

CO-EVOLVE

Promoting the co-evolution of human activities and natural systems for the development of sustainable coastal and maritime tourism

Deliverable 4.9.2

Report on Guidelines for Integrated Rural Landscape Protection and Sustainable Development of the Neretva River Delta Tourism



Activity 4.9

Pilot action n°7 NERETVA RIVER DELTA

***DUBROVNIK NERETVA
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY DUNE***

Table of contents

1. Scope of the document	3
2. CO-EVOLVE and the objectives of WP4	3
3. The strategic planning of Pilot area	4
4. Brief description of the Pilot area	5
5. Planning SET-UP in the pilot area	6
6. Definition of project team	6
7. Participatory process	8
8. Guidelines for Integrated Rural Landscape Protection and Sustainable Development of the Neretva River Delta Tourism	8

1. *Scope of the document*

This document is the report on advancement on pilot actions implementation and corresponds to Deliverable 4.9.1. It's based on concept described in the deliverable 3.18.1 "Guidelines for Tourism-driven strategic Planning" and contains the advancement of activities foreseen in the pilot area Neretva River Delta for the final formulation of local Action Plans on sustainable tourism. The main scope of the Document foreseen for development as part of act. 4.9. is elaboration of Guidelines for Integrated Rural Landscape Protection and Sustainable Development of the Neretva River Delta Tourism

2. *CO-EVOLVE and the objectives of WP4*

The WP4 (*M2-Testing*) translates in practice the findings of WP3 in order to implement Pilot Actions (plans, concrete actions and measures), setting the conditions for a sustainable tourism in coastal areas and related maritime space and promoting robust and transparent decision-making processes. CO-EVOLVE recognizes as a key challenge for sustainable coastal and maritime tourism development the strengthening of cooperation among Regions and the joint development and transferring of approaches, tools, guidelines and best practices. The actions envisaged are systemic, ecosystem-based and dynamic, taking into account future scenarios of natural (i.e. climate change) and anthropogenic changes. The Pilot Actions embrace a wide range of case in the Med area, from coastal urbanized or exploited areas (including port areas, structured waterfronts, different kind of beaches with tourism facilities, etc.) to natural protected areas (Natura 200, Ramsar, SIC&ZPS, etc). Fields of intervention are the **integrated planning of coast-maritime space, governance and management of conflicts between different uses, recovery and valorization of natural areas, developing of integrated tourist offers and deseasonalization of tourist fluxes.**

WP4 has two main specific objectives:

- **Define and test training tools for implementing sustainable tourism** and for sensitizing local administrators / tourism operators. (Output 4.1);
- **Formulate local Action Plans and implement actions for sustainable tourism** in the Pilot Areas, with the participation of main stakeholders and local coastal communities (Output 4.2);

WP4' results and practice experiences on the field, constitute the basis of good practices contribution to the "Transferability Plans" at pilot areas and regional scale (WP5).

WP4 starts on month 02-2018 and end on month 05-2019 **and represents the Module 2 "Testing" of CO-EVOLVE, according to the modular structure of Interreg MED projects.**

3. The strategic planning of Pilot area

The strategic planning process guides development in the direction of those strategic priorities identified by all stakeholders through a consultative process. In particular, on coastal area, a tourism-driven strategic plan for sustainable development of coastal areas have to integrate main principles and goals provided by the Integrated Coastal Zone Management recommendations (UNEP/MAP/PAPRAC Guidelines for ICMZ, 2012) and the Sustainable Coastal tourism approach guidelines (UNEP, 2009).

The methodology proposed by deliverable 3.18.1 for a definition a strategic planning tourism based on a pilot area is organized in different consequential steps that constitutes an adaptive and cyclical process. It consists of 6 major phases, each of which includes key tasks and steps. The iterative process of tourism-driven strategic planning in coastal areas is reported in figure below.



The current development of tourism activities in the Neretva cluster area cannot be assessed with high marks. In other words, existing tourism resources are not used in an optimally and economically rational way, and what is most closely related to the fact that it is a space historically oriented

mainly to agriculture or maritime transport (port of Ploče), while tourism business development by local development stakeholders was not recognized as one of the possible generators of additional economic growth and development. Thus, with the exception of the development of the capacity of family accommodation in Slivno municipality, there have been no significant investments in tourism infra and suprastructure in this area for the last 30 years, which ultimately reflected the lagging behind in the tourist development of the whole area compared to the rest Dubrovnik-Neretva County, but also in relation to other tourist receptive areas in Croatia. Regardless of the relative neglect of the tourist offer and taking into account the potential of the available tourist resource-attraction base, the growing interest in products of special interest on the global level as well as a number of market-ready tourist products destined for one-day excursion, executive holders in the local self- should be further engaged in order to stimulate long-term sustainable tourism activities throughout the project area.

4. *Brief description of the Pilot area*

PA 7 NERETVA RIVER DELTA – Neretva Cluster – consists of seven units of local self-government in the southeastern part of the Republic of Croatia on a wider area along the Neretva River. These are 3 cities: Metković, Opuzen and Ploče and 4 municipalities: Kula Norinska, Slivno, Zažablje and Pojezerje. The Cluster is located on the territory of the Dubrovnik-Neretva County near the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Neretva cluster is spread over an area of 412.56 km² representing 23.15% of the Dubrovnik-Neretva County area. Neretva Delta is the river delta of the Neretva, a river that flows through Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia and empties in the Adriatic Sea. Due to very specific way of life of local people who have co-existed with the wetland through centuries, Neretva Delta represents the unique landscape in Europe. It is characterized by diversity of wetland habitats mixed with agricultural land surrounded by karst hills as well as with the sea at the river mouth. In many ways, the Neretva delta is different from other parts of coastal Croatia. Furthermore, Neretva is the only river in this region with a delta at its mouth. In spite of the conversion of wilderness into tamed waters and arable land, the landscape around the Neretva delta has preserved its beauty and romance. The alluvial plains in the carst setting have become both the inspiration for artists and a topic of scientific research. The unique landscape and the specific culture have made the Neretva delta an attraction for both Croatian and international tourists. According to the review of the landscape units of Croatia as stated in the National Strategy and Action Plan for the Protection of Biological and Landscape Diversity (OG 81/99) and the Spatial Planning Strategy of the Republic of Croatia, the cluster area belongs to the Neretva Landscape Unit - LOWER NERETVA and its delta are unique in terms of landscapes. A total of 1,620 ha of the delta are designated protected areas: ornithological reserves (Prud, Orepak and Podgredom), ornithological and ichthyologic reserve at the river mouth protected landscape (lake Modro oko). The major part of the area is under NATURA 2000 protection. The lowland wetlands, protected by the Ramsar Convention and cultivated areas surrounded by hills and connected to the sea shore and the sea, are a peculiar feature in national frameworks which is still not sufficiently exploited, particularly in the context of (long-term sustainable) tourism business.

5. *Planning SET-UP in the pilot area*

The main aim of this phase, that can be considered the most important pre-planning phase, is to create the needed bases for the subsequent implementation of the whole planning process. Pre-planning phase has been implemented with Dubrovnik Neretva County Institute for Spatial Planning.

The main working team is DUNE A project team in collaboration with Institute for Spatial Planning Dubrovnik Neretva County and planning office APE (external experts for pilot area 7, for implementation of WP3, WP4 and WP5). Territorial scope has been identified in the communication with Dubrovnik Neretva County Institute for Spatial Planning.

6. *Definition of project team*

The project team consisted of the following members:

- *Iva Pozniak (DUNE A)*
- *Ivana Prce (DUNE A)*
- *Melanija Milić (DUNE A)*
- *Vicko Viktorijo Šaban (DUNE A)*
- *Matea Dragobratović (DUNE A)*
- *Tea Stjepović (DUNE A)*
- *Barbara Savin (Institute for Spatial Planning Dubrovnik Neretva County)*
- *Marina Oreb (Institute for Spatial Planning Dubrovnik Neretva County)*
- *Ivan Lukačević Verenec (Institute for Spatial Planning Dubrovnik Neretva County)*
- *Ana Knego (Institute for Spatial Planning Dubrovnik Neretva County)*
- *Nikola Karaman (Institute for Spatial Planning Dubrovnik Neretva County)*
- *Stjepko Kovačević (Institute for Spatial Planning Dubrovnik Neretva County)*
- *Nikša Božić (APE d.o.o.)*
- *Marijana Zlodre (APE d.o.o.)*
- *Sandra Jakope (APE d.o.o.)*
- *Jurica Zovnik (APE d.o.o.)*

- *Borislav Dominiković (Pojezerje Municipality)*
- *Zdenko Zloić (Pojezerje Municipality)*
- *Dalibor Milan (City of Metković)*
- *Ivan Marević (City of Ploče)*
- *Ivo Mihaljević (City of Opuzen)*
- *Stanka Perleta (Zažablje Municipality)*
- *Nikola Krstičević (Kula Norinska Municipality)*
- *Nikola Bartulović (Slivno Municipality)*
- *Smiljan Mustapić (Slivno Municipality)*

7. Participatory process

Participatory process should be launched at the establishment stage in order to involve public from the very beginning of the process. This usually has two fold benefits: it will secure capturing of the local knowledge on the one hand, and it will influence the level of ownership of the plan which will be reached during the preparatory process. Both achievements are of key importance for the successful implementation of the plan latter on. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze and define local stakeholders during the project establishment phase and to develop a communication strategy.

The stakeholders are divided into two groups:

1. Policy makers, local and regional government who are managing the area
2. Local population – for whom the initiative directly affects and who carry (and who will carry out) out economic activities in the area of river Neretva delta.

The series of meetings with representatives of Institute for Spatial Planning Dubrovnik Neretva County were held in order to prepare public tender and to define pilot action according to real problems and needs of pilot area. During May, meetings with representatives of local authorities of cities and municipalities from Neretva delta were held in order to participate in drafting of Guidelines for Integrated Rural Landscape Protection and Sustainable Development of the Neretva River Delta Tourism. All together, 25 stakeholders from group one were identified and invited to participate in pilot action.

From 6th to 8th of May, seven meetings with representatives of cities and municipalities from Neretva delta were held. A study tour of the area was conducted in May (May 6-8). Representatives of DUNE, Institute for spatial planning of the Dubrovnik-Neretva county and service provider APE visited all towns and municipalities in the Neretva river delta. The project was presented to relevant authorities of town/municipal administration. In addition, a field study of more than 240 villages and hamlets was conducted.

In order to include local population, workshops are planned to be organized during the July.

8. Guidelines for Integrated Rural Landscape Protection and Sustainable Development of the Neretva River Delta Tourism

After the public procurement procedure the service provider was selected – planning office APE from Zagreb, and an expert team was formed. The inaugural meeting was held in Dubrovnik on March 19, 2019. The service provider has since been in constant communication / coordination with DUNE and with the Institute for physical planning of the Dubrovnik – Neretva county (who are coordinating the work related to spatial analyses and spatial planning).

The first phase consists of documentation analysis, identification and creation of catalogue for rural settlements in the Neretva river delta. The analyzed area consists of spaces that in administrative way belong to three towns (Ploče, Opuzen and Metković) and four municipalities (Kula Norinska, Pojezerje, Zažablje and Slivno-Ravno). A relevant documentation has been collected for the area:

books, written documents, archive maps, old cadastral maps, spatial planning documents, studies related to landscape protection, tourist strategic plans etc. Based on the archive and contemporary maps the first database of rural settlements (hamlets) was created. A study tour of the area was conducted in May (May 6-8). Representatives of DUNE, Institute for spatial planning of the Dubrovnik-Neretva county and service provider APE visited all towns and municipalities in the Neretva river delta. The project was presented to relevant authorities of town/municipal administration. In addition, a field study of more than 240 villages and hamlets was conducted. The focus of analysis were features of the built structures: elements of traditional architecture, old and present use, relation to the surrounding landscape, identity characterization and assessment, spatial structures, spatial organization and spatial conflicts. All hamlets, excluding several that are not accessible, were analyzed in detail and photographed. The first phase ends with creation of the Rural Landscape Catalogue and the Catalogue of Rural Settlements. This is done in Access database that is connected with the GIS (Geo-Information System) database. The database will consist of rural landscape categorization and valorization and of the database for each analyzed settlement that will consist of analysis and valorization of the built structures, archive maps, contemporary maps including the satellite views, excerpts from the relevant planning documents, photographic images, identification of relationship with the landscape, identification of spatial conflicts and general planning guidelines. This first phase is currently being finished, and after additional field surveys (done on June 26-28) will be finished during July.

The second phase of the project is related to detailed analysis of the pilot area. During the first phase a pilot area was selected (in coordination with the Institute for spatial planning of the Dubrovnik-Neretva county) – namely, a village Videojet in Zažablje municipality. It is a village of around 50 buildings, once a prosperous area (with two churches and an old school). It was selected because of its interesting layout structure and relation to the landscape, as well as its present problems – depopulation, buildings that have no use, lack of basic infrastructure etc. For this village in the second phase a detailed architectural survey will be conducted: making architectural drawings of all buildings of the selected structure (approx. 20 buildings), recording architectural details of buildings (windows, doors, doorways, masonry, covers, tiles, elements of public surfaces, etc.) as well as photo documentation. The geodetic survey was already conducted (during June 17-20). An architectural workshop for detailed documentation of the selected village is planned on July 1-4, 2019. After this, the architectural documentation will be prepared during July.

The last two phases of this project consist of moderating workshop with local inhabitants raising awareness of values of traditional architecture and the need for quality restoration. The fourth phase will consist of creating guidelines for the revitalization of rural areas and structures (restoration of traditional facilities, planning guidelines, guidelines for architectural design, public space design etc.) and guidelines for connecting and networking of small rural (tourist) units (diffuse hotels, cycling trails, cultural and natural attractions, etc.). A defined list of specific projects is also expected. Finally, the results from the project with specific spatial planning guidelines will be presented in a publication that will be presented to local inhabitants and local authorities.

