

Example of good practice	Development of eco-rural tourism in Bački Monoštor
NP4 category	local initiatives, local products, tourism, culture, equality
Organization	Civil Association for the Development of Eco-Rural Tourism "Podunav" , Bački Monoštor (NGO "Podunav")
Partners	Local community Bački Monoštor "22. oktobar" Primary School, Bački Monoštor WWF IUCN HBS (Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung) BeFem Agriculture Expert)Service Sombor Local civil associations
Location	Bački Monoštor Gornje Podunavlje Special Nature Reserve "Bačko Podunavlje" Biosphere Reserve
Country	Republic of Serbia
Protection category (IUCN)	Special nature reserve
Scope of implementation (local, national)	Local
Implementation time	The idea about starting the initiative and the association was conceived in 2006, and the association was officially founded in 2007. Around 50 projects for the development of the local community were implemented through the association
Number of employees in the organization	No employees, some 20 members in the organization and around 10 volunteers, all of them residents of Bački Monoštor
Budget	More than 50 projects were carried out, with a total budget of around 400,000 euros
Source of funding	City of Sombor, local funds, national and international funds
Project info (link)	www.skituljko.webs.com/ugpodunav.htm www.skituljko.webs.com/ www.facebook.com/ngo.podunavbackimonostor/

Contact (e-mail)	ngopodunav@gmail.com
Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation and implementation of 10 different tourist programs and an eco-tourism offer for Bački Monoštor and Gornje Podunavlje. Some of the programs include visits to Sombor, Bezdan, Kolut, Apatin, and Croatia. • Recognizability of Bački Monoštor as a tourist destination (promoted by the city of Sombor, Tourism Organization of Vojvodina, etc.). The average number of individual visitors and visitors that come for an organized event reaches 20,000. • Members of the local community created a strong organization that is committed to sustainable development goals • About 20 households promote and offer their services and products through this initiative • Women's association and women's economic empowerment. 70% of all the members of the association are women (aged 16 to 65). • Promotion of the area through festivals (Bodrog Fest - since 2005, visited by 12,000 guests, "Regeneration of Danube" Eco-Music Festival - since 2008, visited by 2,000 guests, Fair of cakes, pastry and agricultural products since 2011, about 2,000 visitors, SFRJ Rakijada, a fruit brandy festival - since 2015, about 1,000 visitors). • Improved cooperation between the local population and the manager of the "Gornje Podunavlje Special Nature Reserve" protected area • Most important awards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In 2014, Gornje Podunavlje received the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism from the EUROPARC Federation, the most important organization for protected areas in Europe. The work of the NGO "Podunav", engaged in the field of eco-rural tourism, represented a great contribution in obtaining this charter. The association is also a member of the Gornje Podunavlje Stakeholders' Forum, formed in order to assure quality management and strategy implementation by the "Vojvodinašume" public company, the manager of the "Gornje Podunavlje" Special Nature Reserve. ○ In 2017, Bačko Podunavlje became the new UNESCO Biosphere Reserve as a significant natural asset that included the SRP "Gornje Podunavlje" and Bački Monoštor, and the activities of the association were of great importance for the area's assessment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In 2019, Serbian adventures (a tourist Danube cluster) proclaimed that Bački Monoštor had the best proposal for a five-day tourism program in Serbia, which included both natural and cultural heritage. ○ In 2013, representing the whole Serbia, the association's "Gate of Gornje Podunavlje" project received special recognition from the Landscape Award Alliance of the Council of Europe for its contribution to European ideas and the spread of democratic thought ○ In 2011, due to the association's engagement in the "Wealth of Diversity" project, Bački Monoštor was recognized by the Provincial Secretariats and the Cluster Istar 21, association for the promotion and development of tourism in the Danube region, as one of the 10 most promising villages in Vojvodina with regard to tourism promotion.
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Problem/Opportunity	
Problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migration of the population • Local population's insufficient awareness on the significance of the protected area surrounding them • Threats to the preservation of the cultural heritage of the local population • Untapped potentials of natural and cultural heritage • Insufficient tourism promotion of Bački Monoštor
Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bački Monoštor is a village on an island surrounded by the Danube, river channels and wetland forests of the "Gornje Podunavlje" Special Nature Reserve • Proximity of border crossings • Authentic nature and multiethnic area - the structure of the population • Sustainable development • Development of eco-rural tourism • Development of theme tours

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing infrastructure (international bicycle routes) • Local products and traditional crafts
Planning	
Prerequisites for success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local population recognized the potential of being included in the initiative • Cultural heritage and natural heritage • Women are the initiators of change in the village • The locals' love of their village, there is a saying: "Bački Monoštor is the best in the world!" • The main drivers of the initiative have had experience in writing projects • At the very beginning, there were about ten people from the local community, and the initiative was immediately supported by the Local Community of Bački Monoštor
Initial idea	<p>David Reeder from the WWF-DCP worked in this area and successfully cooperated with the local population, and in 2006 he inspired the local population to establish a civil association and to use the cultural and natural potentials for the development of eco-rural tourism. Since 2010, there is a park at the center of the village dedicated to David Reeder, along with a commemorative plaque.</p> <p>The association's first steps referred to making an inventory of the existing offer, registration of private accommodation in the village, establishment of long-term cooperation with WWF and IUCN.</p>
Related strategies	Strategy for Sustainable Tourism in the Gornje Podunavlje Special Nature Reserve
Partner roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bački Monoštor Local Community - the main partner, logistical project support, but also support in the organization of events organized by NGO "Podunav".

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WWF - assistance in launching initiatives, inclusion in study visits, support for various initiatives, for various manifestations, providing guidance for further work • "22. oktobar " Primary School, Bački Monoštor - children are involved in various educational activities led by members of the association, e.g. there is a children's apiary section led by members of the association • HBS and BeFem - work on promoting female entrepreneurship since 2018 • Agricultural Expert Service Sombor - assistance with the promotion, members' education and the implementation of events • Local civil associations - the "Pčela" Beekeeping Association, the "Šaran" sports fishing club, Roma Association "Rumunka", the "Bodrog" civil association, croatian Folklore association "Bodrog" - cooperation in the realization of projects and events as well as tourist visits
<p>Implementation</p>	
<p>Key stages of the project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The association was established in 2007 when the members realized the importance of networking based on the World Wide Fund for Nature and David Reeder's input and the education on tourism held by the Faculty of Sciences. Dejan Mitić, the president of the NGO "Podunav" initiated the idea of sustainable development through eco-rural tourism and he gathered the key actors of the current tourism offer of Bački Monoštor. The association gathered caterers, craftsmen, private accommodation owners, volunteers. • Development of tourism offer - First, the association made an inventory of potential services and goods, after which they created the

	<p>first visitor programs in cooperation with the Local Community. These programs included the presentation of local products, visits to nature, getting familiar with the cultural heritage and folklore, and the registration of private accommodation. The created programs were then presented to the Tourist Organization of Sombor and at various events. The association started to apply for various calls for project proposals, which led to the implementation of first projects, in cooperation with the City of Sombor and the Assembly of the Autonomous province of Vojvodina, which included education and improvement of eco-tourism infrastructure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education - training, workshops, study visits, seminars organized by CEFE, GIZ, the Tourist Organization, the City of Sombor, the Agriculture Expert Service Sombor, WWF... • Promotion (festivals, tourist fairs), culture (old crafts, women's support...), female entrepreneurship, media, organized visits for the media and travel agencies
<p>Stakeholder involvement</p>	<p>Workshops, joint project writing and implementation, participation in developing strategies and management plans, regular association meetings, meetings with representatives of the local community.</p>
<p>Inclusion of vulnerable groups</p>	<p>According to the last census, Monoštor has a total population of 3,500, of which 80% are Šokci - a Croatian minority group. Šokci (Croats), Roma, Hungarians, and Germans, members of the national minorities in the Republic of Serbia, make the majority population of Bački Monoštor. This is a multicultural place that cultivates diversity. Such an approach has been present in the association from the beginning. Everybody is equal and equally involved in the organizational aspects of the</p>

	<p>association, the organization of events and the offer of services and products that are equally promoted and included in the packages. About 30 families are directly involved in the activities and initiatives, while around 60 are indirectly involved.</p> <p>70% of all the members of the association are women (aged 16 to 65).</p>
Right to access information	<p>The association has given them a voice and a platform, they are better informed and are involved in decision making. The association has given individual members access to various seminars, workshops thus helping them improve their knowledge, work, and quality of products and services that they offer.</p> <p>The association is also a member of the Gornje Podunavlje Stakeholders' Forum.</p>
Used communication channels	<p>They use different communication channels on the national, provincial, and local level.</p> <p>Written press: newspaper, magazines, and electronic media such as portals, blogs, specialized sites, and apps. They use the Internet and social networks, video reports.</p> <p>Fairs (international and national fairs of tourism and related topics, trade fairs referring to the Danube region, as well as other protected areas). They participate in fairs themselves or together with the National Tourism Organisation of Serbia, the Tourism Organization of Vojvodina, the Tourist Organization of Sombor, the "Vojvodinašume" public company, the Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia.</p>
Change	
Positive environmental changes	<p>Promoting the sustainable use of resources also affects the positive change in the awareness and attitude towards the surrounding environment of both the local population and the visitors.</p>

	<p>Better cooperation between local communities and protected area managers.</p> <p>Awareness has been raised on the importance of having a proper attitude towards the nature surrounding the village in the sense of proper waste disposal, being aware of the hunting and fishing closure periods resulting in the fact that a larger number of fishing permits have been issued etc.</p>
<p>Positive economic (E) and social (S) change</p>	<p>Public sector:</p> <p>E - higher local government revenues from residence fees and taxes</p> <p>S - higher recognizability of Bački Monoštor, Sombor and the Reserve as a tourist destination.</p>
	<p>Business sector:</p> <p>E - higher revenues for partner tourist agencies we cooperate with, higher incomes for local entrepreneurs and caterers</p> <p>S - a positive trend towards tourism as a driver of sustainable development</p>
	<p>Local population:</p> <p>E - NGO "Podunav" is the main organizer of several events held in Bački Monoštor, which includes a wider community and generate revenues through events: "Regeneration of Danube" Eco-Music Festival, as well as Summer Feminist Meet-up of Young Rural Women, both held on Danube Day; "Ko poštuje cvet, poštovaće i svet" (Those that take care of flowers, also take care of the Earth) - a small event for primary school children held on World Environment Day; Bodrog Fest - held on the second weekend in August; Fair of cakes, pastry, and agricultural products - held mid October; SFRJ Rakijada - held on the former Day of the Republic, November 29th; Photo Safari - with the participation of photographers from Vojvodina.</p>

This leads to a better sale and placement of local products that are included in the tourist offer, which in turn advertises their products and services (traditional crafts - producing wooden boats, producing wooden clogs, reed products, unique wooden objects - furniture, decorative items, wooden mugs, lamps and other souvenirs, beekeeping products and offering the visitors education on beekeeping, brandy, wines, paprika, charcuterie produced with meat, fish and game meats, the famous Monoštor fish stew, fruit products, juices).

The Ethno houses of Bački Monoštor represent a part of the offer - visiting traditional households, boat and ship tours, fiacre rides, horse-drawn carriage rides, bicycle tours, private accommodation, learning about traditional gastronomy, folk costumes, and handicrafts. The offer consists of approximately 100 different types of decorative domestic products and handicrafts.

S - individuals joining the association; by joining forces, the local population has experienced a significant change in everyday life and work. The local population is aware of the fact that this initiative helps them actively work on preserving cultural and natural heritage, that is, they realized that their everyday life represents a tourist attraction and that they have the opportunity to preserve their tradition for future generations by promoting it through sustainable tourism.

Protected Area Manager:

E - activities of the association have led to an increase in revenues from ticket sales, fishing permits, booking tourist guides

S - better management of the protected area, better cooperation with the local population, greater recognizability of the protected area

Replication and recommendations	
Recommendations for replication	Key issues to replicate: The stakeholders need to be connected and cooperate Support and persistence Stakeholders' will to continue working
Sustainability	Recognition from the local self-government, further work on sustainable development in the local community. The local community should recognize the importance and potential in continuing to develop and support such an initiative.
Recommendations for policy improvement	Two-way communication Raising citizens' awareness Continuous education Promoting Bački Monoštor on all levels Improving the local economy in order to reduce population migration Continuous work on strengthening mutual trust, especially on the local level: between the local population, local self-government and protected area managers
Your focus	Their goal is sustainable development through the preservation of cultural heritage and the natural environment (through eco-rural tourism).