



SusTrip - Sustainable Tourism Research and Intelligence Partnership

Interreg Programme – KCC Lead Partner

Strategic Objectives:

- *To share research knowledge and expertise for joint benefit.*
- *To work together to produce research which will help guide destination marketing and development decisions across the 2 Seas Region*
- *To map out future directions for making the best possible use of new technology in support of sustainable tourism development*
- *To improve intelligence on current and potential tourism industry performance to help to support tourism businesses and underpin investment decisions.*

Project Summary

There are three main project activities which encompass a series of sub actions and these are detailed below. Each of the three activities will incorporate respect for the natural environment and host community as part of its basic remit.

Activity 1: Sustainable Tourism

This activity focuses on the needs of the incoming visitor and the host community. It includes sub actions which encourage respect for the community and find ways of understanding our customers better through;

- The creation of an events impacts measurement and management 'toolkit'
- 2 Seas region-wide resident and visiting friends and relatives (VFR) study
- An accessibility inventory for accommodation, attractions and transport
- Understanding our current visitor - a three region visitor survey incorporating market profiling and visitor spend.
- Identifying our potential visitors through an image and perception study which includes elements to deal with visitors' perceived value for money of a destination, their likelihood of visiting and planning for 'sustainable tourism'.
- A study into new and emerging communication technologies for targeting visitors and informing the tourism industry

Activity 2: Supporting Tourism

This activity focuses on identifying tourism products and on measuring industry performance. The results will be a portfolio of intelligence on tourism product, industry trends, and issues and developments which will be of value to existing businesses and organisations as well as potential new investors. This will be achieved by:

- A Study into self-catering, camping and eco-friendly accommodation products.

- The production of fact-sheets
- 2 Seas investment monitors for product development.
- Business Barometer
- Economic Impact Model
- Museum Study

Activity 3: Knowledge Platform

This activity focuses on a key legacy of this project which will be to establish a new Knowledge Platform to provide long term research support to the partners beyond the duration of the project. The sub actions for this activity are:

- A Research forum for each study conducted
- A Virtual Network - Basecamp
- A Databank – www.sustainabletourismresearch.eu
- Communication and Dissemination

Activity 1 – Sustainable Tourism

Activity	Timing
<p>Creation of an events impacts measurement and management ‘toolkit’ A Transmanche Events Impact Toolkit will be created for use by any tourism professional organising events. This will help to find ways in which events can minimise their negative impacts and maximise their positive impacts by measuring the economic, environmental, social and cultural factors involved in running an event.</p>	<p>2011/12</p>
<p>2 Seas region-wide resident and visiting friends and relatives (VFR) study A visitor survey will be undertaken to identify the nature of the resident market and their visiting friends and family as it represents a significant percentage of the visitor economy in the partner regions. The research will look at the profile, behaviour and value of the market, their motivations and interests, products to develop, and how to successfully target the market.</p>	<p>2011</p>
<p>Accessibility inventory for accommodation, attractions and transport In the lead up to the London Paralympics Games in 2012, it is intended to undertake an audit of tourism product aimed at identifying actions required to ensure the region is accessible to all visitors, over and above national statutory requirements on accessibility. This will identify gaps and opportunities for improvement plus highlight any barriers facing businesses in making their product more accessible. The result will be a joint plan to provide information and support not only to visitors, but also for planners and tourism providers in the partner regions.</p>	<p>2011</p>
<p>Understanding our current visitor - a three region visitor survey Incorporating market profiling and visitor spend An extensive visitor survey is planned at the borders to the Transmanche region of Nord Pas de Calais which will provide invaluable information for CRT, KCC and Westoer on current visitors. In addition Kent is planning to conduct more detailed visitor surveys than ever carried out before to support its economic impact measurement process while Westtoer is conducting a survey into their day visitor market. This information will enable all partners to understand the economic value of particular groups to the whole region, to enable sustainable tourism planning to take place and identify the impact of a changing society influenced by factors from increases in fuel to the increased strength of the Euro.</p> <p>Identifying our potential visitors through an image and perception study which includes elements to deal with visitors’ perceived value for money of a destination, their</p>	<p>2010/12</p>

<p>likelihood of visiting and planning for 'sustainable tourism'</p> <p>An e-survey will be conducted in the UK, France and TBC to test awareness and identify perceptions of each of the partner regions. This will enable Partners to see how images compare to reality on such key issues as quality and value for money. It will also help to identify which markets hold the most potential for each region.</p>	
<p>A study into new and exciting communication technologies for targeting visitors and informing the tourism industry</p> <p>It will be vital as new, more IT literate markets develop that Transmanche tourism businesses understand not only existing communication technologies but also future trends in communication technology so they can reach new and existing customers more effectively.</p>	2011

Activity 2- Change Perceptions

Activity	Timing
<p>A Study into self-catering, camping and eco-friendly accommodation products.</p> <p>Partners are not fully aware of the extent of the self catering, camping and green accommodation product offered in their respective areas. A joint study will therefore identify the scale of such product, its markets, organisation, distribution channels and current market conditions, as well as economic importance and any eco-friendly proposals.</p>	2010/11
<p>The production of fact-sheets</p> <p>These will provide tourism businesses with information on the different regions in Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais. Many businesses have problems finding valuable data on their own or neighbouring areas and "District Dashboards" are designed to provide such information.</p>	2010/11
<p>2 Seas investment monitors for product development</p> <p>The amount and type of investment into the 2 Seas region will be researched and recorded to enable comparisons to be made. This will allow support to be given to complementary strategic product development decisions across the region.</p>	2010/11
<p>Business Barometer</p> <p>Building on the success of the Business Barometer (established under the Interreg 111a Programme a year-round tourism and leisure industry led business performance mechanism will continue to deliver data on the health of the tourism industry in the 2 Seas area, including the numbers of cross Channel passengers. However the system of collection of the data will be improved, and the sample extended to ensure a more valid, reliable and timely document is produced, which can be accessed online. A major cross Channel study was conducted between June 2005 and June 2006, following on from a similar study in 1999/2000. Figures for 2007 show an increase in tourism traffic and prove that the market is subject to continual change, which is important for the Transmanche region to monitor with the Cross Channel Carriers and Ports.</p>	2010/11

<p>Economic Impact Models Understanding the volume and value of tourism is vital to understanding its impact and maintaining funding. In the UK, as part of the National Intelligence Programme, economic impact measurement is being reviewed and Kent will be participating in any new development. In Flanders and Netherlands previous joint work was carried out to compare methods for measuring economic impact of tourism and leisure. They would like to extend this to test the UK models and their application in Flanders on a local and regional level by case studies eventually developing a handbook of recommendations.</p>	<p>2011</p>
<p>Museum Study Following on from a previous museum study carried out under Interreg IIIa, the CRT are looking at how they can expand the economic impact model to voluntary participants. They will produce a guide to help inform key stakeholders about the importance of the cultural tourism product. It is planned to also roll this out in Flanders (TBC).</p>	<p>2011</p>
<p>Activity 3 – Knowledge Platform</p>	
<p>Activity</p>	<p>Timing</p>
<p>A Research forum for each study conducted which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an inception workshop to bring together experts in the field, discuss methodologies, individual regional and broader “2 Seas” area needs and plan the approach. The approach will be flexible using the same foundations but allowing for specific regional focus and budgets. • a seminar to present results, share the lessons learnt with key stakeholders, jointly identify opportunities and threats, discuss solutions and plan next steps 	<p>2011</p>
<p>A Virtual Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of professional Business to Business Websites for each region • Development of a joint online forum to share information and discuss research issues for partners and businesses 	<p>2011</p>
<p>A Databank</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To look together at the baseline information each region is collecting already and as part of the project, understand methodologies and definitions, share best practice and identify benchmarks. • To ensure each region conducts the basic tourism product audit 	<p>2011</p>
<p>Communication and Dissemination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure the results of the programme are included in the various partners' current methods of communication e.g Economie et Tourisme. • To identify target audiences and appropriate modes of communication including instances where it would be appropriate to undertake joint communications and where translation will be needed. 	<p>2011</p>

Programme Steering Group:

- Kent County Council
- CRT
- Westtoer
- Hogeschool Zeeland
- NHTV internationaal hoger onderwijs Breda

Cost:

3,259 m €