Current Trends in Sustainable Tourism - Example of Croatia

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Content:

• Croatian tourism development strategic documents since 1993

• Examples of measures and activities relevant for sustainability

• Cooperation on national level future plans

• Future plans
Croatian tourism development strategic documents since 1993

1st strategy: Developmental Strategy of the Croatian Tourism, 1993-2003
• basic goals were reconstruction, valorisation and protection of tourism resources …

Concept of Long-term Development of the Croatian Tourism, 1998
• stresses the importance of building the necessary infrastructure, especially for transport and communications with the islands
• stresses the importance of building awareness about ecology.
Croatian tourism development strategic documents since 1993, ctnd

2nd strategy: *Strategy Report, Tourism Development by 2010, 2003-2010*

“Tourism largely drives the economic growth of the Republic of Croatia for the benefit of all its citizens, under the premise of sustainable usage, protection and development of its **natural, historical and cultural resources**, while creating a favorable investment climate.”
STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES:

Space is the most valuable tourism resource
- Physical planning to support sustainable development of tourism
- Local communities have a key role to play in planning decisions
- Protection and preservation of natural, historical and cultural heritage a key to sustainable tourism development
- These principles summarized in the logo: The Mediterranean as it once was

Transition from mass tourism to quality tourism…

Sustainable growth is the key to prosperity…
Examples of measures and activities relevant for sustainability

a) Incentive for Success,
December 2002 - March 2009
• Subsidizing interest rate for commercial loans for SMEs in tourism
• Accommodation sector, subsidies differed in amount
• Sub-programme Under Centennial Roofs (architectural heritage, preserving the traditional landscape)
• 107 facilities with the total amount of a bit over 366 mln HRK, approx 48.9 mln €), lowest interest rate for end users (in certain regions it was only 0.5%, on average 2% - 4 %)
• 91 projects in littoral area, 16 projects in continental
b) *Rural Tourism Development, incentive measure*

- Incentives for development of tourism in rural areas (eco and rural tourism)
- Subsidizing interest rate for commercial loans for rural homesteads in tourism (for end user only 2%)

Measure aimed at:
- preservation of environment,
- favourable conditions for the young (stop depopulation of rural areas),
- direct placement of agro produce,
- revival and maintenance of local traditions and gastronomy.
c) State Support Programmes (grants)

- heritage, thematic routes, souvenirs/craftsmanship……

State Support Program of Incentives for the Protection and Reconstruction of Heritage in Underdeveloped Tourism Areas

Project aims:
• Protect, regenerate, & reaffirm cultural heritage through tourism offer
• Protect and add value to natural heritage through tourism offer
• In protected areas Ministry assisted in creation of paths, information centres, even in placing a Braille script information table (Nature Park Medvednica, Zagreb)
• 2000-2011: 787 projects awarded with 46.5 mln HRK (cca 6.2 mln €), within de minimis rule per project (mostly regeneration of traditional architecture)

Experiences were very positive.
These programmes increased awareness about specific heritage and its unused potential.
State Support Program of Incentives for the Protection and Reconstruction of Heritage in Underdeveloped Tourism Areas

Examples of Reconstruction

Traditional Posavina house, Central Croatia

Traditional Medjimurje straw-roof house, Northern Croatia

Water sawmil, Plitvice Lakes, Central Croatia

Ethno-village Kokorici, Southern Croatia
Promoting the development of thematic routes

Project aims:
- show transit travellers the diversity and attractiveness of overall tourist offer in Croatia
- get transit travellers to make a break, to do a round trip or to make a combination vacation (maritime and continental)
- promote domestic tourist trips throughout the year
- **2007-2009**: 173 projects awarded with 11 mln HRK (cca 1,5 mln €)
Promoting the production of authentic Croatian souvenirs for tourists

Project aims:
- promote the production of authentic Croatian souvenirs as an adequate promotional tool and additional tourism product through revival of the old artistic craftsmanship
- **2007-2011**: 2465 projects awarded with 8,8 mln HRK (approximately 0.8 mln €)
d) Other policy measures

QUALITY LABELS FOR HOTELS

Quality label is voluntary and is awarded upon hotel’s request and has to be re-checked every three years. Quality Label can be assigned to 3*, 4* and 5* hotels that will satisfy the prescribed standards in a higher number of elements and achieve desirable quality of services at a higher level than prescribed in classification process.

- Management must submit evidence of its commitment to development, promotion and continuous improvement of quality.

The statement must, for example, give a reply to the following question (among others):
- What is their attitude towards environment?
Q label, ctnd

The document is structured in 9 chapters covering different areas of hotel quality, one of which stimulates hoteliers to care about the environment

**Chapter II - Environmental protection** as an extremely important aspect in line with modern trends in tourism ("green hotels").

- Management must submit evidence of their continuous care of the environment or managing it (their integral approach to the issue of the environment)
- Additional areas include specific studies, programmes and training (for staff and management) to sustainably:
  - *use resources* such as energy, water, and chemicals for cleaning (opting for more natural ones)
  - *manage waste*,
  - *preserve the immediate hotel environment* and plant indigenous plants through organic gardening,
  - *introduce electric cars, develop pedestrian zones around the hotel*
  - *carry out different studies* (e.g. carrying capacity for the hotel beaches)
  - *promote sustainability* and care about the environment among staff, guests and the local destination etc
Q label, ctnd

Cooperation with the private sector

- final version of these Rules and Regulation was accomplished through a **tight cooperation with the private sector**
- three hotels were used as *pilots*:
  - Le Meriden Lav – Podstrana
  - Monte Mulini -Rovinj,
  - Valamar Lacroma Dubrovnik- Dubrovnik
- each hotel did their own **self-assessment** which was later on verified through the **inspection team** of the Ministry of Tourism
- some of the hotels have ISO 14001 certificates, some have additional documents: plans for managing waste, programme for the introduction of energy efficiency etc
Cooperation on national level

*Some examples*

**Ministry of Culture**
Protection and use of cultural assets through tourism
- Handbook on restoration of wooden Posavina houses

**Ministry of the Sea, Transport and Development**
Nautical Tourism Development Strategy
of the Republic of Croatia (2009-20199)

**Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection**
- Eco-label *Environmentally Friendly* (voluntary)
Environmental Label –Environmentally Friendly

-awarding system of the Republic of Croatia was established in 1993
-it is awarded on the basis of established criteria, with expert and public participation following a precisely defined procedure

In 2011 it was for the first time awarded to providers of accommodation in hotels and campsites.
Eco label, ctnd
Requirements for accommodation in hotels and campsites are divided into basic ones (must be met) and the advanced requirements (extra points).

Basic requirements include those in the field of energy, water, waste, detergents and disinfectants, other services and general management.
Advanced requirements comprise a set additional advancement in the basic requirements areas. The first 15 winners are 10 hotels and 5 camps:

Hotels:
Valamar Riviera Hotel & Residence (Poreč), Sol Garden Istra (Umag); Istra (Rovinj); Villa dvor (Omiš); Hotel Vicko (Starigrad Paklenica); Amfora (Hvar); Valamar Lacroma Dubrovnik (; Maestral (Novigrad); Borovnik (Tisno); Villa Andrea (Tučepi)

Campsites:
Polari, Mareda (Novigrad); Park Umag (Umag); Solaris (Poreč); Vira (Hvar)
Future plans

Ministry of Tourism
a) Current programme of support
   - Development of Tourism in Underdeveloped Areas
   - Innovation in Tourism (to include “green” elements)
b) Strategy and Master plan of Croatian tourism till 2020
   - it will be drafted and finalized through: a public procedure (debate, workshops) and consultation with experts and relevant stakeholders
   - **Key Challenges and Dilemmas** for the new Strategy, from the area of sustainable development, include:
     • physical planning, climate change, carrying capacity, seasonality, continental tourism etc
New Strategy, cntd

Postulates
• tourism development *based on the adequate tourism resource basis*
• management of the *physical space*, fiscal policies and incentives, coordination, human resources, investments
• maximal protection, *sustainable development and climate change*
• *refrain from creating “tourist resort”*, charm of Croatian tourism is in close contact with local communities
• deal with the *issues of seasonality and uneven geographical distribution*

*Key Projects that might be Implemented (sustainable development)*
• partial *study for tourism planning* in the local, regional and national physical plans
Ministry of Tourism and
Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning
• measures (under preparation) to assist hotels and camp to:
  - achieve energy efficiency and introduce solar energy (as of 2013)
  - change outdated technologies for the more green ones

Ministry of Tourism and
Ministry for Environmental and Nature Protection
• expanding the application of the Environmentally Friendly label to other accommodation facilities (e.g. rural accommodation)
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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