Amazon of Europe Bike Trail

Introductory presentation

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Project co-funded by European Union funds (ERDF, IPA)
Project data

• Title: Amazon of Europe Bike Trail
• Acronym: AoE Bike Trail
• Duration: 36 months
• Start – end: 1 June 2018 – 31 May 2021
• Total budget: 3,176 mio EUR
• 3 rivers – 700 kilometres
• 5 countries
• 15 Project Partners (PP)
• 10 Associated Strategic Partners (ASP)
• Website: http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/amazon-of-europe-bike-trail

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Map of the area and proposed trail

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Project partners

- WWF Austria
- Trail Angels
- TVRBR - Tourism Association Region Bad Radkersburg
- Institute Iskriva
- Municipality Velika Polana
- West Pannon Regional Development Agency
- BfNPI - Balaton Uplands National Park
- SMVKA – Entrepreneurs’ Centre of Somogy County Foundation
- TZMZ - Tourism Board Međimurje
- PIVPC - Public institution for nature protection of Virovitica-Podravina
- RRA SiB - Regional Development Agency of Slavonia and Baranja
- KKZ - Koprivnica Križevci County
- WWF Adria
- City of Sombor
- Municipality of Apatin
Associated Strategic Partners (ASP)

- BMLFUW - Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management
- MGRT - Ministry of Economic Development and Technology
- UNESCO - Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe
- NFM DCC - Ministry of National Development – Department of Cycling Coordination
- ZCG - Zala County Government
- MINT - Ministry of Tourism
- TZ OBZ - Tourist Board of Osijek-Baranja County
- PSRD - Provincial Secretariat for Regional Development
- DCC - Danube Competence Center
- MGRT - Ministry of Economic Development and Technology
Growing tourism in protected areas

• **Increasing trend of tourism**: International tourist arrivals grew 6% in the first four months of 2018, compared to the same period last year, exceeding UNWTO’s forecast for 2018 (source: UNWTO)

• **Increasing visit of protected areas**: 8 billion visitors arrive every year to the world’s 140,000 protected areas; these areas brought in at least $600 billion to national economies in 2017 (source: CREST, *The Case for Responsible Travel: Trends & Statistics 2017*).

• **Increasing numbers of cycling-tourism**: In EU Member States, cycling-tourism was worth 44 billion € and reached 2.3 billion trips/year in 2016 (source: EFC, *The EU Cycling Economy*).

• Our wish: sustainable tourism, beneficial for the locals, visitors and nature

• Examples: Alpe Adria Trail, Drava Bike Trail

Planned Transboundary biosphere reserve Mura-Drava-Danube (TBR MDD)

- Most preserved riverine system in Central Europe
- UNESCO planned Transboundary biosphere reserve
- Cooperation between (protected) areas along 3 rivers
- Approx. 1 mio inhabitants
- Approx. 1 mio hectares
- Ministerial declaration signed in 2011

Photos: www.amazon-of-europe.com

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Main project objective

To enhance regional development and economic growth of the Amazon of Europe based on integrated sustainable management of natural and cultural heritage and resources and the capacities of the local people.
From challenges to objectives

Enormous potential of the biosphere reserve natural values in less developed border areas

Limited knowledge and skills of existing service providers in sustainable tourism suitable for sensitive natural areas

No sustainable system with fair distribution of benefits for the locals, visitors and nature

To boost regional economy by developing and implementing the AoE Bike Trail as a flagship tourism product for biking

To improve skills and knowledge of the locals for sustainable tourism

To ensure valorisation of protected areas through sustainable tourism

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From objectives to work packages

To boost regional economy by developing and implementing the AoE Bike Trail as a flagship tourism product for biking

WP3 Product development
WP4 Nature oriented trail
WP5 Bike Trail implementation

To improve skills and knowledge of the locals for sustainable tourism

WP3 Workshops for regional trail management
WP5 AoE Bike Trail Academy

To ensure valorisation of protected areas through sustainable tourism

WP6 Valorisation programme

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Target groups for implementation

• Public institutions: regions, municipalities, institutes (e.g. nature conservation) → infrastructure, local support
• Tourism boards, info points → cooperation
• Existing and potential service providers → offering high-standard services
• Inhabitants → supporting the product, knowing it
• Visitors → enjoying the Bike Trail, promoting it
• Media → reporting about the Bike Trail
• Ministries (tourism, infrastructure, environment) → broader support

Expected results

• Functioning integrated tourism product with main focus on cycling

• Boosted regional economy, new jobs

• Enhanced cooperation and skills of existing and new service providers

• Start of a long journey towards the Amazon of Europe as a known destination for relaxation in preserved nature along Mura, Drava and Danube

Roles of partners

• **ALL PARTNERS ARE PART OF ALL ACTIVITIES**
  • Coordination: Iskriva
  • Communication & marketing: Iskriva, WWF Adria, Trail Angels
  • Product development: Trail Angels, WWF Austria
  • **Bike Trail implementation: West Pannon, regional coordinators**

  **AT:** Bad Radkersburg
  **SI:** Velika Polana
  **HR:** TB Medjimurje
  **HU:** Balaton Uplands NP West-Pannon RDA
  **SR:** Sombor Apatin

  • National coordinators for Croatia and Hungary: RDA SiB, West Pannon
  • Nature valorisation/sustainability: WWFs, parks

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Work organisation

WP1 Project management

WP2 Communication

WP3 Product development

WP4 Nature oriented trail

WP5 Bike Trail implementation

WP6 Valorisation programme

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Project outputs

WP 3
- O3.1 Socio-economic analysis of tourism potentials
- O3.2 Bike Trail international organisational structure
- O3.3 Guide and workshops for regional trail management
- O3.4 AoE Bike Trail strategic marketing plan
- O3.5 Promotion and booking on-line and mobile platform

WP 4
- O4.1 Nature oriented visitor guidance and mapping
- O4.2 Training on nature oriented bike visitor concept

WP 5
- O5.1 Amazon of Europe Bike Trail route plan
- O5.2 Amazon of Europe Bike Trail Academy: Capacity building programme for service providers
- O5.3 Functioning Amazon of Europe Bike Trail (report)

WP 6
- O6.1 Amazon of Europe Bike Trail valorisation programme

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Foreseen project timing

2018

- Socio-economic analysis

Methodology for:
- Product development
- Nature trails
- Trail route planning

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2019

- Final route plan 05/19

2020

- Equipped route 05/20
- Trail implementation on-site Period 4
- Testing the route Period 5

2021

- Final product 05/21
- Valorisation programme
- Trainings for service providers
- Marketing & promotion

2018-2021

- Period 3: Public procurements
- Period 4: Trail implementation on-site
- Period 5: Testing the route
Two key objectives for the partnership:

1. To put the Amazon of Europe Bike Trail integrated tourism product on the market.

2. To wisely spend all the available EU funds to achieve the results.