



AER Committee 1 plenary meeting
Linz, Upper Austria (AT)
MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP ON TOURISM
28 October 2008, 16.00-17.00

DRAFT MINUTES

Agenda items 1 to 3

The meeting was opened by Thomas CARLSSON, Tourism manager, Västerbotten, Chairman of the group.

The draft minutes of the last meeting (28 February 2008, Lillehammer, Oppland) were adopted unanimously.

The draft agenda of the meeting was adopted unanimously after Harriet Jorderud from Jämtland (SE) asked to add a point under “other issues” to present a project developed in the region. **Point 11: Camp-E project from Jämtland**

Agenda item 4

Céline DAWANS, AER Committee 1, Policy Coordinator, gave an update on the Peer Review on Sustainable Tourism held in Tatarstan in February 2008. After their 4-day visit to Tatarstan, the Peer Review team (Wolfgang PLATZER from Carinthia, Hans BLOM from Flevoland, Eric SVOBODA from BITS, Valerij SMAGIN from the Russian International Academy for Tourism) drafted their report and recommendations. The recommendations varied from advice on community engagement such as “Promote the existent museums, especially the Hermitage Exhibition Centre” to spatial planning with “improve road network” and more creative ideas such as “Create an ice skating marathon from Moscow to Kazan”. The host region of Tatarstan welcomed the report and made no requests for amending the text. It was officially sent to the region of Tatarstan on 29 May 2008. The region is currently in the process of drafting its strategy on Tourism and will hopefully benefit from the recommendations made by the peer review team. All information about this peer review is available on the AER website (remember to log in to access all documents): <http://www.aer.eu/main-issues/tourism/peer-reviews.html>

Agenda items 5 and 6

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Thomas CARLSSON gave some indications about the seminar held by the Bureau for International Social Tourism in May in Barcelona.

Norberto TONINI, President of BITS, updated the participants on the latest activities of the BITS. The end of the year marks the closure of the launch period of the network. Next year, the network will come to its second phase. The BITS participated in the 3rd edition of the International Forum for Fair Tourism which took place in Bamako from 20-22 October 2008.

Mr. Tonini also confirmed his agreement with the propositions discussed during the meeting between AER and BITS for future collaboration, held in Brussels on 9 September 2008. These propositions include:

- a meeting between the coordination committee of the network and the AER working group on tourism (represented by Thomas Carlsson) between 15 January and 15 February 2009 with the objective to discuss the activities of the two networks in the following months.
- a thematic seminar co-organised by AER and BITS during the meeting of the BITS in Sicily (between end April, beginning of May 2009). A proposed theme could be the employment side of sustainable tourism.
- active lobbying in 2009 for the new MEPS
- questionnaire to AER member regions to see which regions are interested and/or active in the field of sustainable tourism
- specialised training academy on how to finance tourism projects with EU funds
- further collaboration on the AER tourism newsletter
- AER partnership pool open to project propositions from BITS members

Agenda items 7 and 8

Céline DAWANS shared the progress made on the PRESERVE project. This INTERREG IVC project stands for "Peer Reviews for Sustainable Eco Regions via Europe" is lead by the AER and composed of 13 other partners: Abruzzo (IT), Alba (RO), Alytus (LT), Avila (ES), Banska Bystrica (SK), Calabria (IT), Carinthia (AT), Észak-Alföld (HU), Fyn (DK), Örebro (SE), Streea Ellada (EL), Styria (AT), Tuscany (IT). The main objective of PRESERVE is to contribute to an improved effectiveness of regional development policies, specifically of regional polices considering cultural heritage as an endogenous factor of economic development and supporting sustainable tourism. Based on commonly defined methodologies, the partners will exchange best practices in the field, mainly through the means of on-site peer reviews and exchange seminars.

The project was selected among some 400 applications and is due to last for 36 months (November 2009 - October 2011). The total budget over the three year period and for the 14 partners is 1.589.281,22 €. The AER will sign the subsidy contract with the Joint Technical Secretariat before the end of the year as well as the partnership agreement with all the partners.



The partners gathered on 6 November for the first partner meeting at a time when they discussed the project time plan, activities, objectives and budget. The official launch conference will take place in February 2009 in Brussels. Between now and the launch conference, the website of the project will be launched and the partners are working

Agenda items 9 to 11

Estelle DELANGLE, acting Senior Policy Coordinator for Committee 1 presented the advancement of the Webportal on Tourism. Since its launch, the portal has attracted 17 partners. In an effort to revitalise the initiative, the portal has been free of charge for any joining region in 2008. Since only one region has joined the network in 2008 (and done so without knowledge of the special condition concerning the cost) the AER secretariat has made a new proposition. It is suggested to develop a platform/network for sustainable tourism. This network would be composed of the members of the webportal. Joining the network could require a small membership fee (as is the case today with the webportal). Regions in the platform would have access to a number of services, including the peer reviews, the tourism newsletter, etc.

The members discussed this proposition without reaching a final standpoint. The working group suggests submitting this proposition, through Thomas Andersson, present at the working group meeting and vice-President of Committee 1, in the discussions that will arise when revisiting the structure of Committee 1 and its working groups.

Agenda items 12

Camp E has developed its programme in close cooperation with one of the first schools that started to teach entrepreneurial skills to students in early ages, to contribute to give young people the possibility to experience the strength and value of their ideas and practical experience with making them happen.

The project idea is to build up a base of camps in Jämtland where young people from other parts of Sweden and Europe will be invited to join the youth from Jämtland in the camps. The goal is to use Camp-E as a platform with its program of entrepreneurship and integration to show how socially sustainable tourism can be developed in this context and to establish a number of new camps in Jämtland Härjedalen, together with the destinations and tourist operators

Partnerships shall be created with regions within AER to start camps in collaboration with local partners in other European countries so that Swedish youth can visit camps in other European countries and vice versa.

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End of meeting

The next meeting of the working group will be 30-31 March in Limousin during Committee 1 Spring Plenary meeting.

List of participants

