



Nature Based Tourism

Nature based tourism is a new tourism sector which has experienced significant growth in recent years. Nature-based tourism offers significant opportunities, especially for Northern Periphery areas, and can support both conservation and employment across the region. However, development in this sector must be managed in the correct manner, in order to ensure that growth does not hamper the essence of the product. The importance of creating an arena for developing and discussing nature based tourism across borders is therefore vital, as many of the solutions are common for all countries and can best be tackled in a transnational environment. This project will work with small-scale tourism companies to exchange ideas and experiences, encourage collaboration, develop products and promote nature-based tourism in the northern periphery area.

Objectives

The project has three central goals:

1. To develop a model for integrating market knowledge on nature-based tourism, in order to have better informed product development and appropriate marketing activities
2. To strengthen the quality and environmental attributes of the nature based tourism product in the Northern Periphery area, and thereby contribute to sustainable product development
3. To develop knowledge, build networks, and encourage innovation, best practice, business development and a sustainable ethic in nature-based tourism

Project activities

The project is made up of 3 main stages:

- **Market Analysis & Adaptation of Market Knowledge:** Micro companies and agencies in peripheral areas have limited opportunities to develop their knowledge of the market, and marketing information is often expressed in a way that is difficult for the operators to understand and apply. It is therefore important not only to increase the knowledge and green awareness base but also to model this information and translate it from the regional and international level, to make it more accessible to tourism companies at a local level.



- **Product Development and Development of New Tourism Products:** There is a demand to develop better products among nature based tourism companies in rural areas, however their resources for carrying out this type of work are limited due to small operations (1-4 people), limited income and strongly seasonal activities. A common, development programme will be created for each country which will be connected to market knowledge. Information on green methods of working and international best practise examples will be equally useful for product development, and will be crucial for integrating market knowledge into the nature based tourism sector.

- **Networking and Meetings:** One of the key aims of the project is to assist business development through establishing both national and trans-national networks, which can share information and experience in nature based tourism. These will provide opportunities for all of the agencies involved to develop new partnerships across borders whilst also helping to identify international best practise, providing mentoring opportunities and allowing the direct exchange of experience. The companies involved will also have an opportunity to meet and exchange experience and ideas.

Expected results

The project will create an arena for a transnational network, that will be an ambassador for the whole area, and which will involve a wide range of actors in promoting nature based tourism in a sustainable manner throughout the Northern Periphery area. It aims to create the following results:

- Integrated, specified market knowledge for use by businesses and marketing associations
- Increased understanding of and knowledge about nature based tourism in wilderness areas and protected areas.
- Improved market access, higher profiles and improved economic viability for operators and agencies.
- A model of how to integrate market knowledge for use by nature based tourism companies.

Partners

North-Trondelag County Council - Norway
Municipality of Luleå - Sweden
Vindel River Association - Sweden
Scottish Natural Heritage - Scotland
Westfjords Development Agency - AtVest - Iceland
Visit Scotland - Scotland
Highlands and Islands Enterprise - Scotland
Tourism and Environment Forum - Scotland

Project website

<http://www.naturebasedtourism.net>

Measure
1.2

Total Budget
1 464 475

NPP Award
878 685

Project Period
01/01/2004 – 31/12/2006

Countries Involved
Norway, Sweden, Scotland,
Iceland

Lead Partner
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