If you travel to another continent of course you will use the plane, but try to reduce using plane on the destinations that are reachable by bus, train, car, ferry...It is estimated that air travel produces 40% of the total amount of carbon footprints in the tourism industry
4. **Local transport.** When you get to your destination it is also important what kind of transport you will use. Instead of using taxi and rent a car for a city tour. Try to use buses, metros, trains, share ride or one of the oldest ways of travelling, explore the city by foot or by bike. Most of the big cities nowadays have rent a bike. You can have a unique experience by getting lost while cycling or by missing your metro station.
5. **Slow travel.** Many travellers nowadays are trying to visit as much places as possible in really short period of time. In 5 days-5countries-5 cities. But do they have time to feel the vibes of the city/country they are visiting? Or is it nowadays travelling just about posting on social media and checking in in different locations? Instead of running around the cities try to spend 5 days in one place, walk around, get lost, be spontaneous, meet local people, try local food, go on a concert.
6. **Pack light** - meaning bring only one bag, because all of those extra bags are using extra jet fuel. So, what should you pack? Reusable items, try to wash your clothes during the trip, avoid using single-use plastic, use biodegradable soap and shampoo because they will not harm the environment. Don't forget that all these things from shampoos are going to the water which we are drinking again. Our planet is a huge circle, spiral and everything we invest will come back to us. If you leave plastic around you, eventually it will come to you again.
7. **For ladies** - use menstrual cup instead of pads. It can last up to 12 hours, and after that you just have to wash it in boiled water, not to get infected. One menstrual cup can last up to couple of years. It is easy to use and much cleaner than pads.
8. **Eat locally and drink locally.** It is cheaper, healthier and you are empowering local economy this way. Try to avoid global brands of restaurants and beverages producers and try local juices, alcohol drinks, local food. Try to eat less meat to reduce emissions.
9. **Buying souvenirs** - try to avoid souvenirs which have a sign Made in China, unless you are in China. Try to find local women who make traditional clothes, accessories, pots or whatever. Support economy of locals bring unique souvenir home and protect cultural heritage of one society.
10. **Avoid activities with animals.** Meaning, avoid riding an elephant, swimming with dolphins, riding a camel, taking pictures with super drugged tigers. Those animals were brought from their natural habitats, tortured and trained so that you can have a "unique" photo on social media or that you can show off your social status. Instead you can just be a volunteer in one of many wildlife sanctuaries. Like for example in this <https://www.wild-anima.gr/synergasies/elliniki-ornithologiki-eteria/> ANIMA wild life conservatory and have an experience of seeing those animals in their natural



But sustainable tourism seeks not only the **protection of the environment**. When we say sustainable development, we say **impacts** (either environmental or socio-cultural, etc.), and sustainable development requires sustainable management of these impacts.

In accordance with the principles underlying sustainable tourism, the tourist operators should try **to involve the local communities**, in order to create a better travel experience for both tourists and locals, aware that residents are more likely to see tourism as having a positive impact, eventually developing some pride in it. We should continue working to involve local people, promoting cultural exchanges and preserving local traditions.

Ecotourism ideally tries to benefit the environment in a positive way, through **protection and conservation**.

There is an increasing attention to the conservation and enhancement of these resources, with the presence of many protected natural areas in the territories of the project partner organisations and the promotion of new certifications or awards (like Unesco recognitions).

Ecotourism can also revitalize the social structure or culture of the community where it is practised, and contribute to the economic well-being of the local community in many ways: stimulating sustainable economic development in smaller regions, as ecotourists prefer to consume local products, thereby supporting local communities, but also increasing political and financial support, creating new jobs or encouraging and stimulating the training of professionals in the sector.

Fortunately, today the increased sensitivity towards ecological and climate change issues is also capable of generating tourists who are increasingly aware of their impact on the tourist destination and, at the same time, are increasingly attentive and demanding in terms of environmental sustainability concerning the tourism products they are looking for.

On the other hand, sometimes, ecotourism is seen as a more expensive, almost luxury tourist product from potential tourists.

In fact, sometimes information about packages and destinations for truly sustainable tourism is

more difficult to find, due to inadequate promotion by the operators themselves, or because of misleading advertising by structures that actually have little of sustainable.

For these reasons, the search for suitable destinations or accommodation may take longer and may therefore cause some potential users to desist, who may be tempted to "fall back" on other "easier to reach" destinations/solutions.

This is why the adoption of sustainability certifications for accommodation/destinations or tourism products in general can sometimes be helpful and effective.

It is also important to spread some simple tips and behaviours that every tourist should adopt in order to behave responsibly in the destination to which he goes, so that his journey would be sustainable for the destination itself, avoiding negative impacts on the environment and the local population.



## Chapter V

### Final conclusions

Ecotourism has expanded fast and in a revolutionary way. It is an offshoot wave of environmental awareness. Due to tourism's strong role in the nations and economies of the world, the need for tourism research is imperative. The movement towards ecotourism is at once a threat and an opportunity to create more sustainable tourism. By diverting tourist traffic to ensure that the carrying capacity of any destination is not exceeded, by planning for regeneration of natural resources, and by generating awareness in the host community whereby they are prepared to deal with the negative impact of mass tourism are the ways of attaining sustainability.

Nature-based tourism is undoubtedly one of the most significant areas of research in tourism studies today. Ecotourism is viewed in many parts of the world as the next wave of community and regional development. In order to maintain ecotourism site as a popular destination, it requires a detailed study of individual preference pattern and motivating forces should be carried out. Ecotourism acts as a tool for sustainability. A detailed examination of ecotourism activities would require more information and as this paper has shown there should be some improvement in marketing facilities for ecotourism promotion. Ecotourism marketing is different from traditional marketing as it involves the marketing of products and services with positive ecological outcomes to environmentally concerned consumers, so effective marketing is necessary for ecotourism development.

Tourism product, whether natural or man-made, should be published for encouraging the flow of tourists. The tourist information centres are necessary in order to provide proper information and education for the visitors, tourist information centres are necessary. In order to earn foreign exchange, proper publicity should be made to attract foreign tourists towards ecotourism. Ecotourism exhibition is an important tool for the ecotourism promotion. Brochures and guidebooks can also be used as a promotional method. Advertising and mass communication media can be used for the promotion of ecotourism. Picture CDs can be used for promoting ecotourism. It is recommended that

the internet be better used for information exchange. Qualified websites with useful information are necessary. Ecotourism industry should also be made as an IT enabled tourism industry.

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