



Expert Meeting to Discuss
Draft Manual for Sustainable Tourism
(Split, 11-12 June 2007)

REPORT
of the Expert Meeting to Discuss
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Priority Actions Programme
Regional Activity Centre
Split, June 2007

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DRAFT MANUAL FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
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Introduction

1. Given its long experience in ICZM and in tourism-related activities, especially in Carrying Capacity Assessment (CCA), PAP/RAC was approached by the UNEP/DTIE office in Paris regarding the preparation of a manual for inclusion of sustainable tourism planning in the ICZM process.
2. The first draft of this Manual was prepared by a group of authors engaged by PAP/RAC and submitted to UNEP/DTIE for examination by the end of May 2007. According to the contract signed between the two institutions, PAP/RAC had the obligation to organise an expert meeting to discuss this first draft and decide upon a pilot application of the Manual in a suitable area.
3. This expert meeting was held at the PAP/RAC premises in Split, on 11-12 June 2007.

Participation

4. The meeting was attended by PAP/RAC officers and consultants who are the authors of the Manual, a representative of UNEP/DTIE, as well as representatives of the UNDP project "Coast" and the Croatian Ministry of the Sea, Tourism, Transport and Development. A complete list of participants is given in Annex I to this report.

Opening of the meeting and organisation of work

5. The meeting was opened by Mr. I. Trumbic, PAP/RAC Director, who welcomed the participants on behalf of PAP/RAC. He presented the agenda of the meeting, which is attached as Annex II to this report.
6. After a "tour de table" in which the participants introduced themselves, Mr. Trumbic presented the main objective of the meeting, which was to discuss and review the draft Manual, a practical guide intended for those dealing with the development of tourism strategies all over the world. He invited the participants to express their critical comments and suggestions, stressing the need to link tourism development and ICZM, to adopt an environmental approach and to secure a careful management of tourism activities.

Background and introduction on the general structure of the Manual

7. Mr. S. Fotiou, UNEP/DTIE Tourism Programme Officer, explained the process that conducted to the preparation of the Manual financed by the French Government. He pointed out that the Manual had been conceived as a very practical tool to be used by different stakeholders while making management plans or development plans. It was considered as a beginning of a larger initiative and would be distributed through UNEP Regional Seas and UNDP networks all over the world. Finally, he explained that a consultation process would be launched to comment and revise the Manual, which would include WTO, UNESCO, UNDP, tourism task force members, etc.
8. Mr. Fotiou presented the structure of the Manual and explained that its seven chapters were conceived with a view to accommodate the main users. He described first the key role of tourism industry and the importance of providing investors with a tool towards

sustainability. Tourism is seen as a soft industry and the first and easiest way towards development, but the problem is that environmental considerations are most of the time left aside. He pointed out that the Chapter 4 on ICZM was intended to give the fundamentals for the Manual and to establish a framework for the subsequent Chapter 5, which is the core chapter of the Manual. In it, the responsibilities of each stakeholder would be detailed, and the way in which they should work together would be described. He also stressed the importance of the Annexes envisaged as a simple step-by-step implementation guide of the Manual. Each chapter was divided in two main sub-chapters, namely planning and in-depth sections, the latter containing many technical information that would not be needed by all the users.

9. Mr. A. Satta, PAP/CAR Consultant, pointed out the lack of integrated development examples and strategic planning approaches with regard to tourism. Moreover, there are not many regulatory frameworks for tourism development, which is still based mainly on bottom-up approaches. That is why the Manual is an innovative tool, which would allow, among others, to prepare strategic tourism development plans as independent documents. These plans would be based on the CCA methodology, which implies a participatory process from the beginning to the end of the planning process, and it is applicable to both mass-tourism and pristine destinations. Having stated that there were no important differences in approaches followed in the Mediterranean and in other regions of the world, he pointed out that the Manual should offer a market-oriented approach and put a stronger stress on communication and awareness-raising activities in order to secure from the beginning the involvement of stakeholders and population. Tourism sustainability indicators would also be included in the Manual as tools for assessment and monitoring. Annexes would provide for a step-by-step application of the strategy, using fewer words and more graphs.

10. Mr. Trumbic insisted on the importance of tourism planning relying on the framework provided by ICZM. This Manual is not being made for physical or ICZM plans but physical planning must find its right place in it. ICZM is not covered by legislation and tourism plans are not mandatory in many countries. Thus, the purpose of the Manual is to make the necessary link between ICZM and tourism planning, and to help tourism actors to accept the ICZM principles. He insisted on defining the target group of the Manual and its technical level, stressing that our task was to transfer ICZM principles, such as those provided in the EC Recommendation and the Mediterranean Protocol on ICZM, and to convince tourism operators to implement them.

11. For Mr. Fotiou ICZM is not only a methodological but also a political framework. The target groups are public authorities, planners in various ministries (tourism, economy, etc.) as well as local-level public administration, development agencies, NGOs, etc. It should be detailed enough to tell them what to do but not a template prescribing exactly how to do it. He agreed that ICZM principles should be the driving principles and that we should show in the Manual that there was a consensus on this around the world.

12. Mr. G. Berlengi, "Coast" Project Manager, was concerned about the fact that local planners may not be aware of the ICZM principles. He recommended being cautious with the wording and presenting ICZM principles in a very clear way. In this context, it was suggested to define a set of check-up ICZM indicators (for instance, avoiding linear development, etc.) to measure how ICZM principles have been implemented, something that has been done for Agenda 21.

Detailed presentation and discussion by chapters

Chapter 1: Introduction

13. The Chapter 1 being the introductory one, it was agreed that it would be finalised at the end, as well as the Chapter 7 entitled "The Way Forward".

Chapter 2: Tourism in coastal areas

14. Mr. Fotiou considered this chapter very complete, needing only a few amendments. He suggested to better specify in the Chapter 2.3 the difference between tourism growth and tourism development by explaining that the former is measured in numbers, arrivals, overnights, etc., while the latter refers to the increase in local income, employment and environmental benefits. Moreover, the last sentence in the Chapter 2.5 explains the reason itself of the Manual, and he suggested to elaborate it more as a direct introduction to the next chapter on tourism planning frameworks.

15. Regarding the emerging destinations (Chapter 2.6), Mr. Fotiou insisted on the fact that nowadays tourists showed preference for ecological destinations but there was no real demand yet. In fact, tour-operators are still focusing their ads on quality rather than on environmental management. He suggested finding and adding for USA and Australia boxes like the one for Germany in Chapter 2.3.

16. A few amendments were proposed for Chapter 2.8 on global issues and coastal tourism. The sub-paragraph on climate change should be completed by information such as the contribution of long distance flights to this phenomenon, figures from the last IPCC report (such as that 60% of air traffic is for tourism purposes), as well as a proposal of some remedial measures such as planting trees, including airline companies in the greenhouse scheme, etc. A reference should be made to the relevant UNWTO document to be issued in its final version in the beginning of September 2007. It was also suggested to add a paragraph on natural risks such as tsunami, flooding from coastal rivers, etc. and to give some examples in this regard (for instance, APPEL project in Thailand, Croatian example of building with a setback as a rule even some 40 years ago, etc.).

17. With regard to poverty alleviation, several examples were mentioned to point out that tourism might not help fighting poverty and that, on the contrary, tourism was very often accused for leaving garbage and no money for the local community. It was recommended to visit the "small islands" web site as a source of useful information and to stress the need of avoiding the "all inclusive" concept. In this context, the question was raised at which level the Manual is supposed to be applied: at the level of destinations, national or regional? It was clarified that it should be a tool for every stakeholder group since both destination and local level planning are always affected by national and regional strategies.

18. As a general remark, Mr. Fotiou recommended to avoid web sites in the bibliography. Specific ones are to be omitted while the main pages can be cited. He also invited the participants to think of a more attractive title for the Manual.

Chapter 3: Tourism planning frameworks

19. This chapter should deal with both traditional and sustainable planning. In the chapter 3.1 the idea is to show how and why tourism development happens: whether because some destination asks for it (like Dubai), or some opinion-maker says to do so, or even a self-development happens without any existing framework (like Mykonos).

20. It was decided to merge chapters 3.2 and 3.3 concerning strategic tourism planning and the elements that a strategic plan should include. In this, particular attention should be paid to coastal tourism as a driving force for the development of other sectors and inland areas. Moreover, it was pointed out that the Manual should provide guidelines for tourism planning and be applicable at different stages of the life cycle of a destination and in different cases: (i) no development; (ii) self-development; (iii) already developed destinations; (iv) re-development. In order to facilitate the use of the Manual, examples of developing destinations would be given, which should not focus too much on Europe. Destinations like New Zealand, Canada, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Galapagos, etc. were proposed to complete the Manual.

21. Chapter 3.5 on ecological footprint remains to be fully developed. It was pointed out in the discussion that ecological footprint was not accepted as an instrument but should be used as an indicator: not something to be followed but a sign that something is wrong.

22. The concept of TCCA presented in the Chapter 3.6 is mature and well described in literature, and was already applied in several destinations. However, to avoid misunderstandings, it was recommended to use the UNEP definition of TCCA. Also, it was decided to add a separate chapter on assessment tools for tourism development.

23. On the other hand, the concept of tourism management through EIA (Chapter 3.7) was not completely clear. If we know that TCCA is applied at the destination level and EIA for individual projects, it was judged more appropriate to concentrate in sustainable tourism planning on SEA rather than on EIA. This chapter will be developed accordingly.

Chapter 4: The ICZM approach for sustainable tourism development

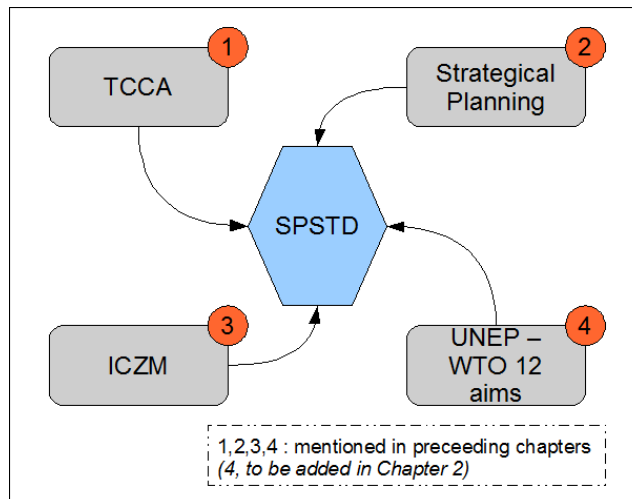
24. Mr. Trumbic stressed once again the importance of the ICZM, a cyclic process that would provide principles and guidelines for tourism planning. It would provide the “logical framework” needed, as well as an operational dimension. The chapter is still to be completed and, in doing this, the suggestions and remarks formulated during the meeting will be taken into account, namely:

- add principles of coastal development in Chapter 4.2;
- elaborate in more detail Chapters 4.5 and 4.6 as they deal with questions leading to the next chapter on the strategic approach;
- in Chapter 4.5 explain why ICZM process can be beneficial for tourism development;
- in Chapter 4.6 introduce the idea that there is a need for tourism planning, and change “development” for “planning”;
- in Chapter 4.9 reduce the "Mediterranean component" and give examples from outside Europe whenever possible.

Chapter 5: Strategic planning for sustainable tourism development in coastal areas

25. After an introduction to the TCCA methodology made by Mr. Satta, it was agreed that TCCA would be used as a starting point of the strategic approach for sustainable tourism management. It was also agreed that the WTO definition would be used to avoid misunderstandings due to the fact that stakeholders, especially tourism operators, often have a wrong idea about it. Moreover, this chapter needs to be “softened” and offer general principles of the strategic tourism planning with less emphasis on TCCA in spite of the fact that the latter is recognised as a strong tool for the implementation of a strategic plan.

26. In order to make the Manual as practical as possible, Mr. Fotiou proposed the following scheme of the strategy planning for sustainable tourism (SPST):



27. A consensus was reached that the Chapter 5 should serve to convince planners of the utility of the proposed strategic approach for their projects. Therefore, it should primarily state the objectives and explain which is the place of tourism within the overall development of a coastal zone, i.e. is the tourism triggering or following the development? It was decided to provide a large range of indicators and technical tools in the annexes, so that the planners can choose those they need to make their own action plans. Since this step has to be done in co-operation with stakeholders, planners will also be provided with tools for managing a team. The decision to separate the technical aspects and put them in an annex will help clear up the document. Finally, a definition of the coastal zone, preferably the one proposed by UNEP, will be given in a box.

28. The added Chapter 6 will be merged with the Chapter 5 and its title will be changed to "Making coastal tourism more sustainable". Coastal activities presented in this chapter will be introduced in Chapter 2.1, as well as some others, such as boom of properties buying.

Chapter 7: Expectations, rights and responsibilities

29. It was decided to add boxes specifying in a tabular format what are the expectations, what are the rights and what are the responsibilities of the stakeholders addressed in each heading of this chapter. Concerning the Chapter 7.7 on conflict management, it was stated that conflicts arose mainly from the competition over resources, but also because the expectations and responsibilities are not clear. To help solve these conflicts strategic decisions are needed and the Manual should help stakeholders to become aware of each one's responsibilities toward sustainable development of the tourism.

Chapter 8: The Way Forward

30. It was decided to write this chapter at the end, once the Manual gets its final form.

Presentation of and discussion on the pilot project

31. After a short recapitulation of the main changes proposed to be introduced in the text of the Manual, Ms. M. Markovic, PAP/RAC Consultant, presented the proposal of a pilot project to demonstrate the applicability of the Manual. The project would be implemented in Baska Voda near Split, in collaboration with local authorities and with the support of the NGO "Sunce". The main problem in the municipality of Baska Voda, rich in sand beaches that are particularly rare in Croatia, is the excessive number of beach users causing environmental, economic and even social problems. The main conflict arises between the local tourism

operators whose guests pay for their holidays and indirectly for the use of beaches, and daily visitors from the adjacent areas who cause the over-use of beaches without contributing to the local economy. The choice of this project is justified by the fact that the municipality is very interested and that many necessary data are already available. Three main objectives can be identified, namely: (i) how to limit the number of people; (ii) how to reduce the social and environmental impacts; and (iii) how to increase the economic benefit.

32. Although the project would mainly deal with conflicts of use and only partly with biodiversity and environmental issues, it was considered that it would be a good example of how the methodology stipulated in the Manual can be applied on a small scale, starting by problem identification and stakeholders involvement through TCCA and recommendations for problem solution. The participants agreed that the stakeholders' involvement since the beginning was a key to the success of the pilot project. These are tourist board (at the local and county levels), tourist entrepreneurs and small tourist operators, the municipality, tourists (through enquires), NGOs, and ministries of tourism and environment. Accordingly, the fact that the pilot project would not focus only on environmental but also on socio-economic issues was found to be very positive for the future acceptance of the Manual. Finally, it was decided that the meetings to be organised within the pilot project would be held in Croatian language and that a survey on "willingness to pay" would be made.

Possibilities of application of the Manual and possibilities of further co-operation between UNEP/DTIE and PAP/MAP

33. Ms. Z. Skaricic, PAP/RAC Project Officer, proposed to use the Manual in the implementation of the LIFE - Third Countries project "Destinations" which has started in February this year in the Maghreb countries (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia). The objective of this project is to propose a strategic plan for sustainable tourism development in selected project areas, based on TCCA and other elements presented in the Manual. She also informed that some other Mediterranean countries (like Montenegro) had asked for similar projects in their coastal zones, and that PAP/RAC and UNEP/DTIE could jointly seek international financing for this kind of projects.

34. All participants, including the representatives of the "Coast" project, expressed their readiness to strengthen the co-operation between UNEP and its components, UNDP, WTO and also other relevant organisations and institutions in order to secure synergy and better visibility of their activities.

Closure of the meeting

35. Having thanked the participants for their contribution to the meeting and their valuable comments and suggestions for the finalisation of the Manual, Ms. Skaricic declared the meeting closed at 12:30 on 12 June 2007.

ANNEX I

List of participants

Mr. Gojko Berlengi
Project Manager
UNDP "Coast" Project
Kralj Sv. Ivana 11
21000 Split
Croatia

Phone : + 385 21 340480
E-mail : gojko.berlengi@undp.org

Ms. Ivana Carev
NGO "Sunce"
Obala HNP 7/3
21000 Split
Croatia

Phone : + 385 21 360779
Fax : + 385 21 360779
E-mail : info@sunce-st.org
ivana.carev@sunce-st.org

Mr. Stefanos Fotiou
Tourism Programme Officer
UNEP
15, rue de Milan
75009 Paris
France

Phone : + 33 1 44371465
E-mail : stefanous.fotiou@unep.fr

Ms. Dubravka Lulic Krivic
Senior Environment Protection Officer
Ministry of the Sea, Tourism,
Transport and Development
Prisavlje 14
10000 Zagreb
Croatia

Phone : + 385 1 6169026
Fax : + 385 1 6169069
E-mail : dubravka.krivic@pomorstvo

Ms. Marina Markovic
Project Assistant
UNDP "Coast" Project
Kralj Sv. Ivana 11
21000 Split
Croatia

Phone : + 385 21 340 483
Fax : + 385 21 340 484
E-mail : marina.markovic@undp.org

Mr. Sylvain Petit
Student - Temporary Assistance to PAP/RAC
University Paul Cézanne - Aix-en-Provence
Rés. St Eutrope_Bât 4
Allée G. Peretti
13100 Aix-en-Provence
France

Phone : + 33 6 10440197
E-mail : sylvain_petit07@yahoo.com

Mr. Alessio Satta
PAP/CAR Consultant
CRENOS
Cagliari
Via
Italy

Phone: + 39 33 84932420
E-mail : alessio.satta@ecoturismo-italia.it

Ms. Zeljka Skaricic
Project Officer
PAP/CAR
Kralj Sv. Ivana 11
21000 Split
Croatia

Phone : + 385 21 340476
Fax : + 385 21 340490
E-mail : zeljka.skaricic@ppa.htnet.hr

Mr. Ognjen Skunca
Deputy Project Manager
UNDP "Coast" Proect
Kralj Sv. Ivana 11
21000 Split
Croatia

Phone : + 385 91 5131273
Fax : +385 21 340484
E-mail : ognjen.skunca@undp.org

Mr. Ivica Trumbic
Director
PAP/CAR
Kralj Sv. Ivana 11
21000 Split
Croatia

Phone : + 385 21 340471
Fax : +385 21 340484
E-mail : ivica.trumbic@ppa.htnet.hr

ANNEX II

Agenda

Monday, 11 June 2007

- 9:30 - 10:00 Opening of the meeting: objectives and programme.
Background introduction on the Manual.
- 10:00 - 11:00 Presentation and discussion of the general structure and contents of the Manual.
- 11:30 - 13:30 Detailed presentation and discussion by chapters.
- 15:00 - 16:00 Detailed presentation and discussion by chapters (continued).
- 16:30 - 18:30 Detailed presentation and discussion by chapters (continued).

Tuesday, 12 June 2007

- 9:30 - 10:00 Summary of comments and suggestions for the revision of the Manual.
- 10:00 - 11:00 Presentation and discussion of the pilot project.
- 11:30 - 12:30 Possibilities of application of the Manual.

Possibilities of further co-operation UNEP/DTIE - PAP/MAP.