

Cross-border region "Drina - Tara"

"Regional cooperation and networking in the field of agriculture, rural and economic development of cross-border areas"

Minutes from the 18th Stakeholders group Meeting for "Drina-Tara" cross-border region



DRINA-TARA
CROSS-BORDER REGION

Minutes from the 18th Stakeholders Group Meeting for the
Cross-border region "Drina-Tara"
30 May 2018

Rural tourist household "Lazarevi konaci", *village Kacer, Serbia*

I. List of participants

The Eighteen Stakeholder Group Meeting for the cross-border region "Drina-Tara" was attended by 34 participants, interested stakeholders from "Drina-Tara" region and SWG project team.

Annex1: List of participants

Annex 2: Presentation

II. Programme

March 30th, 2018 (Wednesday)

Rural tourist household "Lazarevi konaci"

10:30 – 11:00	Arrival of participants and welcome with the traditional sweet
11:00 – 11:15	Welcome speech <i>Dusanka Selakovic, Touristic Organisation of the City of Uzice</i>
11:15 – 12:00	Implemented and planned ABD activities in the cross-border region "Drina-Tara" <i>Danica Nesevic, SWG Regional Coordinator</i>
12:00 – 12:30	Presentation of potentials in the region <i>Predrag Markovic- Presentation of collected data to map the value chain of agro-food products and their development</i>
12:30 – 13:00	<i>Filip Sekuloski- Presentation of collected data to map tourism value chains and their development</i>
13:00 – 14:00	Discussion
14:00 – 14:20	Example of good practice-Rural tourist household "Lazarevi konaci" <i>Milica and Milutin Tadić, owners of the household</i>
14:00 - 14:20	Traditional lunch
14:20 – 15:10	Departure

Minutes from the meeting:

The XVIII Stakeholders' Group Meeting aimed at presentation of realized and planned activities of Area Based Development (ABD) in the cross-border region of "Drina-Tara".

The main objectives of the Eighteen Stakeholders Group Meeting held on 30 May in the Rural tourist household "Lazarevi konaci", village Kacer, Uzice, Serbia was to present implemented and planned activities within the SWG EU project "Regional cooperation and networking in the field of agriculture, rural and economic development of cross-border areas", as well as presentation of collected data with the aim to map the value chains in rural tourism and agribusiness sector in the cross-border region of "Drina-Tara".

Official opening of the event

The participants of the meeting were welcomed by the President of the Assembly of the City of Uzice, Mr. Brane Mitrovic, who thanked to SWG RRD for support in the previous period to the regional event International fruit brandy Festival "Zestival" and invited all participants to this year's event to be organized in August in Uzice.

Dusanka Selakovic, in front of the Tourist Organization of the City of Uzice, expressed her thanks to SWG RRD for support in implementation of project ideas in the previous period, as well as to all partners for enhancing cooperation with the aim of strengthening entrepreneurial ideas, regional cooperation through support to the development of rural areas of local communities in the cross-border area.

Participants were also welcomed by Suzana Djordjevic Milosevic, an international expert on the project for assessing the potential for diversification of economic activities in rural cross-border areas.

1. Activities on the SWG EU project "Regional cooperation and networking in the field of agriculture, rural and economic development of cross-border areas"

Throughout the SWG EU project in the cross-border region "Drina-Tara", a total of 9 regional manifestations. So far regional event "XV International Folklore Festival Višegrad" has been supported in the period from 18-19 May, which gathered around 500 participants from Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bulgaria.

Through the project, the Workshop "Development of the value chains in tourism and the agribusiness sector - a tool for strengthening the competitiveness of cross-border regions and the entry of small producers of local products into the regional market" was organized in the period from 16-18 April 2018 in Zlatibor. The mapping of the value chains in tourism and the agribusiness sector, the development of 2 priority actions - their weaknesses and opportunities, the causes of weaknesses and the creation of priority actions for selected value chains, representing one of the thematic area of workshop held for participants from the cross-border region of "Drina-Tara" conducted by the trainers from the Regional Development Agency "Zlatibor". The training was attended by 22 representatives from the non-governmental and private sector, and as a part of the workshop was organized meeting with the management staff of Hotel "Mona" Zlatibor with presentation of "Mountain breakfast" concept, as one of the good examples of the value chain.

2. Implemented and planned activities in the cross-border region supported under other projects/donors

Two regional manifestations were organized:

- ✓ 19th memorial Vitomir Dizdarevic – Admiral Kuk Drina- Sava international recreational-touristic kayak-canoe Regatta, 28.04-05.05.2018, Visegrad-Sremska Mitrovica which gathered 102 participants from Serbia, B&H, Macedonia, Croatia, Poland, Austria, Romania and Bulgaria
- ✓ Presentation of traditional products at the 85th International Agriculture Trade Fair Novi Sad for participants from the cross -border regions “Drina-Tara” and “Drina-Sava”

Four additional events will be organized:

- ✓ 19th Lim Regatta, Tourist Organization of Prijepolje, Bijelo Polje and Prijepolje, 1-3.06.2018
- ✓ Golden hands of the Drina region (Podrinje), Tourist Organization of Visegrad, Visegrad, 2-3.06.2018
- ✓ Manifestation of original creativity, preservation and cultivation of tradition of the cross -border region “Drina-Tara”, Women Association “Sacuvajmo selo”, Priboj, 24.06.2018
- ✓ Demo band contest, COD Luna, Rudo, 30.06-01.07.2018

Planned workshop:

- “On line marketing in tourism-Promotion and selling of tourism and agricultural products via internet” for participants from the cross-border regions of “Drina-Tara” and “Drina-Sava”, Jahorina Mountain, 4-6.06.2018

3. Presentation of potentials in the region

The evaluation of the potentials for diversification of economic activities in rural cross-border areas through the development of small value chains was presented by Filip Sekuloski and Predrag Markovic as experts appointed in this project. The creation of Program framework is linked to the main indicators - employment and income generation.

Mapping of value chain in tourism is a process that began in April 2018, training was organized in Zlatibor for 22 interested participants. Available data (baseline studies and other documents (CBC programming), official statistics, data collected by the SWG RRD project units) were used for assessing the state of the tourism. Based on the collected data, cross-border region "Drina-Tara" has 27,000 beds in more than 500 accommodation units (hotels, motels, apartments, small farms). There are 75 small agricultural households in the region with about 900 beds. More than 500,000 guests are annually visiting this region (and more than 500,000 in daily visits) and there are 1.7 mil overnights in this region per year. One of the main problems is that tourist agencies do not see financial benefits in cooperation with small agricultural holdings. Couple of in-coming tourism agencies In Serbia do not include small farms in their offer.

Regarding the situation in the agribusiness sector, berry fruit has grown in the region, the situation with the raspberry is unstable. Small rural households process fruits (below 1%) in small quantities. Small producers are facing difficulties to meet the challenges: the problem of illegal sales related to difficulties in obtaining certificates (introduction of HCCP standards), insufficient quantity for the wider market, the need for technical support in production (engagement of

marketing experts, technologists). Competition in the market is strong, small farms are seeking for the new market niche. Sales channels are possible and product placement should be combined with tourism. Also, co-operatives represent a good mechanism for overcoming this problem, as they represent a collection center for processing and possess all necessary certificates for processing.

Interventions are needed at all three levels:

1. National (better legislation / hygiene / processing / placement)
2. Regional (linking with tourism)
3. Local (activities that can create new employment)

4. Example of good practice-Rural tourist household "Lazarevi konaci"

Host Milutin Tadic welcomed the participants and introduced their household. "Lazarevi konaci" are the first experimental household as training center for existing and potential service providers in rural tourism on the territory of the Zlatibor District. He started this family business 11 years ago. The property occupies an area of 5ha and has 12 beds for guest accommodation. They have no ambition for expansion their business since they do not have available work force to engage and are the only one dealing with rural tourism in their village. Most common are one-day visits to their household, and guests are coming back for food, delightful ambiance and socializing with hosts.

Conclusions from the Meeting:

- Associations and organizations for the implementation of planned activities supported within the SWG RRD projects should strengthen the capacities of their organizations and timely to define tasks with their team members to ensure the successful implementation and sustainability of their events / activities;
- Additional data related to tourism sector to be submitted;
- To deliver information regarding the amount of berry fruit (raspberry, strawberry, blackberry, blueberry, cultivated forest) processed in juices, sweet, wine etc.;
- Channels for placement of local products are possible and should be combined with tourism;
- For the agribusiness sector, the key problem may be legislation regulating this area (in respect to the Food Safety Act, which prescribes the HACCP standard and fulfillment of other sanitary and technical preconditions for legal placement of fruit products on the market).

Prepared by:

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