

Notes from Zadar Think Tank I Nurope XI I 23-27 August 2010

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<http://www.nurope.eu/graz.html>

Context

Kornati, Island Pag, Cultural Heritage & Tourism I Thursday I 26.08.2010

Two representatives of a local NGO presented us their projects on the island of Kornati:

- "Vacation with sense" – island 1, with its restoration of olive grooves
- "Wireless connectivity" – island 2
- "Reconstruct the windmills" – island 3

These projects have been implemented with the help of international volunteers, from India, Korea, and Belgium .

Mr Vlado Juresko, Director of Con Sole Company, the islands of Pasmán & Ugljan, vlado@islandpasm.com was the main counterpart for the Nomads.

Think Tank

Raymond facilitated the think tank which was part of the general outing of the group consisting of a beautiful boat trip, a nice swim in the small turquoise bay and a sumptuous lunch.

The Nomads discussed how to create sustainable tourism in the Archipelago. Here are the thoughts that the group has come up with without attribution to individuals or sub groups.

Preamble

Ideally, think tank activities focusing on third parties would best be organised together with representatives of the communities in discussion. Development must be the choice of the community. Therefore it is essential that local residents are engaged in this conversation. Development initiatives cannot be imposed. What are the dreams of the inhabitants of the archipelago? How many live on the islands? How many new comers? How many leave the islands? The two NGO representatives helped us understand some of the challenges facing the island community. Future brain storming with the islanders would help deepen the issues and strengthen the process of identifying viable projects.

I. What tourism products could be offered? (not in any order of importance, nor weighted)

In order to create sustainable tourism, it is important to find ways to bundle local specificities as unique selling points in order to capture the niche market. These characteristics include, but not exclude, isolation, special heritage, climate, special landscapes and the populations.

The following are a list of ideas generated from 4 groups of the Think Tank process and captured while sailing along the coast of Zadar Region and therefore not complete.

In total 35 ideas were recorded. These ideas are grouped into 9 categories in order to give some clarity of trends and directions. These categories are not mutually exclusive and some with overlapping properties. They offer a list of the starting points to be further explored through consultation with the local community. Action plans could be identified once such consultation is concluded and priorities identified.

The list of ideas is as follows:

Recreational & Sports

1. Recreational fishing, “parangal”, and fish watching.
2. Fishing convoy and floating holidays (4 or 5 boats at a time)
3. Sailing schools and sailing sport facilities
4. Capturing favoured local sports and start annual competition events

Well being and De-stress

5. Natural wellness products, such as herb tea, soaps, essential oils, scented vinegar with local herbs, olive oil, cosmetics, and jams – all locally produced.
6. De-stress centres, similar to an Austrian spa, with massage and other cures; or health farms
7. Special Dalmatian cure

Local Food and Beverage Specialties

8. Special designed glass bottle with liquor scented by local herbs, e.g., juniper, wild mint
9. Local cooking, slow food, tasting

Crafts and Workshops

10. Restoration workshops, for art objects, paintings, furniture
11. Making traditional musical instruments and restoration
12. Masonry workshops
13. Glass making workshops
14. Rock sculptures

15. Land art

Dissemination of Local Traditional Knowledge

16. Recording of the traditional knowledge
17. Recounting of Roman history
18. Story telling through the internet and social networks, of the history of archipelago
19. Traditional village dance classes and music performance
20. Portraits of individual inhabitants of the islands
21. Festivals, such as recreating a Roman style regatta. Annual performance, competition.
22. Special thematic holidays, such as Olive Pressing and cooking (2 day holidays)

Historical and Cultural Activities/Holidays

23. Archipelago digging camps and lectures
24. Night of Dalmatian poetry and literature appreciation – works by local authors
25. Poetry hot line, one poetry reading per call
26. Creating cultural events throughout the year, moderated by the taste of “senior citizens”.
27. Monastic tourism
28. Pilgrimage walking tour

Entrepreneurial Initiatives

29. Creating water transportation services, such as water taxi service
30. Call centre services

Educational Programmes

31. Summer school programmes on Dalmatian history, art, archaeology, ocean biology etc.
32. Residential programmes for art, history, agriculture, land conservation...

Festivity and Theme Based Celebration Events

33. Special wedding celebration on “love island”
34. Historical in-role holidays (with historical costumes)
35. Re-enactment of historical scenes and events (performance)
36. Reserving one island without technology and creating a Neolithic theme park
37. Theatre pieces based on island histories

II. How to develop successful tourism initiatives?

1. Provide micro-financing to support local initiatives
2. Building up local confidence
3. Branding local products, such as olive oil
4. Mobilise more volunteers
5. Enhancing local capacities

III. Challenges in tourism development

1. Poor infrastructure in the archipelago
2. Inadequate service quality – in need of hospitality training
3. Water supply
4. Visa requirements

5. Centralised decision making, rendering high transactional costs and lack of responsiveness to the local needs.

IV. Additional ideas

1. Renewable energy production on the islands, such as recycling of pressed olive for generating bio-fuel;
2. Demonstration sites for organic farming
3. Demonstration sites for water harvesting using traditional knowledge
4. Wine making and recycling of waste material
5. Can the islanders be active participants in carbon trading?

Concluding Remark

No further recollection of group discussions was received up to this moment. We therefore processed further the ideas that have been captured into categories. We hope that this classification could help the social dialogue with the inhabitants of the island communities in:

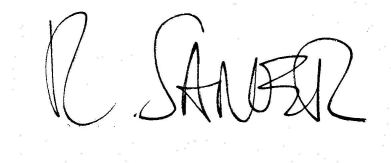
1. Assessing capabilities
2. Setting priorities
3. Deciding on an action plan.

Some of the ideas could be implemented fairly easily without either major investment nor institutional support. Other ideas could be more challenging and would need backward and forward linkages in creating a supply or value chain.

Regardless of these choices and decisions to be made, it was our privilege that we nomads had the opportunity to interact with colleagues from Zadar and in looking into the future together and seeing beyond the present.



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