

WaterTour - Improving the Competitiveness of SME's and Regions involved in Water Tourism Activities by Innovative Strategies and Technologies

Best practice examples on watertourism development



Handbook for service providers, tourism planner
and marketing organisations



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1 Introduction

Since July 2004 the following authorities and institutions from five European countries have been working together within the Interreg IIIC operation ***WaterTour - Improving the Competitiveness of SME's and Regions involved in Water Tourism Activities by Innovative Strategies and Technologies:***

- Regional Tourism Board Vorpommern, City of Greifswald, Germany,
- Midland Regional Authority, Midland Region, Ireland,
- South Transdanubian Development Agency, Pécs, Hungary,
- City of Lahti, Technical and Environmental Services, Health Control and Environmental Protection Centre, Lahti, Finland,
- Forest Producers' Association (AFLOPS), Azeitão, Portugal.

Within each region a study on the needs of water tourism development was conducted from January to July 2006. The following short abstracts of these case studies show the particular water tourism situation, new development perspectives and transferable guidelines:

- Regional Tourism Board Vorpommern: Economic efficiency of landing stages along rivers – the City of Loitz
- Midland Regional Authority: Development of a water tourism destination
- South Transdanubian Development Agency: Nature protection versus tourism development within a national park
- City of Lahti, Technical and Environmental Services, Health Control and Environmental Protection Centre: Prolonging the tourism season
- Forest Producers' Association (AFLOPS): Development of a tourism master plan for a nature sensitive region

The manual would like to present cases which should be used as best practices. Contact data for further information are placed at the end of each article.



2 Economic efficiency of landing stages along rivers – the City of Loitz as model project

animare projectmanagement tourism, Romy Sommer

2.1 Potentials of the region

The river Peene has a length of approximately 105 km. It is located in the North East of Mecklenburg/ Vorpommern and connects the lake district of Mecklenburg/ Vorpommern with the Baltic Sea. This area is characterised by agricultural use. The scenery is shaped by natural and pristine landscapes. The tourism sector is gaining increasing importance.

Tourists appreciate the picturesque small towns, historic manor houses and parks, the hilly landscapes, alder forests and meadows as well as rivers and lakes. Water tourism is one of the increasing sectors of tourism. Its season is short with a significant peak between June and August. During this time the capacity utilisation numbers reach 55-60% on average. During the off-season it is 10-15% on average. With a mode of 55%, the capacity utilisation numbers for peak season are relatively low. The reason for this is presumably the partly inadequate infrastructure setting which affects the tourism flow in a negative way.

2.2 Tourism potential for the City of Loitz

In comparison to other locations in the region the land-based tourism potential for the City of Loitz is rather low with a number of 57.738 visitors per year. Reason for this are low development degree of tourism infrastructure as well as unfavourable traffic connection to regional centres. The integration of Loitz harbour into the regional and supra-regional harbour infrastructure is described as followed:

- Loitz Harbour is situated in the middle of the estuary's trace – every water tourist will pass Loitz;
- Every 5-10 km a harbour is available along the river Peene;
- Loitz Harbour closes a gap in the estuary's infrastructure – the harbour facilities near Loitz provide a very limited capacity of berths and service;
- In Loitz there are 5 boat clubs that offer berths for tourist only on arrangement;
- The Peene estuary is suited for bigger boat types such as motorboats, houseboats, sailing boats a rather self-contained estuary with little branches;
- 16 – 20 berths planned, Canoe racks à 8 canoes, quay walls for 2 passenger ships or 2 river cruise ships;
- The harbour is situated in a city area → little conflicts with protected areas-restrictions for water tourism
- The Loitz Harbour is situated in SPA 12 (bird sanctuary)





Facility related requirements at Loitz Harbour

- Supply and disposal facilities (toilets, showers, drinking water, energy, waste disposal, waste water disposal);
- Technical service: slipways;
- Other service in the city: super market, restaurants, post office, telephone, bank, medical care, hotel / holiday houses / camping facility.

2.3 Analysis of target groups and water tourism offers for Loitz Harbour

Water based

- House boat/Motorboat drivers;
- Canoeists;
- Sailors with flat going sailing boats;
- Passenger/River cruise ships;
- Anglers.

Land based

- Users of recreational vehicles;
- Cyclists;
- harbour visitors;
- Bus tour operators.

A mix of different utilisation forms and thus addressing different target groups is essential in order to ensure a high capacity utilisation and an economically efficient operation of the harbour. Focussing on different target groups involves the risk of target group conflicts occurring due to a limited space. Measures to avoid problems have to be realised.

In spite of the increased number of service providers along the river Peene and Lake Kummerow the water tourism potential in the region is not yet used to the full extent. There is a lack of special offers such as guided and thematic tours and product packages (e.g. combined ship-bicycle or canoe-passenger ship packages). Furthermore, there are some big gaps in the tourism infrastructure (e.g. lack of canoe rentals, fishing shops and rentals, etc.) along the river as well as serious differences in quality and service level regarding the service providers.

2.4 Utilisation concept

Overview of the amount of space: development, expansion potentials, aptitude

The new Loitz Harbour was built in the area of the already existing industrial harbour. So the operational area is limited and framed by the surrounding property. There are rather no expansion potentials.

The emerging port basin with measurements of 80 x 35 m will offer space for 16-20 boats. Additionally 2 passenger ships, river cruise ships or pushing units will find room at the quay walls. The utilisation of the quay wall on the east side adjoining the camping site is currently not integrated into the planning. It provides the opportunity to establish additional berths for smaller boats. Depending on the development of the capacity utilisation numbers this could be a perspective measure in order to generate additional income from berth rental. Loitz Harbour



cannot be run economically efficiently on berth rentals alone. An additional utilisation will be essential in order to open up further income sources.

Evaluation of utilisation forms within the harbour area

Different scenarios of generating income were calculated on the basis of optimistic and pessimistic utilisation as well as different numbers of offered infrastructure. The following infrastructure and services were taken into consideration:

Port basin & berths – waterside

- berths for tourism purposes;
- permanent berths;
- passenger ships, river cruises (berth fee).

Land-based service offers of Loitz Harbour

- Trailer facility / parking space & trailer parking space;
- Camping Site;
- Hire companies & Angler's supply;
- Houseboat charters;
- Winter storage & small shipyard;
- Parking lots for recreational vehicles;
- Gastronomy;
- Shop with fishing, boat and camping supply / regional products shop;
- Bicycle rental agencies.

2.5 Overall view of potential income & expenditures

Income

In the following, the potential total income from the above-named utilisation forms is presented. The income from gastronomy, shop, hostel and other extended utilisation forms are not considered and need to be examined separately regarding their profitability.

Total income from harbour operation

Utilisation form and kind of business volume	Scenario 1 (Income in Euro)	Scenario 2 (Income in Euro)
Income from berth and service fees	7.400	9.500
Income from berth fees for river cruise ships	600	1.200
Income from berth fees for passenger ships	3.600	4.000
Income from slip	3.000	3.000
Income from parking lots	1.300	1.300
Income from overnight stays at camping site (incl. Sophienhof)	4.000	5.000
Income from canoe rental agency	8.550	8.550
Income from winter berths	5.000	5.000
Income from parking lots for recreational vehicles	1.000	5.000
Total sum	34.450	42.550

Source: own calculation



Expenditures

Four different scenarios demonstrate different expenditures depending on the assignment of personnel:

Scenario 1: **Two** temporary employees on minor basis during season (**165,- Euro**-Basis).

Scenario 2: **Two** temporary employees on minor basis during season (**250,- Euro**-Basis).

Scenario 3: One temporary full time employee during season & one temporary employee on minor basis during season.

Scenario 4: **One** permanent employee & **one** temporary employee on minor basis during season.

Additionally the following estimated values were taken into account: insurances, administration costs, amortisation & fees: 80,- Euro/berth, harbour maintenance costs of 200,- Euro/berth.

Estimation of day-to-day operating expenses of Loitz Harbour

Day-to-day operating expenses	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4
	(Expenses in Euro)	(Expenses in Euro)	(Expenses in Euro)	(Expenses in Euro)
Personnel costs & ancillary wage costs	2.410	3.600	14.505	23.580
Insurances, administration costs, amortisation & fees	1.600	1.600	1.600	1.600
Maintenance costs	4.000	4.000	4.000	4.000
Total sum	8.010	9.200	20.105	29.180

Source: own calculation

Income versus expenditures

Income-expenditures calculation

	2 temporary employees on minor basis during season (165,- Euro-Basis)	2 temporary employees on minor basis during season (250,- Euro-Basis)	1 temporary full time employee during season & 1 temporary employee on minor basis during season	1 permanent employee & 1 temporary employee on minor basis during season
Surplus (Income - expenses) - Scenario 1	26.440	25.250	14.345	5.270
Surplus (Income - expenses) - Scenario 2	34.540	33.350	22.445	13.370

Source: own calculation

Only the day-to-day operation costs were estimated within this itemisation of costs. Interests, amortisation rates for investments as well as operation costs and amortisation of buildings



were not considered. These costs depend on the decision of a future operation and the estimation of a realistic level on investment costs.

Without consideration of investment costs and adherent future charges, the harbour can be economically efficient operated under the described conditions.

2.6 Product development to attract new target groups

An important aim for a successful operation of the harbour is the development of an extensive spectrum of offers. The development of new products is essential to attract new target groups. The more target group orientated offers covering various themes are developed, the more attractive Loitz and its harbour will be to visitors - also from greater distances.

2.7 Guidelines

Overall the following measures to improve the utilisation of the full tourism potential of the estuary Peene/ Lake Kummerow and the Harbour Loitz can be deduced:

1. Utilisation of maritime tourism potential by expansion of offers;
2. Improvement and expansion of infrastructure;
3. Development of innovative products for utilisation of market potential in seminal water tourism segments;
4. Optimization of marketing for water tourism offers and the presented infrastructure;
5. Optimisation of service infrastructure of water tourism facilities and city offers;
6. Optimisation and bundling of organisation structures in maritime tourism and maritime business.

Regional Tourism Board Vorpommern

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3 Development of a Case Study for the Midland Region for SME and communities involved in water tourism and related activities

Tourism Research Centre, Dublin Institute of Technology

3.1 Overseas tourism statistics

Table 1 compares the number of overseas tourists to the Midlands East region to other regions during 2003. It shows that Midlands, with 775,000 overseas tourists, lags behind all regions (Dublin 3.4 million, South-West 1.5 million, West 1.1 million, Shannon 983,000 and South-East 907,000) in terms of overseas visitor numbers, with the exception of the North West which received 476,000 overseas visitors. The Midlands East region currently obtains 13% of overseas visitors to Ireland, and the Midlands study area receives 30% of these visitors.

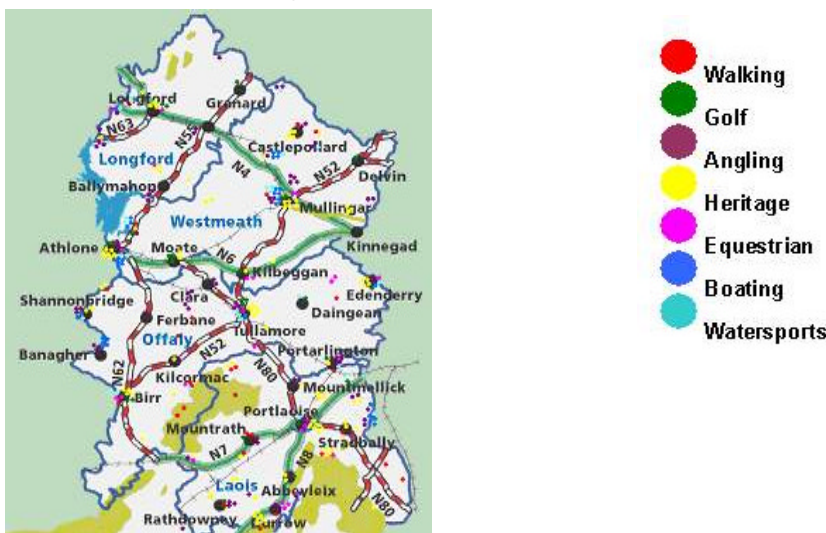
Table 1: Overseas tourists to the regions (2003) (000s)

	Total	Britain	M. Europe	N. America	Other Areas
Dublin	3,444	1,798	922	551	173
South-West	1,515	638	399	392	86
West	1,159	372	380	348	59
Shannon	983	345	263	334	41
South-East	907	425	206	228	48
Midlands East	543	299	126	85	33
Remaining					
Midlands Region	232	137	50	34	11
North West	476	252	103	101	20

Source: Fáilte Ireland Tourism Fact Cards - Regions 2003.

3.2 Product Audit

The map below is a graphical representation of the tourism product and infrastructure available within the Midland Region.





3.3 Conclusions from the research (survey of 318 waterway users)

Profile of Waterways Users

The main social classes using the waterways were identified as managerial/technical workers (20%), retired persons (17%), skilled manual workers (13%) and students (10%).

The vast majority of respondents were resident in the Republic of Ireland (85%). The main countries of residence for overseas visitors were Germany (5%) and Britain (4%). The average length of stay in Ireland for overseas visitors was 10.5 days, and 78% of overseas respondents had visited Ireland specifically to experience the waterways.

Waterways users were identified as being predominantly male (73%), with only 27% of respondents female.

The average party size using the waterways was 2.6 persons, with 89% of respondents in a party of 4 or less people, and the remainder (11%) in groups ranging from 5 to 26 people. Thirty six percent of respondents were using the waterways alone, 25% as a couple and 25% with a group of friends.

Almost half of respondents were regular users (49%), 32% locals and 21% holidaymakers.

English was the first language of 88% of respondents, with German the second most common first language (6%).

Activities

The main activities undertaken on the waterways were walking (35%), private cruising/travelling by barge (27%) and angling (25%). These were also the activities most frequently undertaken by respondents.

Motivation to Use the Waterways

Respondents' main motivations for using the waterways were to relax/relieve stress/experience a sense of freedom/'get away from it all' (37%) and for the peace and quiet/atmosphere/pace of life (30%).

Sources of Information

The main sources of information used by respondents when sourcing information about the waterways were that they lived locally (45%), they were regular users (40%) and friends/relations/word of mouth (32%).

Length of Time Spent on the Waterways

The average length of time spent by respondents on the waterways was 3.6 days.

Rating of Waterways and Facilities

Respondents' overall rating of the waterways was positive, with 86% rating them as very good or good. The Royal Canal was rated highest, while respondents were least satisfied with the Grand Canal.

The main reasons for rating the waterways positively were that it was peaceful/quiet/a nice area (18%), the fishing was good (11%) and it was relaxing/a way of life (11%). The main reasons for rating the waterways negatively were that the fishing was not good (4%), that more development was needed in the area (3%) and that there were too many weeds (2%).

A high percentage of respondents rated children's playgrounds (85%), pump out facilities (71%), showers (68%), ships chandlery (63%) and refuelling facilities (59%) as either poor or very poor.



Expenditure

The average amount spent by waterways users in total for equipment was €13,030, with respondents spending on average €728 on equipment annually.

3.4 Recommendations for the development of new products and services

It is important that the waterways is recognised as a regional asset and that it is continuously managed as an attractive place to live, work and visit, having regard to preservation of waterways and its environs for future generations. This is the overall vision for the management of waterways in Ireland and all development should be centred around this vision.

Services

As a priority the following waterways facilities need to be developed:

- showers,
- toilets (availability and quality),
- restaurants,
- children's playground facilities and
- pump out facilities.

Furthermore, it is suggested the following facilities require further development:

- public facilities (such as changing rooms),
- litter management/rubbish bins, and ongoing maintenance of the same is critical for sustainability
- mooring facilities and
- Electrical points
- Chandlery Shops
- Children's Play Areas
- Fishing facilities and Access points
- Designated Swimming areas
- Return transports to cars
- Kids summer Camp
- Improved information points - Additional signage, Directional, welcoming, interpretive – maintenance
- Safety and security on the waterways needs to be extended
- Nature tours along the waterways

Products

There is currently an in-ordinate focus on cruising/boating activities and tourists. There is a need for a variety of land based activities and alternative water based activities to pull land based tourists to area and to provide alternative land based activities for cruising tourists. This would increase the economic impact of tourists and increase the overall economic benefit of tourism for the region.

The area should prioritize developing and accommodating the activities that have a larger proportion of users, namely (in rank order): walking, private boating, angling and hire cruising. Two key products which require development are walking and cycling:



- Although cycling is not permitted along un-surfaced lengths of the shoreline for reasons of public liability, many sections of the waterways are bounded by local country roads which can run alongside for many miles.
- Many of the features of significance and villages within the waterway corridor are not actually on the water itself, an attractive walk or cycle way could be developed, running along the waterway where feasible and close by where not, with deliberate routing to places of interest including, adjacent villages, heritage sites and places of scenic interest.
- These routes could be developed along, tow paths and pathways.
- In addition, it is suggested guided walking tours are provided in the Midland Region.
- Once a viable route is mapped it needs to be properly signposted and maintained.
- Fáilte Ireland, through the Western Development Tourism Programme, has funded a new concept in walks – Walking Through Time. This concept, which aims to engineer 10 quality, visitor responsive, low impact, community run landscape interpretation projects for walking visitors, should be further assessed to add an appealing dimension to the area. A broad profile of different users is also available from Walking in the West. Details on both can be found at <http://www.trueireland.com> or from (071) 9155323.
- All routes should be developed using best practice guidelines. Contact the Irish Sports Council (www.isc.ie) for details.

Driving routes could be developed with various areas themed (e.g. craft/gourmet/heritage/nature trails)

Equestrian

Development of pony trekking by the lakes, rivers and canals.

Water based activities could include:

- kayaking, jet-skiing, waterskiing, angling, sailing and wind-sailing,
- expansion of hire companies on the canals.
- Provision of guided nature tours along the waterways and information pertaining to the same.

The **family market** is currently inadequately catered for and thus this market is not being attracted to the area. Sample product development opportunities include:

- Development of family parks
- Innovative or weather independent tourist activities i.e. adventure centres; spa Boat
- Day trips to Organic Farms
- Family activities that are suitable for all ages, boat trip packages that include transfers

Packaging

Developing combination holidays along the waterways – e.g. walking and fishing, cruising and golf, cruising and car hire, walking, cycling and pony/horse treks

It is recommended offering a package including cruiser and car hire since many overseas visitors appear to stay a second week in Ireland and travel independently.

Extend accommodation base

Increased land-based accommodation could encourage tourists to extend their stay, addressing regionality and seasonality issues in part.



Festivals and Events

The development of a waterways themed festival would also increase awareness of the waterways and increase the enjoyment of waterway users.

Responsible tourism

Responsible tourism is clearly one of the fastest group tourism niche markets and the midland waterways provide an ideal product and environ for expanding the product. Responsible tourism is environmentally responsible and sustainable with a focus on conservation and on local communities who benefit from the local environmental assets. Community and public agency support is critical for the development of responsible tourism in an area. Refer to <http://www.trueireland.com> for details on Ireland's GreenBox – Ireland's first area based integrated eco-tourism plan. Using this approach, the area could benefit from clear marketing, designation, management.

Develop linkages with local area

There is a need for stronger links between the waterways and towns, villages and with cities of neighbouring regions, thereby promoting cohesion Villages along the waterways have tourism potential but are somewhat forgotten. The development of clearly sign-posted driving/cycling/walking trails could help alleviate this.

Transport/activity links to local towns and villages to attract tourists from the waterways and provide alternative activities for waterways users.

Waterways Ireland is responsible for the navigable waterways on the island of Ireland and in the case of this study the Shannon, the Grand and Royal Canals and the Barrow navigation. Waterways Ireland has responsibility for the management, maintenance, development and restoration of these waterways and also is charged with their promotion and marketing. Various development and action plans have been produced for the waterways collectively, including the Waterways Ireland marketing and promotional Strategy, which is in its 3^d year of implementation. Some of the recommendations contained within this report already form part these plans.

3.5 Best Practice Guidelines

Transferable of best practice to project partner regions

Structures – There is a strong need for a cohesive integrated structure for marketing, management and maintenance of Waterways. This should preferably be lead by a state body. This body should work closely with the other planning and development bodies.

Planning and Development guidelines - Clear guidelines on the built environment should be developed. These guidelines should take account of the potential impact of development on the waterways. A transparent and open planning process should be in place.

Training – information awareness amongst user, local communities and stakeholders is seen as a priority. The development of a "Sense of place" is a priority.

Product Development- Sustainable, environmentally conscious product development should be seen as a priority. Development should be undertaken where possible aligned to national policies and structures and to the highest quality. All development should include adequate budgets for the long term maintenance and replacement, particularly in relation to public amenities



<p>Environmental Management – Waterways should be managed to the highest environmental standard in line with EU Water Framework Directives and anti-pollution legislation.</p>
<p>Access - Public access to waterways should be seen as a priority, transport linkages should be put in place to facility easy access.</p>
<p>Regulation, Monitoring & Maintenance – Policies should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure the highest standards are kept and the product is constantly improved.</p>
<p>Safety – Safety on the water should be highlighted as a priority, water safety guidelines should be drawn up similar to Irish Water Safety Guidelines – www.iws.ie</p>

3.6 Marketing recommendations and comments

Target Market

The waterways attracts a distinct market, usually of high income, aged 35-55 years and often regular users. Waterways destinations in Ireland have a high concentration of local and regular users. More specifically the market can be divided into domestic and overseas markets.

Domestic market

It appears that the Midland Region attracts a large number of people from the domestic market with large emphasis on the following counties – Offaly, Westmeath. Many of these are regular and experienced users.

Overseas Markets

The British and German markets appear to be the main overseas markets attracted to the Midland Waterways. To this effect, they should be clearly targeted in any marketing. Tourism Ireland officers and overseas tour operators representing these markets should be regularly updated with information on the area. Familiarisation trips will also assist in increasing awareness of the area to these markets.

Advertising & promotion

The main motivators for using the waterways should be used when promoting their waterways and in their advertising. These include the opportunity to use the waterway to relax/relieve stress/'get way from it all' (37%) and to experience the peace and quiet/atmosphere/pace of life of the area (30%).

Usage of the main sources of information on the waterways identified by the survey should be made to promote the waterways; namely word-of-mouth, local users, Waterways Ireland, cruise hire companies, the Internet, lock keepers, tourist information offices, newspapers/magazines, leaflets and posters, advertising and cruise hire companies.

It is important the Midland Waterways are well represented on the Internet due to the growth in last minute bookings and those influenced by the internet and contact product providers directly. The WaterTour website could be developed to this end to build on the work already undertaken in respect of the regional audit.



It is recommended providing information specifically for first time users, foreign language information and a greater dissemination of information through Tourism Ireland and directly to overseas based tour operators.

Joint promotion of the waterways by all bodies involved in the development of the waterways is required in order to form an overall image and marketing campaign for the waterways need to be developed. It is also suggested people living close to the waterways promote the waterways as a product and contribute to increasing awareness.

Local schools, youth programmes, summer schools could all assist in increasing awareness.

Provision of information

Dedicated material should be made available on all there is 'to see and do' in and around the Midlands Waterways, ideally within a radius of 6 km – again building on the regional audit of services and activities. This material should include a dedicated website, brochure, guidebook and detailed maps. All activities developed should be packaged and marketed on Failte Ireland's www.Ireland.ie.

Develop linkages with local area

There is a need for stronger links between the waterways and the surrounding cities, towns, villages for more cohesion. Villages along the waterways have tourism potential but are somewhat forgotten. The development of clearly sign-posted driving/cycling/walking trails could help alleviate this. Transport/activity links to local towns and villages to attract tourists from the waterways and provide alternative activities for waterways users.

Signage

Development and enhancement of signage of the waterways, access points and facilities those are available along the waterways is required. In addition, all drives, walks, attractions and facilities along and adjacent to the waterways should be clearly sign-posted, using a cohesive brand for the area.

Midland Regional Authority: Jim Stone, Director, jstone@midlands.ie, phone 00353 (0)506 52996



4 Water tourism vs. nature protection on the River Dráva

Southtransdanubian Development Agency

4.1 The River Dráva

The River Dráva has its source in the Tyrolean Alps near the village of Tolback on the Austrian-Italian border, and joins the River Duna at Aljmas in Yugoslavia, travelling 695 kilometres.

24 major rivers and streams flow into the Dráva. The river crosses the Hungarian-Croatian border several times; quite often the left-hand side of the riverbank is in Croatia, while the right-hand side belongs to in Hungary.



Tourism potential of the River Dráva

The entire Hungarian stretch of the River Dráva is under protection. The relevant environment protection authorities work in co-operation with the Duna-Dráva National Park Directorate, aiming to conserve the protected and strictly protected areas. Therefore tour dates and number of participants are strictly regulated. Overnight stays are allowed at 8 camp sites. On the Hungarian stretch of the River Dráva there are only two places where boat trips are allowed.

Attractions in the region

Water tourism has an impact on an area of no more than 3 to 4 kilometres from the riverbank.



Areas relevant to water tourism on the Dráva

Strengths may include the opportunity to present the local folk customs and crafts, as well as the traditions of the different ethnic groups of this multi-cultural region.

Lack of information is considered a major weakness. Brochures and leaflets targeting defined segments need to be produced, sign posting systems along the designated paths and at camp sites with pictures and description of protected species need to be improved.

With improving the camp sites it is very important to maintain the quality of the natural environment. Environmentally friendly (building) materials and alternative energy sources should be used and waste separation should take place.

4.2 Organising tours at the river

The organiser of the tour would obtain an "Application form" from the Duna-Dráva National Park Directorate, and send it back filled in appropriately. The Directorate handles each application individually, giving a priority to first time tourists. After obtaining the "Letter of Consent", the organisers will have to apply for a permit from the Southern Transdanubia Environment, Nature Protection and Water Authority. If the tours cross the state



border, the organisers will have to obtain other necessary permissions from the Border Guards Directorates.

4.3 Services required by water tourism

The main services essential for ensuring an exciting tour for visitors are the following:

- **Attractions** (natural, cultural, architectural)
- **Information**
 - When organising a tour: Information about the water vehicles and the camps is necessary. Internet sites and multimedia CD-ROMs are becoming more and more popular.
 - During the tour: The natural environment is a source of information.
- **Camps - accommodation**
 - Tourists prefer accommodation situated in the natural environment. They like to spend the night in nomadic or semi-nomadic conditions.
 - Camps provide only basic services (toilets, rubbish bins, campfire places, benches and information signs).
 - Accommodation provided by families in rural settlements are quite popular as well.
- **Meals**
 - On tour, most tourists consume food they have purchased in advance.
 - Discovering the specialities of the local (regional) gastronomy can be fascinating. If a member of the group knows people in the area who are famous for their cooking, the group is more inclined to try a local speciality.
 - A few tourists would choose to go to a restaurant.
- **Bathing opportunities, possible locations**
 - Regulations allow bathing in rivers only at designated beaches.
- **Accessibility, public transport**
 - Transport companies would gain more passengers, and the national park would be visited by tourists using environmentally friendly means of transport.
- **Hiring of canoes and other equipment**
 - Hire facilities seem to be adequate along the Dráva.

4.4 Activities which could be linked to water tourism

- **Walking, guided tours:** individual walking tours and guided tours with an expert;
- **Cycling tours:** After a few days canoeing on the river, the oars could be swapped for bicycles, and the attractions of the region could be explored by bike;
- **Equestrian programmes, carriage rides;**
- **Angling tourism:** As well as having opportunities for angling, water tourists may be interested in the local traditions of fishermen's crafts;
- **Rural tourism:** Local cuisine constitutes an important part of cultural heritage;
- **Handicrafts workshops and demonstrations:** Most tourists would like to find out more about the local people's way of living and activities, however tourists are keen to buy souvenirs in the workshops they visit;



- **Walks around the villages:** Unfortunately tourists are not provided with sufficient information about the region, therefore they tend to visit only the most famous villages;
- **Health tourism:** Each form of water tourism contributes to people's health.

4.5 Impacts on the environment

If carefully planned and managed, tourism provides jobs and generates income, and also offers the possibility of setting up tourism businesses to the local entrepreneurs, all of which will improve local people's quality of life. Tourism may assist in financing the protection of natural and cultural heritage and traditions. However, if managed badly, tourism will result in environmental pollution, traffic jams, rising noise, which might consequently ruin the natural and cultural assets.

Typical impacts of water tourism on the environment are the following: noise pollution, water pollution, solid waste build up, air pollution, pollution caused by oil spillage, vandalism. Some groups of water tours still have the tendency to disturb animals, usually in connection with the alcohol consumed by the tourists. We must also mention the smuggling of foreign species into an area, which is another typical problem, even though it is usually not intended. Species not typical for an area might appear, probably carried in with food and by travelling. As a consequence, the structure of the ecosystem may be modified.

If managed well, water tourism may be an excellent way to raise environmental awareness as the tourists move along an easily monitored path in organised groups. Therefore skilled tour guides and service providers in the area are key pre-requisites of the successful development of water tourism on the River Dráva.

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5 Possibilities for Environmentally Friendly Tourism in the Lahti Region, Especially Prolonging the Tourism Season in the Lahti Region - Case Lehmonkärki

Tuomas Vuorio, Lahti Polytechnic, Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality

5.1 The province of Päijät-Häme

- located between coastal Finland and the Finland Lake District
- almost 200.000 inhabitants in twelve municipalities
- surface area is 6.257 km², almost 18 per cent are waterways
- 3.8 holiday homes per square kilometre - the highest number of holiday homes in the Lake District
- about 208 rural tourism entrepreneurs, 60 full-time and ca. 150 part-time. (Sinivuori, 2002)
- lake Päijänne one of the largest lakes in Finland, surface area of the lake is 1.118 km², length 119 km, largest width 28 km, average depth 16.2 m and deepest point 95.3 m and a total shoreline of 2.248 km
- the Päijänne National Park (14 km²) was established in 1993.

5.2 Lehmonkärki

Lehmonkärki is a marketing and product brand, the form of ownership of the company is a partnership. Five permanent employees, including the owners of the company Ari and Marjo Yrjölä, and a large number of temporary employees (mostly from the field of program services) work here. The supply of program services has been increasing in connection with the building of new accommodations. In addition to outdoor exercises people can play tennis or badminton, ride a horse, use a motor- or a sailboat, ride a snowmobile, fish and practice extreme sports such as rock climbing or riding hot-air balloons. Other product examples are adventure and team tracks, role and fantasy adventures, school riding and horseback riding, game tournaments, snow shoe safaris, church boat trips and various adventures that pleasure everybody. Lehmonkärki is located in the municipality of Asikkala, on the shore of the lake Päijänne.

The lake Päijänne is an important element for the business, for it is utilized in a great variety of manners. Rafts that were finished in 2004 have brought a new dimension to the utilization of the waterways. All of the round log villas (total number 15, capacity from 2 to 15 persons) are located on a ridge-like cape fairly far from each other and they have their own shorelines.

The company has a meeting room for 20 – 70 persons and party premises for 150 – 200 persons. More than half of the customers are companies. The other groups are private customers (family holidays) and private groups (weddings and other parties). Foreign customers comprise about 10% of the clientele. The products can be divided into three groups: 1. those for companies, 2. those for families on holiday and 3. those for persons arranging parties (for full list of products see www.lehmonkarkki.fi).

The lake Päijänne is an important factor for the company. It is of utmost importance, that the future development of the brand Päijänne will be supported. The whole marketing emphasises



the importance of the lake Päijänne, but the accessibility of the southern lake Päijänne must be improved to attract tourists. The lake Päijänne is especially important in winter, because it offers various products. The wintry lake is also a major competitive strength compared to many other waterway tourism areas. The possible future moving of the snow barrier to the north is a major threat for the winter products and the winter season.

5.3 Environmentally friendly tourism

The ecological nature of tourism business in Finland has been handled in several connections. Many of the preconditions are good, for example the manageable number of customers, the almost total lack of mass tourism and the clean Finnish nature. Environmental friendliness should be realised, especially within waterway and rural tourism. There are excellent preconditions to realise the ecologically efficient business. And in many cases companies will be able to avoid large investments. Environmentally friendly tourism is a strength of the Lehmonkärki - a customer-centred viewpoint is a central issue. The company has strived to take into account environmental issues from the very beginning: constructions have been realised in an environmentally friendly manner: in the treatment of waste water, heating utilizing the lake is applied in the main building, in addition solar heating is used, the waste management is based on complete recycling, all used oils used are non-polluting, four-stroke engines are used for the rafts, boats and snowmobiles, continuous training and development connected with environmental issues are realised in the company and food that is produced close by is used as much as possible. But there are several problems concerning environmental friendliness, as for instance the impossibility of sorting waste in a sparsely populated area and the frailty of the waste treatment system. The company does not have a separate environmental system. We are involved in the training Laatu-tonni (in English: "QUALITY 1000, the quality programme for tourism companies"). In this system environmental issues are stressed, as for example the ethical behaviour. The entrepreneurs wish that the making of environmentally friendly choices would be supported by society and that there would be more flexible legislative renovations because the investments can be very large and fatal concerning the profitability of single enterprises. For many companies, environmentally friendly operations are more a word than a possibility and we can only hope that the good experiences in Lehmonkärki will offer faith and be a good example to other entrepreneurs.

5.4 Tourism seasons



The tourists' holiday seasons are the most important times for Lehmonkärki, especially concerning the cottage rental operations. The different holiday periods of Finns and foreigners prolong the leisure tourism season. During the summer season, customers of Lehmonkärki include families, groups having private parties and companies having their summer parties. Starting in August, corporate events become more common and they continue fairly evenly until Christmas. The weekends in late summer and

early autumn are also popular among leisure tourists. Christmas, New Years Eve and the Epiphany are also a season of their own. Corporate events continue after the turn of the year. Finnish winter holidays are important, and so is Easter. So far, May Day has been slower than Easter as a season, but tourism during this event is clearly increasing. It can be clearly seen that actions of single people and companies are becoming more similar. Therefore,



simultaneous holidays are no longer the only problem: more and more often companies wish to arrange their events at the same time. This can be seen at the annual and the weekly level. The most important challenge for business operations are the high changes of demands especially in the short term. The forecasting of the slow periods in advance is almost impossible and their times vary on an annual basis. Some of the problems are connected with larger unities and thus the solutions depend on actions at the level of the entire society. The company is highly dependent on those strengths that the area has from a geographical and natural point of view. We can state that the company should be studied as a unity and a good example of successful operations concerning the prolonging of the tourism season. However, studying the company's operations does not give rise to all of the typical problems generally evident in the tourism season in the area.

Commercialisation of the winter season has been successful, and the significance of the winter season will be more pronounced in Päijät-Häme when the warming of the climate transfers the snow boundary closer to ridge Salpausselkä. An especially encouraging issue in the case of Lehmonkärki is the possibility to utilize the lake Päijänne during the whole year.

(Sinivuori, K. 2002. Päijät-Hämeen maaseutumatkailun kehittämishanke – esiselvitys (Päijät-Häme Rural Tourism Development Project – preliminary report). Lahden seudun yrityskeskus, Lahden matkailu, Maaseutumatkailu)

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6 Case studies – Herdade do Zambujal/Sado Estuary

AFLOPS – Forest Producers association, Portugal

6.1 Setting of the Studied Area in the Region

Considered the nucleus of the area covered by AFLOPS, the region is located in the district of Setúbal and has 510.360 hectares or equivalently 5100 km².

Although the region contains large population densities and industrial clusters it has a great diversity of both protected areas and those important for the conservation of nature. Not only do these areas play a vital role in the preservation of natural resources but they are also equally important for the leisure and recreation of visiting populations. However, all and any attempt to develop tourism in these natural areas must be conducted in a sustainable way.

6.2 Strategic Recommendations for the Development of Tourism in AFLOPS' territory

In consent with the properties of AFLOPS' associates, an evaluation of resources and respective potential was carried out according to a matrix of tourist evaluation parameters as well as issues related to the organisation and location of such properties.

A synthesis of the more pertinent and significant conclusions follows:

- All properties demonstrate a large potential for the development of rural tourism not only due to their forestry but also due to the remaining explored activities like agriculture or herd raising (cattle, horses, and game...).
- Salt, rice and cork production proved to have a large exploration potential for associated tourism.
- There are no problems concerning the external road access to the surveyed properties. In addition there are some alternatives of relevant interest by sea, river and rail. The equipment and infrastructure capable of being converted to serve tourism exist in almost all properties.
- Interesting historical references can be adapted for tourism purposes in approximately half of the surveyed properties.

A limited vocation and the growth of tourism is noticeable on the properties. Yet it is faint and dispersed with little development for it solely takes advantage of existing natural resources for tourist hunting grounds and some initiatives dealing with exterior sports.

6.3 Presuppositions for the development and management of tourism in AFLOPS' territories

This preface acts as a synthesis of those ideas, fears, and stronger expectations on the specificity of the region and properties that emerged more pertinently and intensively during the ongoing talks, hence, revealed as the consensual understanding of the majority of the contacted entrepreneurs and proprietors. Given the utmost importance, these ideas are now thought to be the necessary conditions for development, those in which the philosophies and future roads to follow must be rooted.

To our belief it is important to underline some of these presuppositions henceforth, namely:



PRESUPPOSITIONS	ACTIONS
Securing the privacy and integrity of the properties	Solving the theft problem Diverting unwanted trespassers Managing external flows of visitors
Ensuring the proper use of properties' tourism resources	Developing and creating codes of conduct Managing internal flows of visitors (interpretation)
An image of quality and prestige	Creating a high quality brand of reference catering upper market segments Emphasis on natural and cultural heritage
Increasing institutional control over the development of proprietors' projects	Mend the influence of associates – lobbies and supra-institutional integration
Converging the actions of proprietors in the direction of development	Networking Partnerships and Protocol

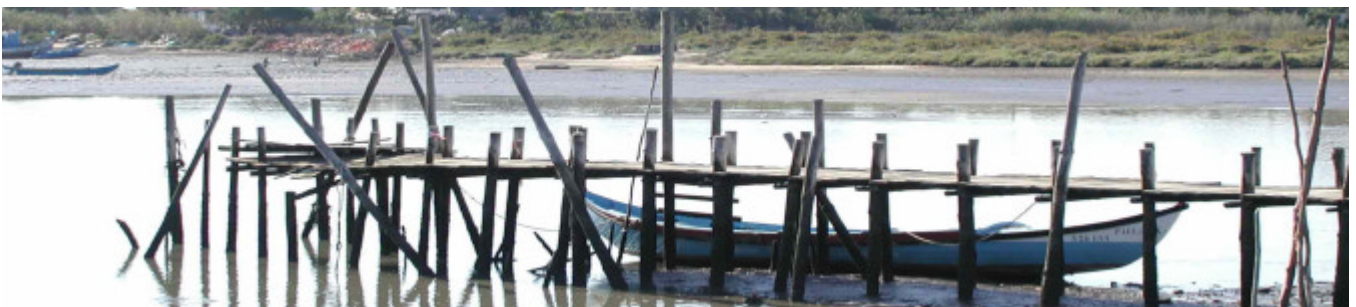
The path for the development of tourism in the AFLOPS' area must be thought up and traced out on a basis of principals and presuppositions that will guide the definition of the strategy and ultimately be able to underlie the respective implementation and actions to be developed. We do not doubt, that the AFLOPS case and the model that may be developed will be a paradigm in the spectrum of tourism in Portugal in terms of its dynamism, initiatives, presuppositions and partnerships.

6.4 Regional Strategic Vision

The implementation of an integrated tourism strategy in the region must be based on complementarity principles, in a perspective of a Regional Net.

The tourism offer must represent the global vision of the region, addressing the base tourism product for the Sado Estuary and its Natural Surrounding. In this perspective, the tourism in and around water will have to be one of the main promotional products of the region, although it will be "anchored" in equipment and attractions at the land shore.

Strategically, the region will have to stake in the dynamization of the nautical recreation, from the set of small and medium supporting infrastructures of the fishing activity.



6.5 Future Strategy

In future we want to endow the Sado Estuary with a network of offers for the development of nautical recreation activities, anchored in the small and medium infrastructures of support to the fishing activity. We want to



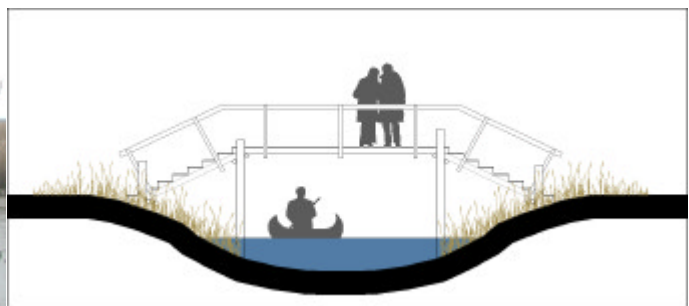
- encourage infrastructures and ways that allow the promotion of the animation activities for the visitors' free time occupation and that contribute for the divulgation of the natural and cultural patrimony, as well as for the qualification and diversification of the tourism offer;
- contribute to the preservation, recovery and improvement of the region characteristic elements of the constructed patrimony;
- contribute in a general way to the sustainable development of the region;
- promote the installation and the functioning of lodging units in quality tourism enterprises in rural areas;
- contribute to the improvement of the environment quality in the region, reducing the overcrowding of the places and improving the general aspect with the adequate landscape treatment and quality control of the architectural design;
- contribute to the justifying and paying for the conservation of places with tourism attraction characteristics.

In the plan of actions following activities are included:

- To create/re-qualify the tourism offer network from the existing and potential Palafitte Harbours with bigger expression and memory in the region.



Examples of Zambujal



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