**EUSDR PA3 CONFERENCE**

**17-18th of November, 2016**

**Draft 5**

1. **The Conference Context and Background**

During the PA3 of EUSDR Steering Group meeting in Ruse (Bulgaria) - June, 2015, a draft concept note – *The Danube Region and its World Heritage* was presented and discussed. The concept note highlighted the necessity to find a common approach for all the countries in the Danube region regarding the cultural and natural heritage, its preservation and its management.

The countries included in the Danube region contain a significant number of cultural and natural sites as well as immaterial features and traditions already recognized as World Heritage. Although these sites’ protection is generally ensured by the State Parties to the World Heritage Convention, specific problems for their conservation occur sometimes in relation to intensive tourism, over-restoration works, new inappropriate investments or uncorrelated private interventions that may harm their authenticity and context. There is a significant discrepancy between the visibility and importance given to the sites included in the World Heritage and the sites and monuments included in the cultural heritage of the target countries, a common problem at global scale. The world heritage has become a brand that captures attention, to the detriment of the local heritage.

A thematic diversification of the tentative lists and national lists of the target countries is necessary, in order to identify new classes and types of cultural heritage to be assessed and promoted to WH status.

These problems could be prevented through better monitoring and management methods and regional cooperation could be a driver for identifying the best ways to do so at a regional level.

The cultural diversity of the sites, their interconnections along the Danube as well as the necessity of their enhanced monitoring and management is encouraging a common approach that could integrate regional cooperation on several levels such as *cultural partnerships* for better monitoring and management of world heritage sites based on best practices or thematic & high quality tourism routes based on the strong cultural interconnections in the region. Furthermore, the need of a relevant, balanced and credible *regional Tentative List for UNESCO World Heritage* is calling for cooperation in establishing the *National Tentative Lists*, all the way through a regional harmonizing process strongly encouraged by UNESCO in the World Heritage Convention Operational Guidelines.

**Objectives and expected outcomes of the overall concept**

* The identification and setting up of the innovative models of good practice in the monitoring and integrated management of world heritage sites and/ or sites included on the tentative lists, which would work as a valuable regional instrument/model for heritage management along the Danube;
* The identification of new ways by which the attention generated by WH sites can be reflected on other sequences of the target countries’ cultural heritage;
* The establishing of the better basis for harmonization between national tentative lists along the Danube, as requested by the World heritage convention and will enhance institutional cooperation in all World Heritage matters;
* The consolidation of the links between tourism and culture; to stimulate cultural tourism in connection to broad heritage destinations while thoroughly looking both at its opportunities and its threats, e.g. through activities of audit destination and standards design that ensure the protection of heritage monuments in situations where there are heavily increased tourist flows or other associated effects;
* The (re)activation and enhancement of the connection between the heritage destination, the community around it and educated quality tourism. The dialogue between local authorities and the community should be stimulated through concrete measures and best practice sharing between project partners, in order to raise awareness and educate about the importance of cultural heritage, its protection and valorization.

During last years, the PA 3 of EUSDR co-Coordinators developed a series of activities in order to make important steps towards the achievement of the PA3 targets (eg. Ministerial Conference in Tourism – Sofia, 2015, Danube Cultural Conference – Timișoara, 2015 etc.). However, new challenges are always emerging and the necessity to find innovative solutions is a reality.

1. **The EUSDR PA3 Conference Concept**
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The PA 3 of EUSDR Conference is a thematic event organised by the Romanian Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration, with the large participation and support of the Romanian Ministry of Culture and the Interethnic Relations Departament.

It is expected that the event directly and significantly contributes to the achievement of targets 05 *'To create a Blue Book on Danube cultural identity'* and 03 *'Develop new support existing Cultural Routes relevant in the Danube Region'* of the PA3.

The conference concept relies on ***three components*** that work in an integrate way within the process of structuring and strengthening the cultural routes network in the Danube Region:

* ***Expand the perspective upon the cultural tourism routes***: from the punctual cultural heritage objectives network, towards the mixed cultural-natural heritage areas network, under the UNESCO Convention concerning the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage;
* ***Examine the local communities roles within the sustainable management of cultural heritage within its environment***, and relevant creative/smart relevant solutions, in support of both vivid cultural tourism routes, and higher quality of life;
* ***Examine the role of turism related relevant economic development structures***, as catalysts of cultural tourism routes.
  1. **Expected results**
* Technical substantiations of approaching cultural tourism routes as a matter of:
  + better engaging the existing cultural patrimony within the cultural routes, and expanding the perspective from the existing objectives to the mixed heritage areas;
  + community development and commitment towards a sound management of the mixed heritage, based on inter-sectoral approach;
  + local/regional economic sustainable development and competitiveness through smart cultural management.
* Good practices/ experiences regarding topics as following
  + the relevance of shifting from punctual cultural heritage network to the mixed cultural-natural heritage, in support of cultural routes strengthening
  + the extent to which the cultural routes make sense/ activate/ contribute to the other EUSDR PA-s
  + local communities management of the cultural heritage objectives, and mixed heritage areas
  + sustainable and competitive communities regeneration through (sound and) creative management of the mixed cultural and natural heritage, tourism development etc
  + the extent to which tourism economic structures contribute to catalyze the cultural routes
* Identifying the potential of structuring a Danube Region natural and cultural heritage areas network, in support of cultural-natural/thematic/etc tourism (based on World Heritage Convention Areas Network approaching)
* Identifying ways to connect and to integrate various relevant initiatives regarding valuable territories within the Danube Region (to maximize impact and minimize resources allocation);
* Sketch with partners the potential approach/calendar/plan of the process of mapping the mixed natural and cultural network, and of tourism development, at the scale of Danube Region.
  1. **Conference Structure**
* Day 1
  + Plenary session: open speeches, the conference framework, presentations regarding the relevant approaches
  + 3 Parallel Workshops on example of good practices:
    - cultural routes development based on the mixed WH Convention approaching, and the other EUSDR PA-s contributions/relevance;
    - communities working together and managing the cultural patrimony in support of steering the cultural tourism routes;
    - Tourism economic structures relevance for the cultural routes.
* Day 2: Study Visit
  1. **Value added**
* Natural and cultural patrimony creative capitalization as structural component of tourism, contributes to:
* catalyzing the cooperation and the structuring of tourism business with cultural routes;
* develop communities understanding of the history, environment and economy;
* develop communities networks, based on thematic areas, sharing of experience, tourism development structuring etc;
* develop mentalities based on fresh perspectives upon of the known environments;
* communities' economic development, see EU Urban Agenda, priority theme 11.
* Natural and cultural patrimony creative capitalization relevance to the other PA-s.

1. **The tentative Agenda**

**November 17, 2016 – Conference Section**

| **Timing** | **Presentation** | **Expected results** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 9:30-10:00 | Participants registration and coffee |  |
| 10:00-11:00 | Opening welcoming speeches   * Deputy Prime-Minister, Romania * The EUSDR Romanian Coordinator * PA3 Coordinator | Structuring the conference framework |
| 11:00-11:45 | **The Danube Region - its World Heritage and related cultural routes** | The **discussion** will concentrate on **exchanges of innovative models of good practice** in the **protection monitoring and integrated management of world heritage sites** and/ or sites included on the tentative lists. It also aims to propose ways by which the experience generated by WH sites can be spread and reflected on other groups/types of the target countries’ cultural heritage.  Subthemes:   * model approaches in World Heritage Conservation programmes * Perpetuation of Traditional materials use and traditional techniques related to heritage conservation * Specific challenges in heritage protection * The nature/culture connection in world heritage sites |
| 11:45-12:15 | Coffee break |  |
| 12:15-13:00 | **The Danube Region – between the multicultural mosaic tradition and today’s cultural dialogue** | Three main aspects will be highlighted: the cultural memory, the cultural creativity and the cultural inclusion, with accent on networking and dialogue. The best practices examples will show the way in which national minorities and multiethnic areas generally preserve their heritage and traditions, contributing along the centuries to the development and the evolution of the territories. Also, examples of the involvement in today’s minorities cultural phenomenon and cultural cooperation between minorities will be presented. |
| 13:00-13:45 | **Economic catalysts of local community development: cultural heritage and routes** | Role of economic structures and entrepreneurship in both sustainable management of cultural/natural heritage, and cultural tourism |
| 13:45-14:45 | Lunch |  |
|  | **Parallel Workshops** |  |
| 14:45-16:45 | **Workshop 1**  ***Expand the perspective upon the cultural tourism routes***: from the punctual cultural heritage objectives network, towards the mixed cultural-natural heritage areas network, under the UNESCO Convention concerning the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage | **Best practices** of sustainable development of rural communities starting from their heritage conservation programmes. Training and integration of local labour force in conservation projects, encouraging private initiative for projects using traditional materials and techniques promoting and disseminating this approach, are among the strengths of the programmes that will be presented. The examples will show to what extent an integrated perspective of the UNESCO Convention concerning the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage could contribute to strengthen the cultural routes structure/ network.  Relvance/bridges to the otherPA-s |
| 14:45-16:45 | **Workshop 2**  ***Local communities roles within the sustainable management of cultural heritage within its environment*** – one of the keys of sustainable and competitive communities regeneration | **Best practice** examples will highlight creative/smart relevant solutions, in support of both vivid cultural tourism routes, and higher quality of life; sustainable and competitive communities regeneration through (sound and) creative management of the mixed cultural and natural heritage, relevant networking, involvement in tourism economic structures etc  Relvance/bridges to the otherPA-s |
| 14:45-16:45 | **Workshop 3**  ***The role of turism related relevant economic development structures***, as catalysts of cultural tourism routes | **Best practice** examples of sound management of the mixed heritage, based on sustainable cultral tourism; contributions of tourism economic structures to the financing of the mixed heritage  Relevance/bridges to the otherPA-s |
|  | **Closing Conclusions Session** |  |
| 16:45-17:00 | Workshops conclusions short reports  Conclusions and next steps | -Sharing the parallel workshops conclusions to all the participants  -Bridges among PA3 and otherPA-s  -Sketching potential steps of action, based on relevant conclusions of the workshops |

**November 18, 2016 – Study Visit – Bucharest – Viscri (Brasov County) - Bucharest**

| **Timing** | **Activities** | **Expected result** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 9:30-13:00 | Departure  Study visit |  |
| 13:00-14:00 | Lunch |  |
| 14:00-17:00 | Study visit  Arrival |  |

\* *Travel and accommodation costs will be supported by each of the participants.*