

European Project

SU.VO.T.

“Sustainable and Vocational Tourism”

Workshop on the Best Practices of Sustainable Tourism

20th October 2005 from 9.30 to 13.30
(Hotel Sporting Viale Vespucci, 20 – Rimini)

In January 2005 the activities of the SUVOT project (Sustainable & Vocational Tourism) have officially started, coordinated by the Province of Rimini and co-financed by the European Programme Interreg III C.

Public institution of touristic destinations from Italy, United Kingdom, Spain, Greece, Lithuania, Sweden and Germany participate in the project, that has a budget of around one million of Euro.

The project SUVOT share and expand the experience gained by the Province of Rimini in the framework of the LIFE project “Strategies and Instruments for a Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean Coastal Area”.

To reinforce the action lines of the “Network of Cities for Sustainable Tourism” by refining and transferring the outputs achieved in the project so as to advise local governments in other tourist areas, the Suvot partners will define solid strategies for sustainable tourism that contribute to their capacity to address global challenges.

Furthermore, the project intends to increase awareness of local governments on the emerging topic of vocational tourism, a sustainable tourism led by specific personal sensibilities and interests of people: heritage, nature, sport & wellness, outdoor activities etc.



Agenda:

- 9.30 - Ferdinando Fabbri** (Province of Rimini President).
Opening of the Conference and welcome of participants and international experts.
- 9.45 - Cesarino Romani** (Councillor of the Province of Rimini for the Environment, Sustainable Development policies, Agenda 21, Integrated management of the coastal zones - GIZC, Protected areas).
Local policies and strategies in the field of “Sustainable Development”.
- 10.15 - Enzo Finocchiaro** (SUVOT Project Coordinator – Province of Rimini).
Presentation of the “Knowledge Resources Guide” in the field of Sustainable Tourism.
- 11.15 - Coffee break.**
- 11.30 - International experts in the field of “Sustainable Tourism”.**
Presentation of “Best Practices” and case-studies starting from the expertise gained by the “Network of Cities for Sustainable Tourism” and the SUVOT Partners.
- **David Bowker** – *Blackpool Borough Council*
 - **Kostas Fotis Fotios** - *Kallithea-Rhodes Sustainability*
 - **Riera Ignasi** - *Lloret de Mar*
 - **Giuseppe Salvo** - *Comunità Montana del Giovo*
 - **Raul Lozano** - *Foundation The Legacy of al-Andalus*
- 12.15 - Alessio Satta** (Ambiente Italia – UNEP Consultant).
The diffusion of the Tourism Carrying Capacity Assessment in the Mediterranean coastal areas. The application of UNEP guidelines and the Province of Rimini case-studies.
- 12.00 - Open discussion with field experts about the “Knowledge Resource Guide” an “Best Practices” case-studies.**
- **Luigi Rambelli** (President of Legambiente Turismo - VISIT)
 - **Prof. Giorgio Conti** (University of Venice – Cà Foscari)
- 13.00 - Andrea Gnassi** (Councillor of the Province of Rimini for Tourism and internationalisation, Human resources, Community Policies, University, Sport and Civil Protection).
The importance of Interreg programme and European Projects to develop sustainable alternatives and initiatives: the "vocational tourism".

13.30 – *Buffet*

Ferdinando Fabbri (Province of Rimini President)

Opening of the Conference and welcome of participants and international experts.

Throughout the successful launch of the process for the promotion of sustainable tourism, the Province of Rimini has obtained important recognition and has also attracted a deep interest from institutions, research centres and both national and international organisations, with regards to this complex challenge we also have to face.

In this respect, I am delighted that the SUVOT Project “Sustainable and Vocational Tourism” has been awarded financial support by the European Commission. This contribution is evidence, on a European level too, of the value of the projects the Province of Rimini is undertaking, thanks also to the support of tourist operators, associations and local, national and international institutions involved in the promotion of environmental sustainability in the tourism industry.

I would also like to thank you for accepting to participate in this workshop and I am sure that your direct involvement will guarantee achievement of our all objectives over the next few years.

I really hope we can further extend the collaboration we have established during this appointment, by implementing the above initiative.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that this morning session we will illustrate the proposals, actions and initiatives that give meaning to sustainable tourism, in order to establish the so-called good practices or guidelines that are an important signal towards sustainability. This morning, both the Councillor from the Municipality of Rimini and various experts will present our experience and compare it with the international situation.

However, and I will conclude here, as well as good practices, we will also look at the experiences that have already been implemented, in both the public and private sector, for example, initiatives that have been implemented by our operators in terms of tourism activities, such as hotel accommodation and beach facilities.

As well as these initiatives, which you will see in the next few days, there is another very important consideration that I would like to make on this matter.

Unfortunately, good practices are not enough. In the next few years, we need to make tougher and more radical decisions. We don't have much time to deal with critical issues such as traffic and roads, the landscape and the way a territory is “consumed” so we need to make radical changes. Over the next three days, we are going to illustrate examples of good practices, projects and initiatives financed by the European Union but we also need to look at managing a territory in a manner that is highly sustainable.

In conclusion, the experiences of SUVOT and other European projects are extremely important because they provide the missing piece to a puzzle. Although they are pilot initiatives they provide an important idea of territorial management. As a matter of fact, both the Municipality and the Province of Rimini are working towards defining new urban tools.

I think we are doing the right thing. I think we are responding to the new needs of our citizens as well as tourists and I think the projects and debates we are implementing confirm that we are doing the right thing.

Cesarino Romani (Councillor of the Province of Rimini for the Environment, Sustainable Development policies, Agenda 21, Integrated management of the coastal zones - GIZC, Protected areas).

Local policies and strategies in the field of “Sustainable Development”.

In order for me to focus on SUVOT or, in other words, sustainable and vocational tourism, I need to introduce some actions that have been implemented by this Province in the field of sustainability.

The President of the Province has already introduced some of the main concepts with regards to what we have implemented and again, they are linked to good practices as well as territorial choices that he defined as “radical” or that, in any case, will have to be fairly radical for this territory.

As we have assessed and debated them with our citizens, we are well aware of the critical issues experienced by our Province, but perhaps others may find it more difficult to understand our choices.

As mentioned, Rimini is a mature tourism market; we have a long-standing tradition in tourism. I’m sure you’ll agree that tourism has always evoked and still evokes the idea of travel, culture, awareness and the environment. For the past 100 years, we have succeeded in capturing a mass need. As well as the items mentioned above, the territory also needed to provide entertainment and leisure activities.

In this respect, Rimini can easily be defined as one of the capitals of entertainment and we have succeeded in addressing this need in terms of both the quantity of hotel accommodation facilities and the quality of the services offered.

As we deal with huge numbers, we have to consider the results of having a mass presence here in Rimini as this greatly conditions the territory.

This has logically translated into some of the critical issues we are focusing on, which as our President mentioned before, are problems linked to traffic and road conditions, which we are trying to address, but also problems linked to the need for good air quality, good water quality and, in general, good environmental quality performances on the territory.

The overall actions we have taken in this direction are fairly concrete in the sense that with regards to traffic, for example, we are working on plans to upgrade the territory that aim to improve mobility in the town. This not only concerns the use of vehicles run on ecological fuel but also aims to improve and increase the use of public transport.

We are focusing particular attention on the issue of water, especially on the pressure that large numbers of tourists places on us. We are looking, in particular, at the end of the water cycle and especially at purification means and facilities. We collect 95% of wastewater and the remainder, which concerns the hilly inland area, has local purifying facilities.

Clearly, a huge effort needs to be made as it is not easy for the territory to support a purification system for a population that in the summer increases fourfold compared to the winter so it crucial to invest heavily. We have achieved good levels but if we want to move towards sustainability, as our President said, we can't rest on our laurels. We are trying to further improve by using new methodologies such as, for example, phyto-purification.

I am placing considerable emphasis on the aspect of purification because one of the greatest problems of our territory and any tourist destination is the problem of the quality of

sea water, in our case the Adriatic Sea. Clearly, the Province is taking action but everyone has to do their part and I am sure that the general conditions of the Adriatic Sea will improve drastically in the future.

We are making a considerable financial effort with regards to the quality of the services we offer, despite the problems currently experienced, on both a local and national level, in finding funds. That is why I have focused attention on the crucial points linked to services that concern the environment.

I'll avoid going into further detail on other themes but I would like to add that in terms of recycling or waste collection policies this territory is self-sufficient thanks to a series of actions that should improve and increase the percentage of recycling and differentiated waste collection, which is currently around 25%.

Having said this, I think you may have a clearer idea about why this territory has worked and invested so much on sustainability on the territory and therefore, also in sustainable tourism because tourism is the main economic resource of our territory.

I think you are aware that we began as far back as 2001, with the International Conference on Sustainable Tourism that was held here in Rimini. This was a LIFE project, co-funded by the European Commission that involved the Province of Rimini along with the Municipality of Calvià and Federalberghi, the national association of hotels, and addressed themes linked to integrated coastal zone management.

This LIFE project helped us to produce some interesting guidelines and manuals for tourism operators with regards to economic purchasing, to promote the European eco-label and a different system of environmental management and to raise awareness in general amongst tourism operators on the theme of sustainability.

On a political level this type of action permitted us to undersign an important charter, called the Charter of Rimini, which provided a benchmark of actions that public administrators will have to respect on the theme of sustainability, but also gave us the opportunity to bring together a network of cities that rely on tourism, and therefore sustainable tourism, as their main activity. This network of tourism cities with the same or similar problems as ours can help us to find solutions to the problems of the pressure faced today by tourist destinations like ours.

We also managed to organise a conference specially dedicated to what we call carrying capacity, or in other words, the ability of a territory like ours to cope with such a large presence of tourists.

This has led to our work being widely recognised, both nationally and internationally. In fact, in 2003 we received the Carmen Diaz Award from the Balearic Islands and this has helped us in our aim to translate this political concept into a shared concrete concept.

In recent years we have been working on Agenda 21 so that these concepts can become, and indeed they are becoming, a concept shared by the territory.

This type of Agenda 21 action as led us to share common good practices, in tourism in particular, that are the basic actions that need to lead us towards sustainable tourism on our territory.

So this Agenda 21 work group, in particular the work group that focused on economic aspects, has developed a good practice that is fairly well-known, on both a national and international level, and that is the eco-friendly beach establishment - a project that has permitted us to ensure a good practice becomes shared and easily repeatable.

We feel that this small example is extremely important because the project foresees good practices on four aspects linked to sustainability.

Firstly, the use of renewable sources of energy, such as solar energy for example, to produce energy and heat water, to drastically reduce the consumption of water by recycling it, to focus on differentiated waste collection and to educate and communicate different aspects regarding the quality of the territory and bathing waters.

Therefore, this is a great example of a good practice that, with respect to the pressures I mentioned, allows us to make each beach facility self-sufficient with regards to energy, the use of hot water, with some beaches saving up to 5,000 cubic metres of water a day by recycling shower water for other beach activities, and also 100% differentiated waste collection. Lastly, by educating people on environmental issues we are giving a strong cultural signal.

As I mentioned before, this is a small example but it has brought about an important cultural change and has helped us achieve great results as well as being nominated to be in charge of the national Agenda 21 group on sustainable tourism. It has also permitted us, through the region of Emilia Romagna, to develop a project to provide solar energy for the entire coast. We have worked on this project in close collaboration with the region of Emilia Romagna and with Legambiente, the Italian environmental agency; a partner who has allowed us to build a strong network of environmentally friendly hotels.

Probably the most important result of our work is that tomorrow you are going to visit the first beach facility in the Municipality of Riccione, where we experimented and tested our strategies. In fact Matteo, the owner of “Bagno Giulia 85” in Riccione, is here with us today. This has brought about a considerable change and it also allowed the Municipality of Riccione to change its town planning for beaches by introducing the need for future establishments to pay particular attention to the issues of renewable sources of energy, differentiated waste collection and reducing water consumption.

I think it is a great result when environmental policies are recognised and acknowledged and bring about changes to town planning. It is a great result that is being translated into actions that will be included in the next regional development plan.

I'd just like to add a few more things because the work done on Agenda 21 not only bring about great results but also focused on three aspects that I would like to highlight as I consider them fundamental. One work group realised an initiative by which teachers could begin to work with the Agenda 21 system in schools. There were two projects with regards to the problem of water - one on the upgrading and regeneration of the Marecchia River in Rimini and another on the most critical issues faced by resorts like ours, in other words, water from the rivers and streams that receive water from purification facilities when they reach the sea.

I hope that I have succeeded in explaining what we are trying to do in order to turn our territory into a quality territory. The aim is for the good practices we are discussing to become not only good practices but also normal habits because, as the President mentioned above, if we are at a crossroads and have to make radical choices, good practices are not enough. We need to make important changes and these cannot come about if all the citizens and economic forces do not share them.

INTERREG SUVOT is an important opportunity for us to continue to assert that vocational tourism without sustainability has, in our opinion, little hope of becoming reality.

I would like to conclude by renewing my welcome to all the representatives of the network of cities for sustainable tourism, as well as to all our INTERREG project partners. I hope that our meeting will be very fruitful and that we will be able to transmit all the enthusiasm we have put into our work in order to make this transformation possible.

Enzo Finocchiaro (SUVOT Project Coordinator – Province of Rimini)

Presentation of the “Knowledge Resources Guide” in the field of Sustainable Tourism.

Quickly, as you can see from the slides, today we are going to present an important part of the SUVOT project or in other words, the *Knowledge Resource Guide*, which doesn't translate well into Italian. Basically, as you can see in the slide, this part of the SUVOT project concerns sustainability but also combines sustainability with the new forms of tourism and, in particular, with vocational tourism.

The objective of this part of the project is to develop and extend action lines that began within the network of cities for sustainable tourism.

This network began in 2001, following an international conference held in Rimini. It involved ourselves and ICLEI, an international network for the sustainability of municipalities with which we have worked for four years, and has led to our action extending to the entire Mediterranean. About thirty tourist destinations belong to the

network and they are located throughout the Mediterranean area, including some resorts in Israel.

As I said, the objective was to reinforce the action lines of the network. This is the aim of one part of the project but the main objective we have to consider is to create a state of the art. This is the objective of the KRG or *Knowledge Resource Guide* and we want to come up with action and interventions that the various tourist destinations, such as Great Britain, Greece, Spain and Italy, will be able to apply and adapt to their own reality.

Today, we intend to do this through a debate that, given the wealth of actors present here today, will certainly allow us to consider and reflect on the state of the art at a European level, but we also want to promote good experiences.

I think that the work we do tomorrow will be equally important, or in other words the study visit during which, as already mentioned, we will have the chance to assess the effectiveness of some best practices. I think that it will complement the work we do today in considering, comparing and studying the theme of best practices.

I think you have already understood from the project partners that it primarily aims to offer useful tools that can be used by the various mass tourist destinations, as I said in Spain, Great Britain, Italy and Greece, to implement their models of sustainability.

As the Councillor mentioned before, it also seems clear that, with regards to the Agenda 21 process, tourist destinations and local authorities are important, or in certain aspects fundamental, for the processes of sustainability on a local level but that the so called *stakeholders* are equally important, particularly those directly involved in supplying tourism services - the entire supply chain starting with tour operators, who have a central role, hoteliers and restaurant owners and, in our case, beach facilities.

It therefore seems clear that the aim of this guide, but also what was a general reflection on sustainable tourism, is to move forwards on several levels and in several fields and above all, with various actors.

With regards to the project, and I think this is an objective we have to aim for, if we analyse existing tools, the guide provides an added value that becomes the *output* for tourist destinations. In other words, there is an internal objective that the guide aims to achieve with respect to the project partners, but that is an objective that I feel is the theme of this morning session and that is, to bring to the attention of the various actors the views of mass tourism destinations on how to move towards sustainable tourism.

In concrete terms, what exactly is the KRG? Basically, the *Knowledge Resource Guide* is a tool, not a goal, but a tool that can play an important role in policymaking, in the choices of local tourist destinations. It is a tool that aims to provide opportunities and initiatives to develop sustainable tourism.

It is a tool that obviously, aims to present good practices and therefore, the possibility to transfer these practices to the territory, to life in general and to the contexts of the partners of the network of cities for sustainable tourism. Finally, it is a tool that aims to promote the initiatives of the network and obviously, it favours a broader scientific debate.

As you can see from this slide, after the previous general objectives we will look at some sub-objectives, in order to get down to specific action. I'd like to start with the

last point; the guide is a tool for favouring cooperation and the exchange of information with the main tour operators. At this stage, the most interested appear to be the large tour operators such as TUI, ACCOR and FIRST CHOICE, or in other words, large tour operators that are already exploring the sustainability of tourist destinations.

The guide also aims to be a tool for the tourism market, a tool to raise the awareness of tourists - our clients - in order to get them to behave better and select their holiday destinations more carefully.

It aims for a tourist that is more aware of sustainability, which will repay our efforts.

Last, but not least, the guide aims to be a springboard for creating far-reaching projects. We have a perfect example here, with a number of partners, as well as those already involved in the SUVOT project, adhering to a project based on INTERREG guidelines. The considerations made by the guide have led old and new partners to adhere to new proposals and broader, and under certain aspects, more targeted projects.

With regards to the methodology, I have attempted to underline that there are some targets and objectives within this project and that therefore, it is the destinations that need to be reached because this is what the European Union, which has co-funded the proposal, requires us to do.

Of course, this is not necessarily the best methodology to create a best practices guide but it is the methodology we followed in this process and obviously, something that has involved a limited number of actors. We will address this shortly.

What the Province of Rimini, along with the other partners, has brought to this guide are the considerations that come from four or five years' work together. We have made progress as a tourist destination and a local authority towards sustainability so our considerations revolve around three fundamental issues - management of the territory, the tourism product and the tourism market.

These three key issues obviously correspond to three concrete subjects. As I mentioned earlier, on the one hand we have local authorities, the subjects that manage the territory, the tourists that compose the tourist market and the subjects that build the tourist product, or in other words the entire tourism chain, ranging from tour operators right down to accommodation operators and tourist information offices.

What we saw before as methodology can be seen here as the steps of the work we carried out, which I repeat, is clearly anchored on the one hand to the project partners and on the other, on the experiences they have matured and developed.

During the second part of the morning session we will study the complex theme of the assessment of the carrying capacity of the various tourist destinations. This is a very important aspect that is dealt with by UNEP, the United Nations environmental agency, on a European level with various experiences in the Mediterranean offering new and innovative tools.

I realise that you are probably getting a little tired of sitting and listening to my presentation but please rest assured that the second part of our session will be a more active debate and you will be able to make your contribution.

Obviously, I think point 4 is particularly important where we assess the collection of the cases of best practices and what is a best practice. I am also very curious to hear your opinions in the workshop. However, what is important is that all

this work has been anchored to tourist destinations therefore, it has been anchored to those who wanted and had to operate on the territory in concrete terms.

We are not merely considering the theoretical aspect but also concrete experiences, choices and initiatives that have been tried and tested in the field.

This slide shows the effort that we have made in our attempt to create this guide. Obviously, we began with the awareness that there is a lot around and so we tried to add something extra, as I mentioned, for the project partners and obviously, we tried to bring to our contribution to the debate in general. This was why we decided to move on three levels and therefore, to analyse and assess what already existed on an international, European and local level.

Therefore, we debated and discussed what we can now consider certain set points with regards to sustainability in general and tourism. In other words, ISO 14001 and also the know how offered by UNEP and the European Commission regarding carrying capacity assessment and integrated coastal zone management or ICZM in English.

I'm sure you are very familiar with most of the issues but just a couple of words on the European level where, in recent years, along with initiatives from the European Commission, so let's say with an approach from the "top down", there are have interesting initiatives that are so-called from the "bottom up", such as the Network VISIT, fast becoming the largest European experience of voluntary eco-labels regarding the tourism sustainability of *reception* facilities in the broadest sense.

In this respect, the study visit tomorrow will bring us directly into contact with the activity that triggered in Italy an experience entrusted to the environmental agency Legambiente Turismo, the Hoteliers' Association of Riccione and the Municipality of Riccione. These can be defined as eco-hotels, the pioneers of our local experience.

Drawing some conclusions, it is not easy to explain exactly what producing this best practice guide involved in just a couple of minutes. We have to keep our feet firmly on the ground and pay particular attention to the needs of our project partners. I want to remind you that this project is co-funded by the European Union so this is a compulsory objective.

On the other hand, a topic I will gladly leave to the next discussion, an in-depth consideration of the effectiveness of the tools I have illustrated and that obviously, exploded from the title on some slides. A consideration of the effectiveness of the tools that have been used on an international, European or local level, different approaches, characterised, as I said, by rules that perhaps attempt to impose sustainability, approaches characterised from the bottom-up that build, perhaps by adding parts, without necessarily starting with a global vision but by working step-by-step and showing their effectiveness in terms of the numbers, members and results achieved.

International experts in the field of “Sustainable Tourism”.

David Bowker (Blackpool Borough Council)

Just to give you some background information on Green Lantern. It began as a project involving several regions that aimed at favouring awareness, analysing and assessing environmental aspects primarily, with particular reference to water treatment, the use of renewable sources of energy and energy saving.

We then carried out monitoring visits and after a 12-month period, if the hotels had implemented what was recommended on the environmental review, they were given a certificate that they could use in their reception and a logo that they could put on their promotional material.

Now, I mentioned Green Lantern because the predominant uptake was in Blackpool. There was a terrific interest from Blackpool hoteliers and they found that they got more business from promoting the fact that they were and are environmentally friendly. But the feedback that we had was only anecdotal. We haven't quantified the benefits in business terms.

We then piloted, in conjunction with the regional tourist board, a green tourism business scheme that had been launched in Scotland in 1997 and has over 500 members. It was aimed at accommodation providers and visitor attractions. The great benefit of the green tourism business scheme was that it provided practical measures to enable reduction in environmental impact, improved resource management, that is save waste, water and energy costs as well as benefiting the environment and increasing the marketing potential for tourism businesses.

The advance on Green Lantern of the green tourism business scheme was that awards are made at three levels. You can achieve a bronze, silver or gold award in relation to your environmental performance. Importantly, the awards were only conveyed following an assessment by an independent environmental auditor. So, two very important elements; recognition through awards and independent assessment.

One of the key reasons that we adopted the scheme was because, in its development, in South West England, 19 businesses had achieved £ 52,000 in savings, and in Scotland, the members who had taken on the scheme were able to demonstrate a 10% higher bed occupancy rate.

So again, two very important business issues; bottom line profit savings and increased business from an environmental standard.

What we did was to incorporate all of those indicators, all that best practice that we had learned into what is now called the Blackpool Blue Sky Resort Network Project, which is our current development.

Sponsored by Blackpool Council, the aim of the project is to raise the productivity, competitiveness and sustainability of existing local businesses, which are predominantly tourism of course, through encouraging and enabling the implementation of environmental best practice techniques and technologies. And of course, we have to state, it was part funded by the European Union under objective 2, priority 1 programme.

Blackpool in sunshine again. Our vision for Blackpool is that of blue skies, golden sands and green tourism and our main aim is to assist businesses to become more profitable, increase turnover and generate jobs. We have to do that for the ERDF project but those are fundamental business reasons for adopting environmental improvements.

We have been supported in the project by the Tourism Support Bureau, which again is another project funded under ERDF but I think my colleague will be talking a bit about that soon.

Funding has come from a number of sources; we have the ERDF, the Blackpool Challenge Partnership and the North West Tourist Board. It's hard work making money out of a hotel in Blackpool, so the only investment that we could take from Blackpool businesses at this stage is coasted time.

The project started in July 2003 and should complete at the end of this year but we've now got a further extension.

Suffice to say from this slide, the local advisors and consultants worked from the Solaris Centre, which is a demonstration centre that I'll talk about in just a moment. I'm going to skip that slide as time is short.

The members of the Blue Sky Resort Network, and they now total over 120 hotel businesses in Blackpool, get advice on how to save money on energy, waste and water, they are signposted in ways in which they can secure other grants to help them implement environmental technologies and techniques, they receive certification to enable them to promote their greener credentials and they are able to market their higher standards to their customers.

Now, there is a dynamic within the network where the hoteliers want to move towards corporate social responsibility. They are a part of the community in Blackpool and they want to be seen as being responsible socially. It is accepted that we need an internationally recognisable standard and as a network, the hoteliers want to move towards the EU eco-label. To date, 125 businesses have joined the network and we are aiming to take on 10% of the eligible businesses in the area.

We have yet to monitor an awful lot of output but at the time of writing this presentation we had safeguarded and increased turnover of the members by over a million euros and, a small amount of increased sales respectively. Through improved environmental performance, we can demonstrate that we have safeguarded 41 jobs and we have increased the number of jobs by 10. However, there is much more to be recorded and of course, that's going to happen in the final phase of the project.

In terms of targets, we are over target in terms of the number of businesses assisted, we are coming up to target on jobs created and we are way over target on jobs safeguarded. We need more increased sales but we are well on our way to achieving sales safeguarded. Of course, increased sales can only be monitored over an extended period of the project.

I've almost finished but, I must tell you about the Solaris Centre. In conjunction with the University of Lancaster, we regenerated an old building in Blackpool, in order to establish a centre for sustainable tourism for the region. We have plenty of wind power in Blackpool so we have two wind turbines, we generate electricity through wind turbines and through a photovoltaic roof.

We have incorporated highly energy-efficient insulation and technologies such as combined heat and power and the rainwater that falls on the roof is recycled through the toilets. So, we have a building through which we can demonstrate sustainable techniques and technologies and many times, this building produces more electricity that it actually uses. In the future, we are going to run a recycling project from that centre that will bring in unemployed people or socially excluded people back into work and we are going to begin the process of implementing the eco-label.

Kostas Fotis (Kallithea-Rhodes Sustainability)

The XENIOS project. Well, there are two points here, the development of an audit tool for hotel structures and the promotional and professional use of energy and renewable energy sources.

A two-year ALTENER project completed in December 2003.

The purpose of the project:

- a computer multi-media tool for carrying out hotel audits
- a prototype for monitoring solar thermal collectors to extract information on the profitability of a solar thermal installation
- dissemination material like brochures, booklets, audiovisual aids
- a dissemination campaign to local authorities, hotels and hotel associations
- seminars, website

With regards to the Xenios software, it:

- helps the user in the making decisions on plans for reconstructing a hotel building.
- supports the user in the execution of a quick preliminary revision of the hotel structure and provides assessment of:
 - o the construction;
 - o technical systems and equipment;
 - o internal environmental quality;
 - o and the potential to save energy and natural resources.
 - o finally, it provides the user an initial estimate of the investment and financial savings to promote RES and RUE.

There's a free download and therefore, you can download the Internet address you can see at the bottom: <http://env.meteo.noa.gr/xenios>

With regards to the dissemination of Xenios:

- a good practices guide, a practical guide for hotel managers;
- a brief guide for hotel guests to help reduce energy consumption;
- brochures, leaflets and even a CD regarding solar energy systems;

- and a CD-Rom that contains the results (in English) and the national version (translated) of the material diffused.

Thank you very much. I apologise again for my English and my Italian and I'd like to invite everyone to visit the sunny island of Rhodes. We have 350 days a year of sunshine, more than Blackpool.

Riera Ignasi (Lloret de Mar)

Just a quick presentation. Tourism in Lloret de Mar dates back to the thirties and I'd like to explain the evolution of tourism in our town. At the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth century it was just a village of fishermen and farmers and many emigrated to America to make a living. Here is a slide of Lloret in the thirties.

I'd like to remind you that Spain then experienced a very bad civil war between 1936 and 1939, which ended with the victory of General Franco and the start of his dictatorship that lasted until 1975 when he died.

Back in those days the beach was largely unused. People lived basically on the hills, towards the mountains where they farmed. The coastal area was not used and they even threw waste in the sea. Naturally, you can see that the people were very poor, fishermen lived in very small houses whereas on the seafront you can see some large buildings that were built by immigrants who had returned from America after making their fortune. So the population was very poor and there was no urban planning.

The first tourists came from Barcelona, Germany and England and over the years, the population increased from 3,000 people to 15,000 people. We built 190 hotels and in a certain respect, we forgot our history. We began to destroy many small houses and built everywhere, selling without any kind of planning and in just a few years, the situation changed to the current one that you can see in the slide.

In the 1960's, 70's and 80's we had no problems at all. We didn't even have to offer our facilities as there was such high demand for Lloret de Mar as a tourist destination. The sun and the beach were the main attraction during that period but nowadays, the situation has changed.

The current situation is that there are 33,000 inhabitants in Lloret de Mar. 30% are not Spanish and we actually have people of 102 different nationalities. Surprisingly, last May the number of nationalities was 92 and in just six months we can add a further 10. So, 102 different nationalities in total. We are now in a different situation because we have to offer our tourism services, we have to look for sales, and we don't have any demand. We have to offer.

The question now is what can we do to fix or change the situation? First of all, we have to stop building and we are implementing a new urban plan to divide the town into several zones. It is important to classify these zones as residential, those dedicated to entertainment, etc. so that we can manage each zone better. The town near the seaside

is very pleasant whereas the parts of the town inland have been forgotten for many years so they need to be upgraded.

Our programme focuses on four main areas. The first will be a sports area called “villa deportiva” with various sports facilities, the second area will be dedicated to the recovery of the cultural and natural heritage of the town, the third will be a Convention Bureau, and the fourth will be Lloret de Mar open-air museum.

With regards to the open-air museum, we are restoring all the small fishermen’s houses and farms because we want to show them to our visitors so that they can see what Lloret de Mar was once like. We are also creating routes for trekking, walking and cycling in the inland areas. We are also working on the recycling and reuse of wastewater for irrigation purposes and also working with regards to quality for hotels.

The slides show some of the gardens, Lloret de Mar castle and the area around Santa Cristina that we are upgrading to show our visitors. These are largely unknown parts of the town that we want to restore and upgrade in order to show them to our visitors but there is still a lot of work to do.

With regards to the sports part of town and the sports centres and facilities, we have already built two sports pavilions, we have an athletics track and we are building a swimming pool. We are working on a multi-functional sports facility and we want to propose Lloret de Mar as a sports destination for visitors and tourists.

Very quickly, with regards to the Convention Bureau we are trying to set up convention facilities for exhibitions, conferences in order to promote our town as an events destination too. We are also certified as a destination for families and sport.

Giuseppe Salvo (Comunità Montana del Giovo)

Firstly, this presentation should have been given by Dott.ssa Minetti from the Environmental Office of the Liguria Region but unfortunately, she cannot be here today so I will give this presentation on systems for environmental management.

Sustainable development is a cross between three different factors - economic development, environmental protection and the quality of life. The various tools to achieve these objectives include ISO14001 and EMAS environmental management certification systems.

The region of Liguria has been working on the issue of environmental certification systems for some time and in fact, we boast the first municipality to be certified ISO14001 and EMAS, Varese Ligure, the first certified mountain community and the first industrial municipality to be certified according to ISO standards. Currently, we have 22 certified bodies and by the end of the programme that I am going to illustrate we should have a total number of 97.

This is a map of the region dating back to December 2000. In the region, our territory was the workshop for the initiatives. Over the years, the number of those who

have achieved certification has changed. This is the current situation, those in red are those that have already achieved certification and those in yellow and green are the municipalities that have just started the process. This is the same for EMAS certification.

The aims of the regional government are to promote the action of local bodies towards development, to support them in implementing sustainable policies, to favour the exchange of best practices, to develop a regional coordination activity and promote access to international and European projects. This entire operation has come about through a series of funding that we will illustrate.

You will remember about ten years ago the case of Haven, a famous oil tanker that caught fire off the shore of Genoa and due to the water currents we received the damage and negative effects of this spillage.

Part of the damage compensation money we received, or in other words, 600,000 euro were in fact, used to set up some good practices and bring some municipalities in the surrounding area into EMAS certification.

Another source of funding came from objective 2, measure 2.6 that supported activities involving environmental management and you can see there was a call in which 97 bodies, currently undergoing the certification process, participated. Another project underway is the certification of port authorities, in particular Genoa, Savona and La Spezia. Yet another activity refers to the certification of health facilities. Some hospitals have been used as sample hospitals and we are currently achieving good results in terms of energy saving.

Yet another project that is not on the slide but is a LIFE project, which called FAROF, will lead to the certification of small tourist harbours and ports and also golf courses.

The role of the regional government in Liguria is to provide technical support and assistance for the coordination of training and information. We also monitor the certification process and also use our website to highlight our experiences and participate in national and international events such as exhibitions.

This is the calendar of courses and monitoring of the process that have to be sent to the region, these are our support initiatives, we participate in Aalborg, Ecomondo and BICA, and here is a local initiative called The Lagueglia Environmental Prize.

In regional planning, the synergy between environmental management and the centres for environmental protection. In fact, the development of centres financed through measure 2, represented in this map, has been fundamental.

This map shows the municipalities in the Liguria Region that have adopted Agenda 21, these are the municipalities that are adopting a system of environmental accounting, these are those developing an ecological imprint or mark and these are the municipalities with green procurement processes. This map shows all the municipalities that are taking part in European Union projects on environmental aspects.

Another important action, also financed by objective 2, involves training of both experts and local authority administrators. On 29th June 2004, our regional department was also certified according to ISO14001 standards.

With regards to the future, these are the issues that we want to study more. Firstly, the integration between objectives of the environmental systems and the programmes that are applied to the territory.

ISO or EMAS certification should not be considered merely as a starting point. This is not the end but just the beginning of a process to improve the situation. We need to move towards a more general vision.

As a final piece of information on our work on environmental management systems that is quite interesting. We have six coastal municipalities, one of which is a small industrial port with ferryboats and considerable traffic, and four of these were awarded a blue flag in 2005.

Alessio Satta (Ambiente Italia – UNEP Consultant)

The diffusion of the Tourism Carrying Capacity Assessment in the Mediterranean coastal areas. The application of UNEP guidelines and the Province of Rimini case-studies.

First of all, good morning everybody and thank you. Special thanks to the Province who we have been working with for about six years now and with whom we have had the opportunity to experiment different tools that you will now find in the SUVOT project guide.

Today, we will deal with what is known in English as the assessment of carrying capacity, a term translated from the French *capacité d'accueil* or *capacità d'accoglienza* in Italian. We need to look at the methodology that aims to assess the complex relationship between tourists and the territory, including obviously legal environmental aspects and the local community.

The Priority Actions Programme (key component of the MAP/UNEP) refers the following definition of the *Tourism Carrying capacity*: «the maximum number of people that may visit a tourist destination at the same time, without causing destruction of the physical, economic and socio-cultural environment and an unacceptable decrease in the quality of visitors' satisfaction». Based on the definition of sustainable development the Priority Actions Programme promotes a flexible approach to the Tourism Carrying Capacity Assessment (TCCA), based on a multi-faceted analysis of tourism development scenarios. The sustainable tourism option is the logical result outcome of the TCCA process. The PAP methodology was recently implemented in a new study prepared by Ambiente Italia with PAP supervision for the Province of Rimini.

The study of TCCA for the Province of Rimini covers the whole territory with a resident population of 272.031 persons in 2001. The coastal area of the Province of

Rimini is a typical mass-tourism destination and has some 2,66 million-tourist arrivals. This region is one of the most highly developed and intensively used coastal tourist destinations in Italy. The Province of Rimini together with a TCCA study has carried out an Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the contest of the LIFE–Environment Project MED COAST: strategies and tools toward sustainable tourism in Mediterranean coastal areas. The TCCA is done at a critical stage in coastal over-development when radical policy changes are needed to achieve sustainable development. The TCCA project objectives included defining a work process for an action programme promoting a long-term strategy for the sustainable development of the region's economy and environment, re-orienting tourism development in this framework. The study employed a five-step methodology:

1. Data analysis and mapping
2. Definition and application of sustainable tourism indicators
3. Tourism development analysis
4. Defining tourism development scenarios
5. Development of Sustainable Tourism Strategy

It is concluded that the calculation of tourist overnight stays in the Province of Rimini is a crucial question. The relevant tourism carrying capacity model has been developed.

This latter tool – based on GIS modelling, shows formally how thresholds and constraints are exceeded during the year.

The emphasis of Province of Rimini TCCA methodology was on the incorporation from the very beginning of a "shared strategy" for the tourism development of the destination, its comparison with the subjective assessment of the prevailing situation, the identification and agreement on the root causes of current problems and the development and adoption of the objectives and criteria of "Sustainable Development". The public awareness became the leading force of all the TCCA process. Participatory process in Province of Rimini was not only implemented at the stage when the social aspects are being assessed but also at the various stages of the study, particularly towards the stage of choosing the more appropriate development scenario. The experiences carried out for the Province of Rimini shows that tourism is, to a certain extent, one of the activities reasonably adaptable to sustainability criteria and this concept was in mind of the various decision makers for doing a TCCA study. This is due to the fact that sooner or later stakeholders dealing with tourism, if medium and long-term oriented, they understand that their "capital" is not only their investment and infrastructures, but also the natural and cultural environment. During the development of the TCCA, other motivations than assessment of the Physical Carrying Capacity of the Area became compulsory and very strategic. What seemed to be one of the most common motivations for applying TCCA methodology is the expansion of the tourist period. Another strong motivation appeared to be the development of a long-term methodology, which scientifically analyses the tourism sector, while in the same time, involves stakeholders in the process, in order to facilitate and secure the formulation and implementation of an efficient tourism sustainability plan.

Open discussion with field experts about the “Knowledge Resource Guide” an “Best Practices” case-studies.

Luigi Rambelli (President of Legambiente Turismo - VISIT)

Good morning everybody. A couple of words on VISIT. We saw earlier that our English colleague presented a project that is a VISIT project.

In fact the project is managed by the vice-Chairman of VISIT and about a week ago, he told us that the number of businesses that are part of the Scottish project has increased to 700 and it is currently the world leader in terms of the number of members.

There are eight other eco-labels, one in Denmark and France and other s in Holland, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Estonia and Italy. The most recent is in Austria, which is a national eco-label managed by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment.

1,700 accommodation and tourism facilities have joined these eight eco-label schemes in 14 European countries and 2 non-European countries that are Greenland, which is included in the Danish eco-label, and the Dutch Antilles, included in the Dutch eco-label. In Italy there are currently 303 businesses involved with 45,000 beds.

Now that might sound a lot but on the contrary, it is a very small number because in Europe, the number of businesses that adhere to a project that is not only an award scheme but is controlled account for less than 1% of existing tourism facilities.

I'd like to summarize the international situation because it has undergone many changes over the last three or four months and now the situation is much clearer and some concepts have started to dominate. This process began about a year ago at the European conference of the World Travel Organisation in Marienbad and resurfaced about a month ago at the European Parliament. The European Parliament evaluated and approved a communication of the European Commission that indicates three positions as priority tools. The first one refers to the relationship between local and public administrators, businesses and the professional associations and social associations, etc. The second refers to the collaboration between public and private sectors, so the same importance will be given to public and private bodies. The third represents the tools that can be used to develop and improve reliable techniques that can be adopted at local level in order to avoid a centralised approach and promote bottom-up initiatives.

The declaration made by the European Commission contains a sentence that is very significant in this respect that states that the European Commission does not support the idea of introducing regulatory tools because of the lack of success achieved so far by voluntary tools implemented in the sustainable tourism sector.

We are very pleased that the VISIT project is mentioned in an attachment to this communication as an “expression of civil society” that aims to provide a common quality standard. As a matter of fact, VISIT has 21 common basic standards that are common to all participating eco-labels.

During a meeting held on 23rd of September the European Federation for Environmental Associations, of which Legambiente is a part, approved a request that aimed at modifying the method for allocating funds to sustainable tourism initiatives.

The second is the request that when allocating funds to businesses and public administrations, financial policies consider both the safeguarding of diversity and the reduction of pollution as a priority. According to a survey carried by the European Parliament there is a certain lack of positive results from initiatives linked to LIFE and other projects.

I would like to conclude my presentation by mentioning something that happened last week in a meeting in Vienna, where as I was invited as a President of VISIT to introduce the general meeting of HOTREC European association of hotels, restaurants and cafés, (Italy is a member with Confcommercio). There were about 24-25 national hoteliers' associations and I had the opportunity to illustrate the VISIT project. The hoteliers' associations largely agreed with the proposals we advanced.

We have been working with the Province of Rimini for a long time, we have a long-standing collaboration, and we would like to work on initiatives that are bottom-up. It is no longer possible to talk about sustainable tourism in general so we would like to use a different definition that is, the reduction of the impact of tourism on the environment and the carrying capacity of our territory. We prefer to talk about upgrading hotels and tourist facilities in the territory from an environmental point of view.

This is what we are working on at the moment.

Prof. Giorgio Conti (University of Venice – Cà Foscari)

Just a couple of remarks on methodology. First of all, the project is two years old. On the one hand, sustainable tourism or good practices and on the other, traditional tourism with the possible creation and diversification of new activities. However, in my opinion there is a basic misunderstanding because we are favouring upgrading hotels and tourism structures rather than issues such as certification.

This is where the misunderstanding lies - tourism is not only an industry and certification and environmental registration lie in the strategies of total quality. Interestingly, some presentations, especially Mr. Finocchiaro's presentation, emphasized the vertical sustainability of tourism at a international, European and local level, so ISO eco-labels on an international level, EMAS at an European level and sustainable hotels at a local level.

In my opinion, however, there is something that is even more interesting and important, something which was mentioned during the presentation by the representative of the Liguria Region or in other words, the horizontal dimension, the

link between the environment, the economy, the social and cultural aspects and above all, ethical aspects.

Assessment of the carrying capacity cannot only be an eco-systemic carrying capacity, or in other words material aspects like water, waste and so on. I think we also saw during the presentation of Lloret de Mar and Rimini, that another important aspect is the quality of life both for residents and tourists. So we have to consider the ethical impact of tourism, too.

Another misunderstanding concerns methodology. Case studies in this network mostly concern seaside resorts however, this is a kind of a tourism that has come to an end and is probably finished. I don't understand why some large industrial cities have abandoned their industrial areas and why there is not a strategic plan to abandon this kind of tourism. The mistake is that we think that because tourism is the main industry in the world and we are a tourist resort we are following a great trend and history is in our favour but it isn't. The "Fordist model" is finished. I think the strategy adopted in almost all the cases is the transformation from beach tourism to a tourist city.

I think there is a third way that is an alternative to the previous two. We have to go beyond tourism and this is in line with horizontal sustainability. We have to look at ethics, at temporary jobs that are created by tourism. We have to propose other activities because there is no longer a distinction between industrial cities and tourist destinations; there is more a city of culture and knowledge, in line with tourist development.

Just to conclude my short speech, tourism has changed and is no longer what it once was, even if it is the main industry in the world. *Trend is not destiny!*

Andrea Gnassi (Councillor of the Province of Rimini for Tourism and internationalisation, Human resources, Community Policies, University, Sport and Civil Protection).

The importance of Interreg programme and European Projects to develop sustainable alternatives and initiatives: the "vocational tourism".

First of all I'd like to say that my speech does not aim to be a conclusion but is based on the presentations we have heard so far.

The first point is that tourism in Italy is not considered as an industry in the sense that it has the same weight and importance as other production and manufacturing activities, such as the chemical or automotive industries. Italy, of course, is a great country for tourism but we have adopted a sort of do-it-yourself strategy. There is not an industrial policy for tourism.

As a local tourism district we have set ourselves a very clear objective. Leaving aside old discussions and controversies with the central government or the funds we can get from the Region, our main objective is to define an industrial policy for our tourism district, which is a mature market. We want a policy that can be good for us and for the country for the development of future tourism areas.

So our aim is to develop and create a strong tourism culture that considers tourism as an industry and therefore, a chain that produces services all year round. We have to do this because we need to be competitive. We do not have the problems of Venice or Rome where they have to deal with the problem of reducing tourist flows.

A second point begins with a very simple question. We have to ask ourselves about our identity. Who are we? Our local district is, as we mentioned before, a mature district from a tourism point of view but it is a strong district. It is real, genuine, and traditional. We have a long tradition of hospitality and this is what makes us competitive.

We have to face the fact that we are a mature market but we are also very aware of our traditional values. Sustainability is a fundamental factor for us but it should not be a niche phenomenon that concerns only a few enlightened administrators and elegant travellers.

We do not want to lose our values because I think that personal and human values, the warmth of our people and of our services are sustainable values. We are a mass destination that's true but we are not McDonald's. We are not fast food tourism, we are real.

Now the third remark. We have to deal with the changes taking place in the market. The first thing is that the market is now driven by demand, it is no longer important to have a strong offer, to have 2,500 hotels, for example.

Now you have to respond to the tastes, passions and personal expectations of tourists. When they go on holiday, people are no longer looking just for a simple break from routine and work. They want to find a place on holiday that can reflect their

identity, their values, so maybe they are looking for food and wine holidays, well being, sport.

The second change is that the number of destinations has increased dramatically and there are no longer barriers linked to time or cost. The third change is that there are last minute and low fares so that tourists can fly anywhere.

Another very important change refers to logistics and to organization. For example Chinese tourists come to Europe through Germany. The Germans are selling Venice to the Chinese. They fly Lufthansa, sleep in Frankfurt and increase German income in tourism. There are similar moves, for example in the Spanish market. Some operators have just acquired TUI, an important tour operator. Also in Portugal, they have introduced tourism in secondary schools and created a system of promocommercialisation, just following a little bit the trend of *Maison de France*.

Therefore logistics and organisation around the cardinals of the country system.

We have analysed and examined the changes that have taken place in the market and we now want to build a strong tourism culture based on sustainability, which is a very strong value. Although we do not want to be a niche market, we want to orientate a mature, a strong and truly sustainable system.

The first step for building this strong tourism culture and an industrial tourism policy for Italy is to orientate development to renew the product. I am not worried about intervening on the territory but we need to consider the more advanced urban aspects. We are working with the private sector and hotels to give ourselves a tool “urban development companies” so that we can intervene on small areas of our territory, on buildings that are out of the market and convert them into areas that can be used by tourists.

In our opinion, sustainability means finding effective tools to intervene on the territory and understanding market changes and therefore, understanding market demand. Therefore, investing in vocations and in particular, in sustainable vocations. With the work and research already carried out we are now in the phase of having pinpointed sustainable vocations that can lengthen our tourism season and we are currently in the phase of taking these vocations and marketing them. We need to find the courage to promote and sell our product.

In conclusion, that is why I want to stress the important role played by SUVOT because it helps us to develop research and development and to extend our knowledge of these policies.