

The Traveller and the Olive Grove

Connecting and strengthening agriculture and tourism through spatial design

This project is a direct result of a CSR country scan executed by CSR Netherlands in September 2014 examining the state of CSR and sustainability in several sectors in Albania commissioned by the Dutch Embassy and the Netherlands Enterprise Agency and a mission conducted by Cityförster in the summer of 2014 researching possibilities for sustainable development along the Albanian Riviera commissioned by Creative Industry Fund NL

As a result of further desk studies and extensive contact with stakeholders in Albania Cityförster and CSR Netherlands have brought together an international team of experts and local key players from government and the different sectors to work together on:

An integrated approach to agricultural and tourism development on the level of “area, value chain and individual company.”

Key question for the mission

How can agriculture, tourism and spatial planning as well as adjacent sectors work together in a circular model adding maximum value to a sustainable year round local economy? How can this lead to more economic relations between Albanian and Dutch companies?

Showcase

It is difficult to envision a solution if you do not have examples at your disposal. For this reason we found that it is essential that effort is put in creating area's where successful combinations are made of agro-food production, the development of tourism and the development of infrastructure and other spatial elements. During recent events a number of entrepreneurs were identified who have a product and service level that could function as a starting point for desired quality level of supply in Albania.

Optimal scale

To build these “living labs” it is important to find an optimal scale: big enough to bring all these elements together and create enough body for impact, small enough to keep things going without making implementation costly and difficult.

Local context

The Ministry of tourism has well thought through strategies and plans in place to develop tourism in Albania. At the same time the agricultural sector is in development with great untouched potential in several areas. The Ministry of Urban development has very clear ideas on how the coastal area's in Albania can be developed. But do these powers strengthen each other or do they in certain cases threaten one and other? In a period when government and sector organizations, in cooperation with international organizations such as the Worldbank and GIZ are working on the actualization of plans and strategies, individual entrepreneurs are working on sustainable tourism and agriculture and providing practical cases and best practices that really stand out and are inspiration for others to follow.

How can these powers come together and complement each other in such a way that the result is a well-structured and smart approach by local and national government to an integrated and sustainable agricultural and tourism sector? And how can they at the same time stimulate the emergence of best practices based on ideas and business cases that have a strong link to this approach?

Objective

Objective of this project is to create insight among high level stakeholders on potential for sustainable alternatives to mass tourism based on worst and best practices elsewhere and in Albania. Furthermore this mission will result in understanding of possibilities and practical implications of implementing a sustainable tourism strategy in a specific location (pilot area), working on development of agro tourism in a narrow sense, on the level of accommodation, as well as in a broader sense by linking agro production, spatial design, infrastructural planning and tourism to show the interdependency as well as the potential to create added value for all three sectors. This project will contribute to the start of a development of sustainable (agro) tourism in Albania, ultimately leading to relevant supply for northern European tour operators and further opening Albania to European market for sustainable tourism.

Project team



Meine van der Graaf: Project manager at CSR Netherlands, CSR business network and platform

Martin Sobota: Architect at and owner of CITYFÖRSTER architecture & urbanism

Tea Hazizulfic: Architect at CITYFÖRSTER architecture & urbanism

Francesco Garofalo: Landscape architect and owner of Open Fabric

Tomek De Ponti: Business Innovator Food Security/Sustainable Productivity, Wageningen University and research centre

Paul Bos: Farmer, communication expert and owner of BoerBos Consulting

Gerben Hardeman: Sustainability manager at ANVR; Dutch tourism association

Chantal van Gent: Sustainability manager at Sawadee travels, Dutch tour operator

Gojart Smaja: Consultant and joint organizer of the program

Rafael Enzler: Co-founder of gutundgut, project development for tourism, leisure and culture

Fedde Germans: Business case developer and owner of Originate, coaching and consulting

Project program

Friday 11th of March

Stakeholder event Tirana

Meeting with students and young professionals from Riviera, living in Tirana

Monday 14th and Tuesday the 15th of March

Field visits, company visits and interviews in Qeparo, Borsh, Himare and Kurvalesh area

Wednesday 16th of March

Local stakeholder event, first workshops on business cases in the area and “diner event” in Qeparo with Arber Togani , winner of Master Chef Albania

Thursday 17th of March

Design sessions in small teams on specific challenges and business scenario’s

Friday 18th of March

Final design sessions and presentation of the results, including the Riviera signature dish by Arber Togani

Return in April/May

Presentation of the results, plans and partners for next steps and follow-up programs