



"A NETWORK OF EUROPEAN WETLANDS"

LEADER+ Community Initiative. Section 2 - Action 2.1.2. "Transnational cooperation"

PROJECT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NETWORK

November 2004

1. Terms of reference

The proposal for a transnational co-operation project aimed at the promotion of wetland areas (Leader + area) as well as of the large opportunities for sustainable rural development. In this sense the project would be in line with the main objective of the Leader + programme, i.e. to evaluate, promote and develop the potentialities of rural areas. The proposed project has not to be considered as an isolated initiative, since it completely fits into an articulated programme involving different actors from the private (companies of different sectors such as tourism, typical products, culture associations, environment association) and public (Regional Parks, Provinces, and the others Leader + municipalities) sectors, thus contributing to a transnational view. The following is a list of some of the main elements/assumptions/considerations to be taken as reference for the project. Some of them refer to general conditions, while some others are more strictly related to the wetlands area, object of the Leader + Programme. Anyway, also in that specific case, the peculiar aspects could be a contribution to raising questions and start identifying possible project opportunities:

The tourism industry is currently growing and changing. Demand registers a general increase, which affects particularly alternative and specialised tourism, and offer increases accordingly. The market shows a growing interest in sustainable and typical tourism, with special attention to quality services and an integrated tourist offer that includes all the aspects of the area of destination.

Nature-oriented tourist offers are becoming more and more popular, since they give visitors the opportunity to experience the landscape with its birds, wildlife, plants, traditions, culture, tastes and craftsmanship. Today's tourists look for a holiday where they can enjoy the landscape and experience rural traditions.

Tourists pay special attention to environmental safeguard and protection. They want to enjoy – rather than exploit- natural and environmental resources.

The regions covered by the project are characterised by common elements that need to be promoted, protected and marketed by means of "a single ideal green itinerary".

The participating regions share the uniqueness of their landscape and their impressive environmental and natural resources. Some of them are protected areas and Sites of Community Importance, others are part of the UNESCO World Heritage. Their fragile ecosystems need to be dealt with in a controlled and sustainable way, so they can become a chance of growth and development for rural areas, as well as a way to attract local entrepreneurs.

The network envisaged by the project will be based on natural elements, first of all on water, with all its natural and scientific implications, since it is water that, forcing its way through the land, creates a unique natural habitat that hosts a great number of both wintering and migrant birds. The rich wildfowl of wetlands has a strong tourist and economic appeal, while, at the same time, it needs to be protected and safeguarded. Consequently, along with traditional tourism, wetlands offer interesting alternatives, as tours on horseback, cycling tours and river tours.

During the planning phase, partner regions have worked to involve local actors, in order to make them understand the need to diversify economic activities and appreciate the potential of natural resources. Moreover, many of the involved regions host Parks, which monitor and control economic activities, opening up new long term growth opportunities, where tourism plays a paramount role. The promotion of wetlands was already part of the planning phase of the LEADER Programme (see the transitional cooperation project "Environmental Education in European Parks", involving LAGs and Parks of the Po Delta in Emilia Romagna, of the Evros Delta in Greece, of the Ebro Delta in Spain and of the Natural Reserve of Kerkini in Greece).

2. Priority themes

The network is aimed at discussing the following themes:

- Tourism
- Environment
- Agriculture
- Rural Development

3. Partnership description

Promoting Committee:

1. LAG DELTA 2000 (I) - Leading partner
2. LAG Oglio-Po Terre D'Acqua (I)
3. LAG Aktiivinen Pohjois-Satakunta ry (FIN)
4. LAG Dimossineteristiki Evros SA (GR)

Proposed Scientific and Technical Committee:

- Members of the Association "Delta calls Delta": Po Delta Park Emilia-Romagna (I), Po Delta Park Veneto (I); Ebro Delta Park (E); Brière Park (F), Delta Danube Biosphere Authority (R)
- Evros Delta Park (GR)

New partners:

- LAG Polesine Delta Po (I)
- LAG Consorci LIDEBRE (E)
- New adhesions by Lags or other European bodies located in wetlands

4. Objectives of the network

- a) Exchange of best practices about projects, initiatives, procedures, etc. concerning themes related to the environment, tourism, rural development, agriculture
- b) Creation of partnerships to formulate new transnational cooperation projects
- c) Joint promotion of the partners' areas involved in the project
- d) Working-out of joint strategies and proposals about environment, tourism, rural development and agriculture in order to attract the attention about specific aspects at Community level.

5. Actions

The network aims at reaching the objectives through the following actions:

- 1) Organization and mutual participation in seminars, conventions, workshops and events
- 2) Creation of an electronic newsletter and a paper newsletter. The paper newsletter will be distributed by the LAGs of the Promoting Committee to the local stakeholders whereas the electronic newsletter will be spread through the network
- 3) Start-up of a web site
- 4) Issuing of joint promotional material among the interested partners
- 5) Mutual exchange of promotional material and its distribution by each partner during targeted events
- 6) Organization of workshops or working groups to deal with themes, problems, and/or specific conflicts in order to formulate methodologies of common intervention, proposals to be submitted to the proper organs of EU, possible guidelines, etc.
- 7) Mutual pointing out of opportunities within Community Programmes for the formulation of transnational cooperation projects, as well as themes and proposals to define joint projects

6. Actions scheduling

Each partner will be asked to observe the following actions in order to keep working smoothly the network

Actions	Description	Responsibility
1. Organization and mutual participation in seminars, conventions, workshops and events	Mutual information about the organization of seminars, conventions, workshops, or events on themes of interest for the network	Lead partner; all the partners
	Spreading of the information through targeted mailing list at local level	Lead partner; all the partners
	Mutual assistance for the individuation of experts who could give an added value to the programmed activity	Lead partner; all the partners
	Mutual participation in the organized activities by the partners	Lead partner; all the partners
	Transfer of the results/output of the activities to the leading partner for the dissemination through the network	All the partners
2. Creation of an electronic newsletter	Transfer of the texts in English language to the leading LAG for the processing of the news	All the partners
	Collection and processing of the information and creation of the electronic newsletter	Lead partner
	Transfer of the newsletter to the partners	Lead partner
	Dissemination of the newsletter to the mailing-list of each partner	Lead partner; all the partners
	Animation actions in order to involve the local stakeholders	Lead partner; all the partners
3. Start-up of a web site	Transfer to the leading partner of the information and of the texts in English language in order to implement the web site	All the partners
	Collection and processing of the information and implementation of the web site	Lead partner
	Animation actions in order to involve the local stakeholders	Lead partner; all the partners

4. Issuing of joint promotional material among the interested partners	Collection of the possible intention by the partners to issue joint promotional material and dissemination of the info among the partners	Lead partner
	Individuation of this action coordinator among the interested partners charged of the collection of the information and the formulation of a draft to be submitted to the interested partners	Lead partner
	Collection of the information and texts from the interested partners, co-ordination of the graphic purpose which will be submitted to the partners for the evaluation and agreement	Action co-ordinator
	Transfer of the graphic layout of the promotional materials to the interested partners	Action co-ordinator
	Printing and joint definition of the distribution channels and identification of the target to be involved	Action partners
	Transfer of an agreed amount of copies of the promotional material to the interested partners to be distributed at local level or during targeted events / actions	Action partners
	Mutual distribution of the promotional material	All the partners
5. Mutual exchange of promotional material and its distribution by each partner during targeted events	Mutual exchange of promotional material and distribution by each partner during targeted events	All the partners
6. Organization of workshops or working groups to deal with themes, themes, problems, and/or specific conflicts in order to formulate methodologies of common intervention, proposals to be presented to the proper organs of EU, possible guidelines, etc.	Pointing out of needs of discussion about themes, problems, specific conflicts, to the leading partner	All the partners
	Dissemination of the information through the network and coordination of workshops or working groups	Leading partner
	Formulation of a report about the activity and a final document to be sent to the leading partner	Working group
	Dissemination of the information through the network and submission of the document to the proper EU organ	Leading partner
	Animation actions in order to involve the local stakeholders	Lead partner; all the partners
7. Mutual pointing out of opportunities within Community Programmes for the formulation of transnational cooperation projects, as well as themes and proposals to define projects	Mutual pointing out of opportunities within Community Programmes for the formulation of transnational cooperation projects, as well as themes and proposals to define projects	Lead partner; all the partners

7. Attended effects

- Implementation of the dialogue among LAGs, Institutions, Parks operating in wetlands
- Solution to possible conflicts
- To stimulate the attention at EU level on politics about wetlands
- To improve the awareness at local level about environment and the importance of wetlands preservation, with a multiplying effect

8. Financial plan of the promoting committee and deadline

Deadline: December 2006

LAG	Actions	EU funding	Total cost
LAG DELTA 2000 (leading partner)	1. Project Committee	5.980,00	16.250,00
	2. Issuing joint promotional material	1.472,00	4.000,00
	3. Creation of a newsletter and a web site	552,00	1.500,00
	4. Organisation of international events on nature tourism and birdwatching, as well as other actions concerning nature tourism in the territory of each partner	72.606,40	197.300,00
Total LAG DELTA 2000		80.610,40	219.050,00
LAG OGLIO-PO TERRE D'ACQUA	1. Project Committee	7.750,00	15.500,00
	2. Issuing joint promotional material	1.400,00	4.000,00
	3. Creation of a newsletter and a web site	525,00	1.500,00
	4. Organisation of international events on nature tourism and birdwatching, as well as other actions concerning nature tourism in the territory of each partner	53.325,00	159.000,00
Total LAG OGLIO-PO TERRE D'ACQUA		63.000,00	180.000,00
LAG AKTIIVINEN POHJOIS-SATAKUNTA RY	1. Project Committee	3.510,00	3.900,00
	2. Issuing joint promotional material	3.600,00	4.000,00
	3. Creation of a newsletter and a web site	1.350,00	1.500,00
	4. Organisation of international events on nature tourism and birdwatching, as well as other actions concerning nature tourism in the territory of each partner	73.848,00	82.053,00
Total LAG AKTIIVINEN POHJOIS-SATAKUNTA RY		82.308,00	91.453,00
LAG DIMOSSINETERISTIKI EVROS SA	1. Project Committee	5.730,00	9.550,00
	2. Issuing joint promotional material	2.400,00	4.000,00
	3. Creation of a newsletter and a web site	900,00	1.500,00
	4. Organisation of international events on nature tourism and birdwatching, as well as other actions concerning nature tourism in the territory of each partner	12.180,00	20.300,00
Total LAG DIMOSSINETERISTIKI EVROS SA		21.210,00	35.350,00
	total	247.128,40	525.853,00

9. How to join the network:

a) Recipients: LAGs or other kind of bodies operating in wetlands of interest for ornithological tourism, river tourism, fishing tours and nature tourism in general.

Meaninig of wetlands:

- deltas, estuary mouths, marshlands, lagoons
- river areas, lakes, ponds, mosses, quarries, saltworks, etc.

b) Financial undertake:

Each partner is asked to include within Leader+ cooperation projects (or other Community Programmes, or other founds) an action to participate in this network. Furthermore the new partner has to allocate a minimum budget to effort the cost of participation in the network:

- *cash*: transfer expenses to take part in workshops, seminars, etc. expenses for the transfer of promotional material, etc.
- transferable and demonstrative local pilot projects
- *Kind*: Human resources involved in the project.

10. The sustainability of the network

The partners have to point out all the opportunities offered by the Community Programmes to keep working and active the network even after the end of the project.