

PRESENTATION OF PROJECT GOODPLACE FACTORY OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AS A TURNING POINT OF SLOVENE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

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Abstract: With its close connections to the environment and climate itself, tourism is considered to be a highly climate-sensitive economic sector and is at the same time, also a non-negligible contributor to climate change through GHG emissions derived especially from the transport and accommodation of tourists. With the right investments, tourism can be a very important driver and a strategic pillar of European sustainable future. GoodPlace Factory of sustainable tourism is set to be a point in Slovene society where the ideas of how to develop Slovenian tourism in sustainable way will get their home and opportunity to become reality. The key role of GoodPlace is to create the environment which will encourage forward oriented thinking and will offer a number of solutions and tools how and why implement sustainable management in a travel sector.

Keywords: Sustainable development, sustainable tourism, education, support, implementation of knowledge

PREDSTAVITEV PROJEKTA TOVARNA TRAJNOSTNEGA TURIZMA GOODPLACE KOT POMEMBEN MOTIVATOR OBLIKOVANJA TRAJNOSTNE PONUDBE SLOVENSKEGA TURIZMA

Povzetek: Glede na veliko odvisnost od okolja in podnebja samega, je turizem zelo podnebno občutljiv gospodarski sektor, ki pa istočasno z emisijami toplogrednih plinov izdatno prispeva k podnebnim spremembam. S pravimi naložbami, lahko turizem postane pomembna gonilna sila in strateški steber evropske trajnostne prihodnosti. GoodPlace zavod Tovarna trajnostnega turizma je točka v slovenski družbi, kjer bodo ideje o tem, kako razviti slovenski turizem v trajnostni način dobile svoj dom in priložnost, da postane resničnost. Ključna naloga GoodPlace je ustvariti okolje, ki bo spodbujalo napredno razmišljanje, rešitve ter orodja implementacije načel trajnostnega turizma na vseh nivojih.

Ključne besede: sonaravni razvoj, trajnostni turizem, izobraževanje, spodbujanje, implementacija znanja

Tourism – a special relationship with sustainable development

Tourism and travel has become one of the largest global economic sectors and is a significant contributor to many national and local economies around the world. Tourism, directly and indirectly, accounts for around 10% of European GDP and 20m jobs. Europeans account for over half of all international travel, and visits by Europeans provide an important source of income for many developing countries.

In today's economically changing conditions and challenges, tourism turns out as one of the most resilient economic sector and is able to quickly adapt to global changes and recover from setbacks. Tourism is also one of the most labor intensive sector and creates wealth and jobs not just in tourism, but in other sectors as well through its enormous value chain. It reduces poverty, supports development, contributes to world peace and understanding.

With its close connections to the environment and climate itself, tourism is considered to be a highly climate-sensitive economic sector similar to agriculture, insurance, energy, and transportation.

At the same time, the tourism sector is also a non-negligible contributor to climate change through GHG emissions derived especially from the transport and accommodation of tourists. Tourism transport (inbound and outbound) currently accounts for 8% of CO₂-equivalent emissions in the EU.

With the right investments, tourism can be a very important driver and a strategic pillar of European sustainable future, by driving economic growth and job creation while simultaneously improving resource efficiency, minimizing environmental degradation and raising environmental awareness among travelers.

The EU Sustainable Development Strategy has three main objectives that are transferred into the key objectives of sustainability of European tourism. These are economic prosperity, social equity and cohesion, and environmental and cultural protection. And what are the key challenges for the sustainability of European tourism? The Sustainability Tourism Group identified the following key challenges (and presented them in the report Action for more Sustainable European Tourism¹) – they are also related to the seven key challenges identified in the renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy:

1. The impact of tourism transport, promoting modal shift toward use of more environmentally friendly forms of transport for tourism to and within the tourist destination and investing in appropriate infrastructure, services and pricing mechanisms.
2. Improvement of the quality of tourism jobs, social inclusion and migration while offering many job opportunities to people of all ages and skills.
3. Maintenance and enhancement of community prosperity and quality of life, implementing careful destination planning and management. And also maximizing the proportion of income that is retained locally and other benefits to local communities, through strengthening local supply chains and promoting use of local produce, shops and other services.
4. Minimizing resource use and production of waste, relating to sustainable consumption and production, natural resource management and waste management.
5. Conserving and giving value to natural and cultural heritage.
6. Reducing the seasonality of demand by adjusting target market selection and product development towards non-seasonal markets.
7. Making holidays available to all to ensure that tourism experiences are available to all without discrimination.
8. Using tourism as a tool in global sustainable development.

Many of the challenges set by sustainability, and the actions required, can best be implemented through processes to encourage: Sustainable destinations, Sustainable businesses, and Responsible tourists.

Who is responsible for the action

The European Commission should be the main player in coordinating action at a European level. Their primary responsibilities include: Incorporating sustainability in all tourism related policies and actions, enabling and ensuring EU funding to sustainable development projects, facilitating the acquisition and sharing of knowledge and skills on making tourism more sustainable, conducting and disseminating research on relevant issues across Europe, identifying and disseminating examples of good practice which encourage member states to pursue more sustainable tourism, and to report transparently and regularly on their policies and actions.

Next are **Member state governments**. They should provide political commitment to the sustainability of tourism, incorporate sustainability aims and principles in tourism policies and strategies, ensure that tourism issues are included and reflected in wider policies relating to the environment, culture, transport, communities and sustainable development, address sustainability issues in the application of EU funding programs to tourism and act likewise in the application of their own funding programs. They should also develop indicators of tourism sustainability at a national or regional level, with associated monitoring and reporting, establish relevant education, training, business support and marketing programs, actively support the application of certification and labeling schemes and support relevant promotion to consumers. It is also very important to encourage and facilitating the establishment of multi-stakeholder Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) and set up frameworks and programs to support sustainable destination management.

Local authorities are key players in planning and managing tourism and addressing its impacts. They should work together, with the private sector and with environmental and community interests, in Destination Management Organizations. Their primary responsibilities include: establishing multi-stakeholder mechanisms and structures for the development and implementation of sustainable tourism strategies and action plans, providing leadership and facilitating coordination and networking, strengthening financial and staff resources devoted to tourism management, providing and maintaining relevant infrastructure and amenities, providing effective land use planning and

¹ Report of the Tourism Sustainability Group: ACTION for MORE SUSTAINABLE EUROPEAN TOURISM, February 2007

development control, promoting relevant educational campaigns aimed at residents, tourists and operators and reflecting sustainability in a range of tourism communication and support services

The level of response of **tourism businesses** is critical to the achievement of more sustainable tourism. Key to this is not only individual response but the support and commitment of trade bodies and associations at a European, national and destination level, including sectoral associations and informal networks. Their primary responsibilities include: actively participating in local destination management structures and activities, taking environmental and social factors into account in their investment and pricing decisions, promoting wider dissemination of Corporate Social Responsibility approaches and engaging in social dialogue, developing achievable environmental management systems, strengthening relationships with the local community, applying sustainability considerations in reviewing supply chains and procurement activities, including travel, providing relevant information to visitors and helping them to travel more sustainably, participating in voluntary schemes to conserve natural and cultural heritage and support local communities.

Consumers/tourists should recognize the impact of their travel and related activities and accept their responsibility to make this more sustainable. They should choose more sustainable transport and accommodation options, reduce use of energy and water at their destination, reduce and recycle material used and leaving no waste, minimize intrusion, for example through noise, gathering information to improve understanding of destinations visited, respect nature, culture and host communities' values and traditions and support the local economy, including purchasing local produce.

Important role to stimulate, monitor, support sustainable tourism play also educational and research establishments, trade unions, consumer associations and other bodies. Although the responsibilities are presented separately for the different players, there all should work together, also through public-private partnerships.

Factory of sustainable tourism Goodplace a key institution for stimulating, developing and promoting sustainable tourism in Slovenia

GoodPlace is a point in Slovene society where the ideas of how to develop Slovenian tourism in sustainable way got the opportunity to become reality. It's a bridge between strategic national goals and the reality, between expectations and tools for implementation. In order to be able to develop sustainable travel product the whole society needs to be sustainable orientated and on the other hand only with understanding of a big picture travel sector can implement solutions which will on a long run meet desired goals. And this is a key role of GoodPlace. To create the environment which will encourage forward oriented thinking and will offer a number of solutions and tools how and why implement sustainable management in a travel sector.

Since it is written in Slovene national tourism strategy that Slovenia will focus on sustainable tourism the need of institution which would focus on that goals increased. That is why Goodplace is not only working on transfer of knowledge and building of services for travel industry but is also supporting young and ambitious future business man to take advantage of all the services being offered within the GoodPlace. And the last but not least are common projects with other countries. The goal is to clone the idea to other markets and develop it further that way. With a proper network of GoodPlace stops we will gain the power when running for EU funds, will offer Goodplace members to use the services especially promotional in other countries and will slowly build the GoodPlace community.

Goodplace is strongly linked to Sustainable travel international a global network developing tools how to implement sustainable management in destinations, standardization of suppliers and destinations and other services with the aim of giving Slovene travel industry a direct link to specific services and knowledge. On the other hand is Goodpalce closely connected to a Faculty for tourism Turistica and working hand in hand on educational seminars and conferences including a number of practices from abroad. One of the programs being workshops targeting special needs and demands connected to innovation and sustainability .

Turning a half of billion tourist into a half of billion opportunities

In 1950, 25 million tourists traveled internationally. In year 2012 the number of tourists hit one billion international traveling the world. The World Tourist Organization – UNWTO forecasts 1.8 billion international tourists by 2030. The most visited region in the world is Europe with 535 million arrivals. A trend which has marked the tourism sector for many years shows stronger growth in emerging economy destinations (+4,1%) as compared to advanced economies (+3,6%). All these arrivals create and maintain jobs, business opportunities, the renewal of urban and

rural areas, the preservation and promotion of a country's natural and cultural heritage and income for those most in need. So, how to turn a half of billion tourists into a half of billion opportunities with improvement of the quality of life and well-being for present and future generations? Of course, with smart, inclusive and sustainable development strategy.

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