

**STRATEGY FOR
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
DEVELOPMENT
OF THE CARPATHIANS**





DRAFT

**STRATEGY FOR THE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
DEVELOPMENT OF THE CARPATHIANS –
BACKGROUND DOCUMENT**

2ND CONSULTATION DRAFT

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CARPATHIAN CONVENTION

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This document contains 79 pages

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	6
1.1	GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE AND DEFINITION	6
1.2	PARTNERS	8
1.2.1	<i>Organizational partners</i>	8
1.2.2	<i>NGOs, Industry partners</i>	9
1.2.3	<i>Results of the Stakeholder Consultations in 2013</i>	10
2	OVERVIEW	11
2.1	REVIEW OF BACKGROUND INFORMATION	11
2.1.1	<i>Related Plans, Documents and Initiatives</i>	11
2.2	SUSTAINABILITY AS THE FOUNDATION FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT	14
2.2.1	<i>Environmental Sustainability</i>	14
2.2.2	<i>Socio-cultural Sustainability</i>	14
2.2.3	<i>Economic Feasibility</i>	14
2.3	FACTORS INFLUENCING DEVELOPMENT	14
2.3.1	<i>Product development and marketing</i>	15
2.3.2	<i>Coordination and Management</i>	21
2.3.2.1	Government	21
2.3.2.2	Destination management organisations	22
2.3.2.3	Private companies (travel and tourism)	23
2.3.2.4	Tourists and local citizens	25
2.4	TOURISM DEMAND AND SUPPLY	27
2.4.1	<i>Tourism Demand</i>	27
2.4.2	<i>Tourism Supply</i>	28
2.4.3	<i>Nature-based Tourism in CEE Countries</i>	30
2.4.4	<i>Travelling to mountain areas</i>	32
2.4.5	<i>Summary - International trends</i>	34
2.5	IMPACTS OF TOURISM	35
2.5.1	<i>Environmental Impacts</i>	35
2.5.2	<i>Socio-Cultural Impacts</i>	36
2.5.3	<i>Economic Impacts</i>	36
2.5.4	<i>Positive impacts of sustainable tourism</i>	37
2.6	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT	38
2.6.1	<i>Impact Assessment in the Carpathians</i>	38
2.6.2	<i>Data gathering system to measure impacts</i>	40
2.7	MONITORING AND EVALUATION	42
3	APPENDICES	44
3.1	CONTRIBUTIONS REQUIRED BY THE STAKEHOLDERS ON CARPATHIAN WIDE ACTIONS/RESULTS AND COUNTRY SPECIFIC ACTIONS/RESULTS	44
3.2	TOURISM DEMAND IN THE CARPATHIAN COUNTRIES	45
3.3	TOURISM PRODUCTS IN THE CARPATHIAN AREAS (EXEMPLARY COMPILATION)	50

3.4	NATURAL RESOURCES IN THE CARPATHIAN COUNTRIES	53
3.5	BABIA GORA DECLARATION ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN MOUNTAIN AREAS "TOURISM IN MOUNTAIN AREAS AND THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY"	54
3.6	CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN GREENWAYS PROGRAM (CEG)	56
3.7	LIST OF PROTECTED AREAS IN CARPATHIANS (CARPATHIAN PARKS, 2013)	60
3.8	INTERNATIONAL AWARD SCHEMES AND INITIATIVES	62
3.9	DARK SKY PARKS	65
3.10	CARPATHIAN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INDICATORS.....	67

1 INTRODUCTION

This document serves as a supplementary background information to the „Strategy for the Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians”.

Its content is strongly related to the individual chapters of the strategy, especially the Action Plan for the Governmental Bodies and the Action Plan for the Carpathian Coordination Centre (to be established).

The background information contains more detailed information on the tourism situation in the Carpathians and foremost initial guidelines and links on how to implement the various actions in order to achieve a sustainable tourism destination, which is competitive on the international market.

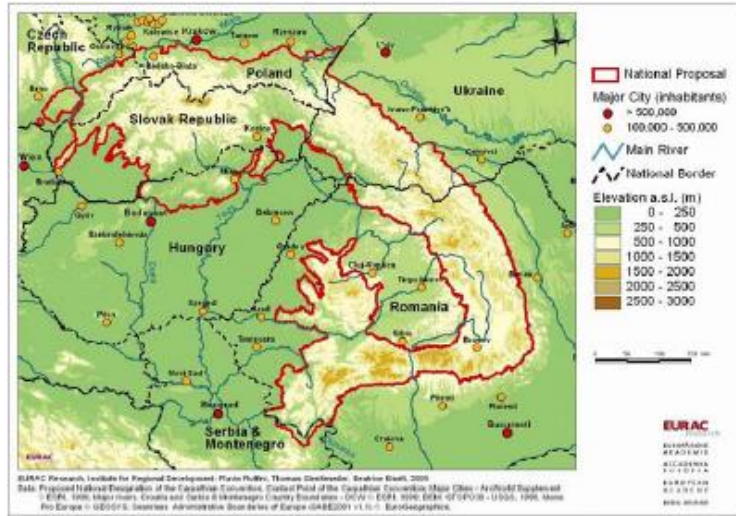
1.1 Geographical scope and definition

The Carpathians are currently home to an estimated 18 Million people. The region is shared by seven Central and Eastern European countries, five of which have already joined the European Union (EU). This increases the possibilities of sustainable development based on the rich natural, environmental, cultural and human resources of the region. Ties linking the Carpathian countries are noticeable in languages, music, similar tales, the characteristic small towns situated at the foothills of the range, their architectural styles, etc.

Looking at historical information, many of the areas in question have deeply rooted in a common heritage, e.g. Southeastern Poland and Czech Republic, Slovakia, Western Ukraine and Hungary have cultural and political traditions associated with Austro-Hungarian spheres of interest and trading partnerships. In the majority of those border regions, there are several environmental groups being involved in the process of sustainable (tourism) initiatives. They have built their own international networks and institutions, which are integrated into the cross-border activities through personal contacts, workshops and projects. Many of the initiatives were supported by EU funds, such as PHARE or INTERREG.

The Parties to the Carpathian Convention have not yet decided on the geographical application of the objectives and the protocols in force of the Convention. However, according to the results of the consultations with stakeholders in the seven countries during summer 2013, the interest has been expressed to enlarge the scope of application for the Carpathian Tourism Strategy to an area, which covers more than just the mountain territories of the Carpathians (Map will be provided after the CC-WGST consultations).

Geographical map of the Carpathians



1.2 Partners

1.2.1 Organizational partners

The strategy cannot be implemented without the active participation numerous organizations and parties. The strategy enlists the parties that are to be contacted, invited and involved in the adaptation and implementation of the strategy. This list is (not exhaustive) naming the key stakeholders (organizations and bodies) that most definitely should join forces in order to turn the strategy to practice.

Czech Republic	Hungary	Poland	Romania	Slovakia	Serbia	Ukraine
Ministry for Regional Development Ministry of Agriculture Ministry of the Environment Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports Ministry of Culture Ministry of Transport National parks, protected areas located in the Carpathian region of the country	Ministry for National Economy (Tourism and Catering Department), Deputy State Secretary for Tourism Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of National Development, National parks, protected areas located in the Carpathian region of the country	Minister of Sport and Tourism Polish Tourist Organisation Ministry of Infrastructure and Development Advisory Centres of Agriculture (Rural Tourism) Silesian, Malopolska & Subcarpathian Regional Tourist Organizations National parks, protected areas located in the Carpathian region of the country	Ministry of Tourism Ministry of Youth and Sport Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Rural Development Ministry for Environment and Forests Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure National parks, protected areas located in the Carpathian region of the country	Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development Ministry of the Environment National parks, protected areas located in the Carpathian region of the country	Ministry of Economy and Regional Development Public enterprise of National Park Djerdap	Ministry of Culture and Tourism State Tourism Administration of Ukraine National parks, protected areas located in the Carpathian region of the country

1.2.2 NGOs, Industry partners

Likely industry partners are those that have already partnered with respective National Tourism Offices (NTOs), and those, that have experiences in sustainable development projects (e.g. CEEweb, exemplary partners). This list is (not exhaustive) naming the key stakeholders (organizations and bodies) that most definitely should join forces in order to turn the strategy to practice.

Czech Republic	Hungary	Poland	Romania	Slovakia	Serbia	Ukraine
Czech Tourist Club Czech Environmental Partnership Foundation Asociace regionálních značek Regional Brands Association Sdružení vinařů (Association of Wine Makers), Česká inspirace (Czech Inspiration)	Hungarian Association of Carpathians, Ökotárs Association, Mátra Jövője Touristic Associations, FATOSZ (Association of Rural and agro tourism), Zöldutak Módszertani Szövetség (green ways), Levegő Munkacsoport (environment protection), “Nimfea” Environment and Nature Conservation Association	Carpathian Foundation Poland Polish Tourist and Sighthseeing Society, Polish Youth Hostels Association, Polish Camping and Caravanning Federation, Polish Federation for Rural Tourism - Gospodarstwa Gościnne, Polish Hotel Trade and Tourism Association, The Conferences and Congresses in Poland Association, Association of Polish Spa Communities Polish Tatra Society Carpathian Heritage Society, Poland, Naturalists Club	Carpathian Tourism Cluster rural tourism (ANTREC), spa tourism (OPTBR), business tourism (RCB), ecotourism (AER) or different professions: tour operators and travel agencies (PANAT), hotels (FIHR), bed and breakfast (ARCTE B&B), tourist guides (ANGT) Romanian Ecotourism Association Green Echoes Association Milvus Group	Slovak Tourism Association, Association of Hotels and Restaurants of the Slovak Republic, Slovak Association of Travel Agents, Bratislava Hotel Association, Lavex - cableways and ski lifts, Historical Hotels of Slovakia, Slovak Association of Rural Tourism and Agro Tourism Slovak Tourist Guides Associations	Centre for Responsible and Sustainable Tourism Development, Elolibri-Bionet Danube – River of Cooperation, Young Researchers of Serbia	Ukrainian Adventure and Ecotourism Association

During the implementation stage of the strategy the NGO and industry partners’ list will be completed based on the recommendations from partner countries and NGOs.

1.2.3 Results of the Stakeholder Consultations in 2013

During the German funded project seven country experts have been identified, which implemented a consultation process in each country of the Carpathians in order to collect comments from the stakeholders to improve the strategy draft and discuss the geographical scope for the Carpathian Tourism Strategy.

The experts communicated with possible participants via email and also approached them via phone calls. The information about the stakeholder meetings was available on websites of organization of the national experts. Most experts distributed the Action Measures Worksheet prior the meeting via email so each participant could add comments in advance and then created a wider discussion at the meeting itself.

After the bi-lateral discussion, the experts organized a stakeholder meeting in each country as a part of this consultation process, which took place as follows:

- a) Czech Republic: 29.-30.8.2013, Hoštětín
- b) Hungary: 6.9.2013, Gömörzóló
- c) Poland: 19.8.2013, Krakow
- d) Romania, 9.-11.9.2013, Bucharest
- e) Serbia: 26.8.2013, Zaječav
- f) Slovakia: 27.8.2013, Banská Bystrica
- g) Ukraine: 10.9.2013, Lviv

The experts compiled the comments into a country report. The main aim of the meetings was to create a SWOT analysis for the Carpathian area in each country, fill in the Action Measures Worksheet and to collect comments on the strategy itself. The measures in the worksheet were taken from the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism of the Carpathian Convention.

When collecting the filled in charts, the comments in the worksheet reflected the SWOT analysis in each country. All stakeholders expressed their opinion of the great potential for developing sustainable tourism in the Carpathians. However, they pointed out that there is a wide space for improvement to make it a success.

Among those mentioned, is the concern on implementing the development of sustainable tourism into national strategies, improving the laws on national and international level, promoting local products and businesses, building infrastructure, creating a shared database of all tourism products and strengthening awareness among local people.

In every country some 15 NGOs and partners participated in the discussions and the consultations (see individual country reports of the stakeholder consultations). The comments and recommendations of these consultations were considered and incorporated in the final version of the strategy.

2 OVERVIEW

2.1 Review of Background Information

The development of the appropriate infrastructure along with the preservation of the region's unique natural and cultural richness remains among the main challenges of the tourism sector in the future as well as marketing promotion of the region, in spite of notable development during the last 5-10 years.

For example, the tourist industry in the Ukraine and Romania has been hampered by a number of problems, including poor infrastructure, especially concerning roads, and the country's international image. Or, Hungary, based on the findings of image surveys run a couple of years ago by the Hungarian National Tourist Office, it was seen as a grey country where besides Budapest nothing is worthwhile visiting. Tax avoidance, black trading and other form of illegal business dealings can also provide challenge in several countries and industries.

The socialist period had its impacts of tourism. Tourism was in many countries mass and/or centrally directed tourism with large number of travelers and relatively low quality level of services. Still, intra-Eastern European (both organized and individual) travel was a significant source of tourism in many countries. After 20+ years of economic changes, these flows are just about to resume.

Agriculture was following the-more-the-better approach in many countries, which still have its impacts in some of the regions (eg. over-exploited forests, small-scale agricultural practices, or lack of marketing touristic products and poor communication). Regarding nature tourism marked hiking trails were created in several countries many of which still in active use and provide recent developments with sound experiences.

However several infrastructural developments were carried out during the latest 10 years. The success of the tourism product development in the region is not a success story all around, neither the positioning of the area as a unique entity. According to an overall content-analysis of a Google search, the keywords of "Carpathians travel" generates 921 000 hits, while those of "Alps travel" 42 100 000. (It is important to highlight that the Carpathians is one of the largest mountain range in Europe, 18.000 sq km larger than the Alps, with larger population of large carnivores than in the Alps). That is why a detailed analysis of the tourism products connected to mountain tourism, as well as the position of the Carpathians highlighted by the member-countries is needed.

2.1.1 Related Plans, Documents and Initiatives

The development plans of the Charpatian countries are summarized in the table below. The latest focus points are highlighted regarding tourism development (the table contains information from the Annual Tourism Reports for European Commission (2013)).

Dimensions	Czech Republic	Hungary	Poland	Romania	Slovakia	Serbia	Ukraine
Existing strategies	Sustainable Development Strategy Government Resolution No 1242 (2004); State Tourism Policy Strategy in the Czech Republic (2007-2013)	National Development Plan of Hungary in the 2007-2013 New Szechenyi Development Plan	Directions for Tourism Development until 2015 Rural Development Programme for 2007-2013 (Quality of life in rural areas and diversification of rural economy)	National Tourism Development Master Plan for Romania 2007 – 2026. National Strategy for Ecotourism, a Sustainable development strategy for the Carpathian in development phase	Tourism Development Strategy of the Slovak Republic until 2013 (Ministry is currently working on a new tourism development strategy until 2020) Marketing Strategy of the Slovak Tourist Board for 2011 – 2013.	National Tourism Strategy of the Republic of Serbia, Danube Strategy	State Programme of Tourism Development (Law on tourism)
Role of Carpathians	n/d	n/d	n/d	Carpathians are highlighted among the most attractive regions	The Carpathian were recognized through smaller parts such as 'Small Carpathians' and 'White Carpathians'	n/d	n/d
Main development focuses (2012)	establishing the network of geoparks, eco-certifications, certification for local food&products; National Tourism Service Quality System), which will result in the creation of	improvement of Szechenyi Recreation Card (SzRC) (National recreation card), quality certification, accessibility of Hungary	new focus on rural tourism and on the promotion of agritourism	co-financing tourism infrastructure projects in public – public partnership (in ski-resorts, mountain areas, seaside areas), ecotouristic labeling	destination management, as a country-wide concept	n/d	n/d

	the Czech service quality system						
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2.2 Sustainability as the foundation for tourism development

2.2.1 Environmental Sustainability

As UNEP stated „Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs”, e.g. keeping population densities below the carrying capacity of a region, facilitating the renewal of renewable resources, conserving and establishing priorities for the use of non-renewable resources, and keeping environmental impact below the level required to allow affected systems to recover and continue to evolve. (UNEP, 2005)

2.2.2 Socio-cultural Sustainability

The natural environment is not a standalone entity. Cultural, social, heritage related aspects can and should also be taken into consideration. “Social sustainability relates to the maintenance of political and community values. Social values and norms, being largely intangible, relate to the “ethics, value systems, language, education, work attitudes, class systems” and so on, that influence societal relations. Social sustainability also speaks to the satisfaction of basic human needs within the society such as food, clothing, and shelter. The sustainability of social needs and values alludes to the quality of growth that occurs in the economy.” (Nurse, K, 2006)

2.2.3 Economic Feasibility

Tourism is a business activity that needs frameworks, structures and targets. „Agenda 21 clearly identified information, integration, and participation as key building blocks to help countries achieve development that recognises these interdependent pillars. It emphasises that in sustainable development everyone is a user and provider of information. It stresses the need to change from old sector-centered ways of doing business to new approaches that involve cross-sectoral co-ordination and the integration of environmental and social concerns into all development processes. Furthermore, Agenda 21 emphasises that broad public participation in decision making is a fundamental prerequisite for achieving sustainable development.” (Will, A. (2007).

In sustainable planning processes one of the key bottlenecks often is the economic feasibility of activities that maybe socially and environmentally sustainable. That is why we have to consider how various alternatives can work in real life situations.

2.3 Factors Influencing Development

According to WTTC’s Position Paper (Welcoming the New EU Member States with Jobs & Growth: A practical manifesto from the travel & tourism private sector) within most of the new member states, the sector accounted for a much smaller proportion of the economy than the EU average. This left and has been leaving immediate headroom for growth.

To a good part of the Carpathians the sustainable tourism objectives (Earth Summit 2002) are also rather relevant, as it is a renewed initiative globally after the crisis in tourism

(Bieger-Kepler, 2011). The Sustainable Tourism Objectives' (STO) approach is gaining recognition by national governments and local authorities. Although STO is still relatively new and has not been widely applied in practice, existing case studies reveal a number of lessons. These include:

- Diverse activities - beyond community tourism it includes product development, marketing, planning, policy, and investment.
- A lead advocate for STO is useful, but involving other stakeholders is critical. STO can be incorporated into the tourism development strategies of government or business.
- Location: STO works best where the wider destination is developing well.
- STO strategies often involve development of new products, particularly products linked to local culture. These products should be integrated with mainstream markets where possible.
- Ensuring commercial viability is a priority. This requires understanding demand, product quality, marketing, investment in business skills, and involving the private sector.
- Economic measures should expand both formal and casual earning opportunities.
- Non-financial benefits (e.g. increased community participation, access to assets) can reduce market vulnerability.
- STO is a long-term investment. Expectations must be prudent and opportunities for short-term benefits investigated.
- External funding may be necessary to cover substantial transaction costs of establishing partnerships, developing skills, and revising policies.

In the following we discuss the elements of these strategic objectives. The three objectives show certain amount of overlap; therefore the related measures are discussed in following major groups:

- Product development and marketing
- Coordination and management

2.3.1 Product development and marketing

For comparison purposes it is worth to refer to the Alps, which has already achieved, in terms of market awareness, what the Carpathians eventually can. The Alps can be compared to the Carpathians, since the attraction-mixes seem to be very similar, i.e. both mountain regions provide:

- Winter products: skiing, snowboarding
- Summer products: walking, mountaineering, bird watching, extreme sports, lakes and rivers
- Cultural and heritage products: city visits, gastronomy, events and festivals
- Health products: bath, wellness and medical services

Although, in terms of natural and cultural assets the two mountain regions are similar, the development trends in the Alps show that what important in the Alps, is rather different from that of the Carpathians, i.e. product development should be focusing on closing the gap (this does not mean to copy what the Alps do but to learn from best practices):

- Development of complementing products and services
- Development of car free destination(s) with soft mobility
- Environmentally sound transportation completed with electronic booking and information systems
- Improvement of visitor information provision and safety
- Interpretation of assets, stories and heritage

These issues are or would also be relevant for the Carpathians, but the significant differences in terms of human and physical resources, as well as tourism infrastructure mean that the Carpathians cannot and may not aim for the same targets (e.g. in visitor numbers) what the Alps have achieved in the last years. The feeling of strong competition between the Alps and the Carpathians can also be seen in the final document of the so called Carpathian project (INTERREG IIIB/CADSES).

ICT solutions and applications can help to improve the marketing effectiveness and the communication among the co-operative participants, as well as the experience, and visitor management issues.

1. Communication among the participants: Different forums, blogs, social media solutions (eg. LinkedIn groups) can help in finding the co-operative partners, as well as in keeping in touch with them. These solutions help in communicating with the local community and industrial partners as well.
2. ICT application and visitor-management: It is highly important to manage the visitor-flow in time and space. If there are definite borders of the protected area, with gate-systems, pre-booking systems can help to diffuse the visitors in time. Mobile or location-based applications seem to be crucial points nowadays. With the help of these solutions visitors can be easily driven on the given paths, while maps, additional information, photos, videos can support the nature-experience (eg. GPS Tour of Banff National Park: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a5zGK7cCVIM>).

It seems inevitable to have more and more **golf projects** in the region. Golf, especially accompanied by (luxury) housing developments, is a rather profitable form of investment. Golf courses, because of the various qualities of the development process and the upkeep, are not considered acceptable, if sustainability was taken into consideration. The 'Golf Environment Europe' non-profit organisation is, however, working to promote environmental sustainability in golf. Golf Environment Organization recognises:

- the global environmental challenges facing society
- that the golf sector, like all sectors, has a role to play in addressing those challenges

- that poorly designed and managed golf facilities can negatively impact on the environment
- that golf can be a positive agent for environmental enhancement, public awareness raising and environmental education.

The initiative provides support and practical recommendations for developers and for destination alike.

Winter tourism, especially skiing/snowboarding, has already become popular in many areas of the Carpathians. More and more investments are being made to upgrade and to extend skiing facilities. Although, skiing may seem to be a 'green' sport, because of the necessary clearings of slopes and water usage (especially for artificial snow), it has several negative impacts on natural environment (and sometimes on the host community, too). Another initiative, i.e. the so-called **Sustainable Slopes** (The environmental charter for ski areas, National Ski Areas Association, USA or the German Federal Ministry for the Environment on 'Sustainable Ski Resorts') makes efforts to set new standards and processes. They use various tools, such as 'The Environmental Indicators Form' asking for the sum of energy, water, solid waste, and transportation reductions from individual projects (although, the total utility usage of energy, water and waste generation data is no longer requested). It is essential, however, to make it very clear that the concept of sustainable slopes is not marketing label and should not just used as marketing communication tool (since that would support the widely used greenwashing which would be highly countereffective)!

It has to be noted, that there is no such initiative as the '**Sustainable Baths**' or spas. In the region, most of healing resorts build on natural assets (caves, thermal waters) that are vulnerable, and not available without limits. Furthermore, especially considering excess thermal water, the implications can be rather dangerous, e.g. increased temperature of surface waters, which leads to change of habitat, etc.

Local wellbeing and wellness initiatives that build on local natural and/or cultural resources and assets (following the likes of the Nordic Wellbeing initiative or wellbeing (rural) tourism developments in Finland) should also be explored especially that those may deeply build on cultural and heritage assets as well.

Accommodation suppliers (individual and chain ones alike) have started to tackle environmental issues some years ago. Most of the practices, however, were motivated by the decreased operation costs, e.g. intelligent heating, ventilation and lighting systems, solar cells, cutting back on washing the towels and bedlinens. Also, there are hotels with special theme, Green Hotels or Environmentally Friendly Hotels (USA), Bio-Hotels (Austria) that are all somehow related to sustainability. It is also known, that accommodations that are individually owned and managed (and most of time smaller than chain hotels) can probably more easily sustainable techniques and tools (such as local raw materials for the construction as well as for catering).

Also the **internet** made it possible to have accommodations that are very much linked to local community. Direct online selling is getting more and more important for the hotel sector. The hotels invest in direct sales based on huge efforts in online marketing with

relevant result: the direct online sales increased by 11% during 5 years in the USA, and reached an average rate of 30% of the total sales (HeBS Digital, 2012).

The most popular tools in the Web Marketing Mix seem to be the social media (acc. to the 43% of the respondents of the recent research of HeBS Digital, 2012), while mobile marketing is the second. Regarding the budget spent on the different tools, it must be highlighted that the so called pulled (demand-driven) marketing is crucial: Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Search Engine Marketing (pay per click advertisement in search engines) gave all together ca. 46% of the budget of the respondents, the second is website design (20% of the budget), E-mail campaigns seemed to be important (11%), while display as well as social media campaign got a relevancy of around 7-7%.

All these tools assure cost-effective marketing possibilities for local small and medium size service suppliers, as well as for the destinations. It must be highlighted, that proper knowledge is vital, that is there is a high importance of trainings.

The following table summarises the key products, the key challenges, and development needs.

Focus areas	Products/services investors find interesting	What sustainable practices needed?	Countries
Rural tourism	Repositioning the existing accommodation, green practices	Using local materials, products, building authentic, green facilities, identifying the unique experience promises of “Carpathians Rural Lifestyle”	Carpathian wide
Slow movement	Developing new agritourism networks	Sustainable agriculture, broaden the Carpathian Culinary Heritage Network	Carpathian wide
Heritage tourism	Hotel developments in (historic and business) cities	Complex and balances supply of accommodation establishments at destinations; development of thematic roads	Carpathian wide
Geotourism	Specialized tour operator services	Sustainable management, maintenance of the paths, code of behaviour for tourists	Carpathian wide
Adventure tourism	Specialized tour operator services	Sustainable management, maintenance of the paths, parks, code of behaviour for tourists (walking, horse riding, cycling)	Poland, Slovakia, the Ukraine, Romania
Ecotourism	Building eco, green lodges	Visitor management issues in national parks, green certification, code of behaviour for tourists	Carpathian wide
Baths, mountain healing	Repositioning existing spas and developing new ones, using climate therapy as USP of Carpathians	Assuring access for locals, offering local products, therapies, treatments	Romania, Hungary, the Ukraine, Serbia, Slovakia
Dark Sky Parks	Developing special themed parks eg. Dark Sky Parks (see appendix)	Visitor management, code of behaviour for tourists	Poland, Slovakia, the Ukraine, Romania, Serbia
Tourism products that can be considered but with special attention and considerations			
Golfing	Golf projects	Applying the ‘Sustainable Golf Courses’ approach	Carpathian wide
Skiing and cross country skiing	Building green lodges, developing ski resorts	ConSustainable Slopes	Poland, Slovakia, Romania, the Ukraine
Service improvements			
Accommodation	Developing eco-lodges	Eco-certification, identifying “Carpathian accommodation style” (architecture, food, additional services)	Carpathian wide
Transportation	Transportation infrastructure (airports, train especially)	Complex transportation infrastructure developments, zoning, identifying non-motorized areas, villages, developing local public transport (eg. bus transfers)	Carpathian wide

Existing products	Products/services investors find interesting	What sustainable practices needed?	Countries
Marketing issues		Sustainable development strategies considering the needs of communities (including tourism)	all
		Co-operations in management and communication	all
		Training of decision makers and industry	all
		Joint approach in finding and supporting investors in tourism	all
		Adopting the meta-management concept of destination management, and focusing on local initiations, monitoring	all
		Identifying the Carpathian experience, finding out the USP of the Carpathians (versus the Alps, e.g. traditional rural lifestyle, climate therapy) and starting joint campaigns (on the website of each NTOs as well)	all

2.3.2 Coordination and Management

2.3.2.1 Government

The primary task of governments in each country is to incorporate the basic principles of sustainable development into the general planning process. Throughout this process, there is a need for active co-operation with the international governmental and non-governmental organisations (as the major aim is to achieve global sustainability), with the civil sphere of the given country, with the representatives of tourism, and with the host community. The representatives of the community, the civil groups, and the tourism sector should all be involved in each stage of the tourism development process.

If a government is committed to sustainable tourism development, it has to assess the adequacy of the existing economic, regulatory and voluntary frameworks for achieving the principles of sustainability. If mechanisms are inadequate, new frameworks should be developed including, among others, methods and standards for the regulation of impact assessment, controlling mechanisms for the tourism developing projects, legal enforcement and monitoring of environmental audits, adaptation of land-use and construction regulations, and protection of historical and cultural values.

Governments should also support the assessment of the socio-cultural, economic, and physical impacts of tourism, since the negative impacts can be prevented or decreased, and the positive impacts can be encouraged. The impacts can be prevented or encouraged if the decision-makers are actually aware of those potential impacts, and if the tourism enterprises, the local communities, and the tourists are all able to assess the implications of their own activities. Therefore, governments should introduce such educational and informational programmes that let all stakeholders know about the nature and functioning of the tourism system as well as its impacts, the skills and methods required to influence the impacts, and the basic principles of sustainability.

An important element of international co-operation is to facilitate information exchange and technology transfer between developed and developing countries. This is important in enabling the nations to learn from each other, so that they can benefit from each other's experiences. International co-operation might also ensure that new tourism destinations that are developed, respect the principles (and practices) of sustainable development from the very beginning.

Organizations, e.g. UNWTO, WTTC or GIZ have published guides for planning that can be adapted by municipalities, i.e. the '**Sustainable Tourism as a Development Option**', Practical Guide for Local Planners, Developers and Decision Makers by UNWTO:

- Step 1: Situation analysis
 - Stakeholders and interests
 - Problems and potentials
 - Framework conditions and prerequisites
- Step 2: Designing a strategy for tourism development

- What kind of tourism? Which tourists?
- Where to begin?
- Step 3: Determining roles and responsibilities
 - Networking the stakeholders: who, how, with whom?
- Step 4: Community involvement
 - Participation stages in tourism development
 - Prerequisites for community involvement
- Step 5: Guarantee sustainability: indicators for monitoring and evaluation

2.3.2.2 Destination management organisations

The implementation of the sustainable development principles happens at local level, that is why the so called “destination management” concept is an important issue.

Historically, the coordination of the destination was limited to marketing-communication, as the globally known destination spent a lot on communication, mainly by state subsidies. The “meta-management” or the overall management of the destinations appeared only in the last decades (Sainaghi, R., 2006). The overall coordination came alive because of two factors: 1. assuring the sustainable development of the destinations to eliminate the negative effects of tourism; 2. to develop and harmonize the supply elements of the destinations so as to meet the needs of the new tourists. The two main pillars of the overall coordination – sustainable development and assuring market success – are included in the concept of destination management. The most overall definition of the meta-management is as follows: “ (...) destination management is the strategic, organizational and operative decisions taken to manage the process of definition, promotion and commercialisation of the tourism product [originating from within the destination], to generate manageable flows of incoming tourists that are balanced, sustainable and sufficient to meet the economic needs of the local actors involved in the destination.” (Franch, M. - Martini, U., 2002)

The tasks of the destination management can be summarized according to Bieger (1997) as follows:

- Visioning and developing function (mutual vision creation, market research, positioning and benchmark analysis, searching for financial sources, attracting investments, marketing-strategy, development strategy, and supporting realization, monitoring)
- Supply function (developing supporting resources, harmonizing and packaging supply elements, innovation, information-services, visitor management, quality management)
- Communication function (communication activity at strategic level: image and brand building, tactical communication, supporting sales of the service suppliers, mediator role, building central reservation system and DMR (integrated destination management ICT system), sales promotion, monitoring)

- Incubation function (representation of interests) (lobby-activity, supporting cooperation and networking, cross-border cooperation, involving locals, development of human resources, consulting, knowledge sharing)

Beside the important planning and management issues, branding is a crucial issue, mainly in regional level, so as to assure the “Carpathian” brand.

2.3.2.3 Private companies (travel and tourism)

Since national, regional and often local governments are rather occupied with social and day-to-day economic problems, private companies can even pave the way to a more sustainable practice, and eventually can influence legislation that provides the necessary legal foundations. As the '**Blueprint for New Tourism**' (WTTC) collected, many of New Tourism's (responsible, sustainable) key tasks for the private sector are very concrete:

- Expanding markets while promoting and protecting natural resources and local heritage and lifestyles.
- Developing careers-education-employee relations, promoting smaller firms, raising environmental awareness, and helping in its own way to narrow the gap between the 'haves' and 'have-nots'.
- Sensitive provision of traditional tourism products and imaginative product diversification that reduce seasonality and increase yields.
- Improving the quality of tourism products and services, and adding value for money while increasing consumer choice.
- Agreeing and implementing quality standards at all levels and in all areas, including staff training.
- Transfer of industry skills and best practice that spreads the benefits widely and efficiently.
- Increasingly sophisticated and more precise measurement of the sector's own activity, to feed into strategic business decisions.
- Communicating more effectively with the world in which it operates – including energetic input from Travel & Tourism umbrella organizations to government, at strategic and local levels.
- The cumulative effect will be a shift towards Travel & Tourism that continues to serve the private sector's own needs, while embracing the wider interests of the countries and communities in which it operates.

Tour operators (TOs) do have significant role in how a destination may develop, TOs set requirements and destinations, if they want to have visitors, should and do comply. This in long run can create a dependent situation, which is not favourable for the destination itself. Many TOs, however, recognized their influence and set up the so-called 'Tour Operator Initiative'. The Tour Operators Initiative (TOI) defines key areas where companies can integrate sustainability practices such as:

- Internal management, by taking into account sustainability principles in the management of human resources, office supplies and production of printed materials;
- Product development and management, by planning tours and selecting holiday package components that minimise environmental, economic and social impacts;
- Contracting with suppliers, by integrating sustainability principles into the selection criteria and service agreements of suppliers;
- Customer relations, by guaranteeing privacy, health and safety standards, and providing customers with information on responsible behaviour and sustainability issues at their destinations; and
- Relations with destinations, by supporting destination stakeholders' efforts to address sustainability issues and financially contributing to conservation and development projects.

The TOs recognised their responsibility to develop and operate in a manner that makes a positive contribution to the natural, social and cultural environment. We also recognise and accept our responsibility to operate in ways that reduce environmental impacts, benefit host communities, safeguard the future livelihood of local people, and ensure the protection of destinations for future generations. In doing so, we commit in this **Tour Operators Initiative** to (<http://www.toinitiative.org/>):

- protect the natural environment and cultural heritage
- cooperate with local communities and people, ensure they benefit from the visits of our customers and encourage our customers to respect the local way of life
- conserve plants and animals, protected areas and landscapes
- respect the integrity of local cultures and their social institutions
- comply with local, national and international laws and regulations
- oppose and actively discourage illegal, abusive or exploitative forms of tourism
- work closely with business partners, local authorities, regional and national governments and other organisations to achieve sustainable development of tourism
- provide information on our activities to develop and encourage the sustainable development and management of tourism
- communicate our progress in implementing this commitment.

Transport companies and fuel supplier can also play a significant role, since at it seems for a good number of years, cars, coaches and aircrafts will be the main means of travel within and into the Carpathians. Rather high percentage of cars and coaches running on the roads of the Carpathians do not have catalisators, and their operation is not fuel-efficient, therefore the fumes and gases mean more serious impacts than similar means of traffic in the Alps, for example. Airlines, even some budget ones (e.g. WizzAir, easyJet and recently Ryanair) have discovered the region, since they can expect not only incoming, but outgoing traffic (when incoming means tourists and business, outgoing mean commuting employees

to Western cities). All airlines try to cut their operation costs, which often mean decreased environmental impacts (such as no on-board food means less waste). EasyJet takes it even further, when they announced in June, 2007, their vision of a more environmentally friendly aircraft, which is due to come to service in 2015. The so called 'easyJet ecoJet' would release 25% less noise, 50% less carbon dioxide and 75% less nitrogen-dioxide (aiming for less than 47g of carbon-dioxide per passenger kilometre, than would be less than half of the recent emission level).

2.3.2.4 Tourists and local citizens

Tourists and local citizens themselves play an extraordinary role in the realisation of sustainable tourism. Firstly, when making travel decisions, they can force the tourism sector to function in an ethical and environmentally responsible way by carefully selecting the tourist companies and services they wish to deal with. Secondly, during their stay at a destination, tourists can also make sure that their activities do not damage the physical and socio-cultural environment of the destination, and that they contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of the local residents as much as possible. Tourists could also support or directly participate in local environmental and cultural conservation efforts. Local citizens can also show good practices to visitors.

In the case of visitors and local citizens voluntary schemes, such as Code of Practices are the appropriate tools promoting sustainable practices. Various organizations, e.g. CRC Sustainable Tourism published special guides, such as:

- Green Guide for 4WD tours: best-practice environmental management for 4WD and off-road tours
- Green Guide to Blue Seas: best-practice environmental management for small boat tours
- Green Guide to White Water: best-practice environmental management for whitewater raft & kayak tours

As an example for international co-operation the **Carpathian Tourist Board** (CTB) should be mentioned. CTB was founded by the Transcarpathian Regional State Administrations together with private sector and local community in August 2001 under the support of TACIS Project "Support to local development and tourism in the Carpathian region of Ukraine". As end of 2005 about 130 tourist companies, educational institutions and cultural organisations are the active members of the Carpathian Tourist Board (<http://www.tourism-carpathian.com.ua/en/rada/about.php>).

The main objective of the Board was supposed to be supporting tourism development in the Carpathian region, to promote the Carpathian region as holiday destination and to market the tourism of Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Transcarpathian, Ternopil and Chernivtsi regions as a whole. Among the main activities of the Carpathian Tourist Board at present there were the following:

- Co-ordination of regional efforts in tourism development
- Analysis of development and activities of the tourist organisations

- Organisation of the round-tables, seminars, conferences and meetings with the tourist companies of the region
- Marketing of regional tourist resources
- Monitoring of regional tourist industry
- Elaboration of the tourist information centres network in the region
- Elaboration of the green rural tourism system of marking and standartization
- Edition and distribution of the brochures, maps, tourist guides, booklets on the tourist products
- Presenting the tour potential of the Carpathian region at the specialised international exhibitions and fairs
- Creation of the regional tourist information database

During the period from its creation CTB has published first guides about the region in English, Ukrainian, Polish, Russian and German languages; tourist map of the region, posters and post-cards. The region so far has been represented at more than 30 international fairs and tourist exhibition. In the year of 2003 the first tourist-information centre was founded in Ivano-Frankivsk and shortly after that - network of 4 such centres in Yaremche district of the Ivano-Frankivsk oblast, as a model for the whole region. In its communication CTB advertises the following attractions and products:

- Wooden churches
- Caves
- Lakes, watrfalls, rivers
- Castles and some selected heritage sites
- Skiing and winter tourism
- Walking and cycling
- Horse riding
- Carpathian tram
- Rural tourism
- Mineral waters

The CTB could possibly be the basis on which all countries and areas in question can, step-by-step create the new identity and image for the whole region, and not only for areas in Poland and the Ukraine.

2.4 Tourism Demand and Supply

2.4.1 Tourism Demand

According to the UNWTO, WTTC and OECD, tourism is one of the most important and influential economic sectors of the 21st century. It is anticipated that tourism, in terms of its economic importance is similar to the car manufacturing or oil industry. By quantitative measures, e.g. number of visits, total expenditure, employment, tourism really is a significant industry, however, by its complex impacts on the socio-cultural, natural and economic environment, it can be rather two-faceted.

Europe, i.e. the EU is the most visited region of the world, accommodating 54.8% of all international travellers. Based on UNWTO figures, good 10 years ago Central and Eastern Europe, in which the Carpathians are located, did not really play a crucial role, since the whole region attracted altogether 10.9% (87.9 million) of all international travellers (806 million). In the last 5 years, the performance of Central and Eastern Europe has been improved a lot, the tourist flow increased: the number of international arrivals reached 113.7 millions in 2012. It must be highlighted, that the CEE has low performance among the European regions, with a share of 21.1% from all European international arrivals, but enjoys the highest rate of growth (more details about demand figures are in Chapter 4.2). It is estimated the actual Carpathian region (i.e. considering only those regions and counties that are geographically located in the mountain range) receives app. 45 million overnight stays (including domestic and international travelers) in a year.

It can be established that after the financial crisis of 2009, all the Carpathian countries gained back their attraction in the tourism market:

- Poland seems to be the strongest among the countries (by tourist arrivals, expenditure), followed by Hungary and the Czech Republic based on the data below. (It should be highlighted, that these data is concerned to total countries, including capitals, and other popular regions as well.)
- Average length of stay is extremely high in Ukraine (4.97 days in 2011), while 3 days seems to be the average (Poland is above the average). The length of stay is rather low in Romania, and Serbia.
- Because of the (assumed) biased information, it is rather difficult to evaluate the tourist flows of the countries. It can be highlighted (based on the data of "Overnight stays of non-resident tourists in all types of accommodation establishments, by nationality 2007-2011 (10.2012) UNWTO), that the countries can be divided to 3 groups:
 1. **Leader:** Poland (10.6 millions guest nights)
 2. **Followers:** Hungary (9 millions), the Czech Republic (6.3 millions) The place of Ukraine is questioned, regarding the above mentioned facts, but based on the expenditure information, Ukraine should be rated into the second group
 3. **Countries with relatively low visitation** Slovakia (4 millions), Romania (3 millions), Serbia (1.6 millions)
- Domestic tourism shows a relatively high volume in Poland (47.5 M guest nights) and the Czech Republic.

- It can be seen that the volume of international excursionists is very high in Poland, Hungary, which shows that there is a great potential to switch excursion trips to longer stay trips, with product development.

Revenues, especially per capita can really show the imbalanced status of tourism in many CEE countries. Especially, in the case of the Ukraine, data show that large number of visitors does not necessarily come together with lot of spending. This data ensure that most of the visitors to the Ukraine are not 'real' visitors, more like cross-border traders or people visiting friends and relatives. The low average figures are not good signs for sustainable tourism. Especially, that government officials, and politicians in all CEE countries are mainly concerned about visitation numbers, and do not take into consideration almost any other data or indicator of tourism.

The state's financial participation in the development of this industry had been very low in the Carpathian countries as it is, for instance, in the Czech Republic or in Hungary. More extensive financial assistance in the country has been provided for the State Program of Support for Tourism, activities of the Czech Tourism Authority (especially expansion of the network of offices abroad, promotion in foreign countries, marketing, creation of information systems, etc.), and activities aimed at promoting the development of tourism in regions. In Hungary, the state was running a special scheme from which accommodation establishments and locations, operators with natural healing/thermal water could develop and extend their services. This situation has certainly changed in those countries that joined the EU since tourism has instantly become one of the priority areas for development. Several billions of Euros have already been spent on tourism development directly (e.g. attraction developments) and indirectly (infrastructure developments).

Several CEE countries were built on their natural assets in tourism communication: Poland uses 'The Natural Choice' slogan; in the logo of Romania the Carpathians are resembled and in Hungary, 2007 was the 'Year of Green Tourism', and from Poland (through Austria) to Romania they refer to themselves as 'The country in the Centre/Heart of Europe'.

It would be highly important to analyze the Intra-Carpathian tourism flow, but due to the lack of the entity of Carpathians, there are no relevant data available.

2.4.2 Tourism Supply

It can be seen that the Carpathians as tourism entity or unit does not really exist (the difference is really huge comparing it to the communication, the image of the Alps where skiing for example is a unifying product and image).

Mountain tourism is important in all the countries; still, the Carpathian Mountains are not highlighted on the websites of several national tourist offices (e.g. Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland). The tourism offer is rather robust in the Carpathians. The mountain range offers approximately 1.5 million beds for domestic and international tourists. Still, intra-regional connections, especially flights are of rare supply (both by routes and the number of flights), although the air-transport infrastructure (especially regional airports) would be available (e.g. in Poland, Slovakia or Romania alike).

The Carpathians play a crucial role in the positioning of Romania, while there are very structured and sound information labelled with Carpathian Mountains in Slovakia. In Serbia,

and the Ukraine, the Carpathians are among the must see destinations, though the low level interpretation of the online information cause difficulties.

Regarding the tourism product the followings can be summarized (detailed inventory can be found in Appendix 3):

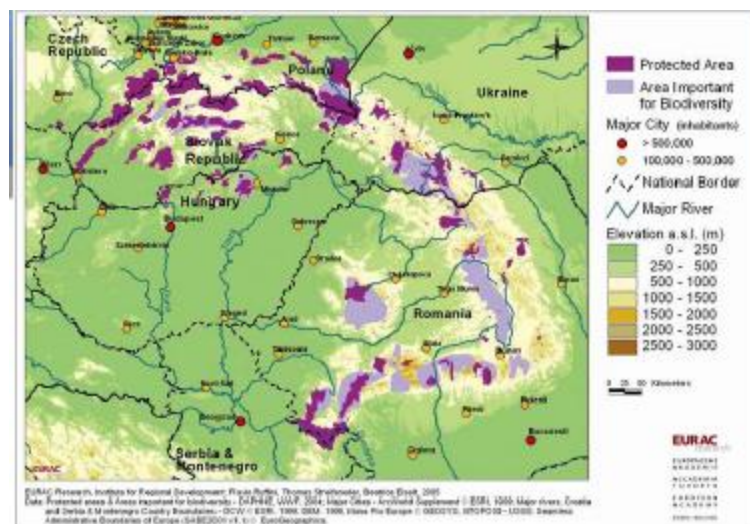
- Skiing in several slopes of the Carpathian Mountains is developed (infrastructure, and marketing communication) in Poland and Slovakia, but there are many new developments in Romania and in the Ukraine.
- Although the concept of 'sustainable skiing' is a likely alternative, it is essential to consider it as a concept or approach and not a label, since the latter can lead to greenwashing. There are "safety issues", code of ethics, and educational programs initiated in the near past in Poland.
- Rural tourism is a basic product of the mountain regions. The authentic culture, and the agriculture of the village life as a main product can be seen in Romania, and The Ukrainian part of the the Carpathian Mountains, while in Slovakia a new, modern and diversified form can be identified. In Poland rural tourism dates back to 19th Century (e.g. Tatras, Beskid Zywicki). It must be highlighted that both rural tourism forms assure economic benefits in the mountain regions, that is why rural tourism development, connected to gastronomy, local food, sustainable agriculture is an important development issue in all countries, even in a joint "Carpathian Rural Lifestyle" initiative.
- Slow movement is becoming more known in almost every country and it is based on local gastronomy. There are initiations (2012) for a Carpathian gastronomy thematic road (Carpathian Culinary Heritage Network) to improve and label the gastronomy of 4 countries: Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, and Ukraine.
- There were specific, country-based models in the area of Quality of Life measurement in Poland, and in Romania, while in Hungary the unique model of Tourism Quality of Life (TQOL, Budapest Model) was improved (Puczko-Smith, 2009).
- The cultural heritage of the area is very rich, with several UNESCO heritage sites, and quite strong, useful information on the websites of NTOs, though thematic, Carpathian-wide trails are missing, though there are new initiatives like the Carpathian Tourist Road, including four countries.
- Geotourism is one of the most important alternatives in the mountain areas, with several, diversified activities. In some countries (eg. Poland, Slovakia), the infrastructure, the guided tours, as well as the marketing efforts are well developed, though in the rest of the region the quality of the infrastructure, and the available information is varied. That is why it is important to prioritize hiking, biking (or horse riding) paths, develop and maintain them, with assure useful information in every country. There are great initiations like the Green Bicycle - East Carpathian Greenway (more information in the Appendix).
- Adventure tourism is a suitable product to attract young, high spending travellers. The best activities, with high promotional values can be found in Poland and Slovakia.

- Ecotourism is particularly interesting in and around national parks, and protected areas, where visitor centres, educational paths are developed, though in the great part of the countries there is a lack of information, maps, prices, programs. (The exception is Slovakia, where there is abundant information about the facilities, though the term “ecotourism” is not defined.)
- Health tourism is an important issue in every country, though the special product of climate therapy (healing lung, and allergic illnesses) are rare, though this kind of special therapy can be the USP of the health tourism of the region. Thermal springs are also important in many countries of the Carpathians.
- Leisure tourism in a more general meaning, i.e. resting, recreation and relaxation in the mountains, built on clean and fresh air, tranquility, etc. can also be mentioned since especially in low seasons this form of tourism can provide an additional way of attracting tourists.

2.4.3 Nature-based Tourism in CEE Countries

The Carpathian region provides some of the Europe’s cleanest streams and drinking water supplies and contains Europe’s greatest reserve of pristine forest. The area represents a unique composition of ecosystems with an exceptionally high biological diversity. Relatively small population densities, difficult access to many mountain ranges and a considerable number of large forests have allowed a rich and diverse flora and fauna to exist in the Carpathians. As a result of far reaching transformations of the natural environment in Central Europe, the Carpathians have remained either the only or the most important refuge for many plant and animal species, playing a significant role in the preservation of biological diversity in Europe.

Protected areas of the Carpathians



Map of Carpathians by countries



Source: <http://www.internationalrivers.org/resources/defending-the-danube-1809>

Regarding natural resources, and sustainability issues, the state of the countries nowadays is summarized below.

There are existing differences between the countries or even discrepancies within the same country in the tourism sector, however. For instance, some destination in the Northwestern part of the region is facing heavy pressure from tourist activities (especially in winter times) on their natural resources (especially from skiing).

In the contrary, in the Southwest of the Carpathians tourism activities calculated in the number of tourists are very low (e.g. Serbia). Thus, the Northeastern part of Hungary, which lies within the Carpathian region, is the least developed part of the country with high rate of unemployment. The region can be characterized as one of huge contrasts with developed parts around cities yet many white spots in the rural areas that are located mainly in the buffer zones of borders (the detailed inventory of natural resources can be found in Appendix 4).

We can summarize that (based on the analysis of national parks, protected areas, health tourism based on natural resources, nature trails, biking paths, sustainable tourism assets):

- The highest number of protected areas can be found in Romania, Slovakia, Poland and Ukraine.

- It can be said, that Poland, Romania and Slovakia builds large part(s) of its tourism on the Carpathians. This can be realized on the number and the diversification of the hiking/biking/skiing infrastructure, as well as on the information provided about these facilities on the website of NTOs. In these countries we can find the highest interest of tour operators, specialized guides.
- In Romania there is a strong effort focusing on the development and the management of the Carpathians, being the greatest tourism region, though the development of the infrastructure, as well as the online information needs to be improved. The same is true for the Ukraine, though there we can find bottom-up initiatives (instead of mainly top-down ones in Romania), and great efforts on communication (but the level of the web-marketing knowledge could be improved).
- In Hungary and Serbia the national parks make great efforts developing educational trails, visitor centres, though the average quality of the hiking and biking paths varies a lot, as well as the information given about them are diffused.
- We can find strong commitment to the sustainability issues in all countries. The highest effort is shown by Romania and Czech Republic, where there is a strong effort to develop strict, and useful eco-certifications for suppliers as well as destinations.

The expected economic benefits of tourism are persuading many communities, particularly in the northern Carpathians and in Slovakia, to develop new tourist facilities with new and improved road networks. These are in addition to the major road programmes already envisaged as “Via Carpathia”, and declared as part of the Trans-European highway by the EU in 2012 (EC, 2012) (it is important to mention the CarpathCC Climate Change Framework Project in progress, which focuses on tourism issues as well (and the relevant report (SR3) was published November, 2013) in which the study refers to a number of trends in the impact of climate change on tourism are identified in the CARPIVIA project and the study on “Impacts of and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Danube-Carpathian Region” by the Central European University (EC 2013).

2.4.4 Travelling to mountain areas

The Carpathians are one of Europe's largest mountain ranges, which cover about 210,000 km². Spreading widely towards the North and South, they extend in an arc for ca. 1,450 kilometres from Eastern part of Czech Republic to the Iron Gate in Serbia.

The Carpathians cover mountain areas, therefore it is worth to note, that travel to mountain ecosystems is increasing at a rapid pace, as growing numbers of tourists are attracted to the clean air, unique landscapes and wildlife, scenic beauty, culture, history, and recreational opportunities that mountain destinations offer. Yet, while this growth provides important benefits to local communities and national economies, the very popularity of mountain areas also poses a potential threat to the health of their natural and cultural resources. Poorly planned and implemented tourism infrastructure, tours and tourist activities can have a serious impact on these often fragile ecosystems, as well as on the communities that inhabit mountain regions (as summarised by the UNEP-Conservation International Tourism and Mountains: A Practical Guide to Managing the Environmental and Social Impacts of Mountain Tours).

The Guide lists the most common elements of mountain-based tours include such as:

- **Nature walks.** An important means of experiencing the mountain flora, fauna and landscape, walks provide tourists with an opportunity to view, interact with and learn about native birds, mammals, reptiles, insects and other wildlife. Encounters with wildlife, which may be unplanned and occur unexpectedly during a tour or purposefully sought out and offered as a core part of a tour program, add significant value for visitors. The scenery and specific experiences of a walk may be quite different, depending on the season, and can be a particularly important source of summer income for areas that are generally dependent on snow-based activities.
- **Land-based adventure activities.** Such activities include cycling, mountain biking, quadbiking, horseback riding, and canyoning and, less often, rock climbing, ice climbing, hang gliding and caving. While the weather conditions (snow, ice-covered or dry) and access to sites may differ (e.g. frozen rivers or lakes or obscured or blocked trails), these activities can occur in mountain areas both on and off snow season.
- **Freshwater-based recreational activities.** Activities including river tours, canoeing, sailing, windsurfing, kite surfing, kayaking, rafting and freshwater fishing may also be a part of mountain tours.
- **Snow-dependent recreation activities.** Activities such as cross country, downhill and glacier skiing, heli-skiing, snow scootering, snowboarding, tobogganing, snowshoe walking and sledding are generally restricted to higher alpine mountain areas and concentrated in snowfall seasons.

Most certainly, the rich culture and heritage of the countries in the region are also correspondin with nature tourism, since in most cases these forms go hand-in-hand.

There is no comparable information from all the countries; therefore it is not possible to introduce the role of the Carpathians in incoming and domestic tourism. Although, looking at the characteristics of domestic tourism in some of the CEE countries, it can be noted that Czechs usually spend their vacation at lakes (23.8%), in mountain resorts (15.3%). Almost 40% of Polish people spent more than 5 nights as a tourist in Poland, and 87.5% of the total guest nights were spent by Polish guests. Among the Slovak people, 38.1% typically visit the mountains, 27.7% lakes and rivers. These data indicate the relative role of natural areas when deciding where to travel.

Ecotourism is often considered as one of the main forms supporting sustainable development at destination level. Therefore, to highlight the main issues, where most of the Carpathian countries should pay attention to, the results of a survey collecting ecotourists preferences in the USA and some other countries are summarized below:

1. Excellent local guides – guides as in printed, online or personal services. Guides are essential for introducing local assets and heritage and to create involvement for visitors
2. Small groups – i.e. upto 10 or 15 persons in one group. Quality experience and optimal impact management is difficult over this group size
3. Education – education of local stakeholders as well as visitors is essential to make common goals accepted and achievable

4. High quality food – in this context high quality refers to locally grown, cultivated, processed foods that are from sustainable sources
5. Non-crowded areas – the ‘consumption’ of natural and cultural assets and resources anticipates that crowding is avoided in all cases, which requires proper management and monitoring measures
6. High quality accommodation – quality refers to the level of attention and services (eg. personal, segment focused, etc. services) and not to luxury qualities of accommodation
7. Conservation – conservation is expected to be integral part of everyday planning and management practices

The people who may want to participate in ecotourism as a general observation tend to be:

- Over 35 years of age, but interestingly Spanish and Italian ecotourists tend to be younger
- Slightly more women than men
- Customers with above average personal income, again Spanish and Italian ecotourists tend travelling at lower budgets
- Mainly highly educated and representing higher social class(es)

2.4.5 Summary - International trends

UNWTO’s Tourism 2020 Vision forecasts that international arrivals will reach nearly 1.6 billion, 1.2 billion of which will be intra-regional. It is anticipated that, in mature regions, such as in Europe, growth of arrivals will slow down, but the growth in Central and Eastern Europe will be above world’s average.

Several studies (see Appendix) highlighted that tourism development may become difficult and complex, as well as show that there are niches and markets for which and whom a ‘new’ destination, such as the Carpathians can become very attractive (e.g. growing environmental consciousness, travelling for shorter distances).

The new trends of 2013 are summarized by the IPK International (2012) as follows:

- Shorter trips but higher spending
- Travellers are older and book online more than ever
- South America and Asia drive global travel growth
- Long-haul travel outpaces holidays within Europe
- Russia booms but Italians and Spaniards stay at home
- Modest growth for European destinations in 2013 (Solid 2% growth forecast for 2013)
- More overseas visitors come to Europe
- Travellers want more individual holiday experiences

- Better information and open communications needed
- Adventure travel heads for new horizons (soft and green adventure)
- Adventure travellers are getting more diverse, High spending supports local communities
- Sun, sea and ... surgery: A fast-growing \$40-60bn niche market
- Hungary, Germany and the Czech Republic are seen as the leading destinations for medical tourism in Europe
- Strong growth outlook
- Making tourism more accessible: A growing segment of the population, Important source of tourism spending
- Social media and bloggers become major influences on travel behaviour
- Travellers use social media all the time.

2.5 Impacts of Tourism

On one hand, tourism promises tremendous economic positive benefits: it is one of the world's most significant sources of economic outcomes and employment. However, tourism is a very complex industry involving numerous stakeholders (sometimes with opposite interests) and requiring significant amount of resources. As such, tourism can have very opposite effects according to the way activities are managed. Managed well, tourism can play a positive role in the socio, cultural, economical, environmental and political development of the destination and as such represents a significant development opportunity for many countries and communities. On the contrary, unchecked tourism development can lead to very damageable impacts (more on impacts of tourism can be found in numerous publications such as the one from the CBD Guidelines on Tourism and Biodiversity, UNEP or Puczko-Rätz, 2001, or UNWTO (2010)).

2.5.1 Environmental Impacts

The quality of the environment, both natural and man-made, is essential to tourism. However, tourism's relationship with the environment is complex. It involves many activities that can have adverse environmental effects. Many of these impacts are linked with the construction of general infrastructure such as roads and airports, and of tourism facilities, including resorts, hotels, restaurants, shops, golf courses and marinas. The negative impacts of tourism development can gradually destroy the environmental resources on which it depends. Also various emissions can pollute or degrade the environment. Emissions are very complex since heating, air-conditioning, transport or even cooking can all have such impacts on the surrounding environment.

On the other hand, tourism has the potential to create beneficial effects on the environment by contributing to environmental protection and conservation. It is a way to raise awareness of environmental values and it can serve as a tool to finance protection of natural areas and increase their economic importance (UNWTO 2010).

2.5.2 Socio-Cultural Impacts

The socio-cultural impacts of tourism described here are the effects on host communities of direct and indirect relations with tourists, and of interaction with the tourism industry. For a variety of reasons, host communities often are the weaker party in interactions with their guests and service providers, leveraging any influence they might have. These influences are not always apparent, as they are difficult to measure, depend on value judgments and are often indirect or hard to identify.

The impacts arise when tourism brings about changes in value systems and behaviour and thereby threatens indigenous identity. Furthermore, changes often occur in community structure, family relationships, collective traditional life styles, ceremonies and morality. Particularly relevant to this region, the so-called demonstration effect can cause long term changes in local communities.

But tourism can also generate positive impacts as it can serve as a supportive force for peace, foster pride in cultural traditions and help avoid urban relocation by creating local jobs. As often happens when different cultures meet, socio-cultural impacts are ambiguous: the same objectively described impacts are seen as beneficial by some groups, and are perceived as negative - or as having negative aspects - by other stakeholders (UNWTO 2010).

2.5.3 Economic Impacts

The tourism industry generates substantial economic benefits to both host countries and tourists' home countries. Especially in developing countries, one of the primary motivations for a region to promote itself as a tourism destination is the expected economic improvement.

As with other impacts, this massive economic development brings along both positive and negative consequences. There are many hidden costs to tourism, which can have unfavorable economic effects on the host community. Often rich countries are better able to profit from tourism than poor ones. Whereas the least developed regions have the most urgent need for income, employment and general rise of the standard of living by means of tourism, they are least able to realize these benefits. Among the reasons for this are large-scale transfer of tourism revenues out of the host country and exclusion of local businesses and products. Still, dependency situations, i.e. when a local area or community depends on one activity, e.g. tourism, this can lead to rather disadvantageous consequences.

Diversification in an economy is a sign of health, however if a country or region becomes dependent for its economic survival upon one industry, it can put major stress upon this industry as well as the people involved to perform well. Many countries, especially developing countries with little ability to explore other resources, have embraced tourism as a way to boost the economy.

The seasonal character of the tourism industry creates economic problems for destinations that are heavily dependent on it. Problems that seasonal workers face include job (and

therefore income) insecurity, usually with no guarantee of employment from one season to the next, difficulties in getting training, employment-related medical benefits, and recognition of their experience, and unsatisfactory housing and working conditions. (UNWTO 2010)

2.5.4 Positive impacts of sustainable tourism

Supporting the objectives of the strategy sustainable development can have various positive impacts on the host community which summarised as follows:

- Socio-cultural impacts
 - Population is maintained
 - Jobs created (temporary and permanent)
 - Customs, professions kept (but there is a high risk that it becomes staged), buildings re-used and revitalised
 - Healthier and more balanced community characteristics and structure (e.g. better image, growth of tolerance)
 - Impacts on the individual and families (e.g. better leisure opportunities, improved social mobility, knowledge of languages, more income)
- Environmental impacts
 - Infrastructure developments, especially roads and utilities
 - Funds for conservation are created and increased
 - Environmental education and awareness
 - Change of landscape and re-use of lands (buildings)
 - Conservation of local architectural styles since tourists tend to prefer 'different' experiences
- Economic impacts
 - More business opportunities, especially but not only in tourism
 - More balanced and wider service supply
 - Better intra-regional transport system and services
 - Multiplier-effects, i.e. positive economic impacts can be traced at regional and national and not only at local level
 - Arrival of new technologies
 - Increased local tax revenues and spending by visitors at local businesses
 - Job creation (Puczkó-Rátz (2001); UNWTO (2010))

Still, the above mentioned impacts are considered positive, almost all of them can have a negative side as well, i.e. impact assessment is essential before any development takes place.

2.6 Impact Assessment and Management

A large part of tourism management involves the assessment, the monitoring and the management of the impacts that tourism has on the natural and cultural environment.

Impact management means:

- Identifying the impacts of existing tourism activities
- Assessing these impacts, taking the viewpoint of sound tourism development and biodiversity conservation into consideration
- Predicting the impacts of the future tourism development
- Developing ways to monitor and react on impacts of existing tourism activities and of the future tourism development

The impact assessment is not only a question of professional analysis but also a subject of personal opinion. The evaluation should, therefore, be reviewed and discussed within the multi-stakeholder group and with the general public. Tourism activities that benefit one societal group may have negative impacts on other groups and the natural environment. The evaluation of impacts should, therefore, also be considered part of the decision-making process.

Various internationally accepted planning methodologies such as the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS), the Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC), Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Social Impact Assessment (SIA) are useful for the planning and management of tourism development.

Impact management can include measures for the siting of tourism development and activities, measures to control tourist flows, the promotion of appropriate tourist behaviour and the limiting of the number of tourists (using the LAC method). The strategy describes the concrete measures either to avoid or to mitigate existing and potential negative impacts. Impact management can be divided into the following steps:

- Definition of a clear set of indicators, that will be used to measure and assess the impacts
- Measuring of impacts (constant monitoring)
- Assessment of the monitoring data: are the impacts within the acceptable limits or not?
- Description of action plans which will become effective in case of unacceptable negative impacts
- Implementation of action plans

2.6.1 Impact Assessment in the Carpathians

Tourism destinations are the focal point of tourism activity. Eurostat data shows Europeans made just over one billion trips in 2011. The average trip spend was 347 euros; a total of 312 million euros in expenditure. This economic impact is felt in employment, increased tax revenues, successful business growth, environmental conservation, and cultural heritage protection. But every tourist also leaves waste behind, uses water and energy and has an impact on the communities they visit. Therefore, informed and collaborative destination management is essential for European tourism destinations to be viable in the long term.

Although definitions, agendas, guiding principles and regional strategies have been well established, there are few tools available to help local destination co-ordinators make informed decisions to improve the tourism in their destination.

Over the past two decades a number of sets of indicators have been applied at the international and regional levels, which are of certain use for measuring the positive as well as negative impacts of tourism in the Carpathians:

- Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations – A Guide Book (UNWTO; 2004)
- Criteria for Sustainable Tourism in Mountain Areas (ETE, UNESCO; 2007)
- Sustainable Tourism Indicators and Destination Management – Montenegro Workshop (UNWTO; 2007)
- Indicator System for ‘Sustainable Tourism Destinations’ (Tourism Sustainability Group (TSG), DG Enterprise and Industry; Final Draft November 2009)
- Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria (GSTC; 2012)
- European Tourism Indicator System – Toolkit for Sustainable Destinations (DG Enterprise and Industry; 2013)
- Tourism-specific Quality of Life Model and Index, TQoL (OTM, 2009)
- Hotel/accommodation performance benchmarking (STR, Xellum, etc.)

The Indicators Guide Book of UNWTO (2004) is for now the most comprehensive compendium and all later published sets of indicators are building, among others, on this guidebook.

However, for now, because of feasibility and applicability reasons a modified set of indicators, based on the TSG Indicator System, has been chosen for measuring the impact of tourism in the Carpathians. This set consists of 20 core indicators, which are supplemented by a number of detailed indicators. The detailed set of indicators is presented in Appendix 3.10 of this Background Document:

1. Tourism Volume and Value	2. Tourism Enterprises Performance
3. Customer Satisfaction	4. Community/Social Impact
5. Quantity and Quality of Employment	6. Gender Equality
7. Equality – Accessibility	8. Reducing transport impact
9. Climate Change	10. Sustainable tourism management practices in tourism enterprises
11. Solid waste management	12. Sewage treatment
13. Water management	14. Energy Usage
15. Landscape and Biodiversity Protection	16. Lights and Noise Management
17. Inclusive Management Practices	18. Development Control
19. Tourism Supply Chain	20. Protecting and enhancing local cultural identity and assets

During the testing phase of this set of indicators, it is necessary to further improve each indicator and to develop a system of “voluntary” and “obligatory” indicators, which

contributes to the achievements and development stages of destinations and the entire Carpathian region.

2.6.2 Data gathering system to measure impacts

For too long, local policy makers have relied on a limited range of statistics such as visitor arrival numbers, employment surveys, and visitor satisfaction ratings to monitor tourism in their destination. These statistics do not tell the whole story of tourism's impacts. Collecting data on a broad range of issues relevant to the impact of tourism on local economy, community, and environment will help destinations build an accurate picture of what is really going on.

To collect information on each agreed indicator is not an easy task to accomplish, especially if data should be collected each year. Therefore, indicator systems tend to stay normally at a more general level (e.g. tourists arrivals, overnight stays, spending per day, etc.). However, with these systems the real impacts on the ground, either positive or negative, caused by tourism, cannot be measured and consequently no actions can be taken in order to minimize negative effects and to maintain or increase the positive.

Because in the Carpathians there is no established system of destinations and Destination Management Organizations (DMO), the challenge to gather sophisticated sets of data becomes rather unrealistic at this stage. However, if all involved governments and stakeholders choose a step-by-step approach, the collection of data and reporting becomes feasible. Therefore the following approach is to be applied:

Phase 1 (2015)

1. Choose one destination in each of the seven countries, which is representative for tourism development in mountains in the Carpathians
2. Collect data according to the set of indicators. (For surveys the templates of the Tool Kit of DG Enterprise – 2013 – can be used)
3. Apply TQoL methodology
4. Deliver the data to the national statistical office for further processing
5. Launch hotel/accommodation performance benchmarking (online system to indicate impacts of events, festivals, etc.). Present quarterly data
6. Deliver the data to the Carpathian Coordination Centre for reporting

Phase 2 (2016-2020)

7. Review set of indicators according to lessons learned in the destinations
8. Establish a number of destinations, which cover the entire region of the Carpathians (if necessary establish trans-boundary destinations)
9. Collect data in each destination according to the revised set of indicators
10. Apply TQoL methodology to indicate changes
11. Deliver the data to the national statistical office for further processing
12. Deliver the data to the Carpathian Coordination Centre for reporting
13. First comprehensive report on "Tourism Impacts in the Carpathians" is accomplished in 2020

Phase 3 (2021 -)

14. Review set of indicators according to lessons learned in all the destinations
15. Implement data collection and reporting in all destinations according to the steps in phase 2 items 7-9.
16. Publish a report on “Tourism Impacts in the Carpathians” in intervals of 4 years.

The below chart visualizes the levels of data collection and reporting on the impacts of tourism in the Carpathians:



With regards to synergizing ongoing initiatives towards indicators on sustainable reporting, regional, EU-level and global reporting, it will be necessary for the Carpathians to cooperate with e.g. EUROSTAT and the UNWTO Tourism Satellite Account (TSA), so that data gathered in the Carpathians can be compared with other regions in Europe and the World. These initiatives will in the future certainly lead to potential benchmarking of the performance of destinations and increase the competitiveness of the Carpathians as a mega-destination.

In order to further improve the set of indicators cooperation with the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) on two specific initiatives are to be implemented:

1. Regional Workshop on Indicators for Sustainable Tourism in Destinations
During the past decade UNWTO has organized a number of workshops at country level on the elaboration of a set of indicators, which are specific to that respective region. These workshops haven proven to be very successful and the indicators are used for data gathering and reporting. The Carpathian countries could initiate a process for such a workshop, organized by UNWTO; in order to develop and/or review the here proposed set of indicators.
2. UNWTO Laboratory on Sustainable Tourism in the Carpathians
The establishment of a number of laboratories, initiated by UNWTO, seems to become a successful tool to measure impacts of tourism in certain regions. Universities with guidance of UNWTO operate the currently established laboratories running in China and Greece. In combination with the Carpathian Cooperation Centre (to be established in 2015), a laboratory in the Carpathians could boost and streamline the tourism impact assessment and management in the entire region.

2.7 Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring means constantly checking if the implementation of the goals, objectives and the work program of the strategy are carried out properly and whether they have the intended effects. Monitoring and its results should help to form decisions about how the plan should be managed in the future.

Country consultations made it very clear that the proper monitoring and evaluation is expected including:

- a. Creation a joint monitoring standard system and a benchmark-platform so as to monitor the following issues:
 1. Quality of the visitor experience
 - Length of stay at the site or area.
 - Number of visitors.
 - Bed nights/room occupancy.
 - Questionnaire response to set questions on levels of enjoyment/satisfaction.
 - Questionnaire response to questions about perceived overcrowding.
 2. Economic factors
 - Spend per head of visitor.
 - Total visitor spend per year.
 - Estimated number of jobs supported by visitor spending.
 3. Community factors
 - Number of planning applications received/granted/refused.
 - Number of complaints received by local authority from locals and visitors.
 4. Environmental factors
 - Air and water quality.
 - Noise levels.
 - Amounts of litter.
 - Number of historic buildings at risk.
 - Impact of tourism flow in the different areas
 - Visual assessment of the quality of the urban scene by zone
 - Visual assessment of the state of the habitat/landscape by zone

- b. Based on the continuous impact-analysis, careful impact-management. Establishing responsible bodies for monitoring in each country
- c. Incorporating of legal and operating tools allowing flexible changes – finance support, development of traditional types of economies - keeping the bodies of Protected Areas informed and allow them to comment

The tasks completed and the impacts it causes have to be monitored at different timescales (see chart). The short-term review evaluates whether the work program has been carried out. The medium-term review evaluates the outcomes of the plans objectives and the long-term review verifies the impacts of the work and therefore how well the goals have been achieved. The review should evaluate the impacts related to the overall goals of the strategy and the strategies of the seven Carpathian countries.

Monitoring timescales		
Short-term	Every day evaluation of work plan implementation	1 year
Mid-term	Evaluation of effectiveness of outcomes for meeting the objectives	5 years
Long-term	Evaluation of positive effects of the entire strategy	10 years

3 APPENDICES

3.1 Contributions required by the stakeholders on Carpathian wide actions/results and country specific actions/results

Measures	Carpathian wide	Country specific
Carpathian region is a sustainable tourism destination		
Regional tourism products		
Quality standards		
Contribution to local economy		
Managing tourist traffic		
Contribution to conservation of biodiversity		
Agriculture and forest management as sectors of special interest for tourism		
Transport and infrastructure		
Local cultural heritage		
Education and awareness on sustainability issues		
Experience exchange, information and capacity building		
Trans-boundary cooperation		
Managing impacts on biological diversity, natural, socio-economic and cultural environment		
Monitoring effectiveness of the strategy		
Common projects and programs		

3.2 Tourism demand in the Carpathian countries

International Tourist Arrivals

International Tourist Arrivals by (Sub)region																						
	Full year					Share			Change													
						Change			Monthly/quarterly data series													
						(%)			(percentage change over same period of the previous year)													
	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2012	10/09	11/10	12/11	2013	2012				2011							
	(million)					(%)			YTD	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
World	677	807	949	966	1,036	100	6.4	4.8	4.0	4.3	2.4	5.3	8.1	1.6	5.7	3.8	2.9	4.8	4.4	6.6	4.4	3.7
Advanced economies ¹	420	459	506	530	551	53.2	5.3	4.7	3.8	3.3	0.2	5.9	7.3	0.1	6.2	3.7	2.8	4.1	4.0	6.2	4.1	4.6
Emerging economies ¹	256	348	443	436	484	46.8	7.8	4.9	4.3	4.6	3.7	3.5	7.7	3.4	5.2	3.9	3.1	5.6	4.8	7.2	4.7	2.9
<i>By UNWTO Regions:</i>																						
Europe	389.0	448.9	466.6	516.4	531.2	51.6	3.0	6.4	3.4	4.9	1.9	7.2	9.0	2.2	4.5	3.2	3.2	4.5	6.4	8.3	4.8	5.1
Northern Europe	46.4	60.4	62.8	64.0	64.9	6.3	2.1	2.0	1.4	2.1	-0.8	9.9	3.5	-2.1	4.8	2.4	-1.7	5.5	3.0	7.0	-0.4	-1.0
Western Europe	139.7	141.7	154.4	151.5	166.6	16.1	3.9	4.6	3.2	3.6	-1.2	5.2	10.0	0.3	5.0	3.2	1.9	3.9	8.4	5.4	1.7	6.2
Central/Eastern Eu.	69.3	90.4	95.0	103.9	111.6	10.8	3.1	9.4	7.4	8.9	8.2	10.1	9.7	7.9	8.0	8.0	7.7	8.4	7.4	9.5	6.6	8.0
Southern/Medit. Eu.	132.6	156.4	173.5	167.0	191.1	18.5	2.5	7.8	2.2	4.6	1.7	6.0	9.7	1.7	1.3	1.0	3.5	1.9	5.2	10.6	8.3	4.6
- of which EU27	326.8	355.1	371.0	390.9	402.2	38.7	2.7	5.4	2.4	2.8	-0.4	5.3	7.3	-0.6	4.2	2.1	1.7	3.0	5.9	7.6	4.0	4.4
Asia and the Pacific	110.1	153.6	205.1	218.2	233.6	22.6	13.2	6.4	7.0	6.3	4.7	6.9	10.3	3.4	8.8	7.8	5.0	7.8	4.8	6.0	8.1	6.9
North-East Asia	58.3	85.9	111.5	115.8	122.8	11.9	13.8	3.8	6.0	2.3	1.8	1.7	7.1	-1.5	8.5	8.6	5.4	2.3	2.1	0.7	5.1	7.3
South-East Asia	35.1	48.5	70.0	77.3	84.6	8.2	12.5	10.4	9.4	12.1	9.2	13.2	15.1	10.7	10.0	7.2	3.8	16.6	7.7	14.1	14.1	6.3
Oceania	9.6	11.0	11.6	11.7	12.1	1.2	6.1	0.9	4.1	3.9	-1.8	7.8	8.8	0.3	4.5	5.2	2.9	4.0	-0.4	0.7	0.2	2.9
South Asia	6.1	8.1	12.0	13.5	14.1	1.4	18.5	12.6	4.6	8.7	6.2	9.6	10.3	8.9	8.2	6.2	11.7	8.9	16.0	17.9	10.2	10.4
Americas	128.2	133.3	150.6	156.0	163.1	15.8	6.6	3.6	4.6	0.5	1.2	0.3	2.9	-2.5	7.1	3.1	3.9	4.0	2.4	5.6	3.2	2.7
North America	91.5	89.9	99.5	102.1	108.7	10.3	7.0	2.6	4.5	0.6	2.2	1.8	1.4	-2.5	7.9	2.1	4.0	4.6	0.4	4.8	3.2	1.6
Caribbean	17.1	19.8	19.5	20.1	20.9	2.0	1.6	3.0	3.8	-1.0	-0.9	-3.8	3.2	-3.1	3.9	4.4	2.8	1.2	2.6	3.6	1.3	4.1
Central America	4.3	6.3	7.9	8.3	8.9	0.9	4.0	4.4	7.5	4.2	2.9	3.4	6.6	4.1	8.0	7.8	5.9	8.1	2.7	4.2	2.8	4.7
South America	15.3	18.3	23.6	25.5	26.7	2.6	10.2	7.8	4.7	0.3	-0.2	-1.2	6.3	-4.0	7.2	4.7	3.4	2.3	8.1	12.6	5.3	4.9
Africa	26.2	37.8	49.9	49.4	52.4	5.1	8.7	-0.9	5.9	1.8	-1.4	0.0	8.8	0.2	2.5	5.7	6.8	1.5	5.3	-1.6	-1.8	2.5
North Africa	10.2	13.9	18.8	17.1	18.5	1.8	6.7	-9.1	8.7	-0.1	-1.6	-3.2	8.4	-3.8	9.5	11.8	8.9	4.5	-11.1	-8.6	-11.9	-3.4
Subsaharan Africa	16.0	23.9	31.1	32.4	33.8	3.3	10.0	4.1	4.4	2.6	-1.3	1.3	9.0	2.4	0.0	2.2	5.2	0.2	12.9	2.8	6.8	5.4
Middle East	24.1	36.3	58.2	54.9	52.0	5.0	11.6	-5.6	-5.4	4.7	3.7	5.8	7.6	2.0	-0.8	-5.0	-13.9	0.1	-4.9	2.8	-3.9	-11.7

Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) © (Data as collected by UNWTO June 2013)

¹ Classification based on the International Monetary Fund (IMF), see the Statistical Annex of the IMF World Economic Outlook of April 2012, page 177, at www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2012/01.

See box at page/Annex 1 for explanation of abbreviations and signs used

Source: UNWTO, 2012, 2013

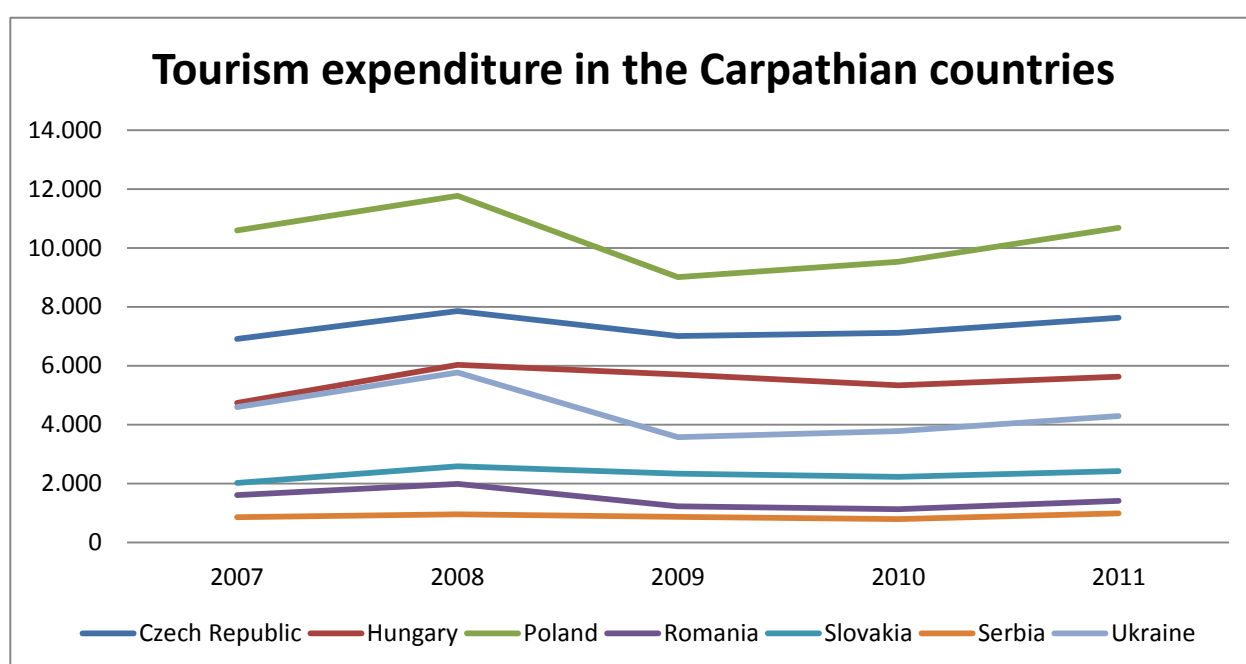
As Rátz (2004) stated, traditionally, the region had a strong relationship with the Western part of the continent, but after WW2, the whole area became part of the socialist block. Certain traditional tourist activities such as golf or tennis as well as visiting religious sights were discouraged. Tourism itself as a leisure industry was partly considered an unnecessary luxury, and priority was given to state or trade union-supported 'social tourism' (i.e. from the early 60's, the new system established a state or trade union owned and managed holiday resort network, with special regulations and restrictions, in order to provide a holiday experience for hard-working citizens).

Trade unions played an important role in the allocation of supply and the management of these services. The network mainly included domestic (mainly health and lake-side) resorts, though trips to the other socialist countries were also available, provided by the state-owned tour operators (e.g. Cedok, IBUSZ, Orbis). For children, so called 'pioneer camps' were offered, a sort of substitution of scout camps, usually at lakes or seaside or in mountain regions.

All these regulations contributed to the development of a strong domestic tourism in the socialist countries, but it was an artificial situation. Since the collapse of the system, intra-regional and domestic tourism have been heavily affected by the economic downturns (and upturns). This has been especially true for cross-border trips, which mainly motivated by different price levels on the two sides of the given border.

Based on the UNWTO (2013) Factbook data, the followings statistics were collected and summerized from each country (though some of the information can be biased, eg. the total number of overnight international tourists of Ukraine, or the number of accommodation in Poland). Please find the tables in point in the Appendix.

Statistical information about the Carpathian countries (USD)



Source: based on UNWTO, 2013

Statistical information about the Carpathian countries

	Czech Republic					Hungary				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
International										
Guests (ths)										
Total (ths)	26 743	26 628	23 285	21 941	22 153	39	39	40	39	41
Overnight visitors (tourists) (ths)	10 162	10 119	8 848	8 629	8 775	379	554	624	904	304
Same-day visitors (excursionists) (ths)	16 581	16 509	14 437	13 312	13 378	8 638	8 814	9 058	9 510	250
Expenditure (USD, Mn)										
◆ Travel	6 915	7 857	7 013	7 121	7 628	4 739	6 033	5 712	5 339	5 629
Average length of stay (nights)										

◆ For all commercial accommodation services	3.09	3.01	2.94	2.90	2.89	2.95	2.85	2.86	2.78	2.72
Domestic trips (ths)										
Total						..	..	..	..	..
◆ Overnight visitors (tourists)	28 481	28 010	27 850	27 614	29 847	..	21	17	18	19
◆ Same-day visitors (excursionists)	..	..	..	..	..	..	753	920	123	062
TOURISM INDUSTRIES										
Number of establishments										
◆ Accommodation for visitors	7 845	7 705	7 557	7 235	7 657	2 956	2 924	2 993	2 957	3 277
* of which, "hotels and similar establishments"	4 559	4 482	4 469	4 300	4 612	1 999	2 001	2 042	2 036	2 154
◆ Food and beverage serving activities	105 007	113 044	119 976	119 547	122 166	57 171	56 612	56 991	55 065	55 730
Tourism balance (inbound minus outbound tourism expenditure) over GDP (%)	2.3	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.9	2.1	2.8	2.7	2.8

	Poland					Romania					Slovakia				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
International															
Guests (ths)											18	19			
Total (ths)	66	59	53	58	60	7	8	7	7	7	975	205	..	..	..
Overnight visitors (tourists) (ths)	208	935	840	340	745	722	862	575	498	611	7	6	..	..	..
Same-day visitors (excursionists) (ths)	14	12	11	12	13	..	..	..	..	..	11	12	..	..	..
Expenditure (USD, Mn)	975	960	890	470	350	..	..	..	..	..	706	562	..	..	..
◆ Travel	51	46	41	45	47	..	..	..	..	..	2	2	2	2	2
Average length of stay (nights)	233	975	950	870	395	..	..	..	..	..	026	589	341	228	431
◆ For all commercial accommodation services	10	11	9	9	10	1	1	1	1	1					
Domestic trips (ths)	599	768	011	526	683	610	991	229	136	420					
◆ For all commercial accommodation services	2.90	4.00	4.16	3.94	3.96	2.30	2.30	2.09	2.05	2.02					
Domestic trips (ths)											6	5	4	4	5
											242	842	996	844	324

Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	40	41	..	..	..	..	..
Overnight	34	34	30	33	29	9	9	11	884	004	..	..	..	..	..
tourists	900	900	800	900	600	294	716	651	797	986	..	..	..	..	..
Excursionists	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	30	29	..	..	..	..	..
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	087	018	..	..	..	..	..
TOURISM INDUSTRIES															
Number of establishments											2	2	2	3	3
◆											449	734	961	126	011
Accommodation for visitors	..	46.8	..	39.0	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	1	1	1
* of											701	744	720	692	645
which, "hotels and similar establishments"	..	33.1	..	15.6	..	163	362	566	781	612	15	15	13	..	..
◆ Food and beverage serving activities	..	196.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tourism balance (inbound minus outbound tourism expenditure) over GDP (%)	0.8	0.4	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.0	-0.2	-0.1	0.7	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.1

	Serbia					Ukraine				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
International Guests (ths)										
Total (ths)	..	..	..	..	..	26 162	28 827	24 033	24 114	24 535
Overnight visitors (tourists) (ths)	696	646	645	683	764	23 122	25 449	20 798	21 203	21 415
Same-day visitors (excursionists) (ths)	..	..	..	..	..	3 040	3 378	3 235	2 911	3 120
Expenditure (USD, Mn)										
◆ Travel	864	957	869	799	991	4 597	5 768	3 576	3 788	4 294
Average length of stay (nights)										
◆ For all commercial accommodation services	2.12	2.16	2.28	2.13	2.15	5.85	5.53	5.72	5.44	4.97
Domestic overnights	5 853	5 935	5 293	4 961	5 002	53 569	52 409	47 063	42 900	40 228
TOURISM INDUSTRIES										
Number of establishments										
◆										
Accommodation for visitors	869	918	931	967	975	4 530	4 668	4 725	4 742	6 174

* of which, "hotels and similar establishments"	634	670	687	721	731	1 420	1 595	1 684	1 731	3 162
◆ Food and beverage serving activities	18 830	19 708	20 987	21 551	20 609	4 648	5 028	4 785	4 744	4 751
Tourism balance (inbound minus outbound tourism expenditure) over GDP (%)	-0.5	-0.7	-0.3	-0.4	-0.3	0.9	1.2	0.5	0.4	0.3

3.3 Tourism products in the Carpathian areas (exemplary compilation)

Products	Czech Republic	Hungary	Poland	Romania	Slovakia	Serbia	Ukraine
Skiing	Ski center of Pustevny and Beskydy, Javorníky	shorter loops and smaller ski centres (Matra,Bukk, Borzsony mountains)	numerous skiing trails, and resorts in Beskidy &Tatra mountains	4 Romanian ski centre are highlighted interantion ally, there is an improve ment of skiing resort in the project of Superskiing in the Carpathians	1,000 ski lifts and 30 cable ways in almost 100 ski centres. wide range of activities (Ski mountaineering, freeride skiing, dog sleigh)	n/d	6 ski-resorts highlighted
Rural tourism	high Nr of rural accommodation, n/d about development	private accommodation quite developed, authentic rural accommodation is rare, some good examples can be seen in the mountain areas	high Nr of rural accommodation, but only a few can be defined as authentic agri-touristic accomm., tour operators specialized for rural / geo tourism	recently improved a lot, most popular Alba County, special-international tour operators	47 rural and agro touristic accommodations (inc. eco-sites, ranches, diaries) are selected by the NTO, rest of them in the mountain regions, with a wide offer of additional touristic products, and green label	some marked private, mountain accommodation on the webpage of National Park Djerdap	strong folk culture, local products, and tasting tours
Slow movement	Slow Food Czech Republic	Slow Food Hungary	Slow Food Poland	Slow food Romania	Slow Food Slovakia Small Carpathian Wine Route	Slow Food Serbia	n/d
Quality of life measurement	n/d	Budapest Model (special index to TQOL)	specific research to Poland	specific research to Romania	n/d	n/d	n/d
Heritage/culture	Valachian Open-air Museum	4 UNESCO heritage sites	5 world heritage site (inc. Krakow)	plenty of world heritage sites (eg. castles in Moldva, Medieval Fortified Churches of Transylvania; Painted Monasterie	more than dozen of UNESCO sites, castles, churches, natural values.	culture of Lepenski Vir, ancient and medieval monuments	cultural, historical towns, castles (eg. Mukachevo, Uzhorod) folk culture

				s of Bucovina) schools of art, painting			
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Products	Czech Republic	Hungary	Poland	Romania	Slovakia	Serbia	Ukraine
Geotourism	hiking, biking	hiking, biking, canoeing, caving	hiking, biking, canoeing	hiking, biking, caving, ranger camps	hiking, biking, caving, windsurfing	hiking, fishing, hunting, biking	hiking, biking, caving, horse riding, caving, kayaking
Adventure tourism	paragliding	paragliding, adventure caving	rafting, snow scooters, dog sledding Nordic cross skating	canyoning, rafting	hang-gliding, freeride, rafting,	n/d	rafting, balloon flights, caving
Ecotourism	mainly in protected areas, organised trips eg (butterfly tour: Hu-CZ-SK), n/d about events, campaigns	mainly in national parks, the development of infrastructure is varied, cave tours in Aggtelek National Park is unique	mainly in protected areas, national parks, the development of infrastructure is varied, as well as events, campaigns	mainly in protected areas, national parks, the development of infrastructure is varied, though there are 6 guide companies with eco-touristic offers	plenty of educational paths in and outside of national and natural parks (well structured information on the website of NTO, though ecotourism – as product – is not highlighted)	Visitor Centre in Donji Milanovac	mainly in national parks with well-established and stable, providing hiking trails
Health tourism - climatology	mineral spring (eg. Luhačovice)	climate therapy in Matra mountain (mofetta, sanatorium)	mineral springs (eg. Krynica Spa), salt therapy (Wieliczka – researcher of salt therapy: Feliks Boczkowski)	climate therapy in Sovata, Parajd, Băile Bălványos) though health tourism is not highlighted on the site of NTO (only clinical tourism)	several spa towns, mineral springs, climate therapy (eg. Spa Vysoké Tatry-Tatranské Matliare, Tatranska Polianka spa, Starý Smokovec)	Gamzigradska Banja – mineral spa	climatology, salt therapy at Solotvyno salt lakes
Carpathians position	The Carpathians is not highlighted on the website of National	The Carpathians is not highlighted on the website of National	Several offers of guided tours, tour operators focuses on Polish	“Explore the Carpathian garden” brand slogan of Romania	Mountain tourism, and the Carpathians’ position is highlighted on the	The mountain regions are highlighted, Carpathians are mentioned	Highlighted among the 10 most see destinations in Ukraine on the website of

	Tourism organization (NTO) information is rare, and diffused.	Tourism organization (NTO) information is rare, and diffused.	Carpathians, as well as Lonely Planet, but the Carpathians as entity is not highlighted on the webpage of NTO, information is diffused.		website of NTO	among them, the information is very diffused on the website of NTO	NTO, though not supported by maps, further information
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3.4 Natural resources in the Carpathian countries

Natural resources	Czech Republic	Hungary	Poland	Romania	Slovakia	Serbia	Ukraine
National parks, protected areas	3	14	19	21	23	1	19
Health tourism resources	spa town of Luhačovice (respiratory illnesses)	spa towns and wellness hotels in the mountain regions (as Eger, Visegrád) and climate therapy in Matra	10 spa towns (eg. Rabka, Krynica - mainly mineral spring, but salt, climate therapy as well!)	plenty of spas (eg. in Harghita-mountain) climate therapy in Sovata, Parajd, Băile Bălványos) though health tourism is not highlighted on the site of NTO (only clinical tourism)	several spa towns, mineral springs, climate therapy (eg. Spa Vysoké Tatry-Tatranské Matliare Tatranska Polianka spa, Starý Smokovec)	Gamzigradsk a Banja – mineral spa	mineral healing spas (eg. Lumshori)
Nature trails	several hiking trails	several education trails, though the quality of hiking trails varies a lot	hiking trails, guided hiking trips, specialized tour operators	network of marked paths and trails mainly in national parks	network of hiking trails (well structured, deep information on the website of NTO)	hiking trails, visitor centre	groomed hiking trails or signs are very rare
Biking paths	several biking trails	biking trails popular mainly in the Danube-bend, and mountain biking in the mountain regions	bike trails at different level, type	organized adventure biking tours, “Dealu Mare Cycling Route” developed by Carpathians Tourism Cluster	long-distance, marked cycling paths	Eurovelo 6	organized cycling tours (mainly automobile roads)
Sustainable tourism – strategic point of view	Sustainable tourism is highlighted in the national strategy, eco-certification is under development, while Czech service quality system is under implementation	Sustainable tourism is highlighted in the national strategy, eco-certification of hotels, different certifications of destinations are improved locally	Sustainable tourism is highlighted in the national strategy, green hotel certification	Sustainable tourism is highlighted in the national strategy, two labels awarded for sustainable tourism products (Ecotourism Certification System, and a new one under development)	Sustainable tourism is highlighted in the national strategy	Sustainable tourism is highlighted in the national strategy (Low on Tourism)	Sustainable tourism is highlighted in the national strategy (Low on Tourism)

3.5 Babia Gora Declaration on Sustainable Tourism Development in Mountain Areas "Tourism in Mountain Areas and the Convention on Biological Diversity"

Recommendations for the Implementation of Sustainable Tourism in Central and Eastern European Countries

General:

1. The implementation of sustainable tourism should be based on long term strategies.
2. There is a need of capacity building of all stakeholders, especially authorities at all horizontal and vertical levels.
3. Local model projects should receive full support at the relevant local, national and/or international levels.
4. With regard to the distribution of information, there should be information exchange at all horizontal and vertical levels.
5. To achieve sustainable tourism, it is essential to develop and use indicators, to set up monitoring systems and promote research on carrying capacity.
6. Technical assistance should be provided by scientists/experts to local research and monitoring, as well as feasibility studies should be supported and promoted.
7. The external costs of tourism activities should be internalised in tourism prices at the local level, based on regional co-operation agreements.
8. Effective synergies between the Convention of Biological Diversity and other multilateral environmental agreements, inter alia, should be encouraged through the development of joint plans and programs, with due regard to their respective mandates, regarding common responsibilities and concerns.
9. The Convention on Biological Diversity and its provisions, including the active follow-up of its work programs and decisions made through national action programs, should be integrated into the programs and policies, in particular of the economic sectors of the countries, including initiatives which promote community-based sustainable use of biological diversity, and their integration into relevant cross-sectoral strategies, programs and policies should be strengthened.
10. The conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, promotion and support of initiatives for hot spot areas and other areas essential for biodiversity conservation, and the promotion of the development of national and regional ecological networks and corridors should be strengthened.
11. Tourism activities and development should respect the ecological characteristics and capacity of the local environment in which they take place and should be restricted or prohibited in ecologically sensitive areas.

Local level:

12. A strong support is required to include local goods and services into offers provided to tourists.

13. Revenues created by functioning financial mechanisms (e.g. entrance fees) should be reinvested for the development of sustainable tourism at the same local level.

Local and national level:

14. For the involvement of all stakeholders (especially business, NGOs and public sectors), it is essential (a) to establish partnerships through e.g. round tables, agreements, steering/co-ordination committees, with a special focus on transboundary co-operation, and (b) to integrate local knowledge, heritage and values in all development initiatives;
15. For raising public awareness at national and local levels, it is necessary to support public awareness campaigns and to establish information centres.
16. Education, especially on ecotourism and conservation of biodiversity, should be strengthened at local and national levels.
17. National guidelines (principles, standards, etc.) and financial support should be provided to develop and maintain ecologically sound infrastructure (i.e. trails, waste management, waste water treatment, housing, etc.).
18. Socio-economic incentives should be provided to support sustainable tourism investments and activities.
19. National and local codes of ethics (based on the Global Code of Ethics on Tourism) should be developed.
20. Sustainable principles should be incorporated into planning and the design of transportation systems, and encourage tour operators and the travelling public to make soft mobility choices;
21. To further educate tourists and influence their behaviour at destinations, collaboration among outbound tour operators, incoming operators, other service providers and NGOs should be promoted at the destinations;

National level:

22. Certification systems, labelling and contests should be developed in order to support good practices in sustainable tourism at local level.
23. For an efficient management of sustainable tourism and for securing the maintenance of biodiversity a legal framework should be developed and strengthened.
24. A database of financial resources for sustainable tourism should exist at the national level and should be accessible to public.
25. Special financial schemes should be established by governmental authorities to support sustainable tourism.

International level:

26. Ways and means, within international regulations, should be found to support local production of goods and services, such as agricultural products, to conserve the traditional ways of land use and improve economic situation of local communities.
27. The CBD Tourism Guidelines should be generally adopted at the international level.
28. Lobbying for special funds to be used for the implementation of the sustainable tourism concept should take place at the international level. (BfN 2003)

3.6 Central and Eastern European Greenways program (CEG)

Central and Eastern European Greenways program (CEG) is a regional program under the umbrella of the Environmental Partnership for Sustainable Development (EPSD) – a consortium of six environmental foundations in Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania. Within the larger and regional context, the CEG program is a framework for interlinking local civic initiatives aimed at conserving natural and cultural heritage and fostering sustainable tourism development in the region.

Greenways are multifunctional trails for non-motorized users typically leading along linear green corridors, historic trade routes, rivers and railways. They are managed by local people in order to encourage sustainable development and healthy lifestyle. Greenways provide a framework for community-based initiatives and projects related to nature conservation, cultural heritage preservation, sustainable tourism and mobility. Greenways seek to address needs of locals and visitors and to provide a positive contribution to the local economy.

All Central European Greenways are implemented according to the following principles:

1. Supporting and mobilizing local communities – encouraging local enterprise, creating jobs and additional revenue streams, restoring and protecting traditional vocations;
2. Natural and cultural heritage conservation and landscape protection;
3. Using local resources – accommodation and food, tourist services, guides and local products;
4. Cooperation between countries, regions, towns, villages and their inhabitants;
5. Helping local communities discover and strengthen their cultural and social identity, improving conditions and quality of life;
6. Providing information and opportunities for tourists to help them better understand the region, its challenges and local initiatives, activities, organizations;
7. Promoting non-motorized transport and environmentally-friendly tourism, recreation and sport;
8. Creating opportunities in urban areas for use of more sustainable forms of transport to help people move about on foot, by bicycle or by public transport instead of using their own car;
9. Encouraging people to be mobile, to improve their health and safety when travelling and to undertake active and responsible forms of recreation.



Long distance greenways



Local greenways



Green Bicycle – East Carpathian Greenway (Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine)

The Green Bicycle – East Carpathian Greenway aims to build an international network of bicycle and other non-motorized trails focussed on the East Carpathians Biosphere Reserve (Polish part embraces the Bieszczady mountains range). The motivation is to provide local people and visitors with access to natural and cultural heritage areas. By engaging with local communities, the Green Bicycle has become much more than just a bicycle trail. It is a source of inspiration for action to protect heritage for those concerned about threats to the outstanding natural and cultural attractions of the area. The greenway has generated new community-based initiatives – recognized with the “Green Bicycle” logo – centred on handicraft workshops and galleries, local heritage products, school projects, eco-museums and other initiatives.

The Green Bicycle initiative started in Polish part of the East Carpathians in 2001 as a non-governmental initiative aimed at increasing local community involvement in economic development and protection of the outstanding natural and heritage values of the region. The project soon built up a constituency of support, who joined together to form a Local Partnership called the “Green Bieszczady”. The Partnership was created as a coalition of 32 NGOs, 10 local governments, 20 schools, 28 small and medium enterprises, the Bieszczady National Park authorities and the Polish Environmental Partnership Foundation. The leader of the greenway is Bieszczady Environmental Partnership Foundation located in Lesko, with professional help of the Bieszczady Cyclists’ Society. Although the initiative started in Poland, the Green Bicycle has been extended to the Slovak side (2004). At the moment the efforts are focused on working with Ukrainian side and building the Ukrainian part of the greenway.

The 900 km long Greenway is signposted with basic direction signs and signposts with the Green Bicycle logo. Main theme of the Greenway is the atmosphere of the remote “Carpathian borderlands”. The initiators of the project try to use distinctive character of this isolated area of Eastern Europe, that throughout the centuries, served as a melting-pot for different tribes, ethnic groups and nations. The East Carpathians bring together outstanding natural values and the colourful ethnic, historical and cultural heritage of the three countries: Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine. The core area of the UNESCO biosphere reserve (the first trilateral reserve in the world) protects old-growth forest and some of the least disturbed natural habitats in Europe, which are home to large carnivores.

Along with a greenway local coalition develops a program for promoting and distributing local products with the brand “Made in Bieszczady”. Another initiative coherent with the Greenway is the program for Schools called “Schools on Green Bicycle” developed in over 20 schools, promoting environmental attitude of children and young people in the region. In 2006 the leading NGO opened a social company called “The Carpathian Centre for Active Tourism – Green Bicycle” that runs and offers several ecotourist products along the greenway and gives certification to tourist services in the region using the “Green Bicycle” brand. The income generated by the company is going to be invested in local heritage initiatives and maintenance of the signposting of the greenway. See: www.zielonyrower.pl.

3.7 List of Protected Areas in Carpathians (Carpathian Parks, 2013)

<p>Czech republic SPRAVA CHKO BESKYDY SPRAVA CHKO BILE KARPATY SPRAVA CHKO PALAVA</p>	<p>Hungary AGGTELEKI NATIONAL PARK BUKKI NATIONAL PARK DIRECTORATE DUNA IPOLY NATIONAL PARK GODOLLOI-DOMBVIDEK PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AREA HEVESI FUVES PUSZTAK PROTECTED LANDSCAPE HOLLOKOI PROTECTED LANDSCAPE KARANCS-MEDVES PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AREA KELET CSERHAT PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AREA KESZNYETENI PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AREA LAZBERCI PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AREA MATRAI PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AREA TARNAVIDEK PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AREA TOKAJ BODROGZUG PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AREA ZEMPLENI PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AREA</p>	<p>Poland BABIOGORSKI NATIONAL PARK BIESKIDU MALEGOO LANDSCAPE PARK BIESKIDU SLASKIEGO LANDSCAPE PARK BIESKIDU ZIWIECKI LANDSCAPE PARK BIESZCZADZKI NATIONAL PARK BRZANKI PASMA LANDSCAPE PARK CIEZKOWICKO - ROZNOWSKI LANDSCAPE PARK CISNIANSKO - WETLINSKI LANDSCAPE PARK CZAMORZECKO - STRYZOWSKI LANDSCAPE PARK DOLINY SANU LANDSCAPE PARK GOR SLONNYCH LANDSCAPE PARK GORCZANSKI NATIONAL PARK JASLISKI LANDSCAPE PARK MAGURA NATIONAL PARK PIENINSKY PARK NARODOWY POGORZA PRZEMYSKIEGO LANDSCAPE PARK POPRADZKI LANDSCAPE PARK TATRZANSKI NATIONAL PARK WISNICKO - LIPNICKI LANDSCAPE PARK</p>	
<p>Romania APUSENI NATURE PARK BUCEGI NATURAL PARK BUILA VANTURARITA NATIONAL PARK CALIMANI NATIONAL PARK CEHLAU NATIONAL PARK CHEILE BICAZULUI-HASMAS NATIONAL PARK CHEILE NEREI-BEUSNITA NATIONAL PARK COZIA NATIONAL PARK DEFILEUL JIULUI NATIONAL PARK DINOSAURUS GEOPARK HATEG DOMOGLED VALEA CERNEI NATIONAL PARK GRADISTEA MUNCELULUI-CIOCLOVINA NATURAL PARK MARAMURES MOUNTAINS NATURAL PARK MEHENDETI PLATEAU</p>	<p>Serbia DJERDAP NATIONAL PARK</p>	<p>Slovakia BIELE KARPATY PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AREA CEROVA VRCHOVINA PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AREA HORNA ORAVA PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AREA KYSUCE PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AREA MALA FATRA NATIONAL PARK MALE KARPATY PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AREA MURANSKA PLANINA NATIONAL PARK NIZKE TATRY NATIONAL PARK PIENINSKY NATIONAL PARK</p>	<p>Ukraine CARPATHIAN BIOSPHERE RESERVE CARPATHIAN NATIONAL NATURE PARK CHEREMOSHISKYI REGIONAL LANDSCAPE PARK CHERNIVETSKYI REGIONAL LANDSCAPE PARK DNISTROVSKYI REGIONAL LANDSCAPE PARK GALYTSKYI NATIONAL NATURE PARK GORGANY NATURE RESERVE HUTSULSCHYNA NATIONAL NATURE PARK NADSIANSKYI REGIONAL LANDSCAPE PARK POLYANYTSKYI REGIONAL LANDSCAPE PARK ROZTOCHCHIA NATURE</p>

<p>NATURAL PARK PIATRA CRAIULUI NATIONAL PARK PORTILE DE FIER NATURAL PARK PUTNA VRANCEA NATURAL PARK RETEZAT NATIONAL PARK RODNEI MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK SEMENIC - CHEILE CARASULUI NATIONAL PARK VANATORI NEAMT NATURAL PARK</p>		<p>POLANA PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AREA POLONINY NATIONAL PARK PONITRIE PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AREA SLOVENSKY KRAS NATIONAL PARK SLOVENSKY RAJ NATIONAL PARK STIAVNICKE VRCHY PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AREA STRAZOVSKKE VRCHY PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AREA TATRA NATIONAL PARK VELKA FATRA NATIONAL PARK VIHORLAT PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AREA VYCHODNE KARPATY PROTECTED LANDSCAPE AREA</p>	<p>RESERVE SKOLIVSKI BESKYDY NATIONAL NATURE PARK SYNEVYR NATIONAL NATURE PARK UZHANSKY NATIONAL NATURE PARK VERHNIODNISTROVSKYI REGIONAL LANDSCAPE PARK VYZHNYTSKYI NATIONAL NATURE PARK YAVORIVSKYI NATIONAL NATURE PARK ZACHAROVANYI KRAI REGIONAL LANDSCAPE PARK ZNESINNIYA REGIONAL LANDSCAPE PARK</p>
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3.8 International award schemes and initiatives

There are various award schemes that support sustainable approaches and provide acknowledgement, status and publicity for the winners. So far, these schemes and awards were not used by the Carpathian countries.

▪ **WTTC Tourism for Tomorrow Awards**

The Tourism for Tomorrow Awards recognize the world's leading examples of organizations and destinations that adopt these principles and translate them into real practice. Entries ranged from small- and medium-sized businesses to large global players from more than 40 countries worldwide. The four major categories are:

- Community Benefit Award
- Global Tourism Business Award
- Destination Stewardship Award
- Conservation Award

▪ **GreenGlobe21**

Green Globes' environmental reports demonstrate responsible behavior across the triple bottom line of economic, social and environmental management. Partnering with Green Globe will help businesses to increase and sustain profits whilst meeting Corporate Social Responsibility obligations.

▪ **Skål International Ecotourism Awards**

The Skål network collects individuals of travel and tourism, who are in senior position, therefore they have a influential role on what their company or organization is doing, which direction it goes to. The award application is based on:

- Contribution to the conservation of nature, environmental considerations
- Cultural heritage conservation
- Community involvement and benefits
- Educational features
- Results already achieved
- Business viability
- Innovation

Applicants can be:

- Tour Operators – Travel Agents
- Accommodation providers of any size and category
- Transportation
- General Countryside (Alpine Tourism, Underwater Projects, Beaches, Theme Parks, Scenic Mountains, Rivers, Lakes)

- Cities – Villages (Community and Government Projects)
- Educational Programmes – Media
- Global Corporate Establishments

- **TourBench - DestiNet**

This is an European monitoring and benchmarking initiative for reducing environmental pollution and reducing costs in tourism accommodation establishments. Hotels, camping sites and other accommodation establishments should identify their financial and environmental achievements as well as their potential for improvement. This requires a regular and systematic collection and monitoring of the amount, type and cost of energy, water and cleaning product consumption. The 'TourBench' System is available on the internet for free in several languages. The website has both a public and a private area.

- **SUTOUR (EELM)**

The acronym SUTOUR derives from „Supporting Tourism Enterprises for Eco-Labeling and Environmental Management“ meaning that tourism enterprises are supported in the introduction and continuous improvement of an environmentally-oriented management system. SUTOUR is being carried out by the Institute of Energy Economics and the Rational Use of Energy, University of Stuttgart, in collaboration with 16 partners from five countries.

- **Blue Flag for Lakes**

The Blue Flag Programme is a voluntary certification scheme for beaches and marinas, owned and run by the independent non-profit organisation, the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) formerly As of 2006 FEE has member organisations in 44 countries. The Blue Flag is a widely recognised eco-label for the public, decision-makers and tour operators. In 2006, more than 3100 beaches and marinas in 36 countries were awarded with the Blue Flag.

Recently some attempts have been made to apply the Blue Flag criteria to lakes, which would particularly be interesting for the lake destinations in the Carpathians.

- **BEST**

BEST was started in 1999 with a grant from the Ford Foundation and served as an incubator for a variety of activities aimed at encouraging the adoption of sustainable practices, stimulating the demand for such practices by travellers, and helping communities start pilot programs. In late 2003, BEST became a part of the Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum (IBLF) as a programme of the International Tourism Partnership, and continues to be a resource for everyone interested in the vital task of encouraging sustainable travel practices by the travel & tourism industry, communities, educators and individual travellers.

- **Center for Sustainable Destinations (National Geographic)**

National Geographic has started a new initiative called geotourism, i.e. it is defined as tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place – its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents (The Geotourism Charter). Of the Carpathian so far only Romania signed the Charter. The Center provides suggestions for institutions, destinations and travellers, as well.

- **Touring Nature (Routes Assembly of European Regions)**

The 'Touring Nature' project aims at developing sustainable tourism in rural areas throughout Western, Central and Eastern Europe. It is driven by two main concerns:

- Environmental protection and the promotion of sustainable strategies
- Involvement of regional authorities and stakeholders; and interregional cooperation.

These core orientations are grounded on the observed trend of growing environmental expectations by European citizens and tourists and their eagerness to engage in holidays alternative to mass and seasonal tourism. The 'Touring Nature' project consists in setting up a network of rural areas throughout Europe, and promoting them to the European – and even International- potential visitors (www.touringnature.com).

3.9 Dark Sky Parks

“An International Dark Sky Park is a location of exceptional nighttime beauty, dark skies education, and preservation of the nighttime environment. Each park shown below has gone above and beyond the requirements as stated in our International Dark Sky Park Guidelines.” (<http://www.darksky.org/night-sky-conservation/dark-sky-parks>)

Certified International Dark Sky Parks

Name	Location	Year Established	Tier
Natural Bridges National Monument	Utah, USA	2006	Gold
Cherry Springs State Park	Pennsylvania, USA	2008	Gold
Galloway Forest Park	Scotland, UK	2009	Gold
Zselic National Landscape Protection Area	Hungary	2009	Silver
Goldendale Observatory Park	Washington, USA	2010	Silver
Clayton Lake State Park	New Mexico, USA	2010	Gold
Hortobagy National Park	Hungary	2011	Silver
Observatory Park	Ohio, USA	2011	Silver
The Headlands	Michigan, USA	2011	Silver
Big Bend National Park	Texas, USA	2012	Gold
Death Valley National Park	California, USA	2013	Gold
Chaco Culture National Historical Park	New Mexico, USA	2013	TBA

Certified International Dark Sky Communities

Location	Year Established
Flagstaff, Arizona USA	2001
Borrego Springs, California USA	2009
Isle of Sark, Channel Islands, UK	2011
Homer Glenn, Illinois USA	2011

Certified International Dark Sky Reserves

Name	Location	Year Established	Tier
Mont Mégantic	Quebec, Canada	2008	Silver
Exmoor National Park	Devon and Somerset Counties, England, United Kingdom	2011	Silver
Aoraki Mackenzie	New Zealand	2012	Gold
NamibRand Nature Reserve	Namibia	2012	Gold
Brecon Beacons National Park	Wales, UK	2013	Silver

3.10 Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Indicators

This set of indicators has been developed based on the Indicator System for ‘Sustainable Tourism Destinations’ of the *Tourism Sustainability Group (TSG) – DG Enterprise (Final Draft 2nd November 2009)*.

I. Basic definitions *:

Tourist	At least one overnight stay
Same Day Visitor	No overnight stay
Visitor	Tourists + Same Day Visitors

* According to the European Community methodology on tourism statistics
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/tourism/documents/IRTS_2008_UNEDITED_0.PDF

II. Definition / framework for this set of indicators

Destination (Target unit)	For this set of indicators a destination is a region, which markets its tourism in a common way. The indicators are meant to fit also from small(est) destinations to the Carpathian level.
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There will be a need for destinations to use data and information from a variety of sources such as:

- Official sources and statistics
- Business Surveys
- Visitor Surveys
- Host Community Surveys
- Plus new destination studies to be developed

III. Destination Description and key Data

1. Name of Destination	
2. Category of Destination City, municipality, district, province, protected area (Attach delineation of territory, incl. boundaries of PAs)	
3. Location within the Carpathians	
4. Population size/Residents	
5. Area in sq. km	
6. Number of tourism enterprises in the destination	
7. Annual number of tourist arrivals	
8. Annual number of overnight stays	
9. Annual number of same day visitors	
10. Total number of enterprises (all sectors)	
11. Number of beds	
12. Direct employment in tourism	
13. Total employment (all sectors)	
14. Number of second/rental homes	

IV. Core indicators

Number and Title	Wider Topic Area	Measures
		1. Number of tourist nights per month.
		2. Daily spending per tourist.
		3. Number of same day visitors per month.
		4. Daily spending per same day visitor.

<p style="text-align: center;">No 1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tourism Volume and Value</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Tourist impact presence</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Same-day visitor impact presence</p>	<p>5. Relative contribution of tourism to the destinations economy i.e. tourism generated income as a percentage of total GVA (gross value added) of the destination</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">No 2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tourism Enterprises Performance</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Productivity competitiveness of businesses</p>	<p>6. Occupancy rate in commercial accommodation per month and average for the year.</p> <p>7. Percentage of tourism enterprises participating in cooperative marketing.</p> <p>8. Average REV PAR (Revenue per available room) in destination</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">No 3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Customer Satisfaction</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Fulfilment of customer expectations</p>	<p>1. Percentage of visitors that are satisfied with overall experience.</p> <p>2. Percentage of repeat/return customers (within 5 years).</p> <p>3. Value/price rating by visitors.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">No 4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Community/Social Impact</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Carrying capacity of the destination</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Community acceptance</p>	<p>4. Number of available beds per 100 residents.</p> <p>5. Number of tourists / visitors per 100 residents.</p> <p>6. Number of second/rental homes per 100 homes.</p> <p>7. Percentage of local residents who are satisfied with tourism in the destination (per month/season).</p> <p>8. Percentage of local residents directly or indirectly benefiting from tourism.</p> <p>9. Percentage of employees in tourism holding relevant qualification at basic, intermediate or higher level.</p> <p>10. Percentage of tourism enterprises where the employees receive any training.</p>

No 5 Quantity and Quality of Employment	Contribution to of resident population	1. Direct tourism employment as percentage in total employment.
		2. Percentage of jobs in tourism that is seasonal.
		3. Percentage of “non resident” employees by month.
		4. Local unemployment rate by month.
		5. Percentage of employees in tourism who indicate they are satisfied with their jobs.
		6. Ratio of average wage per employee in tourism to average wage in destination.
		7. Percentage of employees in tourism holding relevant qualification at basic, intermediate or higher level.
		8. Percentage of tourism enterprises where the employees receive any training.
No 6 Gender Equality	Gender equality	1. Average wage in tourism for women compared to men’s employment.
		2. Percentage of men and women in tourism employment.

No 7 Equality - accessibility	Inclusion for those with special needs	1. Percentage of sites considered accessible.
		2. Percentage satisfaction level of customers with disabilities.
		3. Percentage of hotels with accessible rooms.
		4. Participation in recognised accessible information schemes (0 – 100%).
		5. Percentage of visitor attractions/sites that are recognised information schemes (0 – 100%).
		6. Availability of local public transport system and vehicles that are accessible for wheelchair users (bus, tram, metro, light railway, taxi, mini bus) (Yes/No) to each modal category.
No 8	Reducing the impact of travel per visit/stay	1. Average length of stay of tourists (nights).
		2. Average length of stays same day visitors (hours).
		3. Average km travel by tourists to and from home to destination.
		4. Average Km travel by same day visitors

Reducing transport impact	Reducing the impact of travel per visit/stay	from and to destination.
		5. Percentage usage of different modes of transport (Public/private and type) for arriving tourists and same day-visitors.
		6. Percentage of visitors using local/soft mobility services (definition of soft).

No 9 Climate Change	Mitigation and Adaptation re climate change	1. Percentage of tourism infrastructure (hotels, others) located in “vulnerable zones” e.g. flood risk, avalanche.
		2. Presence of destination climate change adaptation strategy and plan
		3. Percentage of tourism enterprises that are involved in “adaptation” response and actions.
		4. Percentage of tourism enterprises involved in climate change mitigation schemes such as CO2 offset, low energy systems, etc.
No 10 Sustainable tourism management practices in tourism enterprises	Measuring good management practices	1. Percentage of tourism enterprises/establishments in the destination with externally verified certification/labelling for environmental / sustainability and/or CSR measures.
		2. Number of establishments with sustainability report in accordance with Global Reporting Initiative (GBI).
No 11 Solid waste management	Reducing waste	1. Percentage of tourism enterprises involved in waste reduction activities.
		2. Waste volume produced by destination (tonnes per person per year).
		3. Volume of waste recycled percentage or per person per year (preferably per month).

No 12	Improving quality of local environment	1. % Sewage discharge treated in destination.
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Sewage treatment		
No 13 Water Management	Managing water resources	2. Fresh Water consumption (in litres) per tourist night).
		3. Percentage of tourism enterprises participating in water saving actions.
		4. Percentage leakage rates in destination.
		5. Percentage of tourism enterprises using recycled water.
		6. Percentage of recycled water used in the destination.
No 14 Energy Usage	Energy Management	1. Per capita consumption of energy from all sources (overall and by tourist sector – per person per day).
		2. Percentage of tourism enterprises participating in energy saving actions.
		3. Percentage of enterprises and public entities using at least 50% renewal energy.
No 15 Landscape and Biodiversity Protection	Quality of landscape and biodiversity	1. Ecological potential of the destination (guidance EEA).
		2. Percentage of destination (geographical area in km ²) that is designated for protection.
		3. Existence of positive trends in land use changes and the amount of urban and agricultural/industrial sprawl and other related negative land use changes.
		4. Percentage of local enterprises committed to actions to support local biodiversity and landscape protection, conservation and management.
	Quality of local environment	5. Percentage of visitors and residents complaining about litter and other environmental pollutions in the destination.
No 16 Lights & Noise management	Maintaining and improving tranquillity Saving dark zones	1. Existence of local strategy and plans to reduce noise and light pollution (Y/N.)
		2. Percentage of visitors and residents complaining about noise and light pollution.
		3. Community and private business measures to reduce noise and light pollution (Y/N).

No17 Inclusive Management Practices	Effective destination management and access to information for consumers	1. Presence of a destination management organisation or institutional arrangements that involving public and private stakeholders in decision making processes for tourism development and promotion.
		2. Percentage of Community satisfied with community involvement and their influence in the planning and development of tourism.
		3. Existence of sustainable tourism strategy/ action plan for the destination (with agreed monitoring and evaluation arrangement).
		4. Does your visitor information contain details about state of environment, public transport, labelled accommodation, protected areas etc.
No 18 Development Control	A strategic approach to tourism planning and development control	1. Existence of land use or development planning including evaluation of tourism impact and detailing the development and constraint issues in relation to tourism.
		2. Existence of the visitor management plan with capacity limits and analysis of current position (% of max capacity).
		3. Percentage of area subject to control land use planning and development control within the destination.
No 19 Tourism Supply Chain	Spreading the economic benefit to other local enterprise	1. Percentage of the local enterprises sources a minimum of 25% of food and drink produce and products.
		2. Percentage of local services and goods sourced locally.
		3. Percentage local tour handlers and guides used within the destination

No 20 Protecting and enhancing local cultural identity and assets		1. Number of cultural and heritage monuments
		2. Percentage of residents who believe that tourism is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Damaging b) Helps maintain c) Helps improve The cultural offer and assets of the destination

		<p>3. Percentage of residents who believe that tourism is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Damaging b) Helps maintain c) Helps improve <p>The heritage offer and assets of the destination</p>
		<p>4. Percentage of residents who believe that tourism is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Damaging b) Helps maintain c) Helps improve <p>The distinctiveness and local identity of the destination</p>
		<p>5. Percentage of events audience that were local residents, tourists, same day visitors</p>
		<p>6. Percentage of residents who believe that tourism is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Damaging b) Helps maintain c) Helps improve <p>The quality of life of local residents in the destination</p>
		<p>7. Percentage of events that are based on traditional culture and local assets</p>

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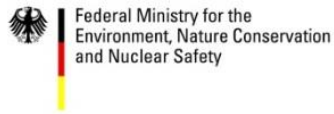
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