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ECTN's fourth Annual Conference 'Managing Our Cultural Tourism Destinations Better' will take place in Barcelona, Spain 22- 23 November 2007, hosted by the Catalan Government and Barcelona University.

The fourth annual ECTN conference will focus discussions on ways in which we can develop a practical model for the sustainable development and management of cultural tourism destinations. The aim of the conference is to bring together cultural and tourism professionals to exchange experience and move the issue of developing an effective management model suitable for all European cultural tourism destinations forward.

Confirmed speakers include Michael Day who is the Director of the Royal Palaces in Britain, Miranda Bird from Cornwall Arts in England, Greg Richards from Atlas and Lena Mossberg, Goteborg University Sweden. Further details regarding the conference are available from Silvia Grau and Jordi Tresserras from the Universitat de Barcelona, contact e mail ibertur@gmail.com and the full programme will at the beginning of October be on the ECTN web site.

The Future of ECTN as a membership association

A core group of members are now working to put ECTN on a permanent footing funded through membership subscriptions with the creation of an international association under Belgium law with a formal board.

To progress the aims of the network it is suggested that below a central coordinating board there will be 3 working groups:

- Research group led by Barcelona University (Spain) – this group will seek to work collaboratively on research to improve our understanding of the contribution that cultural tourism makes to regional economies, the role that it plays in stimulating the creative industries and the behaviour and motivations of cultural tourists. It will also help identify suitable benchmarks to assist with the development of destination models. It is envisaged that this group would consist of a network of

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universities and HE establishments with an interest in cultural tourism. The network could seek funding from the 7th framework to fund collaborative research and from other EU funding regimes for student and staff exchanges.

- Practitioners Group led by South West Tourism (England) – to exchange best practice, and to work collaboratively on the development of practical tools to improve the planning and management of cultural tourism destinations. An early priority is to work with Europa Nostra on an eco label for sustainable cultural tourism destinations and the development of a bench marking system to support this. Again project funding will need to be sought to fund these projects.
- Policy group led by Region Vastra Gotaland (Sweden) – this group will utilise the evidence from the research and practitioner groups to influence policy makers working alongside regional politicians.

The following membership categories are proposed:

- Regional Governments or small member states – the old member states will pay 5,000 euros the new member states 2,500 euros.
- Regional organisations will pay 2000 euros
- City /county authorities – old member states 1,500 euros, new member states 750 euros.
- Universities/ HE institutions – old member states 750 euros, new member states 350 euros
- NGOs – old member states 500 euros, new member states 250 euros.

Regional governments will be entitled to two free delegates places at the annual conference plus a third delegate at a 50% discount, regional organisations and city/county councils 1 free delegate place plus a second at a 50% discount, other categories one free place.

The Shadow Board

A shadow Board was appointed at a meeting of ECTN members on the 10th May in Brussels to oversee the transition to a formal membership association under Belgium law. The members of the shadow Board are:

- Nigel Adams, Welsh Assembly Government
- Peter Cole, Capital Region Tourism, Wales
- Annette Cole, South West Tourism, England
- Conny Boersma, Province of Zeeland, Netherlands
- Paiva Lappalainen, City of Turku, Finland
- Josefina Diez Pascual, Catalan Government, Spain
- Silvia Grua Parramon, Barcelona University
- Tomas Olsson, Region Vastra Gotaland, Sweden
- Jim Stone, Midlands Region, Ireland

At the first meeting of the shadow Board on the 27th of June, Nigel Adams was elected chair and Peter Cole, treasurer/secretary. The organisations represented on the shadow Board all agreed to pay the annual membership subscription to enable Peter Cole to recruit a part time coordinator for ECTN. It is intended to elect a formal Board at the conference in Barcelona in November with all the delegates formally representing the organisations who have paid their membership subscriptions by that date being eligible to vote and stand for election to the Board.

ECTN Activities

- ECTN meeting to discuss the future of the network held on 25th of January in Brussels.
- Presentations by Nigel Adams and Silvia Grua Parramon on behalf of ECTN to seminar on Cultural Tourism on 20th of April in Nice organised by Vastra Gotaland and Alpes-Maritimes
- 10th of May ECTN meeting Brussels which agreed a draft constitution, membership subscriptions and appointed a shadow board.
- June ECTN responded to the European Commission's consultation on an 'Agenda for a Sustainable and Competitive European Tourism.
- 27th of June ECTN shadow board meeting and presentation by Nigel Adams on behalf of ECTN to the Committee of the Regions Hearing on Cultural Tourism, in Brussels.
- 24th & 25th of September, Annette Cole will be presenting a paper on destination development and management for cultural tourism behalf of ECTN at the "Researching Destination Management, Policy and Planning: Linking Culture, Heritage and Tourism conference" in Riga, Latvia. For more information on the conference visit www.tourism-culture.com
- Vastra Gotaland will from September take over the hosting of the ECTN web site, thus enabling the web site to be regularly updated.

Committee of The Regions Hearing On Cultural Tourism 27th of June

The Committee of the Regions held a round table discussion on Cultural Tourism chaired by Jyrki Myllyvirta, Chairman of the EDUC Commission of the CoR. ECTN was invited to make a presentation to the hearing, and Nigel Adams spoke on behalf of ECTN. Nigel in his presentation described the background to ECTN stressing it was the only network which brings professionals from the cultural and tourism sectors together at the European level to share and develop experience and best practice. He set out why cultural tourism was important and identified three major challenges that need to be addressed if cultural tourism was to be developed and promoted in a sustainable manner:

1. Effective destination management to protect the cultural resource from the negative impacts of tourism and ensure that the local community

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- secures real benefits whilst improving the quality of the visitor experience.
2. Ensuring that some of the wealth generated by cultural tourism goes to help conserve and support the cultural resource.
 3. Ensuring that cultural tourism is developed with the support of local people.

To address these challenges he stated will require the cultural and tourism sectors not only to talk to each other, but also to work together cooperatively in an integrated manner and ECTN has a key role to play in bringing the two sectors together at the European level. Finally he referred to The Gothenburg Declaration made at ECTN 3rd annual conference and to the ECTN report on best practice.

Other speakers included representatives from DG Enterprise and Industry, Tourism Unit and DG Education and Culture from the European Commission, Gerd Harms, CoR rapporteur on the Communication on “a European agenda for culture in a globalizing world”, Stavros Arnaoutakis MEP, Marie-Helene Descamps MEP, Bernardo Hernandez Bataller European Economic and Social Committee and Martin Scicluna of Europa Nostra.

The conclusions of the roundtable discussion were;

“Cultural diversity and the development of cultural forms of expression are, together with the preservation of the cultural heritage, indispensable elements of European identity. In this sense we underline that culture plays an ever growing role in economic development itself and to its foundations on which it rests. Culture in its diverse forms can no longer be subsumed and evaluated under the term ‘cultural economy’

The participants of the Committee of the Regions Round Table on Cultural Tourism on 27 June 2007:

- **Highlight** that preserving cultural diversity is one of the defining objectives of the European Union. Local and regional authorities have a key role in promoting and celebrating the cultural identity of their communities;
- **Find** that culture is a major source of growth, jobs and investment in Europe’s cities, towns and regions and is a major component of their development. Furthermore culture contributes to the objectives of the Lisbon strategy;
- **Underline** the value of strengthened and continuous research in the field of cultural tourism;
- **Emphasise** the cultural activities have a fundamental role in promoting social cohesion;
- **Stresses** the importance of cultural tourism for young people, aiming to make them aware of the history of different components of the European Union as well as the common elements that bind them;

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- **Underline** that culture is a main driving force for tourism but **call for** a balanced approach to satisfying economic growth and competitiveness through tourism and the need to preserve Europe's cultural heritage and the environmental context in which they are embedded;
- **Call** for more networks that bring together tourism and cultural industry professionals, cultural associations and other stakeholders in the different regions and cities of the European Union in order to facilitate the exchange of best practice and experiences;
- **Call** on the European Commission to support cultural tourism as well as to develop a policy document on cultural tourism setting out future EU strategies and actions encouraging member states, regions, cities and communes to develop a cultural tourism policy based on commonly agreed principles."

Links With Other Networks

Europa Nostra prepared a position paper on Cultural Tourism which they submitted earlier this year to the EU Institutions and the Council of Europe on the encouragement of cultural tourism and the mitigation of its effects. The paper highlighted the role that networks such as ECTN and Europa Nostra can play in building bridges between heritage organisations, the tourism industry and local communities. The paper called for an Action Plan to be drawn up on a European wide basis, and urged that the Action Plan should support ECTN in their efforts to bring the tourism and heritage industry professionals together with a view to fostering best practice, including the benchmarks. Martin Scicluna the author of the paper presented it to a meeting of ECTN on the 10th of May in Brussels. The shadow board of ECTN met Martin Scicluna and the Director General of Europa Nostra, Mrs Sneska Quaedvlieg-Mihailovic, and Mark Sneathlage, Policy and Campaigns Officer, on the 26th of June to discuss future cooperation and joint projects between ECTN and Europa Nostra. For further information on Europa Nostra or to download their position paper on Cultural Tourism visit

http://www.europanostra.org/lang_en/index.html

ERIH Annual Conference 13th - 14th September 2007 at Dortmund, Germany

Speakers included John Rodger, Project Director, Blaenavon World Heritage Site, and Jeff Pride, Director of Herian both of whom spoke at the ECTN conference in Cardiff in 2005.

International Culinary Tourism Association

Peter Cole met Erik Wolf, President of the ICTA and Garry Taylor their Director European Development to discuss possible future cooperation.

Culture 2007 - 2013

A call for proposals has been announced by the Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency. Proposals have to be submitted by the 31st of

October 2007. Details can be downloaded from

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/culture/calls2007/index_en.htm

Interested applicants will have the opportunity to submit questions on the occasion of the InfoDay Culture, an event organised jointly by the European Commission and the Executive agency on September 14, in Brussels.

Interreg IVC Launch Lisbon

The new programme for 2007-13 is being launched in Lisbon on the 20th and 21st of September in Lisbon.

Partner News

Zeeland, Netherlands

- Following elections last March the Province's culture and tourism portfolios have been combined under one portfolio holder to stimulate policy development in which both fields are combined and strengthen each other.
- A Knowledge Centre for Coastal Tourism has been founded this year in Vlissingen to link government, education and business. The Knowledge Centre which is situated in the Hogeschool Zeeland an institute for higher education, will investigate the threats from rising sea levels and opportunities and works in a future-orientated manner by developing new product market combinations.

Vastra Gotaland, Sweden

- Tomas Olsson, Commissioner, Cultural Department gave a presentation to la rencontres d' Avignon, European Regions and Culture first European meeting of Directors of Culture & Arts third plenary session on Actions and Strategies on the 19th of July at which he highlighted the importance of cultural tourism and the role of ECTN.

Wales

- The new Labour and Plaid Cymru (Party of Wales) Coalition Government have created a new Minister of Heritage, Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM, who will have responsibility for culture and tourism, thus facilitating greater cooperation between these two sectors.
- The Welsh Assembly Government commissioned last June, Stevens Associates to undertake an independent review of the way cultural tourism is being developed and delivered in Wales. They will be presenting their findings and provisional recommendations to a special workshop of the national cultural tourism partnership in October.