



ECORUTOUR
LIFE08 ENV/IT/000404



LIFE + Environment Policy and Governance

Project: ECORUTOUR “Environmentally COmpatible RUral TOURism in protected areas for a sustainable development at low emission of greenhouse gasses”

(LIFE+ 08 ENV/IT/000404)

“Collection of Guidelines for the classification and validation of agri-tourism enterprises at low emission of GHG for a better governance of the local public administrations.”

**linked to the project’s activity 3.4
(this study is composed by two reports
connected to the actions 3.4.3 & 3.4.4)**

June 2013



Content

Foreword	3
Base Documents.....	5
Detail analysis of documents	9
<i>Monitoring of the territory</i>	9
<i>Report on European instances of good practices</i>	11
<i>Analysis and processing of collected data in order to fine-tune the procedures to detect GHG emissions in the territory</i>	13
<i>Local analysis of the territory of the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains Park, Latium region</i>	15
<i>Budget</i>	17
<i>Creation in ARSIAL of an help desk for free consultancy, working inside Latium region, to give information on technical and administrative compliances in order to sink emissions in agritourism sector</i>	21
<i>Suggestions for local plans in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains (Latium region) territory</i>	24
<i>Realisation of an ecological agri-tourism model in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains, Latium region territory</i>	27
<i>Meeting in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains, Latium region territory. and meetings for the suggestion of action plans</i>	29
Reasoned inventory on the evaluation elements detected from the detailed analysis of documents.	31
<i>Features</i>	31
<i>Requirements</i>	32
<i>Additional considerations</i>	34
3.4.3. Guidelines for agri-tourism operators (in order to answer properly to the more appropriated standards)	37
<i>Partnership</i>	40
<i>Accreditation</i>	43
<i>Enhancement of the cultural and landscape's attractiveness trough a network approach for sustainable mobility</i>	46



<i>Integration with local community and territory</i>	50
<i>Creation of cultural events and manifestations linked to a development of the sustainable mobility and to emissions reduction</i>	54
3.4.4. Guidelines for local authorities operating in rural sector (in order to create the necessary assistance and to improve procedures)	58
<i>Enhancing public reply to sustainability</i>	62
<i>Toward short food chain supply in agri-tourism structures</i>	68
<i>Ecological classification and certification of agri-tourism enterprise</i>	72
<i>Commitment in the actions of local promotion with the agri-tourism enterprises</i>	78
Acknowledgements	82
Authors	82
Bibliography	83
ATTACHMENT A - Best Practice Instance. La garanzia di qualità certificata dal Consorzio Best of Sabina (The Quality Guarantee certified by the consortium Best of Sabina)	87
ATTACHMENT B - Best Practice Instance. Environmental Policy of the Comunità Montana del Velino	91



Foreword

This report refers to the activity 3.4 "Realisation of guidelines" of the LIFE+ project ECORUTOUR.

The detailed technical plan, approved by LIFE+ Authority and authorised to project prorogation states literally for this activity:

- Description: *"realisation of guidelines (to be sent to a mail list of users and issued on Internet in Italian and English on the project website, see action 4.1) on the reduction of GHG emissions in rural tourism for suppliers of services and for the public authorities, the action is subdivided in:*

3.4.1 guidelines for suppliers of general services of restaurant and accommodation (in order to answer properly to the more adequate standards);

3.4.2. guidelines for the local authorities operating in tourism sector (in order to create adequate assistance and improve the procedures);

3.4.3. guidelines for agri-tourism operators (in order to answer properly to the more adequate standards);

3.4.4. guidelines for the local authorities operating in agriculture sector (in order to create adequate assistance and improve the procedures);"

- Schedule: *"realisation of guidelines before the 42nd month"*

- Methods employed: *"The activity of guidelines realisation will be possible thanks to the compared analysis of: monitoring activities on the territory (actions 1.2 & 1.5); GHG emissions analyses in the different typologies of existing services (2.1 & 2.2); comparison with the good practices instances (1.4); taking into account the results of the cumulated experiences, thanks to the assistance services to the farms (3.1); the realisation of disseminating models (3.3); but especially thanks to the experiences acquired thanks to the interaction with the stakeholders through local seminars (4.3.1/2) and meetings for the suggestion of action plans (3.2). The results of all these activities will enable to obtain a deep knowledge on the theme, of its problematic and of the variables involved, giving the opportunity to formulate guidelines useful to the general development of tourist services (for RER) and to the specific sector of agri-tourism (for ARSIAL) toward the reduction of GHG emissions. The guidelines formulated will be destined to: 1. orienting the owners/managers on the best choices to take in the relationship economics/environment with detailed indications on the possible way to be followed*



(ethical purchasing groups, locavores, etc...); 2. to the public and managing authorities (illustration of best managing practices, definition of win strategies, suggestions for the adoption of subsidizing rules). Four mailing lists at European level will be created by the beneficiaries competent, in detail: 1) associations operating in the tourist sectors of restaurant and accommodation services; 2) local tourism managing authorities; 3) associations and operators of agri-tourism services; 4) local environmental and agricultural authorities. These lists will be utilised to send the related guidelines copies.

- Expected results: *“creation of two collections of guidelines addressed to tourist services operators and local managing authorities, issued both on paper (printed respectively in 5000 and 1000 copies) and on the website in Italian and English language. Creation of four mailing lists at European level, more detailed: 1) associations operating in the tourist sectors of restaurant and accommodation services; 2) local tourism managing authorities; 3) associations and operators of agri-tourism services; 4) local environmental and agricultural authorities. These lists will be utilised to send the related guidelines copies.*
- Indicators of progress: *“realisation, print, expedition and issue on the internet of the two collections of guidelines”.*



Base Documents

The documents utilised in order to write the present report were collected thanks to Ecorutour's project activities. In detail were analysed the results of the previous project actions:

- Action 1. Preparatory action, monitoring and analyses
 - 1.2.2. Territorial monitoring: study on the features of the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains, Latium region territory
 - 1.4. Report on European instances of good practices for each kind of services aimed by the project (restaurant / accommodation / mobility)
 - Methodology: elaboration and analysis of the collected data in order to define evaluation procedures of GHG emissions in the territory
- Action 2. Analysis and assessment of the effective production of CO₂
 - Local analysis of the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains, Latium region territory
 - 2.2. Budget: starting from the results of the LCA analyses, a comparison of the environmental-economic budget of the different kinds of typologies and of the travelling system will be elaborated, pointing out the strengths and weaknesses linked to the local contingent instances
- Action 3. Support and guidelines realisation
 - 3.1.2. Realisation in ARSIAL of a structure (desk office) for advising free service inside Latium region in order give information on technical and administrative acts needed to reduce emissions in agri-tourism sector
 - 3.2.2. Formulation of suggestions for local plans in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains, Latium region territory



- 3.3.2. Realisation of an ecological agri-tourism model in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains, Latium region territory
- Action 4. Dissemination and continuous information
 - 4.3.2. Meeting in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains, Latium region territory

In order to evaluate the document basic sources required to the present study, the reader is kindly required to see the reports already realised in the frame of Ecorutour project. They were delivered to the EU Environment Commission together with the attachments of the Mid Term report and Progress report, but they are almost all public downloadable from the website www.ecorutour.eu (in Italian language). The following reports were analysed:

- Study on the features of the tourist services of restaurant and accommodation and on the mobility of the territories of Delta del Po Reserve (Emilia-Romagna region) and of Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains Reserve (Latium region), September 2010.
- Report on European instances of good practices for tourist services of restaurant / accommodation / mobility at low emissions of GHG, September 2010.
- Report on evaluation procedures for GHG emissions related to tourist services of restaurant / accommodation / mobility in rural protected areas, August 2011.
- Report on the detection and quantification of the GHG emissions production linked to restaurant menu and to accommodation services in the selected structures of Delta del Po Reserve (Emilia-Romagna region) and of Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains Reserve (Latium region), July 2011.
- Report on the global economic-environmental budget of GHG emissions in the project areas, December 2011.
- 1st and 2nd Yearly Report on advising free services realised by the Service for Tourism and Quality of Tourist Areas of the Region Emilia-Romagna and ARSIAL, January 2011 and 2012.



- Report on the suggestions for local plans in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains (Latium region) territory, June 2013.
- Report on local meetings, May 2010
- Adjoined Report on the activity “The Travel of Transhumance” linked to the project activity 3.2., October 2011.

Moreover, a collection of “institutional” documents was carefully evaluated, both at official level of the EU, and of European and National Organisations of the Member States, and of recent instances of sustainable mobility realised into the EU. For information and didactical use we list below only the more important and those considered more useful for the realisation of the present report:

- EU Commission Decision of 9 July 2009, establishing the ecological criteria for the award of the Community eco-label for tourist accommodation service. Official Journal of the European Union L 198/57, 30.07.2009
- User’s manual for ECO-LABEL for tourist accommodation service, ISPRA, 2009 (In Italian)
- Agriturismo e Ittiturismo – linee guida per una gestione sostenibile, Edt. by WWF Ricerche e Progetti Srl, 2007.
- Linee guida per l'integrazione tra bilancio ambientale e sistema di gestione ambientale, Progetto LIFE IDEMS, Edt. by ERVET, Emilia Romagna, 2008.
- Linee guida per la replicazione del modello DINAMO, Progetto LIFE DINAMO, Edt by ENEA, 2012.
- LEGGE REGIONALE 2 novembre 2006, n. 14, Norme in materia di agriturismo e turismo rurale, BURL, 31 del 10.11.2006
- Disposizioni attuative ed integrative della legge regionale 2 novembre 2006, n. 14 (Norme in materia di agriturismo e turismo rurale), relative all’agriturismo, S.O. n°2 al B.U.R.L. n°22 del 10/08/2007
- LEGGE 20 febbraio 2006, n.96 - Disciplina dell’agriturismo. Gazzetta Ufficiale n. 63 del 16 marzo 2006.



- Rete "Fattorie del Panda" - Disciplinare per l'ingresso - Requisiti minimi delle strutture, Edt by WWF, 2011,
http://www.fattoriedelpanda.com/images/files/FdP_Requisiti_minimi_strutture.pdf
- Sustainable Tourism in Europe Approaches to Development, edited by Donald V. L. Macleod, Steven A. Gillespie, 2011
- Why sustainable agri-tourism is a market opportunity for the organic sector – a guide for farmers and other business. Organic Centre Wales, 2011
- “Norme per la riforma ecologica dell’amministrazione regionale, degli enti locali e degli enti pubblici della Regione Lazio” - Progetto di legge regionale del Lazio, 2007,
http://www.enricofontana.it/downloads/pdlriformaecologica_vers_def.pdf
- GPP Homepage, 2009, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/index_en.htm
- Disciplinare Agriturismi Bio-Ecologici – AIAB, 2009
- European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (ECST), Europarc, 1995
<http://www.european-charter.org/home/>.



Detail analysis of documents

We can summarise below the results useful for the realisation of the guidelines. They were gathered thanks to the analysis of the base documents previously detailed. The highlight of text parts of this chapter in red colour was intended for a better understanding of the results.

1.2.2. Monitoring of the territory

It synthetically results, from the analysis of the related document¹, that the study action was carried out on a mountainous territory in prevalence, of rich landscape and environment value with a population density of less than 0,1 inhabitants per square Km. There are low tourist flows (about 7/8,000 presences per year) with human presence which doesn't affect heavily the local environmental system. Tourism activity is extended almost all the year along concentrated during the week-ends and summer holidays. It resulted that **agri-tourism structures represent 30% of total tourist services present** (both for accommodation and restaurant services: hotel, B&B, holiday house, camping). Concerning the inquiries on the local environmental awareness among service's managers, it resulted that:

- Waste separation: in the area waste separated collection services were not implemented at the moment of the inquiries, but 58% of agri-tourism managers used to separate somehow the waste (vs. 14% of other tourist structures' managers);
- Low energy light bulbs adoption: they were utilised in the 83% of agri-tourism structures, versus the 93% of other tourist structures;

¹ Studio sulle caratteristiche dei servizi turistici di ristorazione e pernottamento e sulla mobilità del territorio del Parco del Delta del Po (Regione Emilia-Romagna) e del Parco del Gran Sasso e dei Monti della Laga (Regione Lazio), September 2010, <http://www.ecorutour.eu/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Studioservizi.pdf> .



- Solar or photovoltaic panels: they were present in 17% of agri-tourism structures, versus 32% of other tourist structures;
- Environmental sustainability awareness: it was present in 42% of agri-tourism managers, versus 57% of other tourist structures managers;
- Environmental label: 42% of agri-tourism managers knew something about, 25% of other tourist structures managers.

It results from these data, that owners of agri-tourism structures have a special consideration on the problems of waste separation and recycling but they seem more diffident on other themes like the utilisation of high efficiency light bulbs to reduce energy consumption or the utilisation of renewable energy production technologies, as it could be expected from the wide agriculture sector from which often these managers come. These perhaps could explain too why agri-tourism managers had more familiarity with environmental label system, notwithstanding their poorer environmental sustainability awareness. In fact voluntary labelling is traditionally linked in agriculture to the huge sector of organic farming, to which many agri-tourism structures adhere too.

Among the results of the inquiry, we register general complaint for the lack of tourist valorisation by public authorities, lack of public transport in Accumoli, lack of taxis, lack of proper tourist signage or the scarcity of information road signs, especially concerning those for tourist routes or trails. Many interviewed observed that existing routes and trails have no maintenance services, starting from vegetation cutting, wild plants threaten to close the paths. In practice it was stated that **it lacks a punctual and shared management of the territory by local authorities. A management aiming at enhancing focal and attractive points in a network of sustainable routes integrated to a communication and information system (signage, information boards, etc...).**



1.4. Report on European instances of good practices

From the analysis of the related document² (the report on European good practices concerning low GreenHouse Gas emissions and tourist service mobility's rationalisation), in total 39 instances of special interest result listed. They are linked to tourist services offering accommodation, restaurant or mobility facilities, but of whom only three are offered by agri-tourism structures.

1. The first one concerns both accommodation and restaurant sector and is represented by the project "Le Fattorie del Panda" (The Panda Farms) (<http://www.fattoriedelpanda.com>) promoted on 2003 by Federparchi and Anagratur. The project's purpose is **to make agri-tourism structures situated inside or immediately near to a regional or national Park as centres of testifying, knowledge and dissemination of the nearby reality and more detailed of the environment, history, culture and traditions of the territory.**
2. The second instance refers to restaurant sector with the case offered by the project "Le Delizie del Ticino" (Ticino's Delicacies - <http://www.mi-lorenteggio.com/news/6025>) promoted by the Ticino River Park of Lombardy Region and by Slow Food in order to create a food & beverage review at Zero Food Miles. Actually the best restaurants and agri-tourism structures operating inside the Park territory, listed by Unesco among the biosphere reserves, offer special dishes realised with the products labelled as "Ticino's Park controlled production" coming from low impact organic farming. Infact the producing farms are located inside an average distance of 40 km far from the structures participating to the review, with an associated sink of carbon dioxide emissions that otherwise would have been produced for farer deliveries. It is therefore stressed **the importance of quality production, of organic and certified origin and in particular at Zero Food Miles.**
3. The third instance refers too to restaurant sector, but connected to a tourism management "event-enhancing-style", with the case of the tourist promoting event "Cultural food &

² Rapporto sulla ricerca di buone pratiche – relativo all'attività progettuale 1.4, Realised by ArpaER DG SGI-SQE, October 2010, http://www.ecorutour.eu/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Report_-ricerca_buone-pratiche.pdf .



beverage festival: typical products at CO₂ 0 and at Km 0”

(http://www.agriturismiebedandbreakfast.com/blog_agriturismo_bb/turismo-enogastronomico-parma.asp) promoted by Parma Province. The festival interests three ancient towns, Trecasali, San Secondo and Fontevivo, and it is articulated in taste dates to discover territorial Zero Food Miles excellencies, coming from the immediate surroundings and immediately cooked and served to the consumers. There are many activities inside the environment too: cycle-tourism with rent services, trekking of the waterholes, 12 km to discover ancient farms, reeds groves, local paths and unpaved roads, guided by environmental experts illustrating wildlife, waterholes and springs. From this project stands out the importance of a shared organisation of tourist events integrated to enhance cultural-economic local systems.

Moreover from the global report could be highlighted other instances of good practice which, even if originated in other tourist structures, could be realised actually in agri-tourism sector too, in particular on mobility sector:

- The conglotation of all inclusive information concerning a territory inside an unique **webgate** (GREENWAYS ITALIA and PEREGRINANDO projects)
- The enhancement of culture routes to valorise landscape, economics and culture of a **territory** (Council of Europe Cultural Routes)
- **Greenways mobility networks inside a territory for car-free users**, utilising disused rails, borders of channels and rivers, old paths, etc...., or managing package tours of “Car-free tourism” (REVER/MED project, Car Free Tourism in Pongau region project, Belluno Dolomites National Park Sustainable mobility management project, Alpine Pearls II project and Adamello Brenta Park project).



1.5. Analysis and processing of collected data in order to fine-tune the procedures to detect GHG emissions in the territory

From the analysis of the related document ³, it results concerning project's purposes that a specific methodology of collection was realised by ARPA Emilia Romagna in order to gather all the data useful to LCA analysis (Life Cycle Assessment). The methodology assembles different check-lists for each existing tourist service typology (restaurant, accommodation, camping). There were no reasons to elaborate a specific check-list for agri-tourism structures, for whom was utilised the check-list related to restaurant and accommodations, utilising both in case the agri-tourism structure was offering the two services.

Among the specificities of agri-tourism sector of Laga Mountain territory emerged some distinctive features inside the selected structures compared to the planned check-list.

- Concerning the accommodation structure:
 - There were no structures with conditioned air
 - There were no structures equipped with elevator
 - There were no structures offering fitness/sauna/wellness commodities
 - The gas fuel is delivered by transport service
 - All the structures have green areas
 - The room cleaning is performed by internal resources

³ Relazione sul bilancio globale economico ed ambientale delle emissioni di GES nelle aree progettuali – relativo all'attività progettuale 1.5, Realised by ArpaER DG SGI-SQE, January 2011, http://www.ecorutour.eu/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/6.1.6_report-azione-1.5.pdf .



- Concerning restaurant structures
 - Cooking is realised exclusively inside the structures

It results therefore that the agri-tourism structures, compared to general tourist structures are significant for **a simplified technical base-equipment**, for **a greater integration with the environment**, and **for an internal management of activities** functional to the operative phase. These factors and especially the better environmental integration, could be of advantage to orient activity toward cultural, training and environment and wildlife re-discovering tourism, with a **greater exploitation of local resources**.



2.1.2. Local analysis of the territory of the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains Park, Latium region

From the analysis of the related document ⁴, it results that to realise the local analysis activity of Laga Mountains territory were utilised seven sample structures. Among these, only two are agri-tourism structures: the first utilised only for accommodation services, the second for restaurant services too. Both the structures offer their services permanently during all the year around.

Among the common features resulted in both the structures:

- An accommodation potential of a good average (23 – 36 bed places)
- They are open all the week around and not only during week-ends
- Low utilisation of extra or seasonal personnel
- Customers' number mean-low (130-150 overnight stays per year)
- Customers' provenience prevailing national
- Customers' mobility exclusively with own car
- Lack of photovoltaic or other renewable energies production technologies
- Central heating system
- Thermic window and wall insulation and
- Uncovered external car parking
- There is no pc-room facility (there is no network for fast internet service)
- There is no cycle rent service
- There is no transfer service from public bus stop

However sampled agri-tourism structures have a good level technical equipment and functional technologies and have a good integration with territorial values (high percent of Zero Food Miles products utilised, landscape integration, ets...). Part of the existing features enable to formulate the

⁴ Rapporto del rilevamento sulla quantificazione della produzioni di emissioni di GES legate alla produzione dei menù di ristorazione e dell'offerta di ospitalità dei servizi selezionati nel Parco del Delta del Po, Regione Emilia-Romagna e nel Parco del Gran Sasso e dei Monti della Laga, Regione Lazio – linked to project action 2.1, July 2011, http://www.ecorutour.eu/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/6.1.7_Report-azione-2.1.pdf .



presence of a **basic potentiality of the agri-tourism structures toward a higher customers' basin**, because the surveyed structures seem to be oversized respect to their present work volume.

Therefore **there are potentialities for enhancement, particularly toward foreign customers**. Presently **there is a marked lack in the promotion for foreign demand** by the centralised authorities, which should instead be properly potentiated.

In this context the self-adhesion to environmental voluntary label certification should play a specific role for agri-tourism structures or their gathering in quality networks to obtain qualified appointments by local organisms (as for the cited instance of the "Panda Farms").

In all the seven structures sampled (agri-tourism service too) results a **scarceness in terms of transport links for people and ware** among reception structures, services and the territorial tourist attractiveness points. The present scenery of reception in Laga Mountains area seems to be featured as a typology that could be defined as "oasis in the desert".

At managing level **subsidies and benefits are especially needed in order to realise service networks which should be managed at consortium, cooperatives or community level too**, with a greater power of economical negotiation and a lower environmental mile impact (for instance: shared shuttles for tourist transfer on call, network of deliver services for cleaning or technical maintenance or servicing or gas fuel transport, etc...).

In this way those technological and informatics services and facilities (as for recreational equipments' rent) should be provided and enhanced in order to improve the quality of customer's permanence.



2.2. Budget

According to the analysis of the related document⁵ concerning data on the selected tourist services of the project area Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains Reserve, a comparison could be build among the impact average of agri-tourism services versus general tourist services. This comparison is based on a sample too restricted to be of significant value, but could ensure an indication concerning environmental impact differences described in Global Warming (GWP) terms characteristics of agri-tourism sector and it is summarised in the table below (functional unit: 1 tourist per meal or per night)

	<i>trasport</i>	<i>energy</i>	<i>laundry</i>	<i>waste</i>	<i>water</i>	<i>total</i>
<i>General tourist services</i>						
Lo Scoiattolo	49	44	1	4	2	100
B&B Giannino	3	96		1		100
Villa Retrosi	69	26	1	4		100
La Vecchia Ruota	84	14		2		100
Ma-trù	99	1				100
<i>Mean values</i>	61	36	0	2	0	100
<i>Agri-tourism services</i>						
Agriturismo D'Apostolo	77	22		1		100
Agriturismo Grisciano	81	19				100
<i>Mean agri-tourism s. values</i>	79	21	0	1	0	100

Comparison on % of the potential environmental impact (GWP) among the selected general tourist services and the selected agri-tourism services of Gran Sasso & Laga Mountain area

Evaluating the above table, respect to general tourist services, **it seems that the most relevant environmental impact factor, due to transport, is strengthened** of about a good 18% and in particular for the mobilisation of customers to reach the structure destination. In this process the car is considered the most utilised vehicle with a mean of three passengers for each car, with a travel to

⁵ Report on the global economic-environmental budget of GHG emissions in the project areas – linked to project action 2.2, December 2011, http://www.ecorutour.eu/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Report-azione_2_2.pdf.



and a travel from. It results that, apart from the general tourist services, **the tourist provenience is exclusively from Italy.**

The second environmental impact factor, the energy consumed for the structure's activity, is less relevant than in general tourist services of a good 15%. This energy expenditure is fractioned for 86% in electricity and for 13% only in gas fuel. Consequently **it results a potentiality to cut down about 75% of the actual energy utilisation by promoting adoption of renewable energy provision** (solar cell or wind power, etc..).

As concerning comparison among restaurant services, taking as sample all the two project areas' services, it results that the agri-tourism service environmental impact, considered in the 5 LCA impact categories, is not particularly far from the mean of all the general tourist services (see table below).

	<i>Global warming</i>	<i>Ozone Layer Depletion</i>	<i>Photochemical oxidation</i>	<i>Eutrophication</i>	<i>Acidification</i>
<i>Sampled restaurant services</i>					
Ristorante Al Deserto	24,17	3,00E-06	0,028	0,025	0,071
La Vecchia Ruota	9,86	1,30E-06	0,011	0,011	0,03
Ma-trù	47,48	5,50E-06	0,057	0,045	0,129
<i>Mean values</i>	27,17	3,2667E-06	0,032	0,027	0,077
Agriturismo Grisciano	28,07	3,50E-06	0,031	0,028	0,085
<i>Comparison of LCA results among the project sample restaurant services and Grisciano agri-tourism enterprise</i>					

As concerning comparison among accommodation services, sampled only inside Laga Mountains area (see next table), it results that in agri-tourism services the environmental impact measured by the 5 LCA categories, is really less than in general tourist services especially in Global warming, Photochemical oxidation, Eutrophication and Acidification. But is more important in Ozone layer depletion.



	<i>Global warming</i>	<i>Ozone Layer Depletion</i>	<i>Photochemical oxidation</i>	<i>Eutrophication</i>	<i>Acidification</i>
<i>Accommodation services</i>					
B&B Giannino	102,5	2,97E-05	0,096	0,135	0,6
Villa Retrosi	7,9	1,27E-06	0,008	0,009	0,026
<i>Mean values</i>	55,2	1,5485E-05	0,052	0,072	0,313
<i>Agri-tourism services</i>					
Agriturismo D'Apostolo	21,2	2,78E-06	0,02	0,023	0,068
Agriturismo Grisciano	23,34	2,98E-06	0,023	0,02	0,068
<i>Agri-tourism s. mean values</i>	22,27	2,8795E-06	0,0215	0,0215	0,068

Comparison of LCA results among the Laga Mountains sample accommodation services and Grisciano agri-tourism enterprise

In environmental impact terms it results therefore a substantial equivalence among general restaurant services and agri-tourism services, instead, **concerning accommodation services the agri-tourism structures should have a particular advantage in terms of environmental impact.**

As already mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, however, these data are to be considered as purely indicative, waiting for a scientific confirmation, because of the scarce numeric consistency of the sample considered inside the budget analysis of the Ecorutour project.

In the same consideration is to be stressed that for agri-tourism services the second environmental impact factor, energy consumption, has an environmental and effective price in the restaurant service equivalent to the mean of comparable general services (restaurants), but it results less than about 50% in the accommodation services (compared to hotels, B&Bs, etc) as illustrated in the next table.



Service	presences/ meals/ year	Mean km per tourist	Electricity/ consumption / year	kg CO ₂ eq/tourist/ year	€/kg CO ₂ eq/tourist/ year	Functional unit
Ristorante Ma-trù	12000	590	8000	47	0,62	meal
Rist.La Vecchia Ruota	19000	95,5	33000	9,86	0,13	meal
Ristorate Al Deserto	10000	179	26297	24,17	0,32	meal
Mean values	13667	288	22432	27,01	0,36	meal
<i>Agriturismo Grisciano</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>11220</i>	<i>28,07</i>	<i>0,37</i>	meal
B&B Giannino	30	95,5	3000	103	1,35	overnight s.
Albergo Diff.Villa Retrosi	700	232	1500	7,92	0,1	overnight s.
Hotel Belfiore	4305	570	72146	52,83	0,69	overnight s.
Mean values	1678	299	25549	54,58	0,71	overnight s.
<i>Agriturismo D'Apostolo</i>	<i>500</i>	<i>232</i>	<i>3200</i>	<i>21,23</i>	<i>0,28</i>	overnight s.

Comparison of yearly Energy consumption in KgCO₂ and in € among sampled services and agri-tourism services (camping were not included because no comparable)

In the same way comparing environmental impact of a single meal or overnight stay, the overnight stay in an agri-tourism structure have an effective less price, as related in the next table.

Services	km/tourist or meal	kWh/tourist or meal	kg CO ₂ eq/tourist or meal	Functional unit
Ristorante Ma-trù	0,05	0,7	47	meal
Rist.La Vecchia Ruota	0,005	1,7	9,86	meal
Ristorate Al Deserto	0,018	2,6	24,17	meal
Mean values	0,02	1,67	27,01	meal
<i>Agriturismo Grisciano</i>	<i>0,15</i>	<i>5,61</i>	<i>28,07</i>	meal
B&B Giannino	3,18	100	103	overnight s
Albergo Diff.Villa Retrosi	0,33	3,14	7,92	overnight s
Hotel Belfiore	0,13	16,8	52,83	overnight s
Mean values	1,21	39,98	54,58	overnight s
<i>Agriturismo D'Apostolo</i>	<i>0,46</i>	<i>6,4</i>	<i>21,23</i>	overnight s

Comparison among indicators Km/tourist and kWh/tourist in the selected project structures and the two agri-tourism enterprises included, referring to the single meal or the overnight-stay impact

In these comparison it is important to consider that the most influencing factor affecting the values is due to the number of tourists per year, which affects strongly the final results.



3.1.2. Creation in ARSIAL of an help desk for free consultancy, working inside Latium region, to give information on technical and administrative compliances in order to sink emissions in agri-tourism sector

The action to give free help to agriturusims in order to decrease GHG emissions is presently at its 33rd month of activity, and it interested 46 structures thanks to the activity of a special operational team. The structures were previously contacted through a phone call and once obtained the agreement of the manager/owner, it was realised a meeting in the structure headquarter in order to give al the information useful to a decrease of the emissions.

The contacted structures were all inside the project area, and in the neighbouring areas and someone in the provinces of Rome and Viterbo.

The analysis of the activity was realised thanks to an internal coordination-meeting with the operational team, because the action itself is not so far ended and only two of the three reports⁶ planned are realised. From this coordination-meeting resulted in particular that during the service action great difficulties emerged for obtaining agreement by the agri-tourism enterprises managers/owners to put in action initiatives to reduce GHG emissions inside their own activity.

During the inspections, the operational team recognized that almost all the agri-tourism enterprises interviewed were equipped with low energy light bulbs and with highly thermal insulated windows and doors. The majority separated the waste and someone had solar cells to produce renewable energy.

⁶ 1st and 2nd Yearly Report on advising free services realised by the Service for Tourism and Quality of Tourist Areas of the Region Emilia-Romagna and ARSIAL, January 2011 and 2012 (not published on the project website).



75% of the managers/owners was aware of environmental problems and declared to be interested to reduce its own emissions. But coming up to the possibility of adhering by its own initiative to the voluntary environmental label Ecolabel, the majority of the interviewed subjects refused giving different reasons. In fact, apart from the agri-tourism enterprise Grisciano (for whom the operational team has forwarded the accreditation request) only to agri-tourism managers/owners declared to be aware on this option (both inside the consortium “Best of Sabina”) and almost all declared immediately that they were not able to adhere to the label for the moment. The reasons for this prevention were gathered in three great main arguments:

- The quota of renewable energy utilised to carry out the agri-tourism services is not reached with the technical plants present in the structure and there is no intention to change the actual electrical power supplier in order to obtain a green-power supply contract.
- There is an economic difficulty to cover even the low costs for the adhesion instance, the administrative duties and the yearly registration fee, due to the hard actual economical situation.
- The realisation of the adhesion’s dossier is very complicate and there is no time and personnel apt to collect all the documentation, the technical files and all the prescribed rules (personnel training, environmental programme, politics and procedures).

Therefore it results a problem of **lack of centralised assistance and orientation by the local authorities on this theme**. In fact, once it would be possible to obtain part of free technical assistance to realise and submit the Ecolabel accreditation request, some owners of agri-tourism structures would be interested to access to it. In particular in the case of little firms, or family managed firms, engaged in the farming production too, it is very hard or impossible to divert part of the internal human resources to fill up and realise all the required acts.

During the assistance service, contacts were held with the agri-tourism consortium “Best of Sabina” , which indeed represents in the frame of this study a best practice instance in the management of agri-tourism services and in the promotion at European level of agri-tourism.



The consortium was borne on February 2000 and it gathers 20 agri-tourism quality structures spread in Sabina territory. The consortium formula enables to have commercial facilities and to accede on the market thanks to the “Purchasing Groups” system for the products and the services useful to the operability of the consorted agri-tourism enterprises. Agreements were realised with specialised tour operators in The Netherlands; Belgium and Great Britain to promote the consortium accommodation services. Environmental fruition routes on foot and bike were created enabling to link some of the principal historic, artistic and cultural attractions of the Sabina area to the agri-tourism enterprises of the consortium. Maps and tourist charts of the routes were realised in collaboration with IGM (Army Geographic Service) and CAI (Alpine Italian Club). The consortium is ruled thanks to the issue of a specific own policy chart gathering the fundamental compulsory and optional requirements, which guarantees the quality of the general tourist service and whom is certificated to be always held by the accommodation structures adhering to it (see the attachment A “The Quality Guarantee certified by the consortium Best of Sabina”). This Policy Chart was selected at European level and adopted by the European Federation of Rural Tourism “Eurogites”, to which Best of Sabina adheres first and sole instance of Latium.

Moreover one of the enterprises of the consortium was the first to ask and obtain Ecolabel trade mark in Latium Region.

During the meeting with the consortium operators, a serious default of promotion and technical help was detected by the local authorities to these initiatives, notwithstanding the involvement of political representatives in the meetings and conferences specially organised in order to find collaboration in the public administrations. Up-today all the consortium organisation was developed and actively realised with only the economic and technical resources owned by the adhering structures.



3.2.2. Suggestions for local plans in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains (Latium region) territory

From the analysis of the related document⁷ and referring to the project's area, some failures result clearly by the public authority in charge of the sustainable mobility sector. These are textually listed below:

- The public mobility systems in the area are inadequate
- The management and network valorisation of the tourist routes is needed
- Public and institutional actions for a better mobility are absent
- There is no central planning for the tourist offer

To these considerations may be added other two critical points resulted both from the local planning on sustainable mobility suggestions and from the previous report on the global economic-environmental budget of GHG emissions in the project areas (action 2.2), which ought to be once again highlighted:

- The most important factor of environmental impact is due to transport
- The second most relevant factor of environmental impact is given by the energy utilised for carrying out the activity

It should be stressed that these two critical points are concerned to both the project's areas environmental balance and it should be mentioned that their importance is evident for the realisation of these guidelines too.

⁷ Report on Suggestions for local plans in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains (Latium region) territory, June 2013 (www.ecorutour.eu).



In fact when evidenced that the most important factor of environmental impact in a structure for tourist accommodation or restaurant is due to the transport of the customers to and from the structure itself, it results that **the tourist sustainable mobility factor seems to be of preliminary evidence in order to decrease GHG emissions in this same structure.**

To this consequence also the secondary problems connected, whose importance seemed limited to tourist mobility, should indeed be considered with peculiar attention in the goal of achieving a decrease of GHG emissions in agri-tourism services, as for instance the valorisation of tourist routes and the management and centralised network planning of the tourist offer.

With reference to this last mention, it should be stressed that the suggestions for a sustainable mobility collected into the related report ⁸, gain importance into the framework of an active reduction of the GHG emissions for agri-tourism services too.

Those suggestion, which we summarise below, were:

- Realisation of a common welcoming webgate, as information point and tourist demand focus point
- Realisation of a “systematisation” of the various existing routes and paths
- Realisation of a durable event of ecotourism.

Obviously the concretisation of these suggestions as they were planned, aiming at an enhancement of the tourist sustainable mobility, could not be made in the same way for a reduction of GHG emissions in agri-tourism sector, but it should be further fine tuned and finalised to this goal.

But a special attention should be paid at the conclusions made at the end of each of those suggestions, and in particular:

⁸ Report on Suggestions for local plans in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains (Lazio region) territory, June 2013 (www.ecorutour.eu).



- To the problem connected to the individuation of the body in charge for the realisation of the webgate, suggested as a local authority or a producers' consortium
- To the eventuality of a mixed form of management public-private aiming at the valorisation of the existing routes and the enhancement of adequate information to develop awareness into tourist/customers on GHG emissions problems
- To the need of a specific competence as facilitator expert in communication in order to strengthen cohesion among the different social parts active in the project to create a durable tourist event.

In conclusion it should be paid attention on the fact that after the priority mobility factor of intervention, **it follows at the second place the intervention on the reduction of electric power needs.** This target too should be developed and brought to the attention both to agri-tourism managers/owners and to local authorities thanks to suggestions of intervention which will be expanded in the following chapter "Reasoned inventory on the evaluation elements detected from the detailed analysis of documents".



3.3.2. Realisation of an ecological agri-tourism model in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains, Latium region territory

In the project the realisation of a specific report was not planned for this action. The action started from the selection of a structure already existent in the territory among those already chosen inside action 1.3: the Grisciano agri-tourism enterprise, which is in the locality with the same name of Accumoli Municipality. The choice was determined on two factors: a good performance in the release of emissions (stated by the evaluation obtained in the check list of action 2.1.2) and the good attitude given by the structure to be involved. The adaptation of the structure was realised on the aptitude of the service to the criteria stated by the article 25 (ecological agri-tourism) of the Regional law 2 November 2006 n.14 "Rules concerning agri-tourism and rural tourism" and in particular in compliance with the criteria for Ecolabel mark release. The structure was supported thanks to the advice service given by the work team of the Action 3.1.2., which after various inspections and advising visits, examined the conformity to the criteria above mentioned and instructed the owner to let those structural and operative work be made which were needed (in particular; installing low emission light bulbs, tap flow regulators, dual-flush toilets; collecting documents for Ecolabel; redaction of environmental objectives, and monitoring planning; environmental policy, leaflet and communication plan for the tourists, etc...). Once the structure adapted and all the documentation collected, the Ecolabel trademark release request was issued to the Italian Ecolabel ecOaudit Committee on 14 June 2011. Notwithstanding formerly concluded, the work was resumed with more advice actions to the model structure in order to ease the label approval proceeding. In fact on 6 March 2013 the official charged for the request in ISPRA asked for an integration of the documents presented concerning some secondary points of less importance but in particular on the absence of certificate of use and occupancy.

As concerning the secondary points it was immediately provided for, but for the certificate of use and occupancy it was necessary to request and obtain a suspension of the proceeding till the delivery of this document was realised, after various delays. These delays were due to the fact that



all the original file for the certificate of use and occupancy had to be re-collected, since the certificate itself was missing, and due to the slowness of the local authorities to give the missing documents of own competence.

Definitively the experience obtained in this action enabled to check various points of interest for the realisation of the guidelines:

- Local authorities ought to help agri-tourism structures in the technical operations needed to prepare requests to obtain Ecolabel, giving advice if possible thanks to their own technical resources
- This is subdue to the preliminary condition that local authorities be aware of Ecolabel norm and have adequate human resources
- Unfortunately it was demonstrated that often these two conditions are missing, especially at provincial level
- It was moreover detected that, concerning territorial governance, in marginal areas the separated collection of waste is not yet serviced and the fact that the structures aiming at Ecolabel have to send a certified mail of request in order to have this service, develops factors of scarce collaboration in the relationships with local authorities.
- however it is therefore capital for local authorities to ease the delivery of all the needed documents, helping thus all the bureaucratic requirements of the accommodation structures, in their own interest.



4.3.2. Meeting in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains, Latium region territory and 3.2. meetings for the suggestion of action plans

The analysis of the related document ⁹, is evidenced on the results of the meeting held in Amatrice (Rieti) on 23 April 2010, in the headquarter of the Polo Agroalimentare of the national Park of Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains.

The seminar was attended by various local stakeholders, delegated by the local authorities, companies and tourist sector.

During the debate resulted problems of coordination and communication among the various territorial bodies and particularly resulted the following base arguments:

- the need to organise a common action among all the local stakeholders in order to enhance sustainable tourism in the territory
- interventions to be carried out should not involve new infrastructures, but the systems of global territorial management
- the need to start to support a sustainable management of the territorial services organized and realised at local level (thanks to structures, resources and organisations of the own territory)
- to support a sustainable tourism development strictly linked with a biodiversity of the offer of the existing structure's typology and characteristic, collaborating to present an ample and differentiated scenery of the productive, cultural and environmental utilisation of the territory

⁹ Report on local meetings, related to project action 4.3.1/2, May 2010,, http://www.ecorutour.eu/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Rapp_Seminari.pdf .



Moreover it should be taken in account that some of the problems pointed out, were already discussed and analysed in the section concerning the suggestions of sustainable mobility (e.g. the “systematisation” of the various existing routes, and the creation of a single web gate for tourist orientation) and they are no more examined in this chapter.

The results of the meeting held for the other project area, the Po river Delta Park, appear not to be relevant in order to be realised in this local context, they were in fact suggestions to strengthen the specific attractiveness of the territory: development of cycle routes, river routes, public mobility and suggestions aiming at decrease the insularity inside that Park created by the high traffic of vehicles.

As concerning the local coordination aimed at developing suggestions of sustainable mobility, two meetings were held: the first on 19 May 2011 in the headquarter of the Polo Agroalimentare of the national Park of Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains at Amatrice; the second in the headquarter of Amatrice Municipality on 30 August 2011. both the meetings were attended by delegates of local authorities, farms and agro food companies, NGOs and associations. From these meetings were developed the directives for the sustainable mobility event “The Travel of Transhumance” and probable point of collaboration among the stakeholders of the productive farmers and cattle risers local and other regions world. But were pointed out indeed themes of interest for agri-tourism sector too, apart from their direct connection in this event tourist offer, functionally to their own features of environmental compatibility.

In conclusion, it seems that orientations toward coordination and enhancement of specificity were borne, whom may be involved into the agri-tourism sector only limitedly to a development of cooperatives gathering the different structures, suggested for instance with an action at local level to implement a common candidature to Ecolabel of all the existing agri-tourism services trough a joint pull of resources for the compilation of the different files; or the call to valorise specific diversity among agri-tourism services in order to grow an area attractiveness which could be linked to round accommodation tourist packets involving different structures aiming at deepen the knowledge of different cultural and landscapes traits of the territory.



Reasoned inventory on the evaluation elements detected from the detailed analysis of documents

At the end of the examination of the documents produced during the activities of monitoring, local coordination, and assistance realised in the project LIFE+ Ecorutour, the specific features and the requirements detected are summarised as follows.

Features

First of all it should be highlighted that agri-tourism enterprises represent 30% of all the tourist services existent in the project area.

Among the common features detected, it seems that agri-tourism enterprises could be differentiated especially for a more simplified technical equipment than general tourist services, for a greater integration with the environment and for an almost internal management of the activities needed to the service of the structure, without or with a limited aide to external services.

Moreover, the sampled structures are oversized respect to their actual turnover.

Another detected feature is represented by the fact that customers come only from Italy, there is in fact a great lack in the promotion of the tourist offer abroad.

In terms of environmental impact in restaurant sector it seems to be a significant equivalence of effect among agri-tourism services and general services. Instead in the accommodation and overnight-stay sector it should result an evident gain (less environmental impact) in the functional performances of agri-tourism



enterprises. Electricity supply, in particular, should have an environmental and economic price lower than 50% (matched up to those of hotels, guesthouse, B&Bs, etc...)

However the most important environmental factor is due to transport and this is further deepened because of the specific typology of localisation at “leopard spot” and of the problems connected to this “insularity” of placement of the agri-tourism enterprises in the territory. Both for all the sampled companies but specifically for the agri-tourism enterprises there is an insufficiency in the transport of people and goods among the accommodation structures, the service structures (bus stops and railways stations) and the territorial tourist focal points. The actual scenery of tourist accommodation in Laga Mountains area seems to be featured in a typology that could be defined “oasis into the desert”, which compels the potential tourist to utilise his own car.

The second most important factor of environmental impact is due to the power utilised to carry out the activity, but however this impact for agri-tourism enterprises is less influential than in general tourist services of about 15%: This expenditure of energy could be fractioned for about 86% in electric power and only for 13% in gas fuel

In the framework of the relationships with local authorities it was stressed out the need of a careful and shared management of the territory aiming at enhancing tourist focal points and attractiveness in a network of sustainable routes linked to efficient systems of information and communication (sign boards, etc...)

Requirements

In order to save emissions and for a more rational utilisation of the existent resources, once verified the existence of a basic potential of the agri-tourism services toward a greater turnover, it is needed to adequate



the amount of yearly presences to the effective capability of the structures, in the framework of a larger sustainability of the area too.

There are therefore possibilities of a valorisation, specifically toward abroad customers, through promotional actions and aids both from the agri-tourism managers and from local authorities.

The high environmental value (landscape, natural and farming biodiversity) of the territory and especially the better environmental integration of agri-tourist structures, are a good point of ease in order to turn the activity toward a tourism oriented to culture, training, environment and nature (re)discovery, with a larger utilisation of the local resources, along the guidelines of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (ECST), along with the suggestion of Ecotourism, the recommendation for the implementation of the European Strategy on Biodiversity for 2020 and in agreement with the long term vision of European Commission on Biodiversity for 2050, which strategically put on the market biodiversity as "life insurance" and "natural capital" and as an essential services' resource to mobilise economy.

It results therefore the need to transform the agri-tourism structure located in a national or regional park or in its neighbouring in a point of evidence, of knowledge and dissemination of the surrounding reality and more specifically of the environment, history, culture, traditions of the territory (CETS).

This could be realised thanks to: the creation of cultural routes to valorise landscape, economy and society of a territory; the realisation of network for green mobility for no-car users; the unification of all the information concerning a territory in only one web gate; the shared organisation of integrated tourist events for economic and cultural promotion of local systems, etc....

Instead, into the framework of the direct decrease of GreenHouse Gasses emissions in the agri-tourism structure, it was demonstrated that the factor of mobility was of capital importance in order to reduce GHG emission in the structure itself. Consequently there is evidence that both direct valorisation of sustainable mobility and secondary action previously suggested (e.g. valorisation of tourist sustainable mobility routes



and planned and centralised management of the tourist sustainable offer) should be considered with special attention in the purpose to save of GHG emissions too.

In this framework a specific role for agri-tourism structures plays also the self-provision of voluntary environmental certification labels or their gathering in networks of quality characterisation in order to propose services certified by local authorities. This last subject is strictly linked to quality production, organic farming and appellation of origin, but especially to the Zero Food Miles issues.

At managerial level are especially needed aids and special terms to build network of services, which could be managed at consortium level or by cooperatives too, as in th mentioned case of the Consortium Best of Sabina.

The co-participation of more services in a shared level could be of ease to give optional services for the tourists, to reduce emissions problem in transport (realisation of shuttle services or bicycle rent or luggage transfer services), to decrease utilisation of electric power (realisation of wind generators or solar cells or cogeneration CHP), to purchase goods and service for the structure's service (laundry, cleaning services, gas fuel transport), to obtain environmental quality labels (EMAS, Ecolabel) with easier procedures.

All these involve also awareness by the local authorities on rules and norms connected to environmental voluntary certification and that they have enough and proper human resources in order to aid documental accomplishments to access to the certification processes, thus helping the requirements of the accommodation structures.

Additional considerations



In the process of implementation of the guidelines to decrease greenhouse gasses emissions in agri-tourism sector, the works already realised were taken into account too, especially those aiming at enabling managers to answer properly to the more adequate standards. This particularly in the framework of the European programmes, as for the instance developed in the frame of an Equal programme and edited by WWF “Agriturismo e Ittiturismo – Linee guida per una gestione sostenibile” (Agri-tourism and Fishing-tourism – Guidelines for a sustainable management – In Italian on http://www.wwfrp.com/wwfrp/pubblicazioni/Attica2006-07_Linee%20Guida.pdf), or the work granted by The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, edited by Welsh Government and Organic Centre Wales “Why sustainable agri-tourism is a market opportunity for the organic sector” (http://www.organiccentrewales.org.uk/uploads/agri-tourisme_july11.pdf).

Both these publications analyse the question of a sustainable management in agri-tourism structures and suggest to adopt technologies and practices based on the following key-points:

- to utilise on preference renewable energies
- to keep structures, technologies, building materials and furniture traditionally linked with the place, utilising mainly bio-materials
- to adopt natural ventilation and green shading
- to ensure the perfect insulation of structure and thermal plants mainly with product of natural origin
- to bring sunlight into dark areas by the use of sun pipes
- to utilise electric devices of “A” class, timers and automatic regulation systems
- to turn down radiators and boilers service temperature
- to switch-off electrical devices and not leave them on standby
- to create green areas with autochthonous plants in order to enhance local biodiversity
- to reduce waterproofing of external grounds
- to rationalise and teach waste recycling



- to use low environmental impact cleaning products and plan maintenance schedules
- to utilise thermal insulated windows and doors
- to reduce water fluxes in bathrooms and kitchen with proper devices
- preferably do not use single-portion or disposable products
- to change towels and linen only on request
- to valorise awareness on the local and traditional culture utilising Zero Miles foods and other products and providing adequate information on them
- to encourage guests to plant a new autochthonous tree with his name in the territory
- to re-think transport policies to reduce emissions
- to train the personnel and to give proper communication to the guests on the environmental policy adopted and to publicise the own sustainable policy
- to certificate its own enterprise with an environmental quality label

Because of the high quality of these works already issued, it was considered useless to duplicate here suggestions and guidelines already made, but the interested reader is encouraged to a direct lecture.

This work was thus focused on the decrease of greenhouse gasses emissions in agri-tourism enterprises thanks to strategies and politics of general management in the enterprise, considered inside the full territorial context in which she is inserted.



3.4.3. Guidelines for agri-tourism operators (in order to answer properly to the more appropriated standards)

In creating guidelines designed for agri-tourism sector concerning the decrease of greenhouse gasses emissions it is to be considered with care the factor of the specific environmental quality connected to the characteristic farming feature of the enterprises. Besides, the guidelines¹⁰ already issued in this project for the operators of generic restaurant and accommodation services, are perfectly fit for the agri-tourist sector too and their consultation is advisable for technologies and referring norms yet pertinent.

The agri-tourism enterprise is by itself a factual model of environmental respect, because to finalise an existing structure of farming origin to an accommodation or restaurant reception service represents almost always an example of landscape preservation. Moreover the multifunctional nature of the agri-tourist structure allows to meet and to merge in only one enterprise different functional destinations, with a save on the base energetic costs which would have been larger if destined to specific structures with separated functions.

But it is to be considered that often agri-tourism enterprises, frequently family-run, just in reason of this multifunctional feature, could have a very limited farming production, which would not be able to enable alone an adequate financial management. The partitioning of the manpower between farming production activity and tourist accommodation activity is largely unbalanced in favour of this latter.

To this must be added the specific conformation picture of the mean Italian farm which has in average less than seven hectares of extension. Thus farming in agri-tourism enterprises is often extensively featured,

¹⁰ Creation of guidelines for service providers (in order for such providers to respond adequately to the most appropriate standards) and for local authorities (in order to create the necessary assistance and to improve procedures). Life+ Ecorutour project, www.ecorutour.eu



without intensive crop rising technologies, horticultural or grain culture, but they have little olive groves, vineyards or pastures with small animal husbandry, poultry, and vegetables sufficient to stay into the norms of self-production. Very often they are farms listed into the organic production register and they are inserted into a high quality environmental context. Clearly the problems of emissions reduction for the farming and husbandry industry usually do not involve or very marginally the agri-tourism enterprise, and therefore they were not considered in the realisation of this study.

From the analysis carried out in the previous chapters stands out the need to go in the direction of an integrated management of the territorial resources, connecting sustainability with social participative mechanisms in order to reduce emissions for all the local community.

Once established that the larger environmental impact is due to mobility and that with the present state of economic situation there is a very scarce possibility that institutional bodies could operate creating new infrastructures for public transport, it is therefore necessary to call for joint venture actions of mixed public-private origin and searching for cooperative efforts in order to have a proper operational ability at territorial level.

The agri-tourism manager/owner has not the power to determine its own guest's choices in matter of mobility to and from its enterprise, even if he could suggest to use the public transport services as much as possible, thanks to a proper information.

But a significant number of agri-tourism enterprises, associated among themselves thanks to some kind of cooperative tie, would be able to support a more sustainable approach for the guests thanks to the creation of shared transport services and it could be able to reduce also the mobility of goods thanks to organised purchase for centralised services or purchasing groups.

If these consociated enterprises find some sort of joint-venture public-private with local authorities, gathering NGOs, cultural organisations, and the territory typical production stakeholders, they could start local governance programmes on the territory that could be able to decrease substantially greenhouse emissions and at the same time enhance sustainability in a very active way.



As could be seen the most effective ability in reduction of emissions is joint to the greatest skill in involving the largest number of stakeholders in the community.

But is of capital importance that the initiative starts from the enterprises, trough proper operative tools which are illustrated in the following chapters.



Partnership

The creation of a local consortium among agri-tourism enterprises allows to constitute a group with more negotiating power both from the organisation, market and governance's points of view, All this could influence greenhouse gasses emission decrease:

- from the organisation point of view there are special advantages with the centralised purchase of shared services for:
 - management consultancies (tax& fiscal consulting, administrative duties, service planning, legal advice, etc...
 - tourist promotion (publicity and booking at European level, multi-language websites, brochures, maps and charts, environmental and cultural information, joining up networks, etc.)
 - environmental and quality certification (Emas, Ecolabel, regional and private quality labels, ECST, etc.)
- from the market point of view it enables:
 - to purchase goods thanks to organised purchasing groups (cleaning products, food, etc.)
 - to purchase services (power, laundry, catering, green maintenance, sewage disposal) with advantage of greater economies of scale.
 - to obtain services for insurance, financial, legal issues, etc. with larger benefit for individual save
 - to organise participated services for the valorisation of the consorted agri-tourism enterprises (tourist transfer, guided visits, rent of facilities for environmental fruition; bicycles, horses, canoes, etc.) or also the mobilisation of guests with shuttle busses
- from the governance point of view it enables:



- to acquire negotiating weight in the local administration's democratic and consultative phases
- to have the opportunity to act with heavy influence in the environmental governance, in the business and economic development, in tourist promotion, in the decision making for the choices in infrastructure mobility
- to take part in the public debates, meetings, conferences in order to contribute to dissemination of awareness toward environmental and emissions reduction thematic.

In terms of emissions reduction, positive effects could be obtained from all the above mentioned potentialities. Centralisation of consultancy services enables a good reduction in the number of travels of the operators toward the different consultants which could organise themselves near the headquarter of consortium and good part of the documents could be exchanged on the Consortium's web. The same argument is suitable for tourist promotional system that in this way could reach a greater customer number and in many languages, reducing the desk information work of the various enterprises to only one organisation. Environmental quality certification could be released at consortium level, reducing here too, travels among different enterprises and technicians and consultants and certificating bodies.

Centralisation of suppliers is of special importance in order to reduce GHG emissions thanks to organisation of a purchasing group and the utilisation of only one area's supplier. The more the number of consorted enterprises, the more would be the emissions save.

The organisation of common services for leisure valorisation would enable to develop guest utilisation of sustainable routes substituting conventional car traffic with a great sink of the emissions and would enable common transfer of the guests to and from accommodation structures. Just remember that guest travels could affect almost 75% of total emissions production, as already stated.

A heavier political influence due to partnership among agri-tourism enterprises could have a huge potential on the reduction of GHG emissions, tanks to the orientation toward more sustainable choices decision making.



Moreover the realisation of a local partnership among agri-tourism enterprises enables the creation of a scenery of receptions diversified for typology, style, features, level and localisation in the territory, enlarging thus the characters of “biodiversity” linked to the specific tourist offer and allowing to create networks for pilgrimage, cultural routes, tourist routes on foot, on bicycle, on saddle.

These allows also a possible increase of the attractiveness potential for guests coming from abroad and for specific typologies of holidays (religious, study, knowledge, wildlife) and a subsequent increase of the turnover that would be obtained not very easy by a single enterprise.

Presently inside the multicoloured scenery of Italian agri-tourism sector there are various instances of partnership among agri-tourism enterprises, only some are listed below:

- Consorzio Agriturismo Mantovano, founded on 1998 by 14 young she-farmers, today it gathers 250 farms and agri-tourism enterprises - <http://www.agriturismomantova.it/Default.asp>
- Consorzio Best of Sabina, founded on 2000, ruled by a specific Policy Chart of quality criteria - <http://www.bestofsabina.it/criteri.php>
- Consorzio Agriturismi di Ferrara, particularly careful on environmental valorisation - <http://www.agriturismiferrara.com/agriturismo-ferrara.html>
- Consorzio Agriturismi Enna, founded on 2006, <http://www.consorzioagriturismienna.it/home.html>
- Consorzio Agriturismi di Parma – founded on 2012, <http://www.parmagriturismi.it/>

Partnership among agri-tourism enterprises creates solidarity and restrains negative competitiveness among the structures of a territory, enabling to enhance production strategies, decrease emissions and increase the sustainability of the community.



Accreditation

In the last years there was a growing ask by consumers for ecological products and/or at low environmental impact. The “green products” formula gained quickly all market sectors, from food to baby products,... to those for cleaning and hygiene. Tourist sector too was affected and there are now on the market holiday offers and receptions at low environmental impact too.

In Italy this offer was developed mainly on the North where the market tendencies are more oriented to abroad tourist. But the real problem for the consumer/tourist, as for for the consumer of food or cleaning products is always how to distinguish between real “green” and false “green” or “greenwash” products.

In fact apart from the accreditation by environmental quality labels, is no possible for the consumer to distinguish among products realised with unscrupulous practices not really sustainable and those studied and created in a full environmental respect.

Certification licensed by an environmental quality label is the only way for agri-tourism operators to guarantee properly the sustainability of their own services to the guest and it represents the only way to guarantee on the market their own respect and environmental quality.

Quality is one of the most important values that the guest is waiting to find and is very important that this should be ensured through specific criteria of management, maintenance systems, services practices and a continuous monitoring of the enterprise management.

In the case of organic farming there are specific bodies for accreditation which perform the survey of the production, and in an agri-tourism enterprise they could be useful to certificate its own farming products. Instead, to certificate the tourism business service offered by the same agri-tourism enterprise is required to recur to a centralised body which is able to license the enterprise with an environmental quality label in compliance to the accommodation services offered to specific criteria and to a proper environmental policy.



In Europe there are various body for accreditation whit environmental label for accommodation services (Ecolabel, ECEAT, Nature's Best, The Green Key, etc..). In Italy presently operates the centralised body Ecolabel Italia, whose label has an European meaning. For the services inside parks and environmental reserves it is possible to adhere to the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (ECST). AIAB offers a quality label for Bio-ecologic (organic) agri-tourism services, which has only a meaning at national level. In particular AIAB's Policy Chart for "Agriturismi BioEcologici" tries to give pragmatism and integration inside agri-tourism business through a corpus of criteria considering different themes: production activity, didactical and naturalistic services, environmental and natural resources protection, accommodation structures, equipment and accommodation services, tourist services, restaurant and sale service, transport and mobility. ICEA Turismo Ecologico e Biologico (Biological and Ecological Tourism) associated with ATR (Italian Association for Responsible Tourism) and EARTH (European Alliance for Responsible Tourism and Hospitality) started a voluntary accreditation service designed for Agri-tourism enterprises, B&Bs, Hotels and Campings aiming at reducing energy utilisation, a rational utilisation of water, waste reduction and selected collection.

Among the advantages offered by the accreditation with an environmental quality label there are:

- lower operational costs through greater technical efficiency in the plants and greater staff awareness
- attraction of new customers
- improvement of the service quality
- environmental improvement through resources save
- waste reduction
- fulfilment of customers' expectations for a greener service
- improvement of the enterprise's public image
- improvement of the customer's experience
- improvement of the benefits for the local community



- natural environment valorisation
- reduction of traffic and pollution.

Data obtained tank to the experience of ARPA Emilia-Romagna¹¹ show that a in mean-sized agri-tourism enterprise the spare of resources obtained, thanks to the systematisation of the procedures needed for Ecolabel accreditation, enabled a yearly reduction of about 21% of electrical power, 38% of heating power, 31% of water and about 12% of waste production. Besides these noticeable saves, the economical gain consented to cover the accreditation fees.

The saves obtained in terms of energy and water, in compliance to the standards needed for the accreditation, besides the noticeable effects on emission reduction, were recognised to have evident economical benefits for the enterprise's management.

¹¹ H. Tenaglia "Regolamento Ecolabel ed etichette di tipi I-II-III", Ecorutour training course, Ferrara 25.02.2010



Enhancement of the cultural and landscape's attractiveness through a network approach for sustainable mobility

Another strategy aiming at sinking greenhouse emissions considers the agri-tourism enterprise inside its own territorial boundaries, linked to them in an organic and functional way. In fact it should be recalled that are very few the instances when the guest of an agri-tourism enterprise does not visit the surrounding environmental context and stays for all his permanence passively inside the structure without wandering around in the territory utilising its services or buying its products.

We already saw that transport and mobility of people and goods affect preponderantly on the emissions quotas and it is no wrong considering that the operator aiming to reduce these quotas should try to orient its own customer to explore around in a sustainable way.

The more advisable approach is to enter an already existing network of sustainable routes or to create a fully new one and to persuade customers to visit it.

Sustainable routes' networks consists in a system of routes linking and discovering thematic focal points of a given territory which could play a role of attractiveness for the visitor.

Sustainable routes could be travelled on foot (paths), in bicycle (cycle lane), horseback (bridle path), in canoe (waterways), or they could be of mixed nature. A network of routes enables a diversification of the package and an enrichment of the local attractiveness, rising thus the emotional and cultural demand of the tourist.



A focal point could be represented by a specific feature (thematic) of the territory, the natural environment, the landscape, the history, the religion, the local culture (arts, buildings, crafts, farming, agro-food, cooking, etc...). Each route should be focused on a specific theme, but a network could be grounded on different themes.

It is strongly advisable that the selected themes should be highly specific and typical for the considered territory and that they should be deeply rooted in the inhabitants awareness. This is important especially when it is the first time that a route is designed, in order to obtain the collaboration of all the stakeholders.

As a rule, however is important to try to trace up in the local history themes of high importance in the past and vestiges of really existed routes. In the nature-focused themes, a good hint could be to try to trace up and put in evidence trails and points of passage of the wildlife animals, or areas of concentration of special or rare plants and to suggest specific watching or discovery routes during the various seasons.

In the planning phase, the various components of a route should be considered:

- the trace (creation of a new-one, restoration of old mobility systems, viability check, licenses and authorizations to access particular areas or for the clearing of the existing vegetation, evaluation of the passage risks, etc.)
- equipment (signals, notice boards, realisation of leisure facilities as pic-nic areas, protection fences, jetties, benches, bird-watching huts, etc...)
- information (realisation of proper documents with data, possibly multi-language informative, images on the selected theme in general and in particular on the focal points, realisation of documents on general sustainability, documents on the specific issues of the route, as: length, difficulty degree and slopes, accessibility, etc..)
- publicity (localisation of proper promotional and enhancing information, possibly in various languages, thanks too notice boards, websites, brochures, maps and charts, etc..)



It is to be reminded that the action is not self-contained only in the design and realisation of the route, but that is absolutely important to ensure also its full and durable operational and therefore to plan who and how during the times will ensure the service and the maintenance not only of the route itself, but of all its components (equipment, information and publicity too). This should be clearly considered during the planning phase in order to avoid problems in the future and to reduce costs for service and maintenance.

It should also be considered that a bad experience on an ill-serviced route have a negative effect on guest's disposition to come back for other holidays or to further publicise the place among friends and acquaintances.

The creation from the beginning of a route involves multiple actions for planning and realisation that could be of complicated nature (in relation to the length, kind and articulation of the course too) specially if it is inserted into a network. It is advisable therefore to seek collaboration with all the community stakeholders (local administrators, other businessmen, voluntary and category associations, thanks to a communication and approaching process focused on the reasons for the realisation and the benefits obtainable for all the community (see below). Obtaining collaboration from the stakeholders will be larger as far as the involvement process is participated and the theme to be developed is rooted in the local traditions.

The potential benefits obtainable both for the agri-tourism structure and for the community from the realisation of a sustainable routes network are:

- a wealthiest tourist packet for the structure and the community
- enrichment of the tourist competitiveness on the market for both the structure and the community versus other tourist destinations
- increase of the structure's and the community's productivity in the territory thanks to benefits gained for all the chain of tourist services and operators
- a greater awareness on community values among the operators of the territory



Benefits in terms of Greenhouse Gasses Emissions will be reflected in the reduction in utilisation of private cars to visit the territory, in the decrease of the “week-end” traffic, in the education of guest/tourist to a more sustainable behaviour in his way of travelling around during holidays and in his increased awareness on the fact that his enjoyment will be enriched culturally and emotively if it will be experienced “out from the car”.

The save in emissions will be as more effective as more the agri-tourism enterprise will publicise detailed information on how to come and depart travelling by public transport (lines, timetable, fares) and as more all the community will provides transfer shuttles with the nearest public mobility nodes.

Benefits obtained from the reduction of the emissions attained thanks to a sustainable mobility network are reflected on global scale and not only for the agri-tourism enterprise or the surrounding community.



Integration with local community and territory

A key to develop sustainability in an agri-tourism enterprise is represented by integration with the local community and the territory in which it is placed. As greater the integration degree is obtained, the more will be the sustainability results for the enterprise. Integration could be realised on different levels:

- functional integration is realised through all the context of the services that the agri-tourism enterprise offers. Commitment of the laundry-, cleaning- and maintenance-services to local enterprises, for instance. Or the preference to purchase foods, drinks, cleaning products or goods from local providers or directly to local producers. The utilisation of local tourist operators to advertise, to booking, etc....Those are all aspects of a functional integration enabling to reduce effective kilometres of travel for goods or people (short chain purchase or direct marketing) and to increase local sustainability. In negotiating with local suppliers it is important to highlight and point out strongly and repeatedly the need to have products and services of a good quality level and high degree of environmental respect in the production/supply phases. To insist often on these two aspects will help to disseminate a new awareness on local product value and a new reflection by the producers/suppliers concerning their own market strategy. Moreover the agri-tourism enterprise should reflect on the potential to vehicle this kind of communication in the framework of its own promotional strategy, that is that the enterprise is determined to utilise exclusively local resources of the local market. This determination could sometimes imply an increase in the immediate purchasing price respect to more competitive goods or services offered by the global market. But is to be considered that an higher initial cost could be compensated by image benefits and by the insertion in the sustainability chain system of the local community.
- Landscape integration. Restoring and maintenance in buildings utilised as agri-tourism services should be realised in conformity to traditional style, shapes and building methodologies adopted locally. Building materials and furniture components should be those utilised in the territory itself and possibly they should come from the territory itself. Is not suitable therefore to realise a



mountain chalet inside a coastal intensive farming area, or a latest-fashioned villa in a landscape context of old rural villages. But at the same time in a territory the presence of a “Biodiversity” of agri-tourism structures could be considered as positive, explicated always in the respect of the traditional styles but, for instance, utilising different functional structures, e.g. one agri-tourism structure in an ancient noble’s villa and another one in an ancient watermill. Concerning the utilisation of traditional building materials, it is to be considered that in some European countries volunteers associations are organising public events to re-paint old rural villages with traditional earth-made color, as for ochre-paints. Sometimes it should be carefully evaluated if the creation of additional leisure structures (water-pools, external saunas, shelters, boxes, etc...) is really needed or it wouldn’t represent a negative value in the complex of harmony of the general landscape. Landscape integration is effectively carried out in the vegetation planning phase of the external agri-tourism structure. Preference for autochthonous plants, the conservation of ancient trees, the restoration of hedges, of historic tree-rows or lines, enable not only to enhance the attractiveness of the location, but also to help conditioning and refreshing the buildings and in particular to reduce greenhouse emissions.

➤ Historic integration. As far as possible is important to attribute to the agri-tourist enterprise a dimension of persistence in the course of time. This enables to valorise its own present features and to attract the attention of the guest on the changes in the environmental, economic and social conditions in comparison to actual state. Historic integration could be realised proposing to the attention of the customers old documents and images of the structure itself and the territory in which it is placed, old equipment and tools of traditional arts and professions, everyday’s objects of old times, etc....It is important that:

- artefacts should be congruous with the ancient structure, its vocation, origins or the environmental and social context in which it was placed
- a central idea should link all the artefacts and documents exhibit
- proper documentation should be available to the customers, illustrating and integrating artefacts and images shown, together with sustainability notes related to the items (that could be both positive or negative respect to the present conditions).



The historic integration of the structure could be realised also in an area-context if it in the past represented a specific value of the territory, as for instance an agri-tourism structure realised inside the building of an ancient abbey or a castle or a mill and therefore the information could be extended to all the complex of historic-environmental conditions of all the infrastructures that in the past were functional to its existence (old ways, shrines, defence walls, channels, etc...). In this way an area attractiveness is obtained with special advantages for the total integration of the base-structure and the potentiality to realise sustainable mobility routes.

- Cultural integration. The specific localisation of the structure has an important role for its cultural characterisation. The pertinence to a local community of specific ethnic or linguistic origin or to a specific social tradition (shepherds, fishers, lumberjacks, etc.); the relationship with historical places of religious, army or sport's culture; the proximity to place frequented by well-known writers, poets, artists, etc... All these could be considered as priority themes to be addressed into the communication strategies to the guests by the agri-tourism structure. They will be integrated by proper synthetic information and or mentions on where to find information on the themes. However for the enterprise it is needed to valorise the more important cultural aspects. It is well-known the instance of those Alpine cultures where accommodation structures' personnel wears usually the historic popular dresses and performs musical- or dance-events linked to its own tradition. It is also well-known the attractiveness that those behaviours contributed to inspire in the tourists and the effects for the local sustainability which they contributed to generate. Still without reaching those levels, the enhancement of the typical cultural aspects of the local community should be aimed at various levels, maybe only through the active collaboration of the enterprise to activities of cultural associations or local events.
- Social integration. The agri-tourism enterprise should aim to be the more involved as possible in the social manifestations of the local community, both at management level and at simple information level for the customers. The direct participation to a public event, to a debate or to a meeting helps to increase the level of integration, of belonging to the community and thus of general sustainability. To give to the guests even only a simple communication of these events, helps to enhance the quality image of the agri-tourism



enterprise and enables a potential larger access to the territory for its guests/customers. Social participation could be deepened also when the enterprise itself organises the meetings, or allows to held them inside its own structure, but could also be realised through sponsoring events and fairs, festivals, shows, etc...

The agri-tourism enterprise should not be envisaged as an happy island in the middle of an environmental, social and economic desert, in the course of time this wouldn't be sustainable.



Creation of cultural events and manifestations linked to a development of the sustainable mobility and to emissions reduction

In order to optimise its own integration with the local community and thus to contribute to global sustainability and greenhouse gasses emission reduction for all the territory, is important for the agri-tourism enterprise to play an active role in organising cultural events and manifestations linked to the development of global sustainability.

The creation of a network of sustainable mobility routes helps to decrease emissions in a passive way; the creation of tourist events linked to the sustainable mobility sets in motion in an active and dynamic way the enterprise's own potentialities for environmental mobilisation.

Detailed methods of planning a sustainable mobility event and the comparison with a real instance of feasibility were already described in a previous report¹² of the project LIFE+ Ecorutour. Therefore we offer only a short methodological synthesis in the following paragraphs.

The starting point is given by the individuation of a powerful theme specially rooted in local common consciousness on which to appeal in order to develop the mobility intervention and the enhancement of the general and specific awareness. This theme will be valorised in order to create around it a preservative retrieval and a strengthening of the values of the linked local historic-cultural heritage. These values should be considered as grounding the actual cultural-economic situation of the community.

For instance in a mountain community the powerful theme could be individuated in the local traditions of cattle-rising, wood-industry, alpinism, etc...

¹² Report on the suggestions for local plans in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains (Latium region) territory, June 2013 (www.ecorutour.eu).



This strategy aims at realising a tourist seasonal event which could properly incentive the area's sustainable development, increasing its potentialities for economic development thanks to the promotion of the small local enterprises of agro-food production and craftsmanship and thanks to the development of proper tourist services of leisure and accommodation, always in the highest consideration for of the values of environmental conservation and biodiversity respect.

Once selected this powerful theme, it is needed to attract the consideration of all the stakeholders of the local scenery in order to try to match the intervention's and direct action's demands coming from the mobilisation of inhabitants and volunteers committed in the territory with the requirements of law framing, of proper governance and of economical development set by the local authorities, and by the public bodies involved.

The practical achievement of the realisation, that could be defined as "tourist active fruition", should be actuated thanks to a set of proper tools, when possible already existent, but however pointed out on the practical situation, which could be listed as:

- a map of the various services of restaurant and accommodation to be included into the initiative (in particular of the agri-tourism services and of the other sustainable tourist services)
- the realisation of tourist packets for the involvement into the event (possibly they should be diversified for quality or length of stay)
- the creation of communication documents, information or didactics for cultural support (history of the selected theme, the linked industry, the relationship with the environment and with the local sustainability and the effect on the release of greenhouse emissions)
- the localisation and selection of local artistic focal points linked to the theme (buildings, paintings, music, dances, poetry, etc...)
- the involvement in the theme of possible museums or didactics' poles, which could become part of a visit circuit or which could make exhibition artefacts available



- organisation and exhibition during the event of live shows concerning the traditions of craftsmanship and of the chain-system related to the theme.

Another intervention method, which could be defined as “tourist induced fruition”, is to bring the tourist’s attention to a packet of themes configured as an exposition at Zero Food Miles of the typical products of the territory related to the selected theme and characterised by strength values of biodiversity and sustainability.

This expositive moment should be concretised focusing on the following tools:

- map of the typical and traditional products
- organisation of the expositive event and stand organisation for information/tasting/marketing
- local enterprises coordination through a public announcement

In the actuation phase it’s advisable that the intervention coming out from the local enterprises or business based, well linked to the theme and the commercial and publicity partnership, should be entrusted to local tour operators with the collaborating partnership or the support of all the stakeholders, which should be gathered by the local enterprise or business promoting base. In fact the greatest number possible of representatives of the community should be mobilised, with specific functions:

- local authorities: regions, provinces, mountain community districts, forest services, parks and natural reserves, etc... With the function of patronising, sponsoring and publicising (the competent authorities could deliberate possible norms and authorisations needed for the organisation of the event, e.g the temporary closing of public spaces, transit of ways, possible measures for law and order; shuttle busses to help sustainable mobility, temporary parkings, rescue vehicles and security agents availability).
- Grass-roots and institutional tourism offices. With the function of promoting information, patronising and of possible collaboration in the organisation
- Board of trades and sector associations. With the function of patronising, sponsoring, financial and technical contribution, information promotion
- Local financing institutes and banks. Financial contribution, sponsoring, credit facilities to the enterprises involved in the valorisation of the chain-system in the selected theme



- Volunteer associations. Environmental associations, sport associations, civil protection, cultural associations, manufacturers' and farmers' associations. Collaboration in organisation and management of the event
- Enterprise of production and services and farms of the territory – sponsoring, financial contribution, collaboration in the organisation of the event.

The creation of a cultural event or of a seasonal event linked to a local community enables to attract tourist and guests and to increase production aptitude in the community. The relationship with a specific agri-tourism enterprise is difficult in many cases, unless this same enterprise is not characterised by a specific farming production or by a traditional feature so typical to be a point of straightness in the local community. Instead the relationship between an yearly event and a network of local agri-tourism enterprises associated is easier and less heavy in terms of resources as one couldn't imagine, if the activity of organisation and promotion is shared among the different stakeholders.

In this case too is very important that the agri-tourism enterprise should be identified with the territorial and social context, linked to it in an organic and functional way, but also that the same enterprise would be inserted in a network of similar enterprises collaborating all together locally, as described in the first tool suggested in this section. **An association or a consortium of agri-tourism enterprises could effectively act on the territory and on its sustainability only if they start to represent a gateway to access the territory itself for their guests/customers.**

This access should be realised in a global way to all the components of the territory: environment, nature, landscape, history, culture, traditions and community.



3.4.4. Guidelines for local authorities operating in rural sector (in order to create the necessary assistance and to improve procedures)

Provided that the guidelines realised in the frame of this project for local authorities operating in tourist sector¹³ contain notions of interest for those operating in the rural sector too, at least for information aim, we address to them for all the technical and law specifications of reference which could be of adopted to agri-tourism reception.

In Italy agri-tourism sector is increasing notwithstanding the economic crisis: from 2010 to 2011 the enterprises authorised to this business grew of 2,2%. More than one enterprise out of three is managed by a woman (Istat source). The exact competence on this sector in terms of public authority was often a point of dispute among the authorities for tourism and those for farming. Usually the competence is under the tourism when are at stake the accommodation and restaurant functions that the agri-tourism enterprises offers, while the agriculture authority is empowered when the whole enterprise is considered in its farming production. Actually this is a multi-functional enterprise and both operators and local authorities should be well aware of this, also when sometimes the agri-tourism enterprise is only an accommodation and restaurant structure located into the country and it operates without any direct and proper link with farming activity that is contracted out to third parts.

Instead in the real multi-functional enterprise the activity of tourist accommodation and reception should take a rather reduced place in the complex of the business productivity, that should be in this case properly involved in the framework of operation of the authorities delegated to farming sphere.

¹³ Creation of guidelines for service providers (in order for such providers to respond adequately to the most appropriate standards) and for local authorities (in order to create the necessary assistance and to improve procedures). Life+ Ecorutour project, www.ecorutour.eu



In this framework the problem of reducing Green Houses Gasses emissions or of a higher sustainability should be debated inside the global evaluation of the whole functional activities of the enterprise, but for the complication of the problem and for the need of proper scientific research, presently it is possible to analyse from one side only the aspects linked to tourist reception, from the other side only those of farming business.

Usually farming delegated authorities usually do not consider with special attention the problem of emissions in agri-tourism reception. They are instead oriented to rule all the aspects of environmental impact of extensive and intensive farming practices (nutrients percent in sewages, pesticides pollution, treatment of pesticide's containers and packaging, cleaning of tanks and equipments for pesticide treatment, protected agriculture plastic recycling and packaging recycling, etc ...). Instead it is important that also the public authorities delegated for agriculture sector would become aware of the environmental sustainability aspects for agri-tourism sector.

For centuries the farmer was considered as the more appropriate keeper of landscape and environmental values of the territory and today it is needed that this function would be turned-over to those aspects of tourist reception that the farmer-manager of an agri-tourism enterprise exercises.

In this way it should be considered that the main environmental impact factor (GWP – Global Warming Potential) for agri-tourism enterprises is due to transport of people or goods (about 75%) greatly distanced to the second factor, power consumption (about 20%), as pointed out in a previous study realised in the framework of the LIFE+ Ecorutour project¹⁴.

¹⁴ Report on the global economic-environmental budget of GHG emissions in the project areas – linked to project action 2.2, December 2011, http://www.ecorutour.eu/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Report-azione_2_2.pdf



Therefore, especially with reference to the first factor, it is needed an action on the sustainable mobility, considered as:

- linking agri-tourism enterprises and public transport junctions
- sustainable mobility among agri-tourism enterprises and local focal points of tourism attraction
- mobility of people and services needed to the agri-tourism enterprise operation

Clearly the competence on these actions is not due to local authorities delegated to farming and it would be framed with difficulty into the logistic plans suggested sometimes for fruit and vegetables supplies, because of the limited weight of agri-tourism productiveness on the global farming market. Moreover the large part of the production of the agri-tourism structure is consumed inside the enterprise itself, or so it ought to be, in order to provide its own reception function. But farming public authorities could help to decrease mobility of supplies by enhancing adoption of Zero Food Miles or local consumption inside agri-tourism structures.

As concerning the following factor of environmental impact, the energy, it is suggested to proceed at strategic level with an action supporting voluntary environmental certification, which valorises and promotes qualitatively the efforts of the enterprise in order to reduce its own environmental impact and increases its own competitiveness.

This action could be undertaken at public authority level, jointly to the institutional activity realised for the promotion and vigilance on organic production. This latter consideration is linked to another feature, which came to evidence during the Ecorutour project activity, a feature to be well considered by the local authorities in charge of agriculture and to agri-tourism sector, and that is the existing over-sizing of reception structures versus the present turn-over of guests. This means a potential for a great customer increase, which presently, especially as concerning abroad provenances, is very scarce.

Therefore is needed to valorise agri-tourism reception potentials in a complex of enhancing actions which usually take place in the case of fairs, festivals, events to promote typical fruit and vegetables products, the wine-taste markets, the direct-markets as the “peasant’s market” or “from farmer to consumer” trade, etc....



Keeping in mind these considerations, we suggest some strategies, as follows, needed to the reduction of greenhouse emissions and to increase sustainability for agri-tourism enterprises. These strategies have been elaborated aiming especially at the general aspects of the relationship public authorities-enterprises, in a point of view of integrated action and global enhancement of communication public-private and not aiming at specific actions on particular technical aspects, which could differ from a context to another one, according to the environmental and market specific features.

The following strategies were structured per sphere of appliance, distinguishing among centralised authorities (regions, provinces) and local authorities (municipalities, mountain community districts, territorial consortia, etc...) respecting each own specific entrustment.



Enhancing public reply to sustainability

Aiming at a better governance to environmental sustainability and Green House Gasses reduction, the first suggestion which we recommend to public authorities both at centralised and local level is to enhance the quality of the relationship with the citizens; to try to reduce and diminish bureaucracy in order to create adequate assistance and improve services.

Its important to consider that the concept of public service evolved in times and that present tendencies consider public administration as a network linking citizens and able to assure performances like: result, effect and impact.

A proper public service should be modulated in three phases or levels:

- strategy (appropriate planning both at organisation and activity level)
- management (optimisation of the internal productiveness of the service)
- operation (implementation of the activities' strategies previously planned)

The scheme EMAS (Eco-Management and Audit Scheme)¹⁵ interests , promoted by European Commission, both the centralised and localised authorities. It defines the management of environmental aspects and impacts connected with the activity carried out. Each public body could activate it inside its own structure in order to obtain the certified acknowledgment and the environmental certificate label. Besides, this acknowledgement is publicised in an official directory.

¹⁵ European Commission – Environement – EMAS: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/emas/>



A best-practice instance inside the project area of Laga Mountains is given by the example of the VI Comunità Montana del Velino¹⁶ (Velino Mountain Community District), which obtained EMAS accreditation for its own organisation starting from 2007 (See Attachment “B” , Environmental Policy of the Comunità Montana del Velino”).

Interesting local communities, in the framework of implementing at local level the processes promoted at European level by Agenda 21, a system for environmental management was developed for local administration, aiming at programming, monitoring and reporting the utilisation of natural resources inside the municipal territory: the ecoBUDGET¹⁷ tool. This tool provides for the natural resources management of the whole territory and citizens’ community and its adoption represents a key for local administrations in order to simplify and give transparency to the processes of planning and managing natural resources.

In the framework of European contribution to environmental safeguard proper guidelines were developed to integrate environmental budget and management system of the environment¹⁸. They are summarised in the following lines and we address to them for a more cautious examination, highly recommended for public administrations working in agriculture sector in order to be able to operate with more rationality in the reduction of Green House Gasses emission and in enhancing sustainability.

Interesting both centralised and local level, the LIFE project IDEMS gathered a set of tools in order to integrate the three levels of functionality of public administration (strategic, organisational and operative level) with **an integrated and coherent approach in order to induce specific operative and procedural improvements in local public administrations**. This approach provides 11 points of operative answers in order to ensure more efficiency and integration in existing local system; in detail:

¹⁶ Vi Comunità Montana del Velino - <http://www.velino.it/>

¹⁷ EcoBUDGET Webcentre - <http://www.ecobudget.org/>

¹⁸ Guidelines for the integration of environmental balance with environmental management system, LIFE project IDEMS, Edited by ERVET, Emilia Romagna, 2008 – www.idems.it



1. Coherent multilevel sustainability planning
2. Policy making and connection with the strategic planning
3. Stakeholder engagement
4. Continuous improvement
5. Organisational criteria and structure
6. Environmental Review
7. Legal compliance
8. Data Quality
9. Monetary accounts
10. Communication and information
11. Assessment

This project draws attention especially to the following points of strength:

- The need to integrate the environment and the social and economical variable, in order to extend the environmental management also to other sustainability environments, thus obtaining a major balance between the policies and the authority's activities
- The duty to define the necessary information fundamentals and the starting elements to be considered when defining the environmental policies thanks to a cognitive frame of the local context
- The value of the analysis of the needs of the stakeholders is especially highlighted, through activities of inclusion of the requests of the main stakeholders and the results of the checking of the pre-existent policies, in other word the analysis of the planning efficiency and continuance
- Inside the organisational level, the continuous improvement is particularly stressed in order to define monitoring standards to enhance quality level of the organisational criteria



regulating the structure's operation and also the precise identification of technical competencies, the ability to guarantee commitment, competencies and responsibilities of human resources.

- Moreover, the value of information is at reason highlighted, connected to the institutional duty of a body to make available and accessible all the managed environmental information, and the value of communication, which regards instead an Authority's ability of reaching its own internal and external stakeholders, giving them the relevant information in a comprehensible and efficient way.

Instead, in the frame of the stakeholders commitment and communication, is important the instance given at best practice level in the model suggested by the LIFE project DINAMO to enforce a sustainable development of a local community in order to valorise the importance of biodiversity protection¹⁹. The DINAMO model foresees the use of two main participative tools: a Forum for confrontation and decision making and a network of action of operative character.

For local authorities is particularly interesting the active case given by the Forum. This is a forum for the confrontation and the individuation of strategies for actions for the conservation and the enhancement of biodiversity on the territory, but the specific instance could be useful adopted to other themes of intervention, as for instance, the reduction of the greenhouse emissions and for economical schemes to sustain local income.

This Forum is a moment of participation, partaking and dissemination of the information, shared by project's partners, farmers, public administrators, Municipalities, local associations, individuals and all people interested for any reason in territorial management. During the Forum the developed actions, difficulties

¹⁹ Guidelines for the replication of the DINAMO Model, LIFE+ project DINAMO, Ed. By ENEA, 2012 - www.life-dinamo.it



encountered and results achieved are discussed; the foregoing of the actions is planned and different strategies are evaluated to sustain Forum activity and the income of local entrepreneurs.

Public administrators and entrepreneurs join the Forum in order to find new shared strategies for the local development. This participation is especially important for the entrepreneurs because they in this way have a privileged place for discussion where to bring their problems and actively take part to decision-making. Their participation is important also because enables them to have more consideration when they ask for grants as for instance the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

For public administrators the participation to the Forum offers the chance to widen agreement and consensus on decisions linked to territorial management and to be closer to local farming and tourist production worlds, with eventual benefits at elections level.

To conclude, is advisable for public administrations both at centralised and local level, to manage effectively the planning and strategic phases inside sustainable tourism and multi-functional farming, Thanks to **the improvement of all those conditions useful to enhance collaborative mobilisation of the community and communication in decision making**, and in particular:

- partnership between public and private sector
- operative management of technical structures
- clear and continuous communication
- participated and motivated communities
- development and sharing of competencies and knowledge
- transparent and responsible decision-making processes
- sharing information among the stakeholders



in this frame is of particular importance the utilisation of specific professions for mobilisation and participation thanks to experts of communication strategies with functions of mediation and facilitation among the different social parts.

To conclude is usefully suggested to all public administration levels **to start trying to reduce in any way emissions of Green House Gasses inside their own structure too**, thanks to the adoption of simple rules already standardised, as for instance putting in practice GPP²⁰ (Green Public Procurement), and therefore re-considering procedures to purchase goods and services for call for tenders, taking into account not only the economic cost but also the environmental impact that they could generate during their lifetime. A specific manual was realised in order to guide public administrations in this way²¹.

²⁰ European Commission – Environment – GPP Homepage - http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/index_en.htm

²¹ Buying Green Handbook, 2011 - http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/buying_handbook_en.htm



Toward short food chain supply in agri-tourism structures

Marketing at Zero Food Miles, more correctly called “short food chain supply”, is going to be more and more developed in Italy and Europe. As evidenced in a recent paper²², usually the consumer associates to local products the following features:

- freshness and authenticity,
- link with the landscape,
- manufacture with environmental-sustainable methods,
- geographic appellation of origin (traceability),
- not factory-standardised food,
- sociality linked to local purchase.

One of the great advantages of the short chain supply product is the reduced consumption of energy for the transport and therefore of greenhouse emissions. Other advantages are given by the chance to find local variety products which are not always distributed by large scale chain retailers, giving thus an aid to the preservation of typical and local genetic resources.

One of the most interesting aspects is also the increase of value of sociality related to local purchase, that is the direct acquaintance between farmer and consumer. This value could increase progressively till to involve effectively the consumer in the farming process, for instance thanks to the alternative food networks, the self-harvesting organisation by consumers or the community-supported farmers.

On the other side the choice of short food chain gives to the farmers more chances to decide the prices, with more freedom from market economy ed enabling larger incomes than those offered by wholesale traders. From the community point of view, the interest for local product is larger than the explanations for consumers and farmers.

²² Ansaloni F., Prodotto locale e sistemi alternativi di vendita. AgriRegioniEuropa, Year 8 n°30, September 2012.



Short food chain enhances economic development of marginal and rural areas, decreases risks due to wholesale market and thanks to the tighter relationship with the consumer enables to increase healthier methods of farming (organic and biodynamic farming) and the preservation of typical genetic resources. In this way it enhances local communities' sustainability thanks to a proper income of the labour and the respect of: animal welfare directives; history and culture which originated it; farmer's personality and ethics; attractiveness of the farm and of the rural territory.

An instance of best-practice for Italy is offered by the dealing points of the "Rete Nazionale Campagna Amica" (National Network of Friendly Country) promoted by a Coldiretti project in order to create exclusively Italian food chain supplies (www.campagnamica.it). Presently in Italy short food chains represent a feature distinctive of 30% of Italian farms and in prospective this feature will probably consolidate.

View the importance stated in the introduction of the present guidelines to the reduction of the distances covered to transport goods and people in order to sink greenhouse gasses, it is logical that at public authority level, both centralised and local, it will be required to enhance local trading and promotion of typical product inside agri-tourism services beyond the quota of self-production required by law.

In the frame of regional level planning a best-practice instance could be represented by the act issued by Veneto region with the regional Law n° 7 of 2008 July 25 "Norme per orientare e sostenere il consumo dei prodotti agricoli di origine regionale" (Norms to orient and support consume of farming products of regional origin). This act foresees that canteen services entrusted by public bodies have to guarantee that in the food preparation the percentage of farming products of regional origin would be no less than 50%. Moreover in the call for tenders for food supplies for canteens a preference title will be awarded to the utilisation of region-originated farming products in measure higher than 50%.

It foresees that the municipalities should reserve 20% of market places to farmers for direct sell and that places exclusively destined to farmer's market should be created.



Moreover the restaurants and shops trading at least 30% of foods of regional origin are awarded with the possibility of utilise a special regional featured label.

Centralised public authority of Veneto, with this law, the first of this kind in Italy, started the campaign to enhance short food chain supply.

Aiming at valorisation of trading and producing at short chain supply, it is of particular relevance the fact, already highlighted, that agri-tourism enterprises could represent a gateway to the territory for their guests and that they could signify a point of attraction for all those short chain products of the same territory.

Local public authorities interested to the promotion of sustainable development and to short chain supply should try to drive all the agri-tourism enterprises of their territory to represent this function thanks to an amount of operations to be performed inside these same enterprises and aiming at:

- training of the managers and of the personnel of the enterprise on the importance of the short chain supply, on the effective choices (norms and laws) to implement this production process in its different features:
 - direct trade inside the enterprise
 - organised direct trade
 - trade with mobile structures during the season, festivals, local events, etc...
 - dispenser-machine trade, for instance fresh-milk
 - trade and taste inside rural tourism structures
 - farmers market, local seasonal events
 - direct home-delivery
 - typical products specialised shops



- giving information on the whole scenery of short chain local production, which the enterprise should be able to handover to its guest:
 - products (kinds, features, values, history, etc...)
 - places of production and direct trade with addresses and business hours and in the same way associations and organised-purchase groups, local product organisations, farmers markets, etc...
 - seasonal periods of production and trade
- direct trade inside the enterprise, in the frame of specific agreements of cooperative, entering thus to take place in the local economy. In this last point of enhancement the enterprises itself should take part in organisations and consortia for direct trade, etc....

Among the output benefits there is the **challenge to consider the agri-tourism service as a shop-window of the short chain production** and as a favoured mediator for the valorisation of local products and services.



Ecological classification and certification of agri-tourism enterprise

The problem of the classification and the attribution of a quality attitude to agri-tourism services is often deep-considered by the public authority in charge for tourism valorisation and agriculture multi-functionality. But the problem of environmental certification seems to be, on the contrary of scarce relevance for public authorities.

In the last years various regional authorities autonomously realised classification norms on agri-tourism quality, as for Tuscany region which created a proper list on agri-tourism quality based on the attribution of a label symbolised with two or three wheat ears according to the quality of offered services (regional law 2004 August 3, n° 46/R). The situation then went worse with the decision of other regional bodies to adopt different criteria and symbols for classification (wheat ears, little butterflies, stars, etc...) changing in absolute chaos the whole sector.

In Latium region the norms on the classification of vocation of agri-tourism services, "Putting in effect and integrating the regional Law 2006 November 2, n°14 – Norms in matter of agri-tourism and rural tourism" (Disposizioni attuative ed integrative della legge regionale 2 novembre 2006, n. 14 - Norme in materia di agriturismo e turismo rurale), foresees the characterisation in six specific vocations: traditional, drink & food, naturalistic, cultural, biologic and ecologic agri-tourism. But this directive was not adopted for many reasons, among whom, also because once given the characterisation there was no specific label. This instance could be considered as a worst-practice example.

Sometimes regional authorities were taken over by province or district authorities in the valorisation and promotion of environmental performances, as it was the instance of Viterbo Province, which, in the frame of the Environmental Programme of its Department for Farming, Hunting and Fishing, developed various objectives to strengthen this sector and to act in order that activity carried out by agri-tourism services would be the more compatible with natural environment as possible. This also in the assurance that respect and valorisation of natural resources should become the point of strength on which to ground the



competitiveness of the sector. For this reasons the Department on 2007 decided to promote the adoption of a Provincial Directive to award proper agri-tourism services with a label "AGRITURISMO ECOLOGICO DELLA TUSCIA" (Ecological Agri-tourism of Viterbo Province)²³

This directive was created with the assurance that agri-tourism enterprises which obtained the provincial label for environmental quality, apart from the exhibition of its own sensibility and commitment in the environmental sector, should also obtain more competitiveness in comparison with the other enterprises, from both the point of view of the decrease of the costs related to consumption, and of a better public image. The directive stated that agri-tourism enterprises awarded with this label would be favoured in obtaining funds from the Province.

The basic criteria selected in this directive aimed at restricting the main environmental impacts related to the life cycle of the services and in particular at:

- reducing energy consumption
- reducing water consumption
- reducing waste production
- enhancing the use of renewable energies and products less dangerous for the environment
- valorising rural and traditional buildings according to the local landscape
- promoting environmental communication and education.

In reason of the specificities of agri-tourism enterprises, apart from the criteria related to essential services, were introduced some criteria for those specific services and equipments which enhance and support actions linked to environmental protection and promotion of the territory and of the rural world. This instance

²³ Regolamento per l'Assegnazione del bollino di Agriturismo Ecologico della Tuscia. Provincia di Viterbo Assessorato Agricoltura Caccia e Pesca (Directive for the Award as Ecological Agri-tourism of Tuscia, Viterbo Province, Department for Farming, Hunting and Fishing), 2007



couldn't be considered as a best-practice in view of the fact that up-to-day only three enterprises requested and obtained the accreditation in the whole Province. This problem was due to different factors, but mainly the lack of funds which prevented the province authorities to set out the forecasted funding, the lack of a proper communication and of a planning of development of the initiative itself.

ultimately the increasing number of public, private, regional and provincial classifications, certifications and quality directives generated in agri-tourism operators a difficulty to orientation and they remained unresolved on the choices to take. Many decided to take no choice at all, besides the scarce transparency on the benefits linked to those classifications. Moreover the final user of all those directives, the guest, was embarrassed among the different kinds, symbols and directions presented. The result of all this is a general diffidence and scarce consideration for all the proposed classifications.

Generally, however, apart from the lack of norm's concordance among the various regions in matter of quality, it is to be noticed that the classification was always referred to different criteria of heterogeneous nature but among whom the features of environmental sustainability and greenhouse emissions had almost never a prominent place.

On March 2013 was at end realised a definition of homogeneous criteria's classification of the agri-tourism enterprises at National level by the Ministry for Farming, Food and Forestry Politics in enforcement of the art.9 point 2 of the Law 96/2006 "Disciplina dell'Agriturismo" (Agri-tourism Regulation). This new directive foresees a classification based on a set of criteria framed in 7 themes, among whom one specific for the environmental and landscape context. The suitability of the enterprises to the requested conditions allows to reach a score enabling the accreditation from one to five "sunflowers" to be exhibited in a proper label "Agriturismo Italia" which has been approved.

This law should be now accepted and adopted by the various regions. But it should be mentioned that in the text of the law there are only narrow references of specific relevance to the environmental sustainability



of the service to be classified and to the ranking according to the level of Green House Gasses emissions produced. We report below all the references of some relevance connected with the environmental performances and the related score allowed for the fulfilment of this conditions:

- 0,5 points for the presence of renewable resources energy producing plants
- 0,5 points for separated waste collection and/or presence of composting plant
- 2 points if there are documents on tourist attractiveness of the territory
- 1 point respectively if the enterprise offers 7 different kinds of agro-food products of own production (one point for each kind)
- 2 points if it offers products labelled as PDO, PGI, TSG or other schemes of geographical indication
- 2 points if it offers traditional dishes of the territory made with seasonal and fresh foods
- 2 points if it organises horse riding visits with an authorised guide
- 2 points if it offers bicycles to the guests
- 2 points if it organise didactical activities connected to farming, environment, food&drink and craftsmanship (but there is no mention of “related to the territory”)
- 1 point if in the enterprise there is an organised collection of historic artefacts on farming and rural community
- 1 point if it has agreed conventions with operators of the territory to offer reception services

As could be noticed the importance of the environmental impact is not very much stressed. There are mentions to the short chain supply and to the enhancement of local products and services, and to a sustainable mobility (horses and bicycles), although there is no relevance to the link with the specific territory but only to the production with protected appellation (which could be also of other regions). Moreover the adoption of the short chain supply is awarded with a greater score than the production of renewable energies or the separated waste collection.



In view of this scarce environmental awareness of the national authority **the possible solution for the centralised regional authorities is to operate with more clearness and to address the acceptance of this classifying law as much as possible in conformity to an European context.**

Some resolutions have to be taken at European Community level and in this regard it is important to address directly central governments and European authorities. As long as this will not be achieved, in reference to environmental qualification **the Ecolabel certification, anyway adopted in official way by the European Union, remains the only label of environmental quality which has a significance overall Europe and therefore should be promoted and disseminated.**

Actually in Italy 30 agri-tourism enterprises have been entrusted with the Ecolabel and only one in Latium region which has at least 800 agri-tourism enterprises. We cannot make confrontations on the agri-tourism sector for the difference of definitions used, but we could however consider that in France 246 tourist reception structures were entrusted with the Ecolabel, In Italy only 124.

It is therefore needed that in the regional laws the importance of this label should at least be mentioned and that the public authorities should acquire a greater environmental awareness, because perhaps the greatest problem is inside the attitude itself of the public administrators who try to classify agri-tourism services. In fact this activity is usually done aiming exclusively at enhancing the tourist services and at promoting business in services of own competence but not aiming at orienting them toward more sustainable behaviours.

Instead it is needed that the authorities themselves be aware that an agri-tourism enterprise which accredit itself with the Ecolabel, thanks to the adoption of a sustainable environmental policy inside its own structure, obtains a so great save on management expenses, that it pays the costs for the label accreditation and maintenance, those needed for the technical modifications inside the structure and those for the training and instruction of the personnel.



As a consequence, **the main purpose of the enhancement of the classification by the authorities should be addressed to procedure's sustainability and savings which will be reflected on the whole community**, instead of to the tourist-business valorisation .

The achievement of this awareness by the local authorities means also to give assistance to the agri-tourism enterprises which aim to start accreditation procedure with Ecolabel through an effective help translated in terms of support to the preparation and the production of the necessary documents and to give all the information updating available.

The real case of an agri-tourism enterprise having to give up its accreditation application or seeing the time extended to infinity because of delays and misunderstandings with the local public authority in charge of the delivery of the technical certificates needed, ought to be the last of a sequence that should be ended.

Without the recourse to support actions that should trespass in excessive State-aid, it is important that local authority be aware and make as easier as possible the accreditation applications, improving thus performances of sustainability of the enterprises on their own territory.



Commitment in the actions of local promotion with the agri-tourism enterprises

On the contrary of other kinds of tourist reception, the agri-tourism enterprise usually is located in places remote from the usual tourist destinations (historic centres, shore-areas). Moreover its specific feature connecting farming activities with tourist reception allows the guest to consider the specific characters of the territory's productivity and of the environment and to access different cultural traditions, in a more strict relationship of communication and socialisation with the manager and the personnel. **The multi-functional nature and the localisation of the agri-tourism enterprise in the territory may represent an access-key to the local culture and the knowledge for the guests.** This enterprise thus become a privileged point of communication for the sustainable socio-economic development.

Communication potentials are then amplified in case of the creation of agri-tourism networks or associations in a same area.

This consideration should be born in mind by the local authorities interested to a better territorial sustainability.

Considering the agri-tourism enterprises scattered in the territory as nodes of communication and interface with tourism, allows to make a potential use of them to increase the relationship between the centralised promotion of the territory and the guest/tourist and gives to the local authorities the possibility to regard them as privileged spokesmen in the relations that they have to entertain with all the stakeholders.

This is of peculiar relevance in all those occasions when the local promotion is materialised under the appearance of events, seasonal celebrations, festivals, fairs, etc...



In a previous study of the LIFE+ Project Ecorutour²⁴ it was stressed how the creation of a permanent ecotourism event of seasonal or yearly cadence allows to influence considerably sustainable mobility sector and to increase awareness on the importance of greenhouse emissions savings, both at local and extra-local level through the involved tourists.

The didactic effect thus obtained could be amplified on the territory if there is a stakeholders network mobilised and effectively activated in a local partnership group collaborating in the scheme with direct interest, as for the agri-tourism enterprises, which could act as spokespersons with their own guests.

Generally is not difficult to create a local partnership among entrepreneurs, trade associations, no-profit associations, and other stakeholders. But usually to this schemes there is a scarce participation of public authorities, due to side-partitions or to difficulty to find useful commitment to participate to the project beyond the simple giving technical or economical assistance.

Instead it is needed to foreseen and put in action promotional and committing actions starting exactly from the local administrations, in order to begin the sharing of information, observation, requirements, point of views and more in general implicit and explicit knowledge to be democratically considered as a common heritage of the project. The achievement of consensus requires high talent in listening and entertainment in order to carry out a route map firstly toward an alignment of views, and then in a more advanced step toward a participated planning of the action's strategy. Launching this kind of route map helps to consolidate the habit to a common evaluation of the future development perspectives and allows the mobilisation factor in the community.

This procedure is grounded above a chain of notions which have to be respected at organisation level.

²⁴ Report on the suggestions for local plans in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains (Latium region) territory, June 2013 (www.ecorutour.eu).



A correct **information shared and disseminated** allows a greater knowledge on the local environmental, social and economical situation and opens to new ideas to be realised. Moreover the actions to promote decrease of emissions, when they are well disseminated on the territory, help to increase the general awareness on importance of sustainability and to create a local pride on the already achieved actions. This helps to give **equal representativeness** to the stakeholders. In this way it is possible to increase participation level and dialogue with the **partnership implementation**, which attracts always more stakeholders, growing richer and richer of diversity in point of views, potentials, project's aptitude and shared objectives.

The step of involving various stakeholders matches to the implementation of the inclusion principle. That is to recognise the stakeholders' own right to be listen and that they accept the commitment to report on their own actions and choices. This involvement should be casted upon both the subjects with an already consolidated relationship (for instance institutional subjects, trade associations, etc...) and those so-called "having no-said", usually not directly involved in. In this approach is essential **the role of mediator-facilitator**, which thanks to a specialised training is able to harmonise the communication phases among the different parts. This enables to:

- starting a procedure of dialog and interacted communication with the community
- starting a procedure of debate to verify the expectations of the parts
- being available to integrate relevant expectations in the own strategies and policies
- committing oneself and realising efforts to give effective answers to the involved stakeholders

The realisation of this procedure ensures that all the point of views would be carefully evaluated and considered and that **integrated approaches** to the problems and **participated solutions** would be carried out. The participated decision-making allows a more firm belief in the realisation of the community selected choices. In this way is emphasized a dynamic **commitment** which enhances **consensus** and increases community sense of membership, thus being able to create effectively shared options of sustainable development.



ECORUTOUR

LIFE08 ENV/IT/000404



In conclusion it is to be stressed that among the aims of a local public authority interested to sustainability development and emissions reduction in its own territory, there will be therefore the predisposition of a privileged partnership with agri-tourism structures in order to collaborate in the organisation of festivals, exhibitions, fairs and other events of community mobilisation and tourist attractiveness.



Acknowledgements

This study was realised in the frame of the project "ECORUTOUR, Environmentally COmpatible RUral TOURism in protected areas for a sustainable development at low emission of greenhouse gasses" (LIFE08 ENV/IT/000404) on June 2013. We acknowledge in particular LIFE+ Authority which allowed project realisation with a co-funding at 50%.

Authors

Stefano Carrano – ARSIAL Servizio STQ

Paolo Collepari – ARSIAL Servizio STQ

Maurizio Marchetti – ARSIAL Servizio SVA



Bibliography

- Agriturismo e Ittiturismo – linee guida per una gestione sostenibile, Edited by WWF Ricerche e Progetti Srl, 2007.
- Ansaloni F., Prodotto locale e sistemi alternativi di vendita. AgriRegioniEuropa, Year 8 n°30 September 2012.
- Buying Green Handbook, 2011 -
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/buying_handbook_en.htm
- Commission Decision of 9 July 2009 establishing the ecological criteria for the award of the Community eco-label for tourist accommodation service. Official Journal of the European Union L 198/57 - 30.7.2009
- Consorzio Best of Sabina – Criteri di qualità, 2000, <http://www.bestofsabina.it/criteri.php>
- Definizione dei criteri omogenei di classificazione delle aziende agrituristiche, in attuazione dell'articolo 9, comma 2 della Legge 96/2006, "Disciplina dell'Agriturismo". Ministero Politiche Agricole, Alimentari e Forestali, GU n° 5 del 06.03.2013.
- Disciplinare Agriturismi Bio-Ecologici – AIAB, 2009.
- Disposizioni attuative ed integrative della legge regionale 2 novembre 2006, n. 14 (Norme in materia di agriturismo e turismo rurale), relative all'agriturismo, S.O. n°2 al B.U.R.L. n°22 del 10/08/2007.
- ECEAT, European Centre for Ecological and Agricultural Tourism, Quality label, 2013
<http://www.eceat.org/fx/en/10/index.html>
- ECO-ROUTE, Legal and regulatory framework for ecotourism certification in Europe, 2006,
http://ecoroute.prismanet.gr/brochures/Eco-Labeling_FINAL.pdf
- European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (ECST), Europarc, 1995
<http://www.european-charter.org/home/>



- European Commission – Environnement – EMAS: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/emas/>
- European Commission – Environment – GPP Homepage - http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/index_en.htm
- Guidelines for the integration of environmental balance with environmental management system, LIFE project IDEMS, Edited by ERVET, Emilia Romagna, 2008.
- Guidelines for the replication of the DINAMO Model, LIFE+ project DINAMO, Ed. By ENEA, 2012.
- ISTAT: Le aziende agrituristiche in Italia, 2012, <http://www.istat.it/it/archivio/74602>
- LEGGE 20 febbraio 2006, n.96 - Disciplina dell'agriturismo. Gazzetta Ufficiale n. 63 of 16 March 2006.
- Legge Regionale Regione Lazio, 2 November 2006, n. 14, “Norme in materia di agriturismo e turismo rurale”, BURL, 31 of 10.11.2006.
- Legge Regionale Regione Veneto n. 7, 25 luglio 2008 “Norme per orientare e sostenere il consumo dei prodotti agricoli di origine regionale”, BUR, 62 of 29.07.2008.
- “Norme per la riforma ecologica dell’amministrazione regionale, degli enti locali e degli enti pubblici della Regione Lazio” - Progetto di legge regionale del Lazio, 2007, http://www.enricofontana.it/downloads/pdlriformaecologica_vers_def.pdf
- PM4ESD®, FEST, Project Management per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile Europeo, 2011, <http://www.adam-europe.eu/12B017E2-4865-4ABF-8738-6A940F77C6C3/FinalDownload/DownloadId-87AFD254197367256B87327EF19EBD8C/12B017E2-4865-4ABF-8738-6A940F77C6C3/prj/6055/prj/PM4ESD%20Manual%20IT.pdf>
- Project LIFE+ ECORUTOUR: Studio sulle caratteristiche dei servizi turistici di ristorazione e pernottamento e sulla mobilità del territorio del Parco del Delta del Po (Regione Emilia-Romagna) e del Parco del Gran Sasso e dei Monti della Laga (Regione Lazio), September 2010, <http://www.ecorutour.eu/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Studioservizi.pdf>



- Project LIFE+ ECORUTOUR: Rapporto sulla ricerca di buone pratiche – relativo all’attività progettuale 1.4, Edited by ArpaER DG SGI-SQE, October 2010, http://www.ecorutour.eu/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Report_-ricerca_buone-pratiche.pdf
- Project LIFE+ ECORUTOUR: Relazione sul bilancio globale economico ed ambientale delle emissioni di GES nelle aree progettuali – relativo all’attività progettuale 1.5, Redazione a cura di ArpaER DG SGI-SQE, January 2011, http://www.ecorutour.eu/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/6.1.6_report-azione-1.5.pdf
- Project LIFE+ ECORUTOUR: Rapporto del rilevamento sulla quantificazione della produzioni di emissioni di GES legate alla produzione dei menù di ristorazione e dell’offerta di ospitalità dei servizi selezionati nel Parco del Delta del Po, Regione Emilia-Romagna e nel Parco del Gran Sasso e dei Monti della Laga, Regione Lazio – relativo all’attività progettuale 2.1, July 2011, http://www.ecorutour.eu/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/6.1.7_Report-azione-2.1.pdf
- Project LIFE+ ECORUTOUR: Relazione sul bilancio globale economico ed ambientale delle emissioni di GES nelle aree progettuali – relativo all’attività progettuale 2.2, December 2011, http://www.ecorutour.eu/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Report-azione_2_2.pdf
- Project LIFE+ ECORUTOUR: 1° e 2° rapporto annuale sulle attività di assistenza svolte dal Servizio Turismo e Qualità Aree Turistiche della Regione Emilia-Romagna e da ARSIAL, January 2011 and January 2012.
- Project LIFE+ ECORUTOUR: Rapporto su ipotesi di piani di azione locale nell’area del Parco del Parco del Gran Sasso e dei Monti della Laga (Regione Lazio), June 2013 (www.ecorutour.eu)
- Project LIFE+ ECORUTOUR: Rapporto sui seminari locali, relativo all’attività progettuale 4.3.1/2, May 2010, http://www.ecorutour.eu/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Rapp_Seminari.pdf
- Regolamento Ecolabel ed etichette di tipi I-II-III, a cura di H. Tenaglia, Corso di Formazione Ecorutour, Ferrara 25.02.2010
- Regolamento per l’Assegnazione del bollino di Agriturismo Ecologico della Tuscia. Provincia di Viterbo Assessorato Agricoltura Caccia e Pesca, 2007
http://www.provincia.vt.it/caccia_pesca/modulistica/AgriturismoEcologicoRegolamento.pdf



- Rete "Fattorie del Panda" - Disciplinare per l'ingresso - Requisiti minimi delle strutture, Edited by WWF, 2011,
http://www.fattoriedelpanda.com/images/files/FdP_Requisiti_minimi_strutture.pdf
- Sustainable Tourism in Europe Approaches to development, Edited by Donald V. L. Macleod, Steven A. Gillespie, 2011
- The Green Tourism Business Scheme, 2013 – Criteria http://www.green-business.co.uk/GreenBusiness_Criteria_Introduction.asp
- Why sustainable agri-tourism is a market opportunity for the organic sector – a guide for farmers and other business. Organic Centre Wales, 2011
- World Conference on Sustainable Tourism (Lanzarote, Canary Islands, Spain, April 1995): Towards a New Tourist Culture http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13979&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html



ATTACHMENT A - Best Practice Instance. La garanzia di qualità certificata dal Consorzio Best of Sabina (The Quality Guarantee certified by the consortium Best of Sabina)

Basic requirements, mandatory and optional, necessary to insure quality in meeting the demand of rural tourism - that the consortium Best of Sabina will certify, that all structures adhering to the consortium will be in possession of.

A - Mandatory basic requirements

1 - The owners of the properties, will ensure the following:

(authorisation) possession of official authorisation to run business;

(rates) rates will comply with those published by local tourist authorities (APT Rieti);

(bookings) in case of no availabilities, clients will be assisted in finding other availability in a similar structure among those of Best of Sabina consortium;

(questionnaire) clients will be given a questionnaire to evaluate their stay and submit to Best of Sabina;

(personal data) clients personal data will be kept private;

(reception)

- owner or host, will be present on clients arrival and will be available to communicate with guests in at least one foreign language;



- clients will receive a warm welcome and information on everything necessary to make their stay enjoyable. such as:

- o vicinity of banks, shops, cafés, restaurants, chemists public transportation etc;
- o location of sport facilities;
- o distance from major sites of interest;

- clients will receive maps and other tourist material, will be available for the following cultural activities:

- visits to museums and archaeological sites;
- events and sagras;
- naturalistic itineraries.

- for self catering apartments, a manual will be given with the instructions for use of:

- electrical appliances, keys to gas, water and heating plants;
- rules of the house, acceptance of pets, smokers;
- use of fireplace, telephone, fax, internet access;
- useful information to meet any emergency (doctor, fire, police first aid road etc.)

(comfort of clients) rooms will have fresh flowers, tea or coffee or drinks for arrivals, a guest book in which clients can enter their impressions..

2 – Rural tourism structures will possess the following:

(technical requirements) technical requirements specified by law;

(safety) a first aid box; a fire extinguisher; a key to the gas and water supply; emergency lighting; insurance coverage;

(furnishing) furnishings will be either antique, traditional or with refined taste and design and will be as follows:

(bedrooms) comfortable bed, mattress cover, pillow covers; wardrobe and draws; mirror, suitcase support, chair, hangers; bedside lamps, extra pillow and blankets; glasses and jug for water; alarm clock, waste paper basket, weekly linen change;



(bathroom) bin, soap, bath mat, tissues, extra toilet paper, plugs for razor, hairdryer, weekly change of linen, or on request extra towels.

(self catering) in self catering apartments a fully equipped kitchen will be supplied. For long stays, a washing machine will be available and a place to hang laundry, as well as an iron and ironing board.

(Bed and breakfasts) will provide: tablecloth and napkins, service at breakfast, continental or buffet breakfast according to the means of the structure. fresh breads, biscuits, butter, jams and marmalade, milk and/or yoghurt, fresh fruit, fruit juice, a choice of teas and coffee;

B – Optional requirements

Best of Sabina will also certify the following optional requirements which one or more of the members will possess:

(signposting) clear indications on how to arrive from the main roads;

(parking) a parking space destined for use of guests;

(clients comfort)

in bedrooms:

- fireplace
- central heating
- daily cleaning
- laundry
- TV/satellite
- games table
- bookshelves
- radio
- computer/ e mail
- fax
- telephone
- DVD player
- cartoons



- films
- daily foreign newspapers

bathrooms:

- Jacuzzi

Outside areas (terrace / gardens):

- chairs, tables, armchairs, sun umbrellas
- swimming pool
- solarium
- grill/barbecue
- wood oven
- vegetable garden
- horse stables area
- mountain bikes
- tennis
- play area for children not accessible to traffic
- mini soccer field
- bocce balls

(club house) in the agriturismo a cosy communal room with literature on the area, where guests can socialize , and even taste local produce of the farm;

(typical products) if the agriturismo has a restaurant, typical recipes of the area will be featured on the menu;

(farm work) if the structure is a working farm, guests will have the opportunity to participate in demonstrations of the various activities of the farm such as ploughing, harvesting and pruning.



ATTACHMENT B - Best Practice Instance. Environmental Policy of the Comunità Montana del Velino

This document – approved with Decree n° 88 on 2007.12.14 – is in compliance with the requirements of EC Regulation CE 761/2001

The VI° Comunità Montana del Velino (District of Velino Mountains) created on the 70ies, gathers the Mountainin Municipalities of: Accumuli, Amatrice, Cittareale, Posta, Borbona, Micigliano, Antrodoco, Borgo Velino e Castel S. Angelo.

“This Mountain Community District aims at promoting and enhancing the mountain areas inside its own district and to pursue an harmonic counterbalance of the life conditions of the mountain populations thanks to the management of its own, or the delegated, functions and to the shared management of municipal functions (article 1 of the Statute approved with Decree n° 13 of 2001.11.30).

Moreover the Mountain Community District promotes, plans and implements developing policies favouring the territory and protecting the population’s interests, in agreement at strategic and organisation level with the Member Municipalities.

Thanks to an integrated project, utilising intervention's tools as the State of the Environment Report and the Strategic Environmental Assessment, realised with Latium Region funding and utilising European Funds, - this Organisation realised a Preliminary Environmental Analysis and is going to put into practice an Environmental Management System in compliance with the EC Regulation CE 761/2001.

Whit those objectives in mind the Mountain Community District, according to its own “Socio-Economical Developing Plan 2007-2011”, establishes:

- to promote a policy of reduction of energy consumptions and to encourage the awareness, the experimentation and the utilisation of renewable energy resources on the territory



- to contribute, in collaboration with Municipal Administrations and all the stakeholders, to a progressive enhancement of the environmental quality of the territory
- to encourage actions in order to qualify farming activities and rural areas valorisation with special reference to typical productions and specific cultural identity of the territory
- to preserve the forest heritage, giving priority to the project of forest system constitution and contributing to its own safety thanks to actions of fire prevention and protection
- to promote action to rise awareness on environmental culture and knowledge toward its own citizens, employees and Member Municipalities
- to encourage among the Member Municipalities actions aiming at waste management enhancement
- to monitor its own indirect environmental performances, giving preference to the purchase of environmental sustainable goods.

The Velino Mountain Community District commits herself to fulfil all the entrusted activities in the full respect of current regulations, to individuate the specific roles and responsibilities at every level of organisation, and to disseminate the present document to all its own spokespersons, e.g. the mayors of the Member Municipalities whom are invited to acknowledge the advantages originated from the implementation of an Environmental Managing System and to the possibility of adhering to EMAS Regulation.

The Community District commits herself in updating the present Environmental Policy and to consider it as the focus in order to a yearly review and establishment of its own environmental objectives and purposes.

Environmental Policy reviewed on 2007 October 22nd – approved with Decree n° 88 on 2007.12.14

On 2007.12.14

The Mountain Community District's Chairman