



BUSINESS TO NATURE



Interregional Approach to SMEs and Entrepreneurship in Natural Areas

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Good practices from Italy and Poland





PROGRAMME INTERREG IVC

The Interregional Cooperation Programme INTERREG IVC, financed by the European Union's Regional Development Fund, helps Regions of Europe work together to share experience and good practice in the areas of innovation, the knowledge economy, the environment and risk prevention.

ABOUT THE PROJECT B2N

The B2N project ("BUSINESS TO NATURE – Interregional Approach to SMEs and Entrepreneurship in Natural Areas") is an initiative co-financed under the INTERREG IVC programme. B2N aims at contributing to the development of European regions by promoting entrepreneurship, building on local skills and preserving the attractiveness of the natural environment. To achieve this aim the project is identifying and sharing best practices in entrepreneurial initiatives on natural areas that have already been successful.

2012 AS THE LAST YEAR OF B2N IMPLEMENTATION

2012 is the last year of the B2N project. During last two years Polish Tourism Development Agency as a leading partner managed to build a solid European partnership. All activities which were carried out so far turned out to be successful. A lot of analyses, strategic documents, seminars, study visits and workshops lead to a wide good practice database elaboration which is now available on the B2N website www.business2nature.eu



Study visit to Perugia Province

B2N partnership enjoyed Perugia Province natural areas during an interesting study visit in May 2011. In Perugia Province there are protected natural areas which were established according to precise national and regional law and not-protected natural areas, where there are following peculiarities: few inhabitants, rural character and also important environmental and naturalistic heritage. The study visit to Perugia Province gave to the B2N project an input on how local policies can help to improve businesses in natural areas. During this study visit representatives of partner institution had a possibility to see the Perugia Province Park areas with significant economic activities. They visited Subasio Regional Park (mountain area), Trasimeno Lake Regional Park (lake area) and Sibillini National Park (mountain area). During each visit partners met managers and experts in order to facilitate the understanding of the good practices.

Private-public collaboration in Perugia Province showing good practices

Partnership visited Polvese Island included in Trasimeno Lake Park. It is the largest regional park in Umbria. The territory extends along the perimeter of Trasimeno lake, its structure is still today mainly what it was in the medieval times, with its castles and town walls and beautiful natural landscapes. In Polvese Island there are three operating SMEs (they are cooperatives) and they deal with economical activities according to an agreement with Perugia Province: the first (Cooperativa Plestina) manages tourist routes and environmental activities; the second (Cooperativa Aurora) manages a restaurant and the third (Cooperativa Il Progresso) manages olive oil production. Moreover there is another public-private collaboration best practice (GUMP' s case), which is a private association managing environmental education aimed to scholarship in Subasio Park area.

<http://www.parks.it/parco.trasimeno/Eindex.php>

Entrepreneurship in protected / natural areas

The study visit included also a visit to a farm completely integrated into a park area - "Il casale degli amici" farm located in Sibillini Park area. The farm is involved in the cultivation of typical crops (cereals and lens). B2N group visited also another farm "Monte Vibiano vecchio" - the first farm in Europe certified as "zero greenhouse emission".

<http://www.ilcasaledegliamici.it>





Improving protected areas with activities integrated into nature

Two important projects were presented during a workshop organized during the study visit. The first is called "Il Parco Terapeutico" and it's on the possibility to exploit park areas as a location where to bring disabled people in order to help their rehabilitation. The second project was on the creation of horse trekking routes in park areas: the project showed how, thanks to public funds (ERDF funds), it is possible to activate private owners in order to develop sustainable activities in protected areas.

Villa Fabri at Trevi as Biodiversity Observatory: public efforts to safe biodiversity

The location chosen for the workshop was a public building in Trevi restored thanks to ERDF funds.

http://www.tuscany-villas.it/vacation_rentals/1670

Tourism in protected areas of Perugia Province

B2N group visited also Sibillini Mountains National Park which is best practice about how nature and environment can co-exist with entrepreneurship.

Some cases about tourism, handicrafts and agricultural sector were shown, and Sibillini Park is also a best practice because of its aspiration to enter in the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Natural Areas.

The Charter wants to help Park Agency and the Public Institution managing natural areas to increase awareness of, and support for, Europe's protected areas as a fundamental part of our heritage, which should be preserved for, and enjoyed by, current and future generations.

http://www.sibillini.net/en/IL_PARCO/index.html

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Study visit in Grand Paradis

Fondation Grand Paradis hosted a B2N study visit in Aosta Valley in June 2011. Throughout the week partnership members visited enterprises that stand out for their good practices in combining development and respect for the environment in Gran Paradiso National Park.

B2N partners were able to meet entrepreneurs belonging to different sectors (**tourism, agriculture, SME development, environmental education, craftsmanship and culture**). They also had the opportunity to meet the director of Gran Paradiso National Park and the mayors of some of the municipalities within the Park's jurisdiction.

Several best practices coming from the public and private sector were identified during the visit: Fondation Grand Paradis as an instrument of the regional authorities to manage natural sites and ensure economic development in line with environmental sustainability <http://www.grand-paradis.it>

Bellevue hotel in Cogne: hospitality excellence model combining high levels of services offered and local tradition values. http://www.hotelbellevue.it/hotel_bellevue_en.html

Consortium of Cogne Valley's Tour Operators: example of successful cooperation between tourist operators for the joint promotion of the territory and conducting nature-related projects. <http://www.cogneturismo.it/homepage.asp?l=3#>

Parc Animalier in Introd: nature lesson for people of all ages about the alpine fauna of Gran Paradiso National Park. <http://www.parc-animalier-introd.it>

Pitularita folk music band: preserving musical roots of Aosta Valley and the cross border area of the Alpes as a way of living and establishing EU-wide cooperation projects. <http://www.grand-mere.it/index.php?lang=it>

Habitat cooperative society: environmental education activities, including trekking and mountain photography workshops conducted in the natural environment of the Gran Paradiso National Park. <http://www.mountainphotoschool.com>

Alpine botanical garden Paradisia: about 1,000 different species of plants and flowers from the Alps give the visitors the opportunity to come into close contact with nature of the



Gran Paradiso mountains. <http://www.grand-paradis.it/en/sites/sites-of-natural-interest/paradisialpine-botanical-garden>

Maison Bruil of Introd: rural house restored thanks the EU funds with a special showcase “Atelier du Goût” dedicated to local produce of wine growers, cheese-makers and dedicated to local produce of wine growers, cheese-makers and farmers. <http://www.grand-paradis.it/en/sites/sites-of-cultural-interest/maison-bruil>

Area of the Alpes as a way of living and establishing EU-wide cooperation projects. <http://www.grand-mere.it/index.php?lang=it>

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Study visit in Warmia and Mazury

Between the 19th and the 22nd of September, Warmia and Mazury Regional Development Agency JSC in Olsztyn hosted a study visit in the Warmia and Mazury region. Members of the B2N partners' institutions had the opportunity to get to know the project »Development of the tourist infrastructure around the Jeziorak lake« and public policies connected with the Elbląg Canal. The host organisation presented to the partners the hotel Castle Ryn, »Four Winds Mountain« project and social enterprise »Pottery Village«. Moreover, project partners visited some of the places connected to the culinary heritage of Warmia, Mazury and Powiśle.

Several examples visited by the partnership were considered as good practices and will be included in the common database:

Development of the tourist infrastructure around the Jeziorak lake

Example of a well-functioning water tourism system on the lake Jeziorak. The lake is part of the Iława Lake District Landscape Park. It is the 6th largest lake in Poland and the longest one in terms of width. The aforementioned tourism system was equipped with 27 eco-marinas fully adapted for tourists vacationing at the lake Jeziorak: sailors, motorboatsmen and anglers.

Social enterprise ”Pottery Village”

Pottery Village Ltd. was founded in October 2007 by NIDA – the Nidzica Development Foundation. The enterprise employs 10 people. The subject of the business activity of the Pottery Village is craft production: tailor's and ceramic products, souvenirs, handmade paper. The Village organizes training sessions, seminars and conferences as well as stained glass making workshops, ceramic workshops, production of handmade paper and glass painting. An important product of the Village is Mazurian style wedding reception during

which you can taste the dishes made following old recipes and take part in the reception full of singing and dancing to folk music.

http://www.gamcarskawioska.pl/index/?lang_id=2

"Warmia Mazury Powiśle – Culinary Heritage"

The region Warmia and Mazury belongs to the European Network of Regional Culinary Heritage. The concept of the network was developed and introduced in the South-East Skane of Sweden and on the Danish Island of Bornholm in 1998. The project developed rapidly and received considerable interest from businesses and authorities within the region, as well as from other regions throughout Europe. "Warmia Mazury Powiśle - Culinary Heritage" was presented as a good practice promoting and improving the quality of regional food as well as strengthening the regional identity.

<http://www.culinary-heritage.com/region.asp?regionid=53>

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B2N project at OPEN DAYS 2011

In October 2011 the B2N project partners participated in OPEN DAYS 2011 - European Week of Regions and Cities in Brussels. This was the biggest event on European regional policies hosting more than 750 speakers, 110 workshops, 5,700 participants and 250 registered journalists. During the event representatives of the B2N project met other regional stakeholders to discuss effective techniques to promote entrepreneurship in natural areas, attended different seminars and gave a presentation on the B2N project to the **EU Business and Biodiversity Platform (B@B)**.



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More on the B2N website
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