

Example of good practice	Increase revenues for the local population through sustainable tourist at Šasko Lake
Category	Tourism; local products; management; culture
Organization	Green Home – Zeleni dom
Partners	Ulcinj municipality, Šas restaurant, local tourist boards, Ora NGO
Area of activity/location	Šasko Lake
Country	Montenegro
National protection category (IUCN?)	Not a protected area
Scope of implementation (local, national)	Local (municipality) and national level
Time needed to achieve solution	4 years
Number of employees	7
Budget	111 000 EUR
Source of financing	Partner Fund for Critical Ecosystems
More information	https://www.sasko.me/
Contact person	Nataša Kovačević
Accomplishments (overview)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration of local producers (honey, olive oil, wine) at Šasko Lake – 15 representatives. • Formation of a joint platform of local households (20-40) having revenues from the sale of local products • 5 trained birdwatching guides • During the public debate on the Draft Urban Plan for the Ulcinj municipality, proposed golf course (50 ha) at Šasko Lake was rejected.

Problem/opportunity	
Problem to be resolved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of will to protect the area • Large migration of the local population • Poaching • Lack of promotion of local products and areas
Opportunity to be taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural values of Šasko Lake

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organic production • Authentic cultural and natural area • Development of eco-tourism • Sustainable development • Joint management of natural values • Local products
Planning	
Key requirements for success	<p>Legal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring participation of the local population in the decision-making process in drafting spatial plans
	<p>Local community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community wants to protect its natural resources • Active community, trust towards NGOs (representative was a minority member)
How did the idea arise?	Increasing revenues for the local population through sustainable tourism on Šasko Lake for its conservation and protection. The desire to show the development of eco-tourism is a tool for the sustainable development of Montenegro.
Implementation	
Key phases – from idea to realisation?	<p>1. establishment of a protected area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafting the protection study for the area with the Faculty of Science • Initiative to protect Šasko Lake submitted to the Ulcinj municipality <p>2. improvement of the local economy through the development of eco-tourism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafting the tourism development strategy for Šasko Lake • Network of local producers • Registration of producers and marketing their products

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of an Info centre where local producers could bring the products characteristic to this region: honey, olive oil, wine, olives, figs • Marking walking trails around Šasko Lake • Destination promotion
Which actions did you take?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study on the protection of Šasko Lake and its surroundings drafted (https://www.sasko.me/vp-content/uploads/documents/studija-zastite-za-sasko-jezero-i-okolinu.pdf) • Initiative to protect the area submitted to the Ulcinj municipality • Network of local producers and creation of a joint platform • Tourism development strategy for Šasko Lake and surrounding areas drafted • Local producers registered (honey, wine, olive oil, dried figs and herbs, cosmetic products based on natural ingredients, sweet products, jams, wool, local souvenirs) • Establishment of cooperation with the local tourist board and national tourism organisation to promote Šasko Lake • Organised study visits to Slovenia and Albania for local producers (capacity strengthening and education on how to improve the local offer and services) • Adaptation and renovation of the info centre as part of the Šas restaurant; • Map of biodiversity access points, with measures to be taken • Adaptation and marking of walking trails around Šasko Lake

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Info materials – two info panels, brochure (in Albanian, Montenegrin and English), website www.sasko.me • Two containers installed to improve municipal infrastructure
How were local stakeholders selected?	Local producers interested in cooperation and having products they wanted to market.
Which vulnerable groups were included, and how?	The Šas area is primarily inhabited by an elderly population and people of Albanian nationality who prepare the local products for their own needs, and who supported this initiative for better placement of their products.
Did you inform local stakeholders of their right to information?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building the Local Platform helps the local population to more openly participate in decision-making processes and to fight for their rights, particularly for the sustainable use of natural resources. • Joint participation on public debates on the Draft Urban Plan for the Ulcinj municipality (including the area of Šasko Lake) at which time the proposed golf course was rejected and removed from the plan
Challenges during implementation:	Administrative: Insufficient cooperation with the Ulcinj municipality
	Technical: Issue of unregistered local products, resulting in problems promoting this region at the national level
	With stakeholders: Work with the local community required much effort and time, but in the end the results were visible.
Changes	
How were negative impacts on nature reduced?	The map of biodiversity access points with measures to be taken was made, and tourist activities do not take

	place in areas where they are not permitted (e.g. boating is not permitted in the parts of the lake where birds nest).
Positive economic (E) and social (S) changes:	<p>Public sector (local, national)</p> <p>Social:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism destination promoted at the national and international level – at the world tourism fair, ITB Berlin • Ulcinj municipality supports the rural development and initiatives at Šasko Lake.
	<p>Private sector:</p> <p>E: local tourism agencies have revenues from bringing tourists to Šasko Lake</p>
	<p>Local population:</p> <p>Economic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local information centre and necessary municipal infrastructure was adapted. • Better sale and marketing of local products, and growth of the local economy, due to development of additional opportunities for generating revenues from nature-based activities (fishing, mushroom gathering, birdwatching, boat tours, etc.) and better management of natural values. <p>Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Platform created, to bring together food and craft products, recreation and accommodation services. • Capacities of this group improved. • Local population remains in the lake zone, and traditional practices are preserved. • The unemployment rate in this district is very high, at 70% of the labour force, and the use of existing ecological, cultural and tourism potential through this

	<p>initiative proved to be a key alternative for the sustainable development of the local population.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved understanding and knowledge of the local community on the market values of their natural and cultural resources, and continued conservation of these resources.
	<p>Scientific community</p> <p>Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map of biodiversity access points made, with measures to be taken for Šasko Lake Excellent success in the rejection and removal of the planned golf course from the planned Urban Plan for the Šasko Lake area, ensuring nature conservation. Protection study drafted, as the first step to creation of a protected area. The initiative was submitted to the Ulcinj municipality, for forwarding to the Environment Agency with a request that this area be proclaimed as protected.
What was your greatest contribution to the project?	<p>For nature</p> <p>Planned golf course (50 ha) in this area stopped</p>
	<p>For people</p> <p>Better information of the citizens about the natural and cultural values of this region</p>
Replication and recommendations	
Which key items were important for replication?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local support Existence of products and services Natural values of the area
What would you recommend to others?	<p>Continuous communications with all interested parties.</p> <p>Long, hard work with the local community results in certain success.</p>

What is key for project sustainability?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local community needs to recognise and accept the project activities as their own, and for their benefit. • It is key that the project and its benefits be presented to the local community, the key actors be informed, and good communications and cooperation established.
What are your recommendations for policy improvement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the protection of Šasko Lake at both the local and national levels; • Raise awareness of citizens of the values of protected nature; • Promote organic farming as a healthy lifestyle; • Improve the local economy with the aim of reducing migration out of rural areas
Which examples of good practices would you like to learn more about?	Examples of good practices from the region on the topics of eco-tourism.