



National Tourism Development Strategies Assessment

Romania

- Initial findings -

Sustainable Tourism Working Group Meeting
9th November 2012





Sources of Information



We sent official requests to interested ministres, asking for the preliminary information such as the name of the documents related to tourism strategy, departments responsible for their implementation, implementation periods, accomplishments so far and future actions.

We only received a briefly answer from the Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism, sending us to the internet on the ministry website and the only priority for the next year is the designation of the ecotouristic destinations in Romania.

The assessment we made so far is based only on the information found on the internet.





Name of the main strategic document

Master Plan for National Tourism Development in Romania until 2026

- It is formulated by the Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism
- Aims to set the bases of a sustainable approach of tourism development in Romania
- It contains an action plan for six years (2007-2013), connected with financial support from EU fundings
- It was created by a team made up from six international experts from WTO assisted by 20 romanian experts. Moreover, many local stakeholders from all regions of Romania were consulted;
- **The vision:** „To transform Romania into a high quality tourism destination based on it’s natural and cultural heritage, which will meet EU standards regarding products and services supply till 2013 and to accomplish a sustainable development of tourism sector from the point of view of environment at a higher development rate than other European destinations.”





The objectives



The Master Plan has a long list of 25 objectives and among these, two are interesting from the point of view of sustainable tourism:

- Ensuring a sustainable development of tourism in such a way that its environmental and cultural heritage to be appreciated in the present and also preserved for future generations ;
- Supporting ecotourism development in the Danube Delta, in protected areas, rezervations and rural areas.



The tourism planning system in Romania





Actions for sustainable development stated in the Master Plan



Very short term

- Include environmental protection in the authorization system by introducing standards for solid waste, sewage and energy saving
- Prioritize the ecological waste management and adopting a new legislation for reducing plastic containers use
- A better residual water management by implementing proper treatment units
- Work with animal protection associations to remove the risk of ownerless dogs, which are a threat for tourists in some areas.

Short term

- Local administrations to elaborate tourism development plans for every destination, that comply with environmental legislation
- Protected areas administrations to elaborate sustainable tourism development plans and apply for financial support from EU funding
- The Tourism Ministry to elaborate economic plans, environmental impact studies and land-use plans for the new winter sports facilities
- Rationalize the tracking trails network to reduce the negative impact on the environment
- Intensive promotion of rural tourism and ecotourism as elements that give a positive unique touristic image of Romania
- Implementing the campaign „A clean Romania” to clean the waste affected landscapes



I. Description of the document and elaboration process

- The strategy is published in a hard-to-read version with over 500 pages and a heavy language. Only one page is dedicated for environmental issues.
- It has only two of 25 objectives related to environmental protection.
- Sustainable development of tourism is unfortunately not supported with consistent actions.
- Biodiversity protection is only mentioned as a reference to the National Strategy and Action Plan for Biodiversity.
- Ecosystem functioning, sustainable transport, green house gas reduction, climate change adaptation, poverty alleviation are not mentioned.





II. Situation analysis and programming



- Strategic planning was based on a SWOT analysis
- The strategy includes separate analysis of Romania tourism destination and regions, but natural resources were not presented from the point of view of ecosystem services

III. The grade of enhancement on sustainable approach to tourism in policies

- The recommendations and actions does not take into account the social benefits and profits for local communities, only the benefits for tourists. There is only a general statement at the beginning of the document regarding benefits for local communities
- There is no reference to sustainable tourism agreements, conventions, protocols, EU policy towards development of sustainable tourism and nature conservation. (the Ecotourism Strategy has 3 references)



Difficulties and observations

- The strategic documents were available on the internet, but the authorities were not helpful to provide the additional requested information
- English version of the document is available only for the National Sustainable Development Strategy
- The methodology language was clear
- Indicator no. 6 (Political factors...) is not relevant for sustainable tourism development
- At indicator no.7 we can add biodiversity strategy
- We found difficult to assess the indicator no. 5

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