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Statement of Purpose

The *International Journal of Responsible Tourism (IJRT)* is a publication that aims to offer, through scientific papers, a better understanding of the responsible tourism within the tourism promoter environments, to explain the consequences of applying these principles for the Romanian society and for the entire world and open a communication platform for successful international concepts and practices.

IJRT will include scientific papers submitted to the International Forum for Responsible Tourism program that have passed the peer-review stage and have been debated in the forum, considered to be important documents for understanding and developing responsible tourism.

IJRT intends to become a reference journal in the field, being the first initiative of this kind in Romania, and will be published exclusively online and quarterly by the Amphitheatre Foundation. The Journal will include applicable notes on the meaning of responsible tourism and methods of increasing the touristic potential by preserving cultural and social identity, the natural and anthropic environment, elements to be integrated in responsible tourism, along with an adequate education in the field.

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MARKETING STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY THE TOURISM ENTREPRENEURS OF NAVODARI

Associate Professor PhD Daniela Simona NENCIU ¹

Abstract

For the last years the tourism circulation manifested in Navodari has intensified, this area registering a significant increase in the number of structures of tourists reception with functions of accommodation. The area has become an interesting tourist destination both for young tourists who access tourist services specific to night entertainment, here being the most famous clubs of the seaside, and for families with children who choose this area due to the beach which is large and not very crowded during high season. In the last years, the tourism entrepreneurs of this area have adopted strategies to diversify tourist products and services in order to meet the needs and requirements expressed among tourists, diversifying strategies by commercialization of tourism products for various tourist segments and using flexibility strategies which target the adjustment of the offer to the changes which appear on the tourism market.

Keywords: strategy, tourist destination, diversification, tourism product

JEL Classification: L 83, M 31

1. The revival of Navodari area – as a tourist destination of the Romanian seaside

Navodari has become during the last years a destination accessed more and more by Romanian tourists who want to spend their holidays on the Romanian seaside and who look for travel packages which reflect the quality of the tourism services included and who also want to keep away from the much crowded Mamaia resort.

The tourism entrepreneurs of Navodari have tried for the past three years to value the tourism potential of this region investing in establishments of tourist reception with functions of accommodation of bed and breakfast type of two, three and four stars and also in arranging some portions of the beach. In order to attract

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the tourist segment aged between 18 and 30, the night entertainment has developed in the area, the clubs here attracting a significant number of young people. Tourism development in Navodari is one of the priority objectives of the local administration that has tried, through a series of projects, to promote and develop the tourism products commercialized in the area. In this respect, Navodari City Hall, together with its partner, the European Institution for Cultural Tourism EUREKA of Bulgaria, organized in the period 30th-31st October 2013, in Balchik, the Seminar entitled “The diversification of tourist travel packages for leisure activities” within the project “The transboundary center of tourism affairs and related activities – Fish and fish products market

(FISH TOURISM CBC)” financed within the Program of Romania – Bulgaria transboundary cooperation 2007 – 2013. The event lasted for two days, with the participation of the representatives of the tourism sector of the two partner countries, the following issues being taken into consideration:

- instruments and strategies of diversifying tourism services and packages related to leisure activities;
- good European practices regarding tourism services related to leisure activities;
- opportunities of diversifying tourism services and packages in Navodari – Balchik area.

This event aimed at focusing on the main possibilities of overcoming the lack of experience in supplying tourism services in these areas and at introducing innovative instruments to diversify tourism related services.

2. Market strategies adopted by the tourism entrepreneurs in this area

Some of the tourism agencies which develop their activity in this area apply an undifferentiated strategy, which within the present context, when tourists are more and more demanding and want diversity, does not find an optimum applicability, the results being less efficient. For the tourism products and services, commercialized by the companies in this area, to satisfy various segments of consumers, there should be designed marketing programs specific to each segment and a differentiation strategy should be adopted.

In order to identify new means to increase the tourism demand, tourism entrepreneurs of Navodari should adopt strategies of stimulation and development. These strategies are viable only under the conditions which meet the tourism development coordinates of this area.

In order to increase sales on the existing markets of some tourism companies, these apply a rephrasing strategy which has the effect of improving the quality of the commercialized products and services. Such an example would be Phoenicia

Holiday Resort which proposes a new holiday concept – semi all inclusive – in Navodari area. Unique on the Romanian seaside, Phoenicia Holiday Resort represents a new tourist concept in Romania thought to shelter especially families with children, offering them all the necessary comfort to relax and have fun at the same time.

The experience of the last seasons gives the right to the entrepreneurs who own this resort to claim that they can create holiday stories closer to “home”. Situated in Navodari, 150 meters away from the beach, this complex is the most spectacular investment of the last years, covering a total surface of 100.000 square meters out of which over 60.000 square meters represent the establishment. The ultramodern holiday perimeter offers in the first phase accommodation to over 1200 people, in 420 apartments, a parking lot of 400 places, restaurants, bars, terraces, oriental cafés, pools and waterfalls, playing grounds for children, a billiards club and a gaming center. The resort includes three restaurants and four bars. The offer is diversified and thought to cater both for children and for adults, from natural juices and ice-cream to cocktails and alcoholic drinks in all the bars of Phoenicia Holiday Resort.

The tourism products and services commercialized in Navodari area are not well-known on foreign markets. In order to take over these markets, the companies should apply market development strategies. This approach involves the commercialization of quality tourism products which could arouse the interest of foreign tourists who value quality and safety.

Moreover, it is necessary to adopt in this area some strategies of concentric, horizontal and lateral diversification. The first type of strategy aims at launching on the market new tourism services and products (new routes, complex thematic trips, etc.) in order to attract new segments of tourists.

The strategy of horizontal diversification can be applied by the companies which hold a good position on the Romanian seaside tourism market and associated with various service providers managing thus to conceive new products which address however to the same segments of consumers.

3. Strategies specific to the marketing mix

Nowadays, the tourism market is passing through continuous changes and the tourism products commercialized in Navodari area will undergo competitive pressure, so that we have to update and develop these products in order to meet the needs of tourists and the conditions imposed by the market. This area offers a wide range of development opportunities for the tourism products and services. Diversifying and capitalizing the offer by adopting some

viable marketing strategies can become key aspects of tourism development in this area.

The main tourism forms which can be successfully practiced here and can attract new segments of tourists are: sport tourism, by practicing nautical sports, historical and cultural tourism by capitalizing the anthropic tourism potential in Histria area, which is near Navodari. In this respect, the administrative and territorial unit of Istria implemented the project “In the footsteps of the Argonauts: promoting the tourist route Constanta, Istria, Dobrogea Gorges”, financed by the Regional Operational Program, Priority Axis 5 “Sustainable development and tourism promotion”, The Main Intervention Domain 5.3. “Promoting the tourism potential and creating the necessary infrastructure, in order to increase the appeal of Romania as a tourist destination”, based on the financing agreement no. 1228/ 14.02.2011 concluded with the Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism.

The aim of the project was to value the biodiversity as well as the cultural and historic patrimony of the area Istria - Dobrogea Gorges, within the thematic route “In the footsteps of the Argonauts”, by a unitary promotion campaign adapted to the national tourist tendencies. The thematic route addresses to backpackers interested to live a cultural experience, a tendency manifested more and more at global and national level. The project had in view the creation of a cultural identity in the area Istria - Dobrogea Gorges both at local and national level, the increase of the local tourism offer competition by the implementation of an efficient system of promoting and exploiting ecotourism and cultural tourism and attracting tourists by informing them, creating thus an area impact and a coordination of the development efforts.

In order to permanently adapt the seaside tourism offer to the demands of tourists, the entrepreneurs can apply a strategy of flexibility of the tourism product by paying close attention the market evolution and tourist needs.

The strategy of differentiation is often used by tourism entrepreneurs of Navodari who have more supporting elements: the product as a whole, the services associated to the product, the personnel involved in the activity of commercialization and providing the services, the image (of the product, the company, the resort, etc.)

This strategy of differentiation can be seen in the case of the three stars La Scoica Hotel Complex made up of: a hotel, a restaurant, a ballroom (1000 people), terraces on the bank of Siutghiol lake, a stage, playgrounds for children, a wharf, a nautical base and a private beach on the lakeshore. The complex makes available to the passionate ones a variety of nautical sports such as: boats without engine (hydrobicycles, kayaks, boats, surfs) and motorboats (ski-jets, boats, catamarans).

Acting on divided markets, the tourism companies in Navodari should opt mainly for a strategy of adapting the quality of tourism products specific to the seaside to the demands of the various segments of tourists or for a strategy of qualitative differentiation from the offer of the competitive companies from the countries which offer similar products.

Referring to the price strategies, the entrepreneurs of Navodari should take into account, in their future marketing policy which aims the prices, the possibility of applying all-inclusive prices, which represent an agreement by which the tourist pays an unique price for the room and all the facilities from the resort, including meals, drinks, access to the beach and renting the equipment for nautical sports, etc. This kind of arrangements by tour operators becomes more and more popular for beach holidays in Mediterranean resorts. Their attraction point is that they offer the tourist a guarantee for the budget he needs.

The most frequently used strategic options of Navodari tourism companies in their distribution activities are represented by the selective distribution adopted by the entrepreneurs who use a limited number of middlemen and by the intensive strategy used by the tourism companies which sell their products and services through a significant number of middlemen.

From the point of view of the promotional policy, the typology of the strategies adopted by the entrepreneurs of this area is quite varied. Depending on the importance given by tourists to the products, services or the tourism company, this shapes its strategy (the strategy of promoting a global image or the exclusive promoting of products and services).

Depending on the development of the activities in time (V. Balaure, 2005), tourism companies of Navodari opt for the permanent or intermittent marketing communication strategy. Taking into account the fact that the tourism products specific to this area are mainly commercialized during summer season, many of the tourism companies apply the second strategy.

Other strategies of promotional communication, successfully used by the entrepreneurs of Navodari are the offensive, differentiated strategy, the strategy of a mixed approach (both of the segment of individual consumers and the organizational consumers), the strategy of a combined use of communication media, the strategy of a combined support, etc.

The wide range of strategic options guarantees the tourism company numerous opportunities in order to project and implement it marketing communication.

4. Strategic directions in the personnel policy of the tourism companies of Navodari

In the steps taken to reach their strategic objectives and tactics, the tourism companies of Navodari must efficiently manage all their resources. They need to pay greater attention to the human resource that is essential to the existence and progress of the tourism company, as it capitalizes all the other resources in order to efficiently develop the activities within the company.

The personnel policy has a particular importance within the market approach of the tourism companies. One of the most important challenges for a tourism company is to form the team of employees which is the most suitable to sustain an efficient use of the company's resources so that all the company's objectives could be reached. The personnel employed in the tourism sector has an important role in anticipating the needs of tourists, in personalizing the services and in creating a long time relation with the customers, contributing thus to their fidelity.

As the tourism companies became aware of the role of the personnel, they included it in the marketing optics forming the concept of internal marketing in the specialty literature and in practice.

The internal marketing represents “the attracting, training and keeping the employees on the company on positions which can ensure the maximum and efficient use of their work capacity and at the same time a system of motivations which allows the satisfaction of material necessities as well as the professional aspirations of the personnel” (L. Berry, A. Parasuraman, 1991).

The important role of the personnel in offering tourism services imposes a special attention to the way of attracting, selecting, keeping and promoting personnel within the company.

The sustainable development of tourism depends not only on the attractive landscape and tourist facilities, but also on the competitiveness and quality of the employees. Being one of the most competitive economic activities in the world the tourism industry needs understanding, professionalism, commitment, organization and efficient strategies of developing human resources (Master Plan for the Development of the National Tourism 2006-2026).

Competitive services can be ensured only by highly-qualified and specialized personnel with the right aptitudes and performances. Creating a qualified workforce in tourism implies basic education, professional training courses, as well as continuous training at the place of work.

Tourism in Navodari registers nowadays a major deficit of qualified personnel. Most entrepreneurs, due to their seasonal activity, do not employ qualified personnel nor invest in professional training. This is reflected in the quality of services offered by insufficiently trained employees who lack motivation because of their low salaries.

Moreover, the level of competence in tourism is reduced as a result of the performance standards, work standards and educational and training standards.

The motivations for the crisis of the qualified personnel in Romanian seaside tourism are various (Master Plan for the Development of the National Tourism 2006-2026):

- a large number of workers in the domain of tourism leave Romania to work abroad, because of the low level of salaries;
- the current training programs do not focus on forming skills and abilities. Many providers of training courses issue diplomas and certificates necessary to get a job without ensuring a complete and adequate training;
- the great number of hotels and hostels which are built annually;
- daily extended work hours;
- wrong perception of faculty graduates in this domain who consider that they should start their careers as managers;

Tourism entrepreneurs of Navodari should adopt, within their personnel policy, strategies of attracting qualified workers in the domain, strategies to fidelize the employees, strategies to increase the quality of the services provided by offering professional training completed by training courses and strategies of increasing competitiveness by offering some facilities to efficient workers.

5. Conclusions

The success of the tourism entrepreneurs of Navodari will certainly depend on their investments in human resources and on their strategies adopted in order to increase the quality of services provided by tourism workers. Moreover, in order to increase tourist circulation in the years to come, it is necessary to aggressively promote this destination on our domestic market as well as on the external market.

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RURAL TOURISM: A KIND OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN THE FACE OF GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS

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Abstract:

Tourism has represented one of the major sources of balance of trade earnings for many years in the most developed countries. According to estimates by the World Tourism Organization (WTO), world tourism flows will grow by 4-5% annually over the coming years, reaching in 2020 an estimated number of 1.6 billion international arrivals, of which 378 million will be short haul international travellers (Lanfranchi M., Giannetto C., 2010). With the passage of time demand will become more diversified and this will lead to the spread of “new tourism”, the search for new products and increasingly diverse offers, characterised by organized local tourist systems. This paper underlines the importance of the tourist district (TD) or local tourist system (LTS) model as a strategic tool for creating innovative processes of endogenous development in a highly globalized framework, moreover it tries to highlight the peculiarities of tourist districts and their importance (as a network of heterogeneous actors operating at local level) in overcoming the major limitations of the distribution chain.

In this model we need to improve the use and knowledge of the cultural, environmental and gastronomic heritage of the area in question and this can only happen through the creation of a tight network of relationships, composed of and coordinated by both public and private entities able to meet all the requirements (accommodation, catering, entertainment, travel etc.) of potential visitors. Therefore, the birth of DT or STL represents an important opportunity for the promotion of tourism development of different local realities, because they are able to create innovative spatial models, capable of responding effectively to needs concerning the coordination of different tourism initiatives. There has been a heterogeneous response concerning implementation of STL in Italy, indeed some regions have not taken advantage of this potential tool for tourism development, while others have created a special discipline.

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Keywords: rural Tourism - sustainable Tourism - multifunctional agriculture - farm - economic crisis.

JEL Classification: Q26, Q20, Q50, Q34, Q56, Q57, F60, F64, O13

1. Local tourism in relation to the changing competitive environment

Territory may be regarded as a complex system, formed by a series of interacting factors, such as actors, resources and infrastructure. It is characterized both by a spatial dimension and a temporal dimension. The former refers to a dimension characterized by resources and homogeneous features. Although located in a defined space not all activities conducted in a certain territory always originate in that context, and their effects are almost never felt exclusively within a single territory. The temporal dimension, on the other hand, shows that any relationship established is dynamic, that is to say subject to continuous development; for this reason, territory is often described as a vital system (Andereck, K., & Nyaupane, G, 2011), characterized by the evolution of the many actors that constitute it. Actors are an integral part of the system and they can include both individuals (private and public) and more or less complex organizations. In relation to these considerations, the aim of a territory, as a “living system”, is to provide and steadily and progressively strengthen all the necessary conditions for achieving economic, social and cultural improvements. For this reason it is important for it to be increasingly competitive, in relation to its global position and citizen welfare, in terms of employment and economic wealth (Blake, J., 1999). Thus, the competitiveness of a territory is not exclusively linked to macro-economic variables, such as GDP per capita or added value per capita, but also a set of conditions related to individual welfare, quality of life, environmental protection and landscape (Lanfranchi M., 2010). Territories, thus, compete to acquire and control resources useful for their sustainable development and for promoting the socio-economic advancement of the actors who participate in them. From a business viewpoint, a territory is evaluated in relation to the convenience it offers in starting up a business activity. For a company, the degree of attractiveness of an area is influenced by the specific type of production, by the industry it belongs to and by the type of competition strategy adopted. When assessing a territorial area certain variables should be taken into account, such as: the market, human resources, infrastructure, knowledge system, production system, institutions and public policies, the regulatory system, social and environmental quality, image and reputation. The choice of a geographical location in which to make a

productive investment is crucial for a company, whether it is engaged in the primary, secondary or tertiary sector. From the perspective of relative economic sectors, the competitiveness of a region is proportional to the quality of the tangible and intangible elements that constitute the wealth of resources it provides to operators and users (Dragulanescu I.V., 2013). The companies located in a territory increase their productivity level if they are able to differentiate their products, if they are efficient, and especially if they have a localization quality, understood as the ability to build good relationships and a high level of quality of life. In particular, if they operate in the tourism industry they must consider that the territory is seen as an area where you establish systematic interrelationships, where territorial organization is functional to meet tourist needs and elements of attraction are like interacting resources in a development framework that can be used as a tool for projecting a unified image with developmental capacity. In these local contexts, we can distinguish a systematic layout, in which integration is the result of a socio-cultural process that involves not only the territorial system in question but also its tourism space, and a network layout, in which integration originates as an instrument of strategic action for local tourism in relation to the changing competitive environment (Asciuto, A., Franco, C.P.D., Schimmenti, E., 2013). Systematic layouts include the relationship between tourism businesses and the economic and cultural effects generated by social interaction (the public sector plays a crucial role). Network interactions, on the other hand, establish a relationship between local and external businesses, with the presence of a leader; relations are stable, involve a limited number of subjects and they are strongly territorialized.

2. The model of multifunctionality of agriculture

The allocation of agriculture to more features, in addition to the canonical direct production of goods for the market, underlines the key role that the primary sector can play, if properly supported, in the revitalization of rural areas (Brandth, B., Haugen, M.S., 2011). Promoting rural development means to intervene in an area that includes the OECD countries making up 95% of the territory and 36% of the total population. In this habitat, structurally weak and with obvious deficiencies in the socio-economic structure, the agricultural sector plays a strategic role. Agriculture understood in its multifunctional value is realized in multi-employment benefits that maintain the presence of the population in these areas, thus avoiding the negative consequences of rural exodus. The exaltation of the concept of multifunctionality makes agriculture capable of promoting the growth

of all activities defined as minor, such as handcrafts, enogastronomic tourism, farm tourism, Bio-farm holiday, educational farms and B & B, able to diversify with related activities such as catering, tasting of typical products from business, hospitality, organization of cultural events, educational and recreational, and finally to interact with other sectors of the industry and are the driving force behind development of these activities in view of developing a policy of territorial and no longer sectoral (Choo, H., Petrick, J.F., 2014). The multifunctional agriculture is also finding application in the principles of sustainable development, biodiversity, market liberalization and food security, representing a new business model which places competitiveness in an expedient not longer protectionist, but in step with needs of today's society. The farm, among the so-called minor activities, represents the type of agriculture that supplies services to the community, related to the landscape, environment, tourism, leisure, habits, customs and traditions. It is also a valuable tool for integrated development of the territory. In fact, when alongside the farm there are the those activities of reception and hospitality, the synthesis is made more meaningful with the concept of multifunctionality of agriculture, because the production is combined with the preservation of environmental heritage, also promoting the significant cultural heritage, artistic, gastronomic and craft that characterizes many of the Italian regions (Hansson, H., et al. 2013). The development of the farm also offers new employment opportunities, particularly young people and women, and is a source of supplementary income for business. The support income is becoming increasingly important, and this is even more true when referring to an agricultural system composed of small and medium-sized companies, like the Italian one, where the legislation has also created a law specifically for these businesses typical of the rural areas (Hibbard, M., Lurie, S., 2013). The farm is undoubtedly one of the concrete solutions that can help solve the problem of an atavistic low profitability in agriculture, which over time has led to deep social upheavals, such as the massive rural exodus and the abandoning of the land, while it can be considered the tool that allows proper remuneration for the multifunctional role of recognized agriculture company (Hara, T., 2008). In fact, only through this multi-activity the economy of rural districts can be bettered which cannot and will not become competitive in international markets, which are populated by large multinational agribusiness and by the production of commodities. However, these rural areas are of strategic importance in socio-economic and environmental profiles. Today by the agricultural sector values – and not only – the great economic opportunities offered to companies, because we will be seeking to translate multi-sectoral forms of remuneration to ensure economic sustainability while respecting and safeguarding valuable resources, such as water, soil and vegetation. It is implemented mainly through the small farms,

where the production function is considered instrumental in the realization of environmental and social functions.

3. Search Results in economics of rural tourism in disadvantaged areas

To solve the problem of economic depression in rural areas, different strategies can be applied both in the public and private sectors. In the former case, for example, by implementing local action groups through the Leader Program or the development of policies for local development (through Psr which adopts a bottom-up policy). But the development of disadvantaged areas can also come from private initiatives, such as tourism activities carried out by small businesses or farms. In Europe, rural tourism was born in central and northern Europe in the late 1950s, and is developed southern Europe only twenty years later, in 1970s. Rural tourism makes use of spaces suitable for the practice of a wide range of activities related to agriculture or directly connected with environmental resources (sports, recreational and cultural). This form of tourism can satisfy different interests of tourists, supporting of the natural heritage and rural culture of modern society, which is being eroded by the advent of new technologies. This form of tourism primarily includes:

- visits to farms;
- education on the types of crops grown;
- tasting of local agricultural products, etc.

Local actors today, are finally aware of the potential multiplier effect of tourism in terms of creating additional income. To ensure proper promotion and communication of these activities, an important role is played by public authorities and stakeholders. To date in Europe there are almost 28 million rural tourist facilities. The countries with the largest number of structures are France, Italy, the United Kingdom and Germany.

Among the countries of Eastern Europe, Poland holds the record with 610,111 structures. The majority of rural tourist facilities have developed primarily in areas considered rural. Italy doesn't follow this trend as from holiday centres are not included among rural structures because they have different legislation. The EU 28 countries that have a larger number of rural tourist facilities in urban areas are Italy, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. These farms, according to the business transition and rural development models, can address the current economic crisis affecting most EU countries by looking for alternatives and adopting a policy of diversification. As indicated by agricultural policies it is important to diversify, create and implement specialization and increase economies of scale. These alternatives are addressed in three directions:

- diversification of agricultural activities (diversification);
- growth in added value per unit of output (value);
- the reorganization of internal resources (refounding).

In the case of diversification, the firms develops relationships with the rural area, exploiting the opportunities offered by its agricultural activities or from the growing demand for 'green services' from public administrations. In the case of creation of value, the company analyzes new relational patterns within the sector, such as internalizing sales and processing operations or developing strategies for differentiation based on quality (organic products, geographical indications, slow food). In the case of refounding, the company restructures its workforce through, for example, part-time and family multi-activity. The last decade has been characterized by a general growth of firms that implement rural tourism in disadvantaged areas. Countries that have had the most significant increase are the United Kingdom (+17.1%), Lithuania (+6.2%) and Latvia (+5%); while the countries that recorded a decrease in these structures is so-called rural areas are Slovakia (-2.5%), Ireland (-2.1%), Belgium (-1.5) and Poland (-1.4%). Certainly the decrease of these structures can severely affect the economy of the less advantaged areas because, as mentioned, rural tourism creates "local tourism", tourism that stimulates local initiatives, locally managed, with local profits, characterized by local landscapes and adding value to the local culture. Rural tourism is therefore characterized by small or medium-sized tourism enterprises, a kind of tourism in which man is the central and primary element. Many LEADER groups have engaged in this sense. However, it is necessary to prevent the expected progress are achieved at the expense of particularism and character "craft" of the acceptance. In this connection it must be stressed that local actors are now aware of the potential multiplier effect of tourism emerged in terms of creating additional income, synergies development and improvement of infrastructure and support services to the rural world, in the interest of the population and of tourists. In this perspective, rural tourism allows primarily to ensure the protection of sites and ways of life, to benefit both local residents and future generations (Lanfranchi M., Giannetto C., De Pascale, A., 2014). Despite the favorable trends arising from the continued growth of tourism in Europe and the contraction of tourism demand of traditional destinations , the supply of tourism products in rural areas remains relatively low profile. We find, indeed, a lack of products and advanced tourism services, especially in southern Europe. In this regard, one cannot speak of a real structured supply on the market (there are no specialist tour operators, in addition, this form of tourism continues to be characterized by strong seasonality, which limits the return on investments (Lanfranchi M., Giannetto C., Puglisi A., 2014).

4. Discussion: the importance of rural tourism districts for local areas

Tourism districts can be treated as a homogeneous network of operators in a local area and thus, like other networks, is of great importance for the territory. From the numerous contributions made on this subject we can formulate a definition by taking into account three main criteria:

- the geographical dimension;
- the attractions on offer;
- the strategic and organizational dimension.

The discussion of these three definitional criteria of tourism districts takes place from a holistic analysis perspective, which jointly considers supply and demand.

Indeed, the main point of reference for tourism districts is the subject interpreting the tourism experience (Lanfranchi M., Giannetto C., 2014).

The sectoral system is regarded as a set of sectors and commodities (economic and otherwise) and consequently finds a timeline in the geographical element.

We have a geographic dimension when there is a range of product-market combinations (supply nodes) which are followed by stable customer segments.

Another requirement is the presence of well-defined geographical areas that are portions of territory with homogeneous characteristics with respect to the maintenance of natural landscapes and habitats and where land development and land use characteristics are defined as rural.

The areas in which to identify territorial domains are those with high natural value such as parks, reserves, significant natural sites, or natural wooded areas, areas intended primarily for forestry activities in which human activity has affected natural evolution over time (Leco, F., 2013).

Regarding attractions on offer within a district, there are elements that make the various sets of attractions unique and different from those offered by geographically neighboring districts, and changeable over time.

Attractions can be divided into: natural attractions and man-made attractions. The latter are particularly important because, unlike the former, they represent the part of the stock of resources upon which we can act to create more value.

This importance explains the possibility of finding districts geographically close and therefore with very similar natural resources, but with totally different kind of tourism development.

Finally, as regards the strategic and organizational dimension, there is a need to foster strategic and managerial style of district management, facilitating the development of a competitive advantage and creating a balance between supply and demand. This approach should be developed so that the district acquires a competitive position within the tourism market.

Tourism District boundaries become thinner, but despite this there is a complex network of businesses and tourism resources located within homogeneous areas, both in terms of demand and supply.

From the supply point of view, tourism districts that base their activities across the territory can produce goods, provide services and provide recreational and cultural experiences. Below there is a figure summarizing the supply of tourist districts (Dragulanescu I.V., Drutu I. M., 2012).

Regarding supply we can identify three types of tourist districts:

- Sectoral layout: intertwined causal relationships among the actors, without a real purpose or prior will;
- Supply system: the players agree in advance to create relationships, but there is no substantial cooperation;
- Network and constellation: fully-fledged relationships are established, there is an intent to co-operate, and leadership is created.

From the perspective of demand, Tourist Districts link together the human element, that is to say the tourist, the central element, which is represented by all the endogenous and exogenous resources at their disposition, and the information element, which is represented by all forms of communication.

The variables do not determine a defined geographical coverage but involve a mobile destination.

There may be some dissonances between the perceptions of the concept of district for supply and demand; if so, these differences should be eliminated by acting on supply and communication towards demand (for example through tour operators).

The actors operating in a local tourism system offer:

- accommodation services;
- catering services;
- entertainment services (bars, pubs, wine bars, cinemas, theaters, etc.);
- artistic, historical and environmental attractions;
- handicraft goods and services;
- local food and produce;
- public services;
- cultural and recreational events.

Therefore, they must correlate: services, experiences, events (business and leisure) cultural and tourist activities (business tourism and leisure tourism). A definition of tourism district was also offered by ACI-Censis (2007), stating that it is a geographical area with a population of SMEs that share a sufficiently homogeneous cultural heritage and which includes various product systems that address different customer segments, according to paths of integration and homogeneity (Sharpley, R., 2014).

From research conducted by ACI-Censis (2007) the distinctive elements of a tourism district are:

- degree of territorialisation: this represents the level of development of services and amenities in relation to primary vocations;
- quality of catering: identification of catering establishments of high quality;
- quality of hospitality: identification of hotel establishments included major tourist guide books;
- segmentation of catering: indication of the degree of differentiation of food and wine supply;
- segmentation of hospitality: indication of the degree of differentiation of hotel and other accommodation supply;
- the added extra of food and wine: indicates whether there is a particular element of differentiation and attraction compared to other districts.

These elements shows that great importance is given to catering, food and wine, and in this case we can speak specifically of rural tourism districts.

5. The economic effects of rural tourism

Over recent years deep differences have been highlighted in various spatial contexts, both in restricted geographical areas, for example among regions, and on a global scale, indeed the gap between North and South has increased markedly (Lanfranchi, M., et al., 2014).

The differences that emerge reveal that the territory gives rise to social and political events and areas that can change continually, in relation to actions that are performed and the complexities of temporal and spatial dimensions.

From these considerations it can be seen that the added value of a territory is the result of a number of variables, such as interpersonal networks, culture, politics, cultural and natural heritage, survivability and adaptability to exogenous circumstances. It is for this reason it is important for the local system to play an active role in order to achieve territorial development. The local system is characterized by the elements that compose it and strategies that are undertaken, and this also overcomes the theory of path dependence, which states that local development depends solely on the endogenous dynamics of the economy. Various solutions and policy actions have been explored in order to enhance the local economy, but those that may be most effective are the ones that aim at tourist development. For this reason, we have recently seen the adoption of measures for the improvement of territorial management from a tourism point of view, in order to promote the competitive growth of the national, regional and local tourism system.

In relation to the promotion of local tourism growth, article 5 of the new framework law reforming national tourism legislation, N° 135 of 2001, introduces

so-called “Local tourist systems” (LTS), defining them as *homogeneous or integrated tourist contexts, including even territories belonging to different regions, characterized by an integrated supply of cultural, environmental and tourist attractions, including local agricultural produce and handicrafts, or by the widespread presence of single tourism enterprises, or groups of them.* The purpose of this law and, in particular, of the article mentioned is to avoid excessive sectoralization and thus marginality of this sector in economic policies. Therefore, the setting up of LTSs is an attempt to create a “network” consisting of a series of relationships between the businesses in a given context and the local associative, environmental, cultural, artistic and historical context, in order to improve territorial management.

Indeed, these ties enhance and give more importance to quality, tourism development and the improvement of the organizational situation involving, among other things, the enhancement of local territories. LTSs can be defined as a territorial systems, i.e. a real network of destinations and attractions linked by homogenous and complementary factors, requiring however, a complete and integrated supply system and the adoption of product policies geared to the enhancement of territorial specificities.

To achieve these objectives we need to take certain actions such as identifying local employment systems established by ISTAT, detecting the industrial zones and local production systems legally recognized by the various regions of Italy, analyzing and comparing tourism practices and policies on a regional and national level, developing innovative products for sustainable tourism, studying GIS, etc...

In relation to these instruments, there has also been a change in the way politics is conducted, with a move from *top-down* development policies to *bottom-up* development and thus tourism policies have undergone a process of refocusing, moving the centre of gravity from government action to governance action (Moseley, M.J., 1995).

Today we can distinguish three operational instruments of tourism policy:

- public / public partnership;
- public / private partnership;
- partnership between private parties.

In the first case several public institutions agree to support initiatives in favour of tourism activities; in the case of partnership between public / private institutions the public and private sector agree to resolve problems or implement initiatives in order to promote local systems (Stoian, M., 2013). Finally, in the third case, several private parties agree to create consortiums and partnerships. The setting up of partnerships (i.e. networking) can be used to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage, capable of reaching new markets, developing new products, improving operating margins and service quality, and above all achieving new economies of scale (Viswanathan, M., et al., 2014).

LTSs can bring about three kinds of effect:

- direct effects: these originate from the volume of production required to meet actual tourism demand (tourism goods and services, accommodation, meals, local produce, leisure services, etc.);

- indirect effects: in terms of tourism expenditure, these concern the overall volume of output required by the suppliers of the “tourism product” and other businesses that produce real services (these are the less noticeable economic effects and, if there is a lack of an adequate local tourism system, they often benefit external areas);

- induced effects: these are related to the volume of output required to meet the consumption of workers who have earned their income in activities directly or indirectly supporting tourist demand.

The degree of economic activity and the level of the multiplier effect of tourist spending at the local level are determined by a mix of factors related both to the characteristics of demand, and to those of the territory, such as the characteristics and consumption habits of visitors, the organizational model of tourism production, and the characteristics and scope of the entire local production system (Slee, B., Farr, H., Snowdon, P., 1997). A tourism district is a particular form of tourism system; indeed, it is expected, for example, that a tourist’s stay in a tourism district must take place within a geographical area, coinciding with the geographical and cultural boundaries of a locality (Sakellari, M., Skanavis, C., 2013).

6. Conclusions

Rural tourism born in the 50s in many countries of Central and Northern Europe and in the ‘70s in the southern Europe, became immediately a powerplant instrument for revitalizing local economies by helping to reduce the exodus of the population, creating jobs and promoting economic and social development of disadvantaged areas. Several factors are behind this evolutionary process: that tourism form can meet the demand for alternative tourism and not mass: response to the growing interest in natural heritage and rural culture of an urban public tired of his daily life. This form of tourism provides, among other things, farm visits, excursions, sports and agriturism activity, etc. The benefits of implementing a form of rural tourism in disadvantaged areas are manifold, such as maintaining an optimal balance between ecological, socio-economic and cultural systems of the area, while introducing a form of endogenous economic development; it brings to local people an additional source of income that permits them to face the crisis of agricultural systems and rural communities. It contributes to the diversification of economic activities by increasing the supply of services and local products, and

also, promotes exchange between cultures and peoples in knowledge and in mutual respect as a factor of solidarity and social cohesion.

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PROTECTION OF THE COASTAL LANDSCAPE FOR TOURISM SUSTAINABILITY

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Abstract:

In order to respond to the challenge of the sustainable development - that is the conciliation between landscape and environmental protection and socio-economic development – this paper intend to identify methods and scenarios able to promote the development using in balanced and durable way the several landscape and environmental resources.

This paper on the “Protection of the Coastal Landscape for Tourism Sustainability” analyses the phenomena manifested between landscape resource and tourist activities.

The paper proposes to analyse some tourist development models unable to provoke the degradation of natural ecosystems and the loss of local identities, but oriented to valorisation forms of the environmental, social and cultural characters of the sites.

Thus, the tourism, can favourite the economic and cultural development of a territory or, on the contrary, can determinate its irreversible degradation.

Keywords: coastal landscapes; sustainable tourism; landscape quality.

JEL Classification: Q26, Q20, Q50, Q34, Q56, Q57, F60, F64, O13

1. Introduction

The coastal regions of the European Union are under constant pressure: almost half of the population lives on less than 50 km away from the sea and its resources in coastal areas produce much of the economic wealth. Fishing, shipping and tourism have vital habitats along the 89000 km of the European coasts, the same coasts that are home to some of the most fragile and valuable habitats in Europe.

Because of this increasingly intense exploitation, coastal resources are degrading: ground water is lower and therefore invaded by the salt water, the erosion accelerates, pollution aggravates, the stock's decline (Musu, 2003).

This degradation inevitably determines social and economic negative consequences. Many of the problems of European coastal areas exceed national borders: if a petroleum tanker sinks in the English Channel, for example, the oil spot will almost certainly be extended on both British and French shores; similarly, if in the Austrian Danube end up agricultural or industrial polluters, these affect different countries before spilling into the Black Sea in Romania, thousands of miles away.

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The European coasts may also suffer the effects of the policies that at first sight seem not to have any relevance to these areas. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), for example, can affect the amount of manure from intensive farming of pigs and cattle that through the leaching of soil, are poured into rivers and watercourses. The nitrates contained by manure and chemical fertilizers promote the growth of blue algae, which, reproducing themselves at an impressive rate, stifle many other forms of life and once entering into the sea cause serious problems, especially on beaches from bathing localities. The problem of nitrate can hopefully be solved by effective evolution of the CAP.

The policies aimed to influence the viability of rural and mountain areas may have significant effect on coastal areas, affecting the migration to these areas. All these elements require special attention from European policy makers and indeed the European Union has introduced a coordinated policy for the European coastal regions. But the European Commission has taken not only measures to improve Community policies affecting coastal areas, but also urged Member States to implement national strategies for integrated coastal zone management (ICZM). Promoting the ICZM, the Commission pursues a specific purpose: to bring in a targeted strategy all local, regional, national and European policies that in one way or another affect the daily lives of European coastal regions.

The Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) aims to combine the various policies that have an influence on European coastal regions and is expressed through the planning and management of resources and coastal areas. It is not an isolated, but rather a dynamic process that will last and evolve over time. The ICZM has as fundamental objective the involvement of all local, regional, national and European political leaders, and more generally of all stakeholders, whose activities affect the coastal regions, not only state officials and national policy makers, but also, among others, the local populations, non-governmental organizations and businesses. The involvement of all stakeholders is a cornerstone of ICZM: in the absence of a global coordination, the efforts implemented to protect the coasts of Europe must have a limited success. The ICZM is not just an environmental policy. The protection of natural ecosystems is undoubtedly one of the main objectives of the strategy, but the ICZM also aims to promote the economic and social well-being of coastal areas and make them proper in order to accommodate modern and dynamic communities. In coastal areas, these environmental and socio-economic goals are intimately and inextricably linked (EU EC, eurostat, 2013).

2. The purpose of ICZM

The coastal areas are also home to some of the most valuable habitats of the European Union; a recent study of the European Commission (An Assessment of

the Socio-Economic Costs and Benefits of Integrated Coastal Zone Management, Fim Crichton Roberts, November 2000) indicates that the total benefits generated by the ecosystems from coastal areas exceed, in economic terms, the GDP of a small country. In order to protect this economic resource, the European Commission considers essential the adoption of a more coordinated approach.

With the implementation of national strategies for integrated management of coastal areas, the EU member states will improve the economic and environmental well-being of its coastal areas. According to the studies carried out on the potential socio-economic value of ICZM, the gross benefits of ICZM (habitat protection, local economy and tourism) could raise up to 4.2 billion Euros on an annual basis in the European Union. Beyond the net economic benefits, the ICZM offer qualitative benefits (which will vary depending on the specific initiatives that will be made) including, firstly, a greater cohesion of coastal communities. Thus, the implementation of national strategies for integrated coastal zone management will require relatively limited investments, but in return will provide significant economic benefits and extended over time.

3. The inefficiency of tourism development planning

Managed in an appropriate manner, tourism can be important for the economic recovery of coastal areas. Unfortunately, in many sections of European coastal, tourism has developed in a chaotic way, causing serious environmental and social problems. The development of coastal tourism, for instance, can exert strong pressure on local resources of drinking water and cause serious difficulties, as is the case in some regions of southern Europe. In many parts of the Mediterranean, for example in the Greek islands, due to an over-exploitation of groundwater, water sea has ended up infiltrating into groundwater, making it unsuitable for drinking. Moreover, in many of these islands, there is a lack of adequate facilities for the disposal of solid waste and therefore illegal dumps are spreading (Fraguell y Sansbellò, 1998).

A less integrated management of tourist destinations can also cause serious pollution of air and sea. In tourist centers, air quality is often compromised by pollutants from fossil fuels, used not only in heating and cooking in hotels, bars and restaurants, but also by numerous motorcycles, cars and recreational craft that throng coastal tourist destinations. An inadequate planning of coastal tourism development can have a negative impact also on production and social environment of local communities (National Forum on the UN 2003). In the Cyclades islands of Greece, for example, apart from being in conflict with the mining industry, tourism has caused the decline of traditional methods of intensive cultivation determining many people to abandon the work in the fields and to seek employment in bars, cafes and nightclubs.

In France, however, in the Gironde estuary, paints used to treat the hull of recreational crafts have toxic action on local fish farms.

But experts insist that tourism can play a positive role in coastal regions, certainly if it is controlled. In Danish Storstrom County, for example, tourism supplement, especially in low season, the employment decline in fisheries, agriculture, shipping and heavy industry.

3.1. The decline of the fishing

Fishing, which for centuries was the foundation of the local economy of many European coastal towns and villages, is now experiencing serious difficulties across the EU. In many areas, over-fishing has caused a drastic depletion of fish stocks and therefore the loss of jobs and general economic difficulties. In an effort to stop this phenomenon, the E.U. common fisheries policy has imposed restrictions on the fishing volume in the Community waters and has tried to reduce the number of vessels through multi-annual guidance programs for the fishing fleets. But, the scaling capacity of the fleet had as a direct result an increase of unemployment in many coastal areas. Many of the old fishing ports have ceased or reduced their activities and the population has shifted elsewhere, therefore the characteristic of these places have been lost and with it the tourist attraction. The fishing villages have seen the number of visitors dropping drastically when the sailors have finally hung networks to nail. Some areas have sought to give a new impulse to the local economy by creating alternatives to fishing, but this is a process anything but easy, in many regions the opportunity to find work in other sectors remaining rare. In regions which still plays an important role in the economy, the fishing must often contend with other sectors the space it needs, for example, the urbanization of the coastal strip, tourist marinas and moorings and pleasure boating can have a negative impact on coastal fishing and fishery resources.

The increasingly intense use of the shoreline may cause the disappearance of fishing sites and the loss of marine habitat (areas of nutrition, reproduction and growth of juvenile fish), and also worsening water quality and damaging coastal environment. Aquaculture, practiced mainly in the coastal waters and related to urbanization issues, tourism and agriculture, represent a typical example of how the ICZM can ensure mutual compatibility between the various coastal activities. Fish farming can have positive effects on the coastal areas because it can be practiced only where water quality is good and the environment clean; fish farming companies are also a tourist attraction and provide fresh fish to restaurants in the area. However, their presence can also have negative repercussions, as it provides other activities in keeping the little available space in water and on land and creates problems of pollution and waste disposal.

3.2. Lack of transport networks

Transports are the root of the particularly complex problems in E.U. coastal regions. The lack of proper networks stunts the development of the local economy and prevents coastal regions to exploit the economic benefits that could result from a thriving tourism. Inadequate transport networks or designed only on the basis of tourist flows can also cause mobility problems for the population that lives all year in these regions. Conversely, too many communication lines or poorly designed may cause pollution, overcrowding as also and destruction of natural habitats. For European leaders planning the transport problem is to finding a satisfactory meeting point between the accessibility of coastal areas and the protection of local environment. Unfortunately, in the past this happened very often and not always the specific needs of coastal areas were taken into consideration. In recent decades the problem of communication networks has forced many people to abandon some of the more isolated coastal regions of the European Union. The depopulation has reached particularly relevant proportions in some Greek islands and other parts of the Mediterranean. Opposite to this is the situation in the Bay of Naples; there transport routes are numerous, but poorly coordinated, which helps aggravating the traffic congestion (caused also by mass tourism), pollution and mismanagement of natural and cultural heritage.

The achievement of what experts call sustainable accessibility, namely the construction of efficient transport systems in the local environment, is an essential step towards the improvement of coastal zones. In order to reach this result, the various national organizations responsible for the construction of transport infrastructure should work in close collaboration with all local stakeholders involved.

3.3. Urban areas

In recent decades urbanization has affected an ever larger part of coastal communities. If planned with foresight and respectful for the environment, property development can help saving the coastal regions from economic decline; too often, however, the European coast was attacked by the concrete fury.

One of the reasons for wild construction has been the huge increase of second homes along the European coast. Many of these homes are used only on weekends or during holidays and remain uninhabited for most of the year, but in many cases destroy fragile natural habitats and prevent the general public access to beaches. Moreover, the carrying resulting from the waste disposal of and biological waste from the septic tanks of these homes is often higher than the absorption capacity of the environment. The problem of coastal urbanization is particularly severe in

southern Europe, where many second homes are abusive or semi-abusive and not constructed adequate to local regulator plans.

3.4. Coastal Erosion

In many coastal areas of the European Union, erosion caused by the sea is a natural process that has existed for millions of years. The phenomenon itself is little concerning for the environment, but becomes a problem in areas where threatens coastal towns and cities (CE – COM, 2001).

Trying to prevent erosion is a complex process and it is not always easy to calculate what will be the long-term effects of human intervention. The “heavy” traditional engineering works as the breakwaters involve high maintenance costs and does not always succeed in preventing the erosion of coastlines, and in some cases they even accelerate it. The construction of large works of any type in areas that are subject to erosion can aggravate the problem.

In many parts of European Union, national and regional authorities are beginning to realize that it is perfectly useless to build artificial barriers to halt the natural erosion. In some locations it is preferred to choose a policy known as “controlled withdrawal, which is to gradually reduce the presence of human activities in coastal areas that one day will be invaded by the sea.

In regions where the controlled withdrawal is not a viable (e.g. in the areas of high economic or historical value), the authorities have often opted for easy coastal protection instead of traditional breakwaters.

In areas not excessively urbanized, for example, the reintroduction of psammophilous plants and other native plant species can significantly slow down the process of erosion. The great challenge of the next years for policymakers will be to develop solutions that are long-term effective and that lead to the lowest possible number of unforeseen consequences.

3.5. Pollution

Coastal areas are exposed to a dual threat: first they are periodically affected by maritime disasters of vast proportions such as oil or chemicals spills; second they are affected by the waste produced by the mainland, which is poured into the sea via rivers and watercourses.

Pollution caused by maritime accidents is a problem that affects particularly the coastal areas located close to major international shipping routes. Generally, maritime transport is considered relatively environmentally friendly; but when an accident occurs, the consequences are often disastrous. To aggravate the problem is the fact that the responsibility of maritime accidents is often difficult

to determine. The company owning the tanker may have headquarter outside the E.U. jurisdiction and making them responsible is a long and complex. However, the Commission has recently made a series of proposals to introduce preventive measures in this field. Also, the pollution from land-based sources, primarily factories and farms, is a serious problem for coastal areas. Fortunately environmental disasters are quite rare, as the incident that in 2000 has caused in Romania a serious spillage of cyanide and the pollution of a large part of the Danube and the Black Sea coast, but the fact remains that every day important quantities of pollutants are poured on the beaches. One of the main concerning reasons is the pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural fertilizers and manure. Nitrates are an essential component of all fertilizers and if they are properly used, they don't pose particular problems for the environment. However, when, due to the washing away of soil, they are poured in high concentrations in the rivers and waterways, they provide nourishment to algae, which reproducing themselves very fast stifle other forms of aquatic life. The problem also affects the sea, where the proliferation of mucilage makes bathing unpleasant. To avoid these "green tide", we need greater coordination between the stakeholders and the coastal authorities of industry, agriculture and other sources of pollution. The new EU directive on the quality of water known as the Water Framework Directive is dealing with the problems of coastal sense but also with innovative ideas, basing the protection of waters on the management of individual watersheds. The river basin management is accomplished through the coordination of all those national, regional and local exercising an influence on water resources in their path from the source to mountain rivers, lakes and finally to the sea. The Water Framework Directive aims to urge EU governments to make coordinated efforts for water management and to reduce pollution, rather than applying fragmentary policies, in many cases dictated by the needs of a stopgap emergency situations quotas. A great importance is also given to the harmonization of the collection and presentation of data through the use of geographical information systems. Regarding the coastal areas, the directive requires Member States to implement measures to cope with the consistent pollution produced by both terrestrial and marine sources and gives governments 15 years to ensure a good quality of coastal waters through coherent policies based on river basin management.

3.6. Habitat Destruction

Some of the richest and most fragile natural habitats of the European Union are located in coastal areas, in many cases within areas of special ecological interest, as brackish marshes, sand dunes and cliffs, where live many rare species of birds. But in many E.U. Regions the coastal habitats are in serious danger.

Population growth and changing economic activities alter the characteristics of the seabed and coastal beaches. Major coastal habitats, especially in wetlands can be destroyed by the urban expansion. Urbanization has brought to total extinction some of the animal species in various coastal regions: a permanent loss that translates as erosion of what experts call biodiversity. It is impossible to rebuild a coastal habitat once it's been destroyed, and even when the restoration is feasible, the interventions needed are extremely complex and expensive. Moreover, the loss of habitat can also have adverse effects on the availability of water resources and coastal erosion. Requests for protection of natural habitats of coastal regions are sometimes ignored by regional governments who see in the construction of houses, roads and tourist, commercial or industrial settlements an opportunity to give an impulse to the local economy. In reality, however, the loss of habitat has often heavy consequences on the economy of coastal areas: in the areas where the fishing industry is flourishing, for example, destruction of habitats can cause the reduction of stocks and also the loss of areas of natural beauty prevents coastal regions to develop areas such as ecotourism and outdoor recreation.

Community's coastal regions are exposed to many and often contradictory pressures; that is why the Commission considers that for the European Union is necessary a coordinated policy regarding coastal areas.

In 2000, the Commission presented a detailed programs relating to the adoption of a strategy for integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) for the European Union. The report says that the European coastal areas could benefit from a series of measures at Community level, but that it must exist in each Member State a national strategy for the integrated management of coastal areas. Through the various national strategies, the policymakers, to which the management of coastal regions depends, may provide a much more effective coordination of their efforts. The national strategies can also harmonize the various laws and national sectoral policies that affect coastal areas, and to facilitate the operations of local and regional authorities.

In coastal European regions the stakeholders are the local administrations: only they, together with other stakeholders anchored to the area as businesses, residents and non-governmental organizations, really know the real problems of their areas of competence. The regional organizations are expected to provide guidance and coordination of local initiatives arising from the base, while policies and national programs responsible for providing the framework are expected to facilitate legal and action at regional and local levels.

The ICZM shows that decisions affecting coastal regions are taken at the most appropriate level, but highlights the need to harmonize the activities of the different levels of government. In many cases it is also necessary a cooperation between countries: for example, it would be appropriate for those countries bordering the same sea trying to coordinate their actions, rather than adopting different or even contradictory national policies.

4. EU policy on Coastal Management

The strategy for E.U. integrated coastal zone management encourages this kind of transnational policies of the coastal countries bordering on “regional seas” like the Mediterranean or the Baltic. The ICZM strategy also aims to prevent policies that apparently have no connection with the coastal regions to damage the coast (CE – COM, 5/6 February 2012). In the case of agriculture pollution, the ICZM enable the responsible organizations for the CAP to take greater account of the impact of fertilizers on coastal waters. One of the cornerstones on which is based the effectiveness of a policy of ICZM consists on examining the problems of coastal areas in a wider context as possible. In the past, many attempts to improve the status of coastal regions of the European Union have failed, despite the good intentions, because we are dedicated to certain isolated aspects. For example, the issue of tourism in coastal areas cannot be managed effectively if not taking into account a variety of stakeholders, such as water supply, land, employment and the impact of tourism on the existing natural habitats. To make it even more complicated, the situation contributes to the fact that in many parts of E.U. the coastal areas are crossed by several administrative boundaries. As a result, policies aimed to improve the situation of the coast are often extremely contradictory and the various districts implement different measures with no coordination. If the coastal area is divided by a national border, the problem is aggravated. Despite this, many of the problems that afflict coastal areas originate hundreds of miles away from the sea.

Given the multitude of involved factors, the effectiveness of ICZM strategy depends on the ability to coordinate all these organization that exercise an influence on coastal regions and the ability to confront in a proper way the many different, but interconnected problems staffing these regions. The coastline of the European Union has an extremely varied morphology: hence, a strategy for ICZM that can be defined as effective must be based on local solutions designed to fit the local conditions. Therefore, the European strategy for the integrated management of coastal zones is based on the principle of subsidiary, according to which important political decisions should always be taken at a level as close as possible to its citizens. This means that local stakeholders interested in E.U. coastal regions must be in the center of ICZM, since none better than those who live and work in coastal areas

knows the real problems and difficulties of these areas. It would not be logical or fair if national governments or the European institutions try to impose solutions uniform to these regions.

The role of national and community administrations is to provide assistance and guidance to local initiatives, while ensuring that the numerous national and European policies affecting the coastal zone are not in contradiction with each other. National and community administrations must also act to ensure that sectorial policies take into account the specificity of the coastal zones (CNEL 2005). The coordination between national and Community policies concerning issues such as water quality, protection of habitat, transport, fisheries and tourism can contribute to a better future for the coastal zone of the European Union, but only if the various policies will be implemented in a consistent manner at local level. To ensure that problems are dealt with taking into account local needs, it is necessary for the planning and the management of coastal areas to be conducted on the basis of precise and sufficiently detailed information, collected by the Member States.

Often it is extremely difficult to predict exactly what problems will face in the future a particular coastal region. Precisely for this reason, the ICZM born as a constantly evolving process, which addresses not only to the present problems, but thanks to its flexibility, is able to adapt to unforeseen events that may occur in the future. This type of approach is very important because if, for example, once it has built a new marina, we can see that is causing serious damage to the environment, and it is difficult to dismantling and restoring the conditions of departure.

A good management of coastal areas should recognize explicitly that there is no certainty about future conditions and thus flexible and adaptable policies must be promoted. The planning and management of coastal areas must necessarily be based on the so-called “precautionary principle” policy makers must try to predict in advance the potential damage to coastal areas and then identify the most appropriate solutions before problems occur. Also, for the “precautionary principle”, if they are not entirely sure that a particular intervention is devoid of negative effects for a coastal zone, they must inspire their work to the utmost caution. This way of approaching the planning process is particularly important in areas that could suffer negative consequences as a result of the urbanization or development of tourism. Once worsening the risk of climate change, coastal areas will likely be forced to deal with new problems and difficulties in the coming decades. We must ensure that our planning and management systems are sufficiently flexible to enable us to confront new problems as they arise.

The ICZM is intended to foster contacts between the local, regional and national management of the sectors of which we are a part, in order to enable policymakers to get a clear picture of the real needs of European coastal areas. But to give the

desired results, in the planning and the management of coastal areas should also be involved non-governmental organizations and interested local stakeholders: without a regular input from the businesses, NGOs and citizens who live and work in coastal European areas, ICZM cannot work.

Without the full participation of local stakeholders, the coastal management strategies will never succeed. If people do not feel involved in decisions that affect their region, it is not rare that they suffer when confronting political leaders and reject plans for the improvement of coastal areas. In 1993, for example, in the United Kingdom, a plan set Exe estuary prepared by a consulting company was rejected by the local community, who complained that it was not consulted on certain issues, primarily the implementation of rights on port services charged to estuary users. The experience prompted policy makers to rethink the whole strategy for the estuary and led to the creation of a series of study groups composed of residents of the area. Following a broad consultation process turned into several meetings at the local level, they developed a new strategy that had the support of all. Even today, residents meet regularly to discuss local problems and have formed a forum for coordination of the initiatives aimed to improve life in their region.

Similar experiences across the European Union show that it is crucial to involve, right from the beginning, in the discussions on the policy for coastal areas local stakeholders, which must always be in the center of ICZM strategies; equally important is involving in the activities aimed to improve coastal areas all those who exercise an influence on those areas.

Often this requires a more general coordination between local and national policies, in order to avoid conflicts that arise between the various levels of government. It is useless, for example, a local initiative to reduce the pollution of a river without the direct involvement of the authorities responsible for agricultural and industrial policy at national level.

For some situations, the coordination should also extend to European policies; it is the case, for example, of coastal areas that are part of regions declared protected under European standards on the protection of habitats.

The integration between European and ICZM strategies at local level is appropriate for aspects such as agriculture, water quality and transport.

The local stakeholders alone cannot solve the problems of coastal areas. The difficulties that the coastal areas face are many and, in the absence of cooperation between all management levels, the ICZM is inevitably doomed to failure. To avoid that the problems that afflict the coastal regions worsen in the further, a coastal policy is need, coordinated by the Community; generally it is expected that the use of these areas will continue to grow in the near future.

If we do not intervene to manage the increasing pressures to which the coastal regions are subdued, the loss of habitat, pollution and erosion will eventually destroy

some of the most beautiful, fragile and biologically rich area of the European Union, increasing the unemployment and the social disintegration of local communities and causing a drastic depletion of the value of coastal areas and the destruction of valuable resources for the economy.

Only by promoting the introduction of ICZM strategies coordinated at EU and national level, the EU will enhance coastal regions, making them able to develop a modern and vital and at the same time to safeguard their extraordinary natural beauty. To function properly, the integrated management of coastal zones must be based on the principle that local problems should be solved at local level. The local stakeholders will always be the cornerstone of initiatives aimed for the protection and enhancement of coastal regions, but to ensure the most possible effective and correct management it will require coordination between the programs and measures of these areas and the policies adopted at regional, national and European level.

5. Current stage of global tourism industry

The World Tourism Organization (WTO) estimates that since 1950, the number of international tourist arrivals has increased at least 28 times, reaching in 2000 698 million. The forecasts, made before the facts of September 11, assumed that these figures will double till 2020, reaching 1.6 billion arrivals. These figures do not include domestic tourists, tourists who move within their own country, which can be estimated to grow between 4 and 10 times more depending on location. With these predictions, tourism will become the first industry in the twenty-first century and will be one of the top three industries of the global economy. The Mediterranean countries, in particular, increase by 2.8%, with minimum increments for South and the West Europeans. Italy will follow this trend (+2.2%), falling to sixth place in the ranking of the main destinations (currently fourth), after China, USA, France, Spain and Hong Kong. It is clear, then, that even after the events of 11 September, tourism had a very strong global growth and expansion.

With these available data it is clear that the risk is now connected to the tourism industry: conviction capacity that is not common to any other economic sector. However, following the gradual growth of the tourist industry, the international community has gained the understanding that we must curb the negative effects that this growth can have on the environment while maintaining the potential of the sector in terms of new jobs and opportunities to stimulate new investment.

Following this logic, in the last decade, discussions have begun on how to balance the needs of the tourist industry and sustainable development. On an international scale, for the first time, the concept of sustainable tourism has been

focused in the World Conference which took place on the island of Lanzarote (Canary Islands) in 1995, which agreed with the Charter that highlights the term. In the first paragraph the Charter for Sustainable Tourism says that the development of growth must be based on criteria of sustainability, long-term respect for the environment, be economically viable and socially and ethically fair for local communities. The document highlights how the nature of sustainable tourism requires the integration of present natural, cultural and human aspects; must be respected the fragile balance that characterizes many tourist destinations, particularly in environmentally sensitive areas such as coastal zones.

Later than, at the International Conference on Sustainable Tourism held in Rimini (2001), was drafted another Charter which deals in particular with mass tourism destinations, that is considered as “a priority for the political agenda of all involved parties and that this priority should be to direct and encourage further efforts and commitments in the coming years. It has been demonstrated that the increasing tourism demand and offer represents a phenomenon that has already produced relevant social and environmental effects in the present, threatening to undermine the quality and vitality of tourist”.

The question, regards now the areas with a “mature tourism” for which we must assume the responsibility to rethink models and strategies of territorial tourism development and the tourist product innovation, affirming their identity and cultural diversity and valuing products, human resources and local economies, in the clear direction of social, economic and environmental sustainability and environmental regeneration of a land capable of considering the global dimension of the problems (Lanza, 2006).

This approach suffered an important sanction few months later, during the “Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions”, entitled “Working together for the future of European tourism”, dated November 13, 2001 (CE-COM, 13.11.2001). This significant document, made official just two days after the disaster of the two towers in New York, makes a general overview of the European tourism and lays down the guidelines for professionals and researchers. It is a new and precise definition that is the synthesis of the concepts of sustainability and tourism development: “sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions, while protecting and improving prospects for the future. It must integrate the management of all the resources so that the economic, social and aesthetic exigencies can be met, while maintaining at the same time the cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and the living systems. “This definition reminds that of sustainable development contained in the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, where were

delineated the lines of the development for a comprehensive policy based on a high level of cooperation linked to sustainable development. In Agenda 21 and particularly in the second section devoted to “Conservation and management of resources”, there can be found the action guidelines for sustainable development in coastal areas. The fifteen years after Rio have not gone in vain: from the strict scientific environment - thanks mainly to environmental organizations - that concept has begun to pervade policies, decisions, choices and entered the common lexicon up to the point of jeopardizing its own meaning. Today it is clear that there is a growing global demand to identify the strategic guidelines and measures needed to reach sustainable patterns for tourism development. And it is equally obvious that the implementation of the sustainable development principles in the various sub-sectors of tourism is increasingly perceived as a value added to the image of destinations.

The planning of a sustainable tourism development is closely related to the place where and which is designed, because it is intended to identify and design a development model must be adapted to the specific coastal area and must work as the system itself and as part of a larger and complex systems (Luciani, Andriola, 1999). Sustainable tourism is obviously something different from the Ecotourism; only because the United Nations has declared 2002 the World Year of Ecotourism and which have defined the basis for developing ecotourism. The International Ecotourism Society defines, in fact, ecotourism as “responsible travel in natural areas that conserves the environment and ensures prosperity to the local population.” The ecological tourism is, therefore, one of the fastest growing segments of the tourism industry, which, in all its segments, from cultural tourism for the elderly tourism, from social tourism to bathing should guarantee sustainability criteria. The European Commission (CE-COM, 19.10.2007) approved “The agenda for sustainable and competitive European tourism”, which represents a further contribution to the Lisbon strategy in which are set objectives to achieve a balance between the welfare of tourists, the necessity of natural and cultural environment, the development and the competitiveness of destinations and businesses located in a holistic and integrated policy, in which all parties share the same goals. These objectives must include conservation and sustainable management of natural and cultural resources; minimum use of resources and minimum impact of the pollution of tourist destinations; waste production, changing management for the welfare of the community; reducing the seasonal effect of the demand, the environmental impact of transports related to tourism; ensuring the security for tourists and for local communities (Querini, 2000).

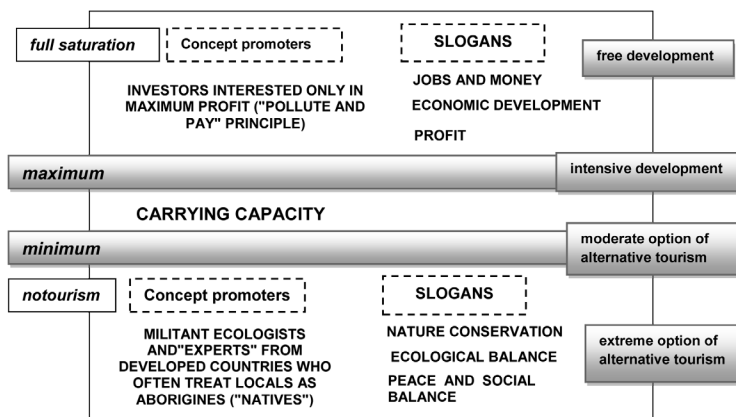
6. The Challenge of Tourism Carrying Capacity Assessment

The methodology of Carrying Capacity Assessment (CCA) has been formulated by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and it is proposed as an analysis technique in a series of UNEP Guidelines adopted in 1997. The UNEP Guidelines indicate how the CCA should become an integrated part of the tourism planning and management process in tourist areas and the analysis methodology takes in consideration all components of the local tourist development:

- the environmental and urban characteristics of the concerned areas,
- the type and scale of tourist attractions,
- the relations between tourism micro and macro policies, the preferences of local people, tourists and traders.

The “value” in terms of carrying capacity that emerges from this analysis is finally assessed in the light of different possible scenarios for the development of tourism and the comparison with the political, economic and social will present in the area. The methodology has been applied, under the supervision of UNEP, in areas characterized by an intense tourism development actual or proposed According to the definition of the World Tourism Organization (WTO), “the carrying capacity of a tourist resort is represented by the maximum number of people visiting, in the same period, a particular location without compromising its environmental, physical, economic and socio-cultural characteristics and without reducing the satisfaction of tourists”. It is a concept that can change significantly depending on the specific context, because the relationship between the intensity of use and user’s satisfaction varies considerably depending on the type of “tourist product” taken in consideration. Every tourist area is characterized therefore by their own specification for “carrying capacity”, defined first of all by the environmental provider, but also with strong references to socio-economic aspects (expectations, vocations, etc.). As illustrated in Figure 1, the carrying capacity can imagine a range within which occurs the process of sustainable development of tourism.

Figure 1 – The Carrying Capacity



The upper limit of this range is the intensive development of tourist resource; in practice from this point onwards development is no longer sustainable from the point of view of the environmental and cultural resources of the territory.

This is the classic case of economic development led by outside investors, with the objective of maximizing profits (an excellent example is that of the Balearic Islands and the Costa Brava). The lower limit is set on alternative tourism development based on soft forms of tourism (radical ecotourism). Basically, it regards the hyper-conservative approach of the territory where tourism is seen solely as a threat to the environment and not a resource.

The study of carrying capacity has the objective of defining the tourist “sustainability” of a location, understood as the ability to support in a given time influx of tourists and the consequent use of available local resources. The carrying capacity is therefore represented by the number of tourists that can be compatible with the maintenance of environmental standards and quality of service, taking into account the “objective” environmental limits, the direction the existing legislation and planning, the willingness of the local community. A condition that cannot and should not be forgotten regarding the planning of tourist resource is that tourism must lead to economic development and that it must be programmed to represent a long-term resource.

New strategies for sustainable development and integrated management of coastal areas, if adopted by the local community, will have a scientific basis to define even more cautious standards, possibly fixing them below the upper limit of the carrying capacity. Studies regarding the carrying capacity (Bossel, 1999) are directed primarily to:

- local authorities and public decision makers (governments, tourism planners offices)
- stakeholders in the tourism sector (hotels, travel agents, tourist associations, consumer associations, tourists, etc.).

The CCA is an open model that aims to guide tourism development in a concerted way through the active participation of the institutions of the economic and social world related to tourism (EU EC-environment, 2009). The participation of all social partners is a fundamental part of the CCA process and the local community should have an active role in the preparation of the CCA for local development.

The methodology proposed by UNEP provides the following steps:

- Analysis of the data and cartographic production
- Definition of sustainability indicators for the tourism area
- Creation of the forum for participation
- Analysis of the current tourism scenario
- Definition of the scenarios for tourism development
- Definition of calculation model for Carrying Capacity

The Assessment of Tourist Carrying Capacity has become one of the most applied techniques for tourism and recreation activities planning and management. The objective of the CCA is to determine the limits of sustainable development, that is the best use of tourism resources and it must be integrated into the process of planning and management of tourism resources.

The CCA, as a result of the first experiences in the Mediterranean, has proved itself as an effective planning tool applicable in more developed areas and to mass tourism, as well in destinations that are not yet developed regarding tourism, as a most appropriate tool for tourism development programming.

Conclusions

During the last century, according with the changing of lifestyle was reevaluated the beaches role: from an inhospitable place they have become the driving force of the economic welfare.

Moreover, the demographic pressure, the urbanization, the overuse of the territory and the other related factors on one hand those of the hinterland (dams in the rivers, farming and tourism) and on another the proper beach (sewage discharge, dry goods extraction and crops) have caused a general decrease of natural sediments supply to the beaches.

However, there is not a unique solution to solve all these problems but with some measures, the situation could improve.

By implementing an Integrated Coastal Zone Management of the beaches that is reorganization of the whole territory and even of its periphery so the natural areas can benefit from that process and provide a concentration of tourism in a specific area. Also to achieve a sustainable development is absolutely necessary to internalize externalities from services and damages (and their repairs) into the prices of the goods, services or activities which cause them (according to the Polluter Pays Principle). Beaches have an economic and an environmental value and for these reason is imperative to protect the coast against coastal erosion, so investing more. In another train of thoughts, a better dissemination of the existing information associated to a better coordination of the stakeholders that deal with coastal management is necessary.

At last but not the least, an improvement of the environmental education is essential for a sustainable development of the coast.

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GLOBALIZATION, TRAFFIC AND TOURISM.**THE NEED FOR A RESPONSIBLE APPROACH**PhD, Doina Tătaru ¹**Abstract**

The article intends to fire a warning on the great possibilities and opportunities people have to better know themselves and communities around while traveling. The intentions are to reveal the diverse significations the category connection has, viewed from different perspectives. Development of the international tourism helps us understand the progress already made on different continents. An accent is put on responsible tourism, a concept with large and useful application nowadays. Several initiatives pursued by committed Romanians are examples to complete the picture.

Keywords: *globalization, epigenetics, responsible tourism, circulation, individual attitude*

JEL Classification: Q26, Q20, Q50, Q34, Q56, Q57, F60, F64, O13

We, humans, live nowadays a hectic time, with strong changes not only in our doorstep, but in more distant communities and all over the world. Most of the effects we feel are due to our actions. Starting with top level policies, supported willingly or unwillingly by institutions, companies on one hand and by small or large communities of people, on the other hand, everyone „contributes” in a specific way to the essence and shape of the world we are living in. Many policies try to be in line with tremendous changes we assist at. There are also cases when NGOs or groups of people committed to a benefic cause manage to stop or modify the course of action in many damaging initiatives the governing officials are determined to implement.

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Technology has reached such a high level of development in many areas, so that professionals or common inhabitants in the towns and regions of the globe can enjoy the effect of communication, circulation, all in all, of connections to one another, within company networks, any institutional structure, among countries or international organizations, through high tech devices and information data, through motor vehicles using air, ground and water but also through ... the power of mind.

How should we view the tourism in this context? The need for discovering new areas, new cultures or old heritage sites, new natural beauties, to meet new people and their way of living, to enjoy fantastic modern achievements, an architectural marterpiece or secluded, untouched areas with wild fauna ...the need will be always there. But how could we do these steps, so that every one and every place to benefit in a positive sense from these actions?

First of all, let us see what is **the perspective we get considering the general tourist economic development so far.**

Demand for international tourism remained strong throughout the first eight months of 2013, according to UNWTO² World Tourism Barometer. Between January and August, the number of international tourists worldwide grew by 5%, driven by strong results in Europe, Asia and the Pacific and the Middle East. UNWTO's Panel of experts confirmed this positive trend. Its evaluation of the May-August period showed a significant improvement in confidence, while prospects for the last four months of 2013 remained upbeat (UNWTO Press release, Oct 2013). In the first eight months of the year, international tourist arrivals grew by 5% to reach a record 747 million worldwide, some 38 million more than in the same period of 2012.

If we take a look to different parts of the globe, positive movements are registered according to the research of WTO, as follows:

- Europe (+5%) benefited the most from the growth of tourism in the first eight months of 2013, with an estimated 20 million more arrivals in the region. Given that Europe is the world's largest tourism region with many mature destinations, a 5% growth rate is very positive. Central and Eastern Europe (+7%) and Southern and Mediterranean Europe (+6%) also performed particularly well.

² UNWTO = United Nations World Tourism Organization

- Asia and the Pacific (+6%) continued to show robust growth bolstered by South-East Asia (+12%), adding some ten million arrivals.
- The Americas (+3%), which gained four million additional arrivals in the first eight months of the year, reported comparatively weaker results, with North America (+4%) in the lead.
- Africa (+5%) where growth was by led by the recovery of North Africa (+6%), received two million extra arrivals, while in the Middle East arrivals rebounded by 7% after two years of decline.

The confidence survey, conducted among UNWTO's Panel of experts on September 2013, revealed a sharp increase in confidence among destinations and businesses, in particular among experts from advanced economies in line with the better than expected performance in world tourism. For the last four months of the year the Panel continued to be rather optimistic.

Having considered these developments worldwide, we should regard things through a synergistic approach. That is why I would recommend turning to the links we can discover among responsible tourism, epigenetics and people's attitude towards ecology.

We know that responsible tourism is viewed as a concept which creates a harmonious, healthy living environment for people and places to be visited, unique in their cultural authenticity. The first ideas on the concept were included in the Manila Declaration of 1980. Then, in 2002, through the Cape Town Declaration adopted by the International Conference on Responsible Tourism Destinations, there have been defined and structured the action guidelines and factors involved for the development and implementation of responsible tourism.

The concept aims a simultaneous economic, social and environmental integration of the communities to whom it is addressed. Any community should be interesting for responsible tourism. At the same time, all communities should be interested in receiving this type of tourism practices, by mobilizing their members who become, in this way, suppliers of goods and tourism services. Under these circumstances, a tourist meets with specific accommodation style, traditional food, attractive recreation, sports and cultural activities. Tourist involvement in community life, the relationship with the locals in an archetypal parts' play as host - guests (Romanialibera.ro, 2013) becomes an opportunity for a tourist to experience unique, complex moments by sharing local customs, traditions and

cultural exchanges in both directions, in the context of preserving community traditions, culture as well as environmental protection.

But coming to the real practices in tourism and to the expectations each of the “actors in the play” we were mentioning before has, does it really happen?

Following the expertise and experiences I had in 30 years of work within touristic activities, I was able to realize a few characteristics of the two groups of “actors” on the travel market:

A. Travel consumers

B. Tourism providers

A. 1. What categories of travel consumers we draw:

- There is a category of tourists who wants real culture through tourism;
- There is the category of people with low education level and the snobs who only want to check, to tick off the different destinations;
- Just a few people, mostly intellectuals with solid experience and preparation behind (including the financial side), continuously opt for unique tours or expeditions;
- The young generation wants to combine travel with sports, even extreme.

A.2. What the travel consumers desire most:

- Generally, travel consumers don't give up trips even when experience crises, either in own families or in the general economy;
- The luxury tourists increase their tendency toward spa and relaxation programs;

- The gifts that are offered to the loved ones consist more and more of short trips or unusual, unique travels;
- Business events are increasingly required as collateral trips occasions;
- Stress and the inflation of urban standardized offers increasingly lead to the desire for nature, local specific and traditions.

B. Characteristics of travel providers:

- Desperate to chase profit regardless of the services delivered;
- Many tourist programs are similar or boring;
- There are sold many attractive tourist offers, but tricky on the ratio: low price per quality of tourism content;
- There aren't enough professional guides on the tourism market;
- The interest of bidders to attract tourists in rural areas or with connotation of local community has increased.

Where do these two big categories of tourism actors meet at the global level? There is a “stage”, very much in danger because of many happenings, several generated by human beings on purpose or unintentional, others as a result of climate and universe-related factors. **This stage is the global support of tourist locations: Terra, our planet.** Both travel consumers and travel providers have to face several phenomena that have occurred in the recent years. Some of them have a great impact on circulation around the globe, on the comfort any tourist program needs to perform in its goal.

Here are the most important findings:

- ◇ Insecurity and uncertainty has increased;
- ◇ The ozone layer has diminished;
- ◇ The forested mountain areas have been modified;
- ◇ Glaciers are melting and the global appeal increases;
- ◇ Volcanoes become active, the crust moves often;
- ◇ The Earth's magnetic coating and the celestial bodies of the near universe experience changes;
- ◇ The plant crops, cereals, vines and fruit trees undergo changes;
- ◇ Technologies are advancing in a rapid pace;
- ◇ There are regions that preserve the inheritance, others in which degradation is massive.

Under these circumstances, responsible tourism becomes a MUST. And therefore, we need to pay attention to several extremely significant messages. These would make the difference for tourist operators, for travel providers, for local administrative managers, for „hospitality industry” workers, for collateral entertaining travel activities makers.

Messages to be embraced by responsible tourism:

- Let us bring tourism in consonance with major existential principle of humanity: LIFE DOES NOT HAVE TO PASS MEANINGLESS!
therefore
 - Tourism should not be conducted without regard and effect for people and the planet hosting us!
 - Let us come into harmony with each other and with our environment - the basic idea of environmentalism!
 - Everything starts with each of us, the first step is ours ... institutions, governments and regulations will adapt of the fly.

Why it is possible for us to become responsible in tourism, as well?

Let us see what epigenetics is and why it would be useful to keep an eye on the domain.

From Robin Holliday's point of view, epigenetics is defined as “the study of the mechanisms of temporal and spatial control of gene activity during the development

of complex organisms” (Holliday, R., 1990). Thus, epigenetics can be used to describe anything other than DNA sequence that influences the development of an organism.

To understand the connections we could make with the whole globe community developments and reactions, it would be necessary to look over another definition, too. The psychologist Erik Erikson developed an epigenetic theory of human development which focuses on psycho-social crises. In Erikson’s view, each individual goes through several developmental stages, the transition between each of which is marked by a crisis. According to the theory, although the stages are largely predetermined by genetics, the manner in which the crises are resolved is not; by analogy with the epigenetic theory of cell differentiation, the process was said to be epigenetic. He introduced the term epigenetics in his book *Identity: Youth and Crisis* and explains that the epigenetic principle is where “anything that grows has a ground plan and that out of this ground plan, the parts arise, each part having its time of special ascendancy, until all parts have arisen to form a functioning whole” (Erikson, E., 1968).

Therefore, I suggest three answers to the question above. **We could become responsible in a globalized tourism:**

-Because epigenetics, this science which deals with quantum field manifestations and the relationship with beings and matter, also shows that a thought and the issuing of an emotion cause a remote reaction in less than a nanosecond;

-Because we are all connected to everyone and to every single corner of Terra, all over the world, connected to globe communities;

-Because individual or group attitude can positively change the mentalities and behaviors of others.

Let us rely, then, on the traffic of thoughts, attitudes and actions!

Responsible initiatives generated by Romanians

There are many examples from Romania to be referred in support of the ecologist principles and responsible tourism.

1. In 2013, two new trails were open in world premiere.



Stanley Glacier affected by global warming; in eight years, it has reduced by 80 m

It is about two new peaks to be climbed in Africa - called “Romania” and “Bucharest” – that were drawn in Ruwenzori Mountains, between Uganda and Congo, in 5,109 m altitude, by Romanian climbers David Neacsu and the team managed by Sorin Delivasile from Oxygen.



The Romanian climbers team on the African base

2. The program running on a national radio station, entitled “Eco Frequency”, initiated by environmentalist journalist Zoly Toth, delivers useful interesting pieces of information related to environment actions. This is a way to support informal education to large publics.

3. In 2011, the expedition RAPAPATATIERRA initiated by a group of Romanian specialists and supported by Vacations and Travel magazine, walked in the footsteps of Romanian explorers



Tierra del Fuego National Park

Emil Racoviță and Julius Popper in Tierra del Fuego and Patagonia, marking by placing memorial plaques in Ushuaia the value of these ancestors' actions. The Radio Romania News public channel accompanied the expeditionary and broadcasted live for the Romanian listeners. A promotional exhibition followed in Bucharest and other towns to spread the word about connecting places and cultures.

4. The TV program “Romania, I love you” on air at a commercial TV channel, with reporter and correspondent Alex Dima as one of the initiators, promotes special reports to unveil the dramatic situation our villages or larger regions in Romania encounter in relation with environment. The fight to save forests from deforestation is one of the best examples here. Dima’s words are in line with the approach in discussion. *“I hope we can change attitudes, habits, to offer solutions and move forward, to understand that if we want to change something it has to start with us and those around us. No more complaining and do something.”*



A thought from far away for Romania with RAPAPATATIERRA expedition team

5. Last but not least mentioned here, the most relevant project that has been initiated in Romania (starting with 2012) to support the responsible tourism concept development locally is the communication platform launched by the Amphitheatre Foundation. A series of conferences, event-exhibitions, publications which encourage exchange of ideas and promote good practice cases that proved to be successful in the country or abroad. More and more professionals are joining the project and the foreign specialists began to notice and appreciate this endeavor.



The National Salon for Tourist Photography supported by Amphitheatre Foundation

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