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Global Sustainable Tourism Alliance Albania Associate Award Whole System in the Room (WSR) Report

January 2009

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Global Sustainable Tourism Alliance (GSTA)

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SUMMARY

Sustainable tourism has great potential for driving economic growth in Albania. Tourism is a mechanism for job creation and image improvement, and, when combined with elements of sustainability, it can help conserve natural resources, including wildlife, green space, and national parks as well as markedly increase quality of life for participating communities, and protect and sustain local cultures and heritages. The recent attention paid to this subject by USAID and the Global Sustainable Tourism Alliance (GSTA) has generated discussion on the need to formulate a countrywide approach to sustainable tourism.

Sustainable tourism is a relatively new topic in Albania, but a lot of good work is already being undertaken in this area by a diverse collection of stakeholders. Many opportunities and challenges present themselves as stakeholders attempt to improve tourism facilities and infrastructure in Albania, as well as convince Albanians that their country has the potential to be an elite tourist destination. Albania's natural treasures are still relatively unspoiled, but they are also in danger of being destroyed. Recent mismanagement of natural resources dictates that Albanians must learn to value their resources and view tourism as a mechanism for economic improvement as well as environmental preservation. The past's focus on reckless over-development has shown the value of investing in local, community-based tourism that disperses the benefits across many levels and lifts up local arts, culture, crafts and products. These pressing needs are what drew a diverse group of system-wide stakeholders together for a three-day workshop to find common ground on how to improve Albanian tourism in both an economic and responsible manner. For the purposes of this report, the terms "tourism" and "sustainable tourism" are interchangeable because stakeholders agreed that Albania's physical environment and resources are precious commodities that should be incorporated in Albania's tourism future.

The GSTA organized a gathering of Albania's key tourism stakeholders at a three-day workshop from January 20-22, 2009 to determine the common goals of everyone working in the tourism and related-industry sectors and to obtain commitments for collaborative actions to attain these goals. This workshop was the first Whole-System-in-the-Room (WSR) planning workshop for the tourism sector in Albania.

The workshop, sponsored by USAID and the GSTA, was held at Hotel Adriatik in the coastal city of Dures. Entitled "Improving Livelihoods in Albania through Sustainable Tourism Development", this planning event drew more than 50 participants from eight diverse stakeholder groups to develop a coordinated road map of action for the future. A total of fifteen observers were present at the workshop.

The eight stakeholder groups represented were:

- Private Sector Tour Operators
- National Government
- Economic Development and Finance
- Universities
- Tourism Services
- Regional Government leaders (Gjirokastra, Korca and Saranda)
- Associations and NGOs
- Donor and Development Organizations

Through sixteen hours of self-managed exercises, the representatives of the key stakeholder groups for sustainable tourism were able to identify and agree to commit themselves to the collaborative pursuit of a set of common goals; also referred to as “Common Ground”. While establishing common ground by the stakeholders is significant, more important is their commitment to collaborate on short and long-term work plans. No longer are stakeholders focused on the differences that divide them and obstruct cooperation and coordination. Now that the common ground has emerged as the collective objectives of the entire system, everyone involved can begin to collaborate around what it is they agree upon. A large step was taken at the workshop towards establishing cooperation and synergy.

The “Common Ground”, or common goals, of the Albanian stakeholders were organized into the following strategic categories:

1. Product Development
2. Image and Branding/ Communication Promotion
3. Human Resources Development
4. Destination Management
5. Sustainable Natural and Cultural Environment
6. Institutions, Organizations, Framework

The aim of this WSR workshop report is to:

- I. Highlight the **common ground elements** determined by the representatives at the event.
- II. Outline the **commitments of stakeholders** to implement collaborative actions in the coming months in pursuit of their shared goals.
- III. Document the **self-managed exercises** that guided everyone in the WSR gathering.

The report has been organized into three chapters to deal with each of these topics in detail. Appendices are included at the end to provide the methodology and tools that were used at the workshop.



I. COMMON GROUND ELEMENTS OF THE STAKEHOLDERS

Representatives of eight diverse stakeholder groups participated in 16 hours of self-managed exercises to jointly identify the common ground elements concerning sustainable tourism that everyone agrees should be incorporated in the future of Albanian tourism. The common ground, including goals, general needs and priorities, paves the way for all stakeholder groups to commit to collaborative actions.

The comprehensive **Common Ground** that **sustainable tourism stakeholders** agreed to is as follows:

Common Ground Categorization

Common Ground Strategic Directions	Product Development	Image & Branding / Communication Promotion	Human resources development	Destination Management	Sustainable Natural and Cultural Environment	Institutions, Organizations, Framework
Objectives / Focus Areas	Increase number and diversity of tourism products	Common marketing strategies and poliices	Capacity building in workforce and labor development	Tourism statistics	Valorization of natural resources	Commonly agreed-upon national tourism strategy
	Infrastructure development	Establishment of Tourist Information Centers	Community awareness of importance of tourism	Sustainability in using alternative energy and strategic management of territory	Development and implementation of environmentally friendly policies and procedures	Regional and local government development
	International standards for tourism services			Strategic management of territory	Protection and efficient utilization of natural and cultural values and resources	Improvement, implementation and enforcement of law for tourism, land use, food safety and heritage
	Produce unique local experiences			Establish a national system of tourism info	Sustainability and usage of alternative energy	Improvement of networking and coordination of all tourism related stakeholders
	Regulate production of handicrafts for more accuracy			Structured info system available in and out of Albania		Development of effective private/public superstructure
	Cross-border cooperation of private sector (travel agents)					
	Improvement of handicraft development					

II. ACTION PLANS – STAKEHOLDER COMMITMENTS

After the stakeholders agreed to their “Common Ground” in a morning session on day three of the workshop, they were tasked with developing three-month and three-year action plans that demonstrated their willingness to collaborate with other stakeholder groups to ensure synergy of efforts and results at a larger scale.

Each group was asked to discuss the following sections:

- Common Ground Issues
- Actions to be Taken
- How to Measure Success
- From Whom Assistance/Help was Needed
- Deadline

Groups presented their three month (short-term) and three year (long-term) action plans, differing in their style of action plan. Some stakeholder groups chose to focus on a single strategic direction, while others provided action plans for a variety of categories. Although not every group identified each section, each group’s report is nonetheless informative of their short- and long-term priorities and their commitment to improving sustainable tourism in Albania.

Stakeholder Group: Private Sector Tour Operators Presenter: Sonja Popa, Gulliver OK Tours

Common Ground: Product Development

Short-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. Review existing products to include in sustainable tourism
2. Practices: Buy local and support local communities
3. Identify and support conservation and preservation organizations and community welfare groups
4. Support locally-owned accommodation and other enterprises

Deadline: 3 Months

Long-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. Develop five to ten new cultural and natural heritage tours using sustainable principles
 - a. Active holidays
 - b. Mountain tourism
 - c. Agrotourism
 - d. Ecotourism
 - e. Cultural Learning
 - f. Coastal/Beach
 - g. Culinary tourism

Deadline: 3 Years



Common Ground: Sustainable Natural Environment

Focus Area: Environmentally-friendly operations

Short-term Action Plan:

Actions:

1. Review existing company operation to reduce waste
2. Introduce recycling if possible
3. No individual plastic water bottles, use 5 gallon refill instead
4. Eliminate plastic bags (use tote bag for staff and company business)
5. Use public transport when possible

Long-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. Introduce “Leave No Trace” company philosophy
2. No litter
3. No plastic
4. Promote community awareness
5. Educate guests on tour to follow company “green” practices
6. Organize a “Community Clean-up Day” to build public awareness on link between tourism economy success and clean environment

Common Ground: Human Resource Training

Short-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. Offer student training internships to give real life work experience in tourism
2. Give staff field experience opportunities
3. Coaching/involve staff in problem solving, staff empowerment

Long-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. Partner with local and international universities and vocational schools on training opportunities
2. International training conference and workshop as company staff incentive (eg. Sustainable tourism workshop, etc)
3. Seek best practices exchange with other businesses in region, especially focusing on international standards



Stakeholder Group: National Government
Presenter: Artur Luzati, Institute of Cultural Monuments

Common Ground: Product Development

Short-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. Artisan legal structure plan

Measure of Success: Strength of the law

Help needed: International experts in field

2. Historical and natural heritage monuments be quickly prepared to be adopted by Ministry of Culture

Help Needed: Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports, UNESCO, ICOMOS, K.K.R.

Deadline: March 2009



Long-term Action Plan

Actions

1. Infrastructure improvement
 - a. New roads, more airport terminals needed
 - b. Touristic marina (within the year)
2. Cross-border cooperation increase (particularly with Montenegro and Macedonia)
 - a. Bilateral agreements
 - b. Increasing number of tourists
 - c. Utilizing similar packages with Ohrid and Prespa Lake areas (enlist help of Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
3. Doubling protected areas
 - a. Natural areas need aid of M. of Environment
 - b. Historical areas need aid of M. of Tourism, Culture, Sports and Youth

All regulations need to be adopted uniformly



Stakeholder Group: Economic Development and Finance Groups
Presenter: Aurel Grabocka, Regional Development Agency Korca

Common Ground: Institutions, Organizations, Framework

Focus Area: Investment/Micro-Credit/Grants to Support Regional & Local Government

Short-term Action Plan

Actions

1. Design seed grant/loan program
2. Competition
3. Evaluation and award
4. Market surveys and analysis

Measure of Success:

1. Number of vulnerable groups reached
2. Multiplied return on investment

Help Needed: Donors, local implementers/institutions, micro-credit orgs, CSR from large companies

Deadline: Due within three months



Long-term Action Plan

Actions

Develop Technical Assistance to support grant and credit program

1. Management and evaluation of existing program; can provide impetus for more investment
2. Continue grant program
3. Short and long term credit program for tourism business (after six months)
4. Attract other donors (year One)
5. Transition program to local institutions (before year three)
6. Develop investment promotion program (start year one)

Success measured:

1. Number of vulnerable groups reached
2. Economic impact
3. Increase in the number of tourists and accommodation capacity
4. Job creation
5. Number of sustainable programs
6. Loan payback
7. Number of licensed businesses created paying into tax system

Help Needed: Same as above, and also from new investors

Deadline: Between 1 – 3 Years



Stakeholder Group: Universities
Presenter: Monika Struga, University of Tirana

Common Ground: Human Resources Development

Short-term Action Plan:

Actions:

1. Organize a strategic meeting of university representatives to discuss sustainable tourism in human resources development
2. Establish a network of universities
3. Create an advisory group

Short-term Action Plan: Universities			
Action #	Success Measure	Help Needed From	Due Date
1	Number of universities signing protocol	GSTA/GW University	1 Month
2	Memorandum of understanding between universities (minimum three)	GSTA/GW University	2 Months
3	Group established with minimum of 6 members and scope of work defined	GSTA/GW and other donors	3 Months

Common Ground: Policy

Long-term Action Plan:

Actions

1. Establishing private and public partnerships (PPP)
2. Establish programs to satisfy needs of PPPs (vocational training, etc.)
3. Modernize tourism policy framework with special focus on education & workforce development



Long-term Action Plan: Universities			
Action #	Success Measure	Help Needed From	Due Date
1	Public-Private Partnership Council	GSTA/Donors and university network	1 Year
2	Two pilot programs (1 public & 1 private)	PPP Council, GSTA/Donors, Government ministries, and university network	2 Years
3	New tourism network and legislation proposals	PPP Council, GSTA/Donors, Government ministries, and university network	3 Years

Stakeholder Group: Tourism Services
Presenter: Dritan Kaba, Hotel and Services Consulting

Common Ground: Communication Promotion

Short-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. Establishment of tourist information offices in Vlore, Pogredec, and Shkoder and further development of existing offices.

Help Needed: Local government and private sector support

Time: Within 3 Months (April 30, 2009)

2. Cultural Heritage TV programming, particularly in Gjirokaster and Saranda

Success: Measured by number of viewers

Help Needed: Donors

Deadline: End of May 2009

Common Ground: Human Resources

Short-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. Professional training of hotel staff
 - a. Focus on periodic trainings, encouraging hotels to bring their staff in for trainings depending on their needs
 - b. Follows international better-hotel practices. Value of service will compel hoteliers to return and service would quickly become sustainable

Deadline: May 31, 2009

Help Needed: Donors (one-time support) and university network

2. Improvement of available tourist publications, to be undertaken by Celesi Guide Books

Deadline: End April 2009

Common Ground: Institutional and Organizational Development

Focus Area: Restructuring stakeholders in a more organized way

Long-term Action Plan

Actions:

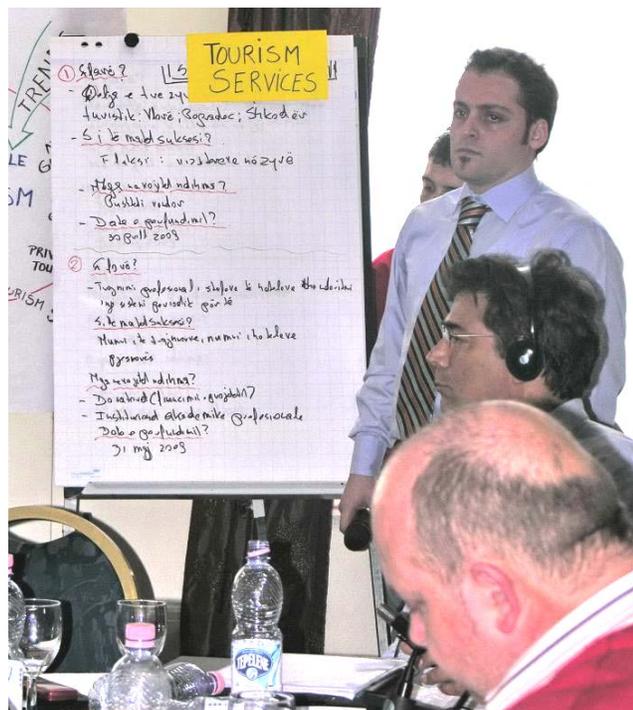
- 1) Reorganize stakeholders in effective associations and business communities, as opposed to everyone functioning as an individual entity

Measure of Success: Create functional structures, increase number of tourists being served, and provide better tourist products

Help Needed: International

expertise and consultancy on better-business practices

Deadline: 2010



Stakeholder Group: Regional Government
Presenter: Aristotle Bitia, Municipality of Saranda

Short-term Action Plans

Actions:

1. Tourist information offices need direction from local government
2. Specific budgeting for tourist destinations
3. Fiscal support for stimulating tourist operations
4. Better road allocation, better road and archaeological signage system

Common Ground: Local development

Long-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. Urban planning
2. Prioritization plan

Common Ground: Image

Long-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. International advertising
2. Creating media such as DVDs to promote destinations



Common Ground: Employment and Infrastructure improvement

Long-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. More action on water supply and sewage improvement, though there are good projects involving new pipe infrastructure are awaiting donors
2. Fighting unemployment through promoting artisanal craft development
3. Better usage of local raw materials



Stakeholder Group: Associations and NGOs**Presenter: Sadi Petrela, GCDO and Orieta Glozhemi, Tourism/Visitor Info Korce**

Gjirokastra**Common Ground: Product Development**

Focus Area: Artisanal Crafts promotion

Short-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. National Conference on handicrafts

Measure of Success:

- 1) Create incentive to adopt the conference nationally and conduct it annually
- 2) Promote and discuss heritage

Deadline: March 2009

2. New museum on Gjirokaster heritage
"Chronicle in Stone"

Measure of Success:

- 1) Castle/space restoration
- 2) Possible usage for other cultural purposes

Help Needed: local and national government, business community, NGOs and donors

Deadline: April 2009

**Common Ground: Product Development**

Focus Area: Artisanal Crafts promotion

Long-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. Artisan handicraft fair in Gjirokastra and other cities

Measure of Success:

- 1) Turn into tourist attraction
- 2) Showcase new products
- 3) Protect tradition
- 4) Stimulate production

Help Needed: Local and national government, technical expertise, other donors

Deadline: September 2009

2. Artisan incubator

Measure of Success:

- 1) Creation of new artisans
- 2) Create more businesses
- 3) Introduce new artisan crafts/products
- 4) Preserve heritage

Help Needed: Local and national government, NGOs, donors

Deadline: Within 2009

3. Interpretive panels for city
4. Solar panel usage at castle and other sites



Korca

Common Ground: Institutional and Organizational Development

Short-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. RehoVe Museum Development

Measure of Success:

- 1) Functionality
- 2) Number of handicrafts involved
- 3) Number of tourists arriving

Help Needed: Local community organizations and international donors

Deadline: September 2009

2. Product promotion and organization, unified Korca brand/logo creation

Measure of Success:

- 1) Logos and slogans
- 2) Promotional materials
- 3) New products created (maps, tours)

Support: Local organizations, bashkias (municipalities) and donors

Deadline: Upcoming tourist season

3. Cleanliness campaign targeting litter, plastic bags

Support: Students, volunteers

Long-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. Professional tour guide licensing

Measure of Success:

- 1) Number of licenses/registrations

Help Needed: National government

Deadline: 2010

2. "Tourism control"

- a. Support local tour guides
- b. Tourist police

Measure of Success:

- 1) Number of local guides at work
- 2) Quality of police tourism knowledge

Assistance: local and national government

Deadline: 2010 and onward

3. Long-term branding process, image improvement, publicity

Measure of Success:

- 1) Brands created

Assistance: ATA, municipal promotional offices

Deadline: after 2010

4. More of a focus on developing tourism, guest houses and vocational high schools

Measure of Success:

- 1) Number of people employed in tourism sector

Assistance: community, local government and donors

Deadline: 2010

5. Guest House categorization

Measure of Success:

- 1) Number of guesthouses involved

Assistance: Central government, communes, community

Deadline: After 2010



Stakeholder Group: Donors and Development Organizations
Presenter: David Milne, SNV

Common Ground: Institutions, Organizations, Framework

Focus Area: National Strategy/Law

Short-term Action Plan:

Actions:

1. Moratorium on tourism development
2. Create awareness with stakeholders
3. Workshops around the country
4. Comments/Revisions to MTCYS (Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports)
5. Include international standards

Long-term Action Plan:

Actions:

1. Law and strategy revised based on input, implement and enforce
2. Governance capacity building (USAID, EU)

Focus Area: Regional/Local Development

Short-term Action Plan:

Actions:

1. Continue tourism action plan (SNV)
2. Incorporate national direction (legal strategy)

Long-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. Have MCTYS and ATA officially implement TAP process
2. Provide tourism development fund to implement TAP and objectives (USAID)



Common Ground: Product Development

Short-term Action Plan:

Actions:

1. Identify priority products/potential. Do market analysis
2. National strategy correlation

Long-term Action Plan:

Actions:

1. Develop TAPs on local and regional levels
2. Continue with strategy correlation

Common Ground: Improve image and position

Short-term Action Plan:

Actions:

1. Review existing marketing strategy as part of national strategy review and development (UNDP)
2. Brand and position
3. Improve image from a tourism perspective (based on selected products)

Long-term Action Plan:

Actions:

1. Develop detailed marketing strategy
2. Implement strategy
3. Utilize a focused, improved image, TAPs, etc

Common Ground: Human Resources and Capacity Building

Short-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. Review national strategy for direction
2. Raise awareness amongst stakeholders
3. Vocational Training (ADC, UNDP)
 - a. Official recognition of trained staff hired by hotels, hospitality industry
 - b. Needs analysis
 - c. Knowledge of material
 - d. On-the-job training
 - e. Exchange visits



Long-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. Implement a national strategy
2. Develop vocational instruction

Common Ground: Destination Management

Short-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. Establish tourism information system (UNWTO)
2. Proceed with TSA (Tourist Satellite Account) program
3. Market internationally
4. Korca Regional Program (ST-EP, SNV)
5. Establish alliances, cooperation (ATA)



Long-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. Ensure information dissemination to stakeholders to guide development and marketing

Common Ground: Sustainable Environment

Short-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. Review existing strategy and strengthen environmental component
2. Tine-into other ministry strategies (environment, local government)
3. Awareness campaigns to change the mindset
4. Tackle waste management (UNWTO, KFW, WB, ADC, SIDA, IC)

Long-term Action Plan

Actions:

1. Incorporate into local and regional strategies
2. Maintain ongoing awareness campaigns

III. SELF-MANAGED EXERCISES

Workshop Highlights

Among of the most significant outcomes of this workshop were:

- A broader perspective concerning issues of common interest,
- An agreement on common goals,
- Networking as a tool for coordination,
- Candid discussions of politically sensitive obstacles/opportunities for sustainable tourism development.

There were more than **50** participants including representatives of government entities, universities, donor and development organizations, members of tourism services, private sector tour operators, economic and financial development groups, and associations and NGOs. In addition there were 15 observers, workshop organizers, local student helpers, a reporter and two interpreters.



WSR Preparation

An assessment team carried out a field visits to seven regions in Albania. The team was looking for potential areas - to implement an industry integrated and system-wide sustainable tourism development program. The assessment team was able to identify key players in the tourism sector and accordingly recommended a list of stakeholders to represent the tourism and related industries system in the Whole System in the Room workshop, particularly those from the three regions that have been targeted for a potential ASTA program in addition to the national players. The workshop was designed to bring together a broad range of stakeholders from the Albanian tourism and related-industry sectors to ensure participation in designing a common plan of action for achieving desired goals and common interests, as well as increase coordination between the various stakeholder activities.



Chief Facilitator Mr. Larry Knox led participants through a series of strategic self-managed exercises following precise and time-specific guidelines. Focus was placed on dialogue as a means of sharing points of view. Participants also helped each other in implementing the various tasks and exercises. This allowed them to take full responsibility for their perceptions and actions.

The WSR Process

Workshop participants conducted exercises in small working groups of five to seven at each table. At times these groups were compiled of specific stakeholder representatives, people and institutions with shared interests in the sector. At other times, the tables represented a mix of stakeholders, which created a "Whole-System-at-the-Table" dynamic.

Self-managed exercises lead the participants to examine their common past, study the current trends, decide collectively what they are most interested in addressing, and envision themselves in a desired future by performing future scenarios (see appendix # 2 WSR Participants' Notebook (Agenda, Framework and Self-Managed Exercises)). During the presentation of future scenarios, it became quite clear to everyone at the workshop that there were many areas of common interest, common goals and shared objectives.

Common ground, rather than "conflict resolution", was the frame of reference. Participants were encouraged to honor and appreciate differences in perspectives rather than try to reconcile them. This approach encouraged participants to "*think together globally before acting locally*", thus fostering a shared understanding and a higher commitment to common objectives before encouraging participants to take action.

On the last day, participants developed collaborative action plans for the following three months and three years. These action plans were all based on the common ground, the future desired by all those present. While the achievements of last day of the workshop were the "grand finale", it is important to note and give details about the sessions of the first two days. While implementing these self-managed exercises the diverse group of participants prepared themselves to focus on the common ground. The report will now focus on the exercises of the first two days. Below is a summary of the agenda that was followed during the three day workshop.

Working Agenda Summary

Day 1, January 20, 2009

Workshop Introductions
Reviewing the Past
Focus on the Present

Day 2, January 21, 2009

Focus on the Present
Focus on the Future
Focus on Common Ground

Day 3, January 22, 2009

Focus on Common Ground
Work Planning Session
Work Planning Presentation



Workshop Introduction - Welcome Speeches by Sponsors and Dignitaries

The Master Ceremony, Mr. Patrick Papania, opened the conference by welcoming guests, participants and observers to the conference. He set the tone for the following several days by introducing the sustainable tourism project and calling on stakeholders to come together to assess the needs of the sector. The carefully assembled participants represented sustainable tourism stakeholders from the different sectors. As representatives of these groups, the participants represented the larger ideas and systems that hold the keys to creating a stronger model of sustainable tourism for Albania's future.

He then introduced Ms. Roberta Mahoney, USAID Mission Director for Albania, who thanked the government for making tourism a national priority, citing numerous investments that had been made in recent years to strengthen the country's position in the industry. Ms. Mahoney warned of the challenges facing the development of a sustainable tourism industry, including significant planning, concerted efforts, dedication, maximizing the individual tourist experience, developing public-partnerships and bringing food, infrastructure and accommodation up to international standards.



The next speaker was the Minister of Tourism, Youth, Culture and Sports, Mr. Ylli Pango. Mr. Pango spoke at length about the national government's commitment to making tourism one of the driving forces of the Albanian economy. He highlighted increases in hotel capacity, development of new promotional materials and television advertisements, the creation of an Albanian tourism association, new road construction in the South, positive trends in visitation statistics, strong development in mountainous tourism in the North, and positive press attention in travel trade publications. As priorities he listed developing eco and culinary tourism, increasing non-European tourists, promoting cross-border partnerships, improving Albania's reputation abroad and improving national infrastructure.

The next speaker was Mr. Jemin Gjana, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection. Mr. Gjana talked about the potentials of agro-tourism, adapting Albanian agriculture to the needs of sustainable tourism, improving payments made to farmers and ensuring food safety.



Next, Mr. Kliton Gerxhani, president of the Albanian Tourism Association highlighted additional challenges facing the country's sustainable tourism development, including a history of early mistakes in coastal resort development, lack of long-term objectives, environmental problems, lack of infrastructure and minimal technical requirements met. He encouraged the development of accommodations linked with bio-products, learning artisan crafts and traditions, and eating local produce.

Finally, Mr. Costas Christ, Global Travel Editor for National Geographic International, discussed shifts in global tourism trends away from large-scale mass tourism to more sustainable models. Sustainability is increasingly becoming a central part of all aspects of the tourism field. As tourism continues to establish itself as the world's largest industry, environmental consumer awareness and ecological sensitivity is entering into the tourism mainstream. More travelers want to have a positive impact on the cultural and natural heritage sites that they visit, helping to sustain the livelihoods of the local peoples involved. Tourists value unexplored wilderness and unexploited natural resources. Albania has both of these and should not squander them.



Following the remarks, Mr. Papania led the group through an icebreaker and explained the ground rules of the conference. He then explained the workshop agenda – to first look at our past and then the current situation in order to plan our collective future together. He affirmed that donors, those present and others not, were more interested in the existing linkages and social capacity, rather than specific business proposals. The following section has highlights of the self-managed exercises from each of the three time periods, past, present, and future.



Workshop Self-Managed Exercises

Exercise 1: Focus on the Past – Creating a Time-line

In the first exercise, participants were asked to note on time lines the milestones related to the issue of tourism, from three perspectives:

Personal: key experiences in one's own life

Global: significant world events that shaped our society and the tourism sector

Local: critical events and developments in Albania that have shaped sustainable tourism

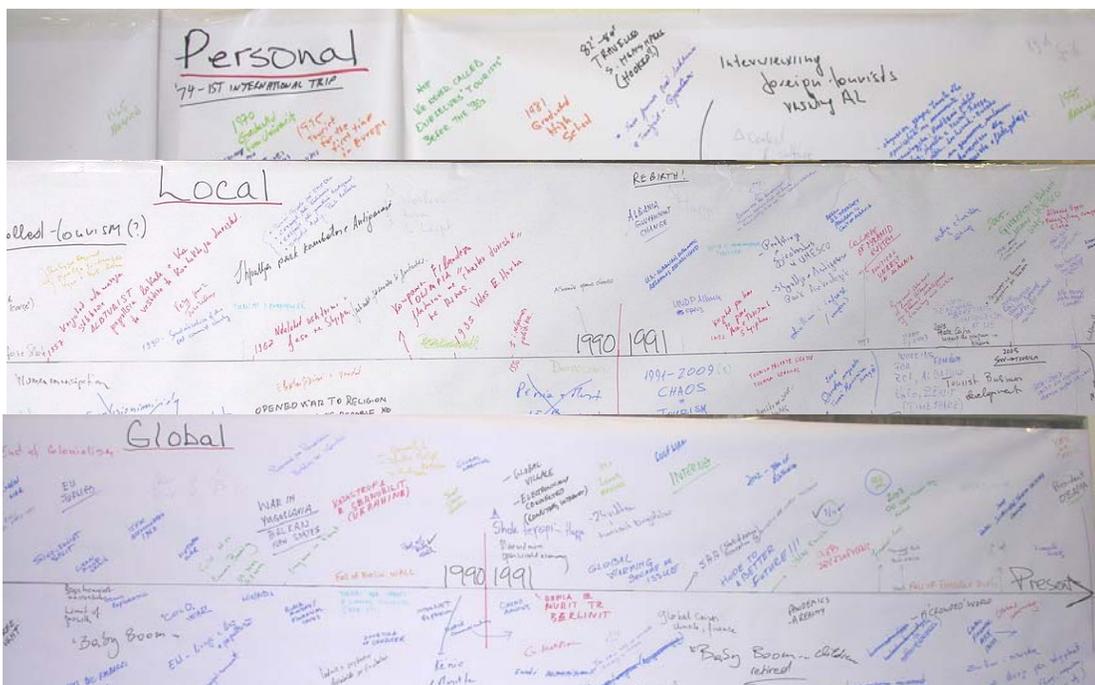
Purpose of Exercises

1. To put the Albanian tourism and related industry sectors in the broadest possible context and establish implications for this meeting.



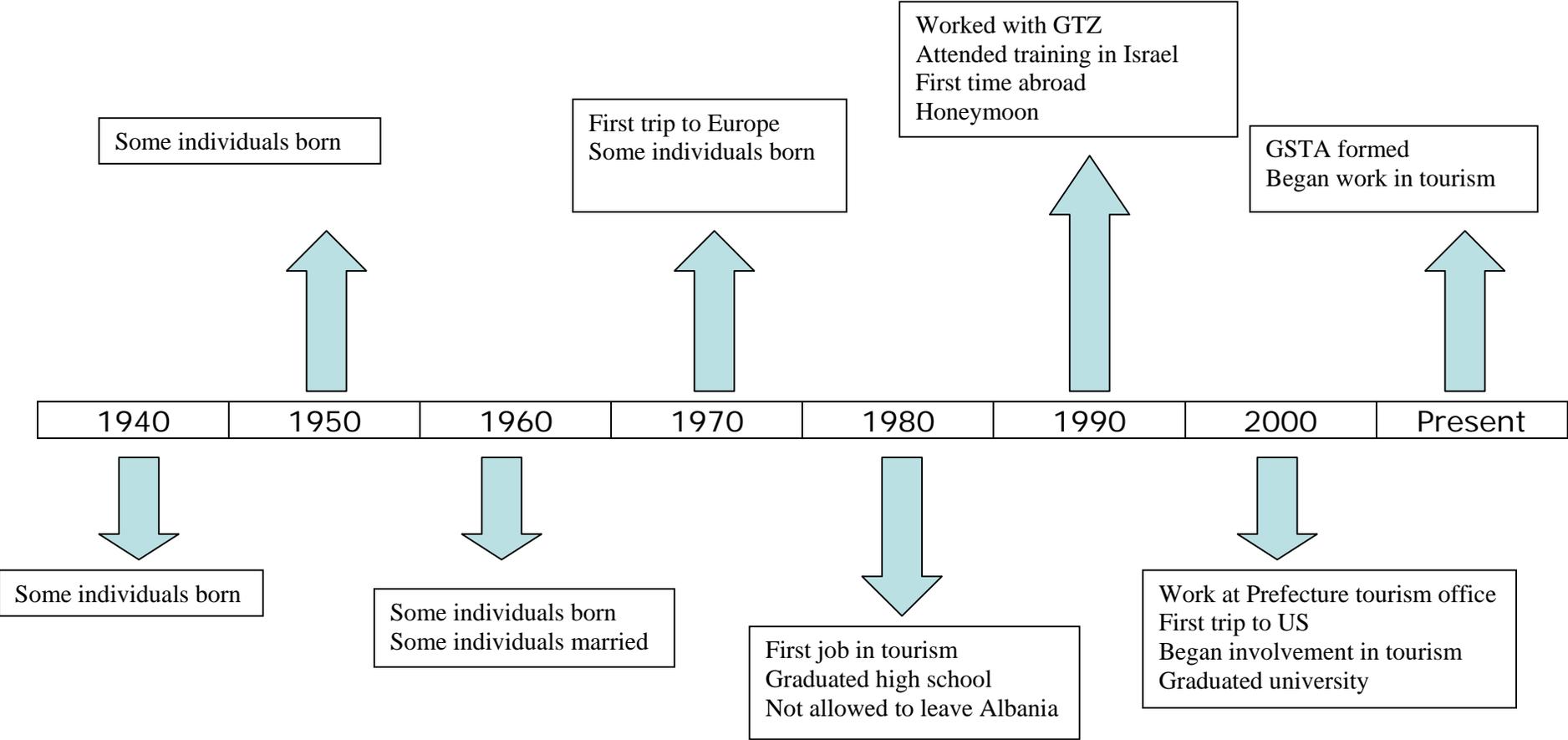
Steps taken

1. Participants wrote information on large time lines on the wall.
2. Participants moved back to small mixed groups (one representative from each stakeholder group)
3. Groups discussed and analyzed the different time lines
4. Groups gave a brief report about their analysis to plenary group



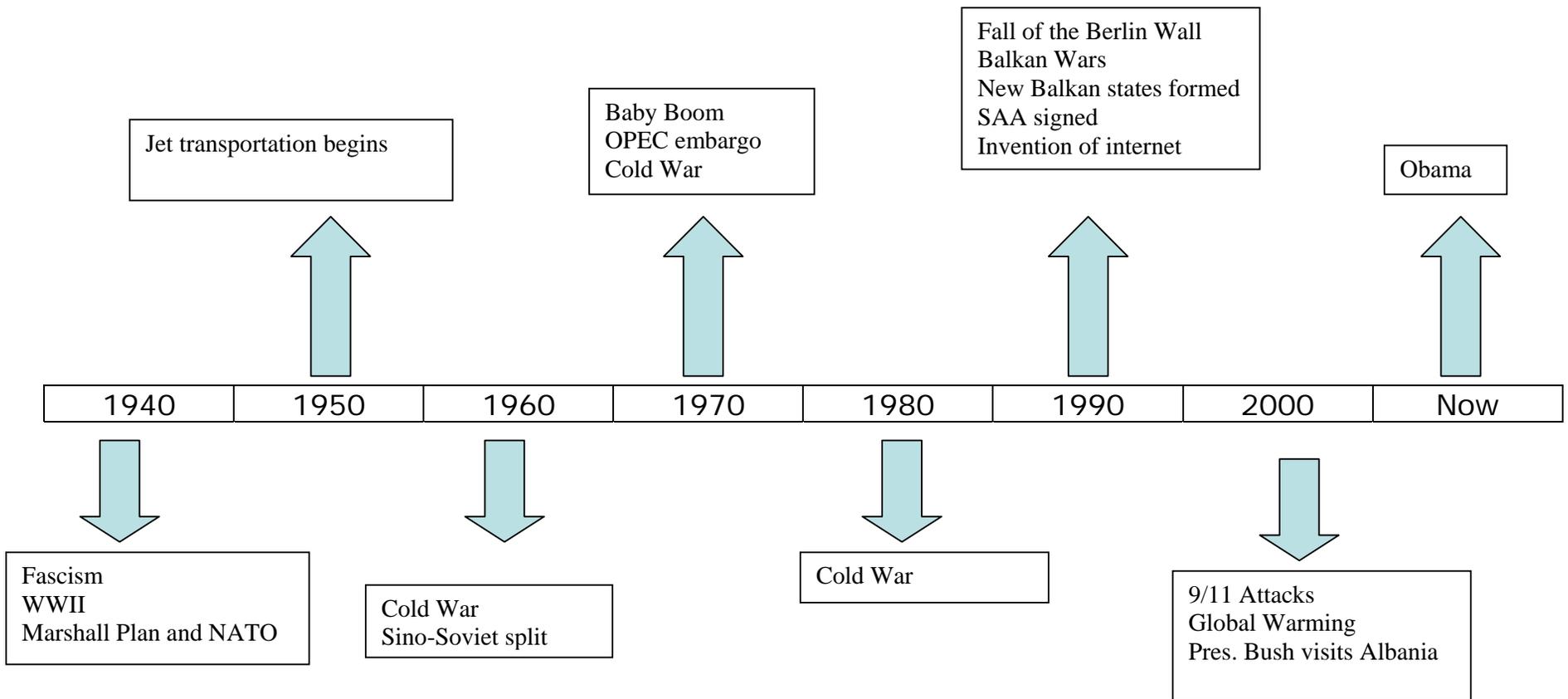
Timeline of Key Personal Experiences

Some of the items noted on the time-line included:



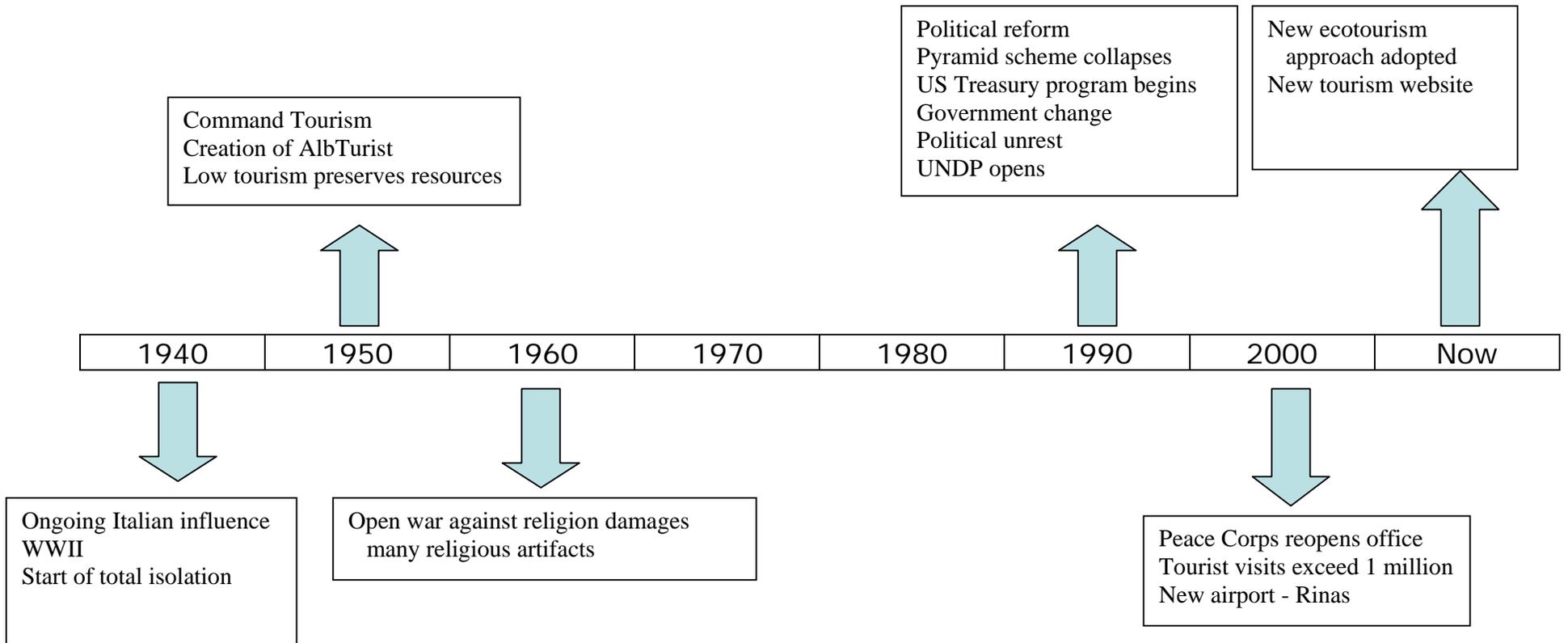
Timeline of Key Global Events

Some of the items noted on the time-line included:



Timeline of Key Local Tourism Events

Some of the items noted on the time-line included:



Exercise 2: Focus on the Past – Stories and Implications

Seven groups were created to present stories relating the events listed on one of the timelines to the work that is being done at the conference. This was followed by the whole group's discussions. Most participants presented their reports as a journey over time, describing key milestones. Other approaches were a tour itinerary across the 20th century for Martian visitors and a wine analogy which showed the transformation of mass universal tourism experiences to a modern-day desire to experience unique local flavors.

- **Personal timeline:** covered the general commonalities and achievements of participants
- **Global timeline:** emphasized the main global events that impacted participants
- **Local timeline:** noted major local events that influenced the development of tourism in the nation



Outcome

The subsequent group discussion focused on the need to identify guiding principles to unite the past, and all its challenges, with plans for future development. The conversation centered on the challenges of integrating the Communist past into tourism development, particularly the opening of bunkers and tunnels for touristic purposes. Debate highlighted the political and cultural sensitivities involved in addressing what most viewed as a very dark period of the past, but with the possible potential of drawing in many tourists interested in exploring those years.

Exercise 3: Focus on the Present - Making the Mind Map

Purpose of Exercise

Create the broadest possible social, economic and technological context for dialogue and decision-making when discussing the present.

Mind Map Rules presented to participants:

- 1) All ideas are valid
- 2) What is your name, what is the issue and where does it go
- 3) Opposing trends are OK
- 4) Give concrete examples

Steps Taken

The facilitators gathered the participants in a plenary session to conduct a communal brainstorming. This session focused on the current trends affecting sustainable tourism in Albania. Participants were asked to state the trend and give an example of it. The trends were written on a large tree diagram. The group's ideas included:

- Increased visitors
- Higher education in tourism
- Program development
- Human resources development
- Decentralization of government – drop decision making down to lower level

- We need to fight growing cost of infrastructure – petrol is too much
- Development in infrastructure
- Increasing number of tourists from neighboring countries by improving existing services
- Preservation of nature and heritage resources
- Organize more NGOs
- Selective marketing makes for selective tourist increase
- Decreasing barriers for NGOs
- Increase government efforts in educational reform
- Increase participation in international tourist affairs – not just in biggest fairs – but also in emerging fields
- Renovation of traditional houses and cultures
- Identification of resources
- Utilizing handicrafts to increase tourism including archeological sites
- Increased access to information through usage of public information office, tourist info centers and technology
- Proper development strategies
- Improving law and regulations
- Increase in entrepreneurship in tourism sector
- Strategic plans in order to leave aside the seasonal nature of tourism in Albania – not just summer tourism
- There is a trend to giving away the best new developments to shady large companies who threaten to misdevelop them
- Creating joint guides with neighboring countries – common groups and tours
- Agro-tourism
- Better use of already existing tourist resources
- People are increasing their awareness when it comes to role of tourism in their lives
- Mass media plays an important role by portraying local traditions – media should not just be informing, but also supporting
- Lack of strategies and programs for tourism development in local communities – its too centralized
- Bad quality of waste management
- Lack of quality people in the tourism sector – starting with management and going down to the direct servers
- We need a stronger presence in high schools and universities
- Less transparency with increasing investment opportunities
- Increased development with lack of regulation and planning control
- Better signage and naming of monuments
- Decreases in vocational training matching needs of labor markets
- Reconfiguring local houses into visited objects
- Local government are showing dangerous trends with hiring and contracting decisions and misdirecting investments and no clear zoning laws
- Lack of establishment of better relations amongst institutions within a city – inter-touristic interest
- Maps are not good and lacking basic information – including our national parks
- Increase in younger demographic
- Need for passion-based tourism
- State of castles worsening and not being respected
- Unknowledgeable security people
- Lack of educated staff
- Overlapping products
- Folk art being utilized better
- There is growing cooperation between travel agencies – foreign and local
- Increase in state budget allocated to tourism
- Decrease in amount available for restoration to private sector
- Increase in the amount of protected hectares
- Increase in accuracy of statistics collected at borders
- Increase in amount of restoration being done with specific aim – not just restoration for sake of restoration
- Trend in more backpackers travelling through Albania
- Decrease in protection of protected areas

Mind Map - Voting on the Trend

When the group brainstorming came to a close, participants were asked to vote on the sustainable tourism trends that they considered most important to them. Each participant was given six colored dots based on their stakeholder groups with which to vote. They were told that they could vote for six different trends or they could put several of their votes on one or more trends, depending on how strongly they felt about it.

Outcome

The subsequent group discussion identified the many directions and interactions between history and culture. Another point was the generality and far-sightedness of the trends mentioned. Though most items received at least one vote, in general votes were cast in close aggregation, chiefly in the areas of **human resources, education, waste management, and the international image of Albania.**



Exercise 4: Focus on the Present - How Trends Affect the System

The workshop participants next worked in stakeholder groups to exchange views on the current trends in Albania affecting sustainable tourism. They were asked to identify three-to-five key trends that they as a stakeholder group were most interested in addressing. They were also asked to list at least three accomplishments they had in addressing issues, and three things they had so far not been able to do. They were then asked to discuss the following questions:

- What is each stakeholder group doing now to respond to the trends, and of which three accomplishments are they most proud?
- What is *not* being done that the groups would like to do in the future, and what are their three biggest regrets?

After an hour of discussions, the stakeholder groups were asked to report back to the plenary to share their main concerns in four-minute reports. Following is an account of the stakeholder reports.

Asterisks (*) denote priority accomplishments or regrets, when included in presentation.

Stakeholder Group: Private Sector Tour Operators**Presenter: Arben Cipa, Sipa Tours**

Trends of greatest concern to Private Sector Tour Operators:

1. International image of country for tourism - government should do more to promote image
2. Lack of proper training and capacity to deliver high quality tourism services
3. Waste removal

Present actions being undertaken now by Private Sector Tour Operators:

1. Participation in international tourism fairs, website to promote Albania, offer trips to travel media
2. Provided Company training
 - a. To build staff tourism service capacity
 - b. Offer practical training internships to students
 - c. Communicating with other Albanian tourism associations through constructive suggestions to improve services

**What Private Sector Tour Operators want to do in the future:**

1. Organize a student or community to clean litter - a day to set a good example and build awareness
2. Day for media advertisements to promote clean environment
3. Pressure government to enforce tourism regulations

Stakeholder Group: Economic and Financial Development Organizations

Presenter: Aurel Grabocka, Regional Development Agency Korca

Trends of greatest concern to Economic and Financial Development Organizations:

1. Waste management is poor
2. Government regulations not enforced and lack of transparency
3. Growing number of entrepreneurs who need support, and sustainable tourism infrastructure. Also need access to finance and credit
4. Unemployment is high
5. Poor access to markets for artisans

Present actions being undertaken now by Economic and Financial Development Organizations:

1. Expressing concerns
2. Program to reduce use of plastic bags*
 - a. Through tax, reusable bag promotion
 - b. Encouraging adoption by shop owners
3. Lobby government on environmental issues
4. Programs to improve business enabling environment*
5. Grants and small loans to vulnerable individuals (handicrafts and waste collection)*
6. Support artisans to sell online
7. Business planning and assistance for small business



What the Economic and Financial Development Organizations want to do in the future:

- 1) Assisting in resolving waste management issues*
- 2) Getting information from the government on their actions, policies and decisions*
- 3) Creating more job opportunities*
- 4) Identifying enough markets for goods and services
- 5) Working more with youth

Stakeholder Group: National Government
Presenter: Sokol Kongoli, National Tourism Agency

Trends of greatest concern to National Government:

1. Infrastructure
2. Management of solid waste on beaches and at natural heritage sites
3. Budget shows lack of financial means to promote Albania

Present actions being undertaken now by National Government:

1. Increasing and improving infrastructure, particularly roads*
2. Financing of landfills*
3. Promotional fairs attended in Berlin, London and soon in Pristina*

What the National Government wants to do in the future:

1. Destroy and removes of illegal buildings which harm views and sites for tourists
2. Provide 24 hour water supply
3. Albanian tourism doesn't participate at enough international fairs, such as upcoming fairs in Finland and Holland
4. Should end moratorium on speedboats so tourists can bring speedboats and yachts into the country
5. Improve vocational and educational training for students
6. Allow charter flights between Saranda and Tirana



Trends National Government had mixed feelings about:

1. Road transportation, both local and national
2. Small heliports and yacht areas
3. Preservation of historical and unspoiled nature

Stakeholder Group: Associations and NGOs

Presenter: Orieta Glozhemi, Tourism/Visitor Information Korce

Trends of greatest concern to Associations and NGOs:

1. Development of a network of travel agencies with a uniform vision and goals
2. Enrichment of touristic offerings including rural and mountain tourism
3. Qualitative increase in human resources training tour guides and staff in guest houses, hostels, hotels, etc

Present actions being undertaken now by Associations and NGOs:

1. Successful usage of volunteer help in Gjirokastra and Korca
2. Artisan Craft Center creation
3. Organizational investment
4. Restoration and preservation
5. Promotional publications
6. Nine monuments declared of national importance
7. Walking tours
8. Improved human resources trainings and qualifications, better service to stakeholders

**What Associations and NGOs want to do in the future:**

1. Impact legislation through lobbying
2. Develop local strategies on tourism - don't really exist yet and usually more theoretical than practical
3. Participate in coordination between local and national level through public and private partnerships

Stakeholder Group: Tourism Services
Presenter: Ylli Sula, Celesi Design and Publicity Guides

Trends of greatest concern to the Tourism Service Providers:

1. Human resources underperforming
2. Solid waste management
3. Better standards
4. Lack of access to information and data
5. Not responding to trends very well
6. Policies and proposals are confused and inconsistent

Present actions being undertaken now by Tourism Service Providers:

1. Making more guides and materials, like the Celesi guide book series
2. ATA (Albanian Tourism Association)
3. Lobbying the central government on tourism issues
4. We have become a factor and stakeholder*
5. There is a high quality product from the Tourism Services field
6. There is an increased awareness of heritage monuments



What the Tourism Service Providers want to do in the future:

1. Fix inconsistency in problem solving such as management of urban waste
2. Better protection of nature and heritage monuments
3. Improve information flow

Stakeholder Group: Donors and Development Groups
Presenter: Christos Petreas, Petreas Assocs (Hellenic Aid)

Trends of greatest concern for the Donors and Development Groups:

1. Increased international standardization
2. Increased demand for uniqueness
3. Increased importance in projecting image of Albania
4. Increase in prioritization of tourism and its financing*
5. Increased public awareness of tourism
6. Increased capacity development in all sectors - public, private and NGOs
7. Increased access to information and technology transfer
8. Increased nature tourism while a decrease in its protection
9. Increase in environmental sustainability*

Present actions being undertaken now by the Donors and Development Groups:

1. Increased privatization and financing
 - a. Development of ATA
 - b. Increased awareness of PPP
 - c. Support for new tourism law development
 - d. Local level involvement to increase awareness of natural land*
 - e. Volunteers working in tourism
 - f. Resource mobilization and program development in tourism sector
 - g. Assistance to development of infrastructure
2. Increase capacity development
 - a. Increased capacity at local level*
 - b. Tourist guide training curriculum
 - c. SME support such as ATA*
 - d. Business incubators and trainings in the arts and crafts sector
3. Increased Environmental Sustainability
 - a. Support for climate change legislation
 - b. Support for energy saving practices
 - c. Local tourism and urban planning includes environmental components
 - d. Support to heritage protection and cultural landscapes
 - e. Environmental sustainability is included in capacity development



What the Donors and Development Groups want to do in the future:

1. Prioritization of Tourism
 - a. Increased donor cooperation and collaboration at all levels for tourism financing
 - b. Lobby for proper implementation and enforcement of laws and regulations
 - c. Support for image development
 - d. Direct support for implementation of plans, strategies
 - e. More financial support in all sectors for tourism development*
2. Increased capacity development
 - a. Consultation and awareness-raising of ordinary citizens on tourism issues
 - b. Vocational training in tourism
 - c. Human resource framework development*
3. Increased environmental sustainability
 - a. Increase linkages between tourism and environmental sectors
 - b. Best practices implementation
 - c. Increased awareness on environmental sustainability to ordinary citizens*
 - d. Lobby government to enforce environmental protection legislation



Stakeholder Group: Local/Regional Government
Presenter: Engjell Serjani, Antigonea Archaeological Park

Trends of greatest concern for the Local/Regional Government:

1. Environmental degradation
2. Creating functional infrastructure
3. Lack of experience, education, etc in human resources
4. International image cultivation
5. Decentralization of local and national government

Present actions being undertaken now by the Local/Regional Government:

1. Promoting cities and towns
 - a. Image improvement
 - b. Booklets and web pages
 - c. Participation in fairs, national and international
2. Environment
 - a. Landfill planning underway including closed circle waste management
 - b. National monuments preservation
3. Human resources
 - a. Several vocational schools, (though should have curriculum more in sync with changing tourism)
 - b. Existing university tourism departments
 - c. Promoted family and local tourism through guesthouse creation

What the Local/Regional Government wants to do in the future:

1. Improving national monuments and city centers
2. Urban development projects
3. Natural monument ownership simplification, there are too many layers to go through now
4. Support the best public/private partnerships
5. Lack of investment and preservation of some popular sites
6. Addressing Corruption



Stakeholder Group: Universities
Presenter: Martin Mato, University of Tirana

Trends of greatest concern for the Universities:

1. Human Resources Development
 - a. More education in tourism
 - b. Vocational training that matches the needs of the tourism labor force
2. Improve law and regulations
3. Educational reform with a new curriculum
4. Program development concerning communication
5. Infrastructure concerns
6. Waste Management
 - a. Environmental degradation
 - b. Physical and cultural accessibility

Present actions being undertaken now by the Universities:

1. European University in Tirana
 - a. 5 Bachelors degrees in tourism and communication and 1 MA in tourism
 - b. Network of 10 European and Albanian universities
2. Tirana University offers Bachelors and Masters degrees in Communications and Tourism
3. Korca University has an economic faculty with a tourism branch, and has organized activities with the local government
4. University of Elbasan
 - a. offers a specialized degree in sustainable tourism
 - b. Summer Day conference (topic of sustainable tourism and local development)
 - c. Via Egnatia project along with a network of universities
5. University of New York, Tirana (UNYT)
 - a. Business related Bachelor's degree (American diploma)
 - b. European Masters Degree, MBA
 - c. Connections with tourist agencies bringing tourists to visit UNYT



What the Universities want to do in the future:

1. Create a national council of universities focused on tourism to influence policy making and to strengthen university network
2. Improve cooperation with the private sector in training, research (surveys) and technical assistance
3. Enhance the quality of teaching and education
 - a. Training staff and
 - b. Improved technical assistance
4. Focus on building business tourism skills with business incubators and business start-up centers
5. Tourism-related training for public administration

Exercise 5: Focus on Future - Future Scenarios

Participants, working in mixed groups, were asked to picture an ideal future for sustainable tourism in Albania. They were asked to put themselves ten years into the future and imagine what is happening in terms of the society, the infrastructure, the values, etc. They were next asked to present their ideal future scenarios in the creative manner of their choice. The groups varied in how they depicted 2019 in their presentations. Some groups enacted return visits of Albanians impressed with the leaps in progress of the sustainable tourism industry. Others depicted TV talk show programs highlighting all the improvements made by the government and industry. All participants enjoyed the talent, creativity, and sense of humor that each group displayed. Examples of elements of the future scenario presentations include the following:

- Locally produced foods are a central part of the cuisine offered at restaurants
- Winter tourism is a growing touristic field. The government now keeps precise, targeted statistics. An interviewed tourist is excited to book his hotel room through the internet and stayed in a refurbished castle.
- A three-act play depicts a once dirty, uncared for village now clean and the old church restored. Local residents have learned to become more helpful and accessible to tourists and speak English. The local restaurants serve locally-grown produce.
- A Texan couple tours Albania and is able to travel on sophisticated transportation infrastructure, including cable cars and helicopter. A now-accessible Antigonea provides the perfect romantic location for an impromptu marriage proposal.
- A sophisticated Tourist Information Center in Himara has helpful, well informed staff. Local guest house stays are recommended instead of loud resort mega-hotels, emphasizing local culture and customs. Local fairs, events and products are well publicized.
- A TV news show at Rinas airport greets the 10 millionth visitor to Albania. Direct flights from Los Angeles are now available.
- A “Futuristic Tourist Office” in London provides more sophisticated tourist maps and guides.
- Communism-themed tourism with bunkers, tunnels, concentration camps and prisons is open to interested tourists.
- A tour through Gjirokastra shows off a restored Old Bazaar to visiting mayors and dignitaries. All buildings are owner-occupied and being utilized. The city now provides a differentiated museum experience to visitors.



Common Factors in the Future Scenarios

The following is a list of some of the issues that were mentioned in the future scenario presentations. Some of the ideas on this list were presented by more than one group, which led everyone to realize that there were many similarities in their wishes. The ideas that were presented in these creative presentations led the group to clearly seeing in the next WSR workshop exercise the common goals they all shared.

- Physical infrastructure has improved (roads, airlines, public transportation)
- Information technology has improved
- Albania's global image and its ability to market internationally have vastly improved
- Environmentally-conscious tourist facilities are available in diverse destinations and overdevelopment has been put on hold
- Tourism is community-based and provides economic opportunities for communities
- Awareness campaigns have helped to educate local residents about tourism and its potential benefits
- Tourist products and offerings have been diversified
- Heritage sites have been properly restored
- Service and information staff are better-educated and better able to meet visitors' needs



Exercise 6 (Discovering Common Ground) and Exercise 7 (Group Action Planning) have already been presented in this report in sections I. and II. The authors of this report chose not to present the exercises in chronological order so that the reader could learn first about the common ground and action plans, the most significant outcomes of the WSR.



Official Closure of WSR workshop

On behalf of both, the Academy for Educational Development (AED) and the Global Sustainable Tourism Alliance (GSTA), **Mr. Patrick Papania** thanked all of the participants for the exceptional work conducted over the previous three days. He also thanked all of the conference organizers, USAID, Hotel Adriatik staff, and offered a special thanks **Mr. Larry Knox** for his hard work as head facilitator for the conference. **Mr. Papania** reemphasized GSTA's commitment to working with all stakeholders on sustainable tourism issues in Albania. He reiterated Hellenic Aid's willingness to potentially fund a project proposal offered at the conference, encouraging stakeholders to continue working together to build the tourism sector in Albanian. He finished by urging assembled stakeholders to begin the difficult work immediately without the initial participation of donors, who would come in when they felt that they saw the appropriate commitment being made.



ANNEXES

Annex 1

Explanation of the System-wide Collaborative Actions for Livelihoods and the Environment (SCALETM)

SCALE™ – ESTA’s COMMUNICATIONS-DRIVEN MANAGEMENT PROCESS FOR WIDESPREAD COORDINATION

ESTA is addressing the need for a stronger and more sustainable tourism sector in Ethiopia by applying a communications-driven management process called SCALE™, System-wide Collaborative Actions for Livelihoods and the Environment. SCALE™ addresses the need for cross-sector collaboration and widespread cooperation among key stakeholders associated with a development issue.

SCALE™ is a framework, a process, and a set of practical tools and techniques that catalyze system-wide change and result in strengthened governmental support, tourism enhancement, and compliance with development issues ranging from environmental protection to widespread adoption of environmentally friendly practices in a wide variety of sectors. SCALE™ effects widespread social change and successfully meets complex development challenges through several core features of the approach:

- Early participation by all relevant stakeholders in a development issue: government (national and local), educators (formal and non-formal), businesses, associations, non-governmental organizations, and other key institutions.
- Building coalitions and collaborative efforts by finding common interests and concerns among these groups that do not usually work together.
- Focusing on a demand-driven approach to prioritizing issues and opportunities.
- Empowering local capacity to design, implement, monitor, and manage new efforts that evolve from the process.
- Establishing realistic and achievable objectives that are compatible with local abilities, resources, and priorities
- Continuous monitoring and evaluation enabling the system to respond to new opportunities, challenges and trends.

Using this approach, ensuring that these core features are followed the scale of activities expands quickly. The **SCALE™ framework** generates system-wide change by catalyzing and supporting **simultaneous** and sustainable collaborative actions toward a common goal with as many individuals and organizations related to a specific issue as possible. SCALE™ simultaneously strengthens the communication and working relationships among these stakeholders, creating a network of interwoven interests and actions.

The **SCALE™ process** provides a road map to initiate, implement, and evaluate this system-wide approach. Its components, Map the Context, Catalyze Coalitions and Partnerships, Create Collaborative Sustainable Solutions, Act, and Value, are described on the next page:

The SCALE™ Process



- **Map the Context:** The SCALE™ process begins with a thorough understanding of the context within which the issue sits. This would include the governmental (policies and strategies), civil society (current knowledge, attitudes, and practices), and private sector participation (the most appropriate support and desired collaboration).
- **Catalyze Coalitions and Partnerships:** SCALE™ initiates system-wide collaborative action from the outset by bringing fifty to fifteen hundred representatives from all sectors of the educational system into one room to find common ground and develop shared goals. These Whole-System-in-the-Room (WSR) planning sessions are critical because they accelerate the process of starting at scale by broadening the base of people creating solutions for the issue.
- **Create Collaborative, Sustainable Solutions:** SCALE™ assists the coalitions and partnerships fostered during the WSR planning workshop in applying the information gathered and analyzed in Map the Context and Create Coalitions and Partnerships to:
 - Generate options that address policy, structural, technological, cultural and social

- aspects of the issue.
- Help groups to generate and analyze a variety of options and their implications.
 - Negotiate and prioritize collaborative solutions. Identify specific opportunities to work towards together as partners.
 - Define objectives and indicators of success.
- **Act:** SCALE™ uses multiple social change methodologies to support and strengthen local individuals, organizations, and institutions and communities as they develop and strengthen necessary policies, standards, infrastructure, associations, and community groups to increase support and compliance for a specific development issue. As activities generate change, SCALE™ helps individuals, groups, organizations, and communities assess where they are in the process and supports them in moving one step forward towards their objectives. SCALE™ continuously seeks to maintain a balance between the “task”—achieving objectives—and the “process”—strengthening stakeholders’ capacity for informed decision making and sustainable, collaborative action.
 - **Value (Monitoring and Evaluation):** This component’s name was intentionally chosen for its multiple meanings. The SCALE™ process helps stakeholders place a higher value on the resources on which they all depend. It also helps stakeholders value other stakeholders’ perspectives, roles, and contributions. Finally, this is the moment in the SCALE™ process to value what is working and what can be improved— as well as to evaluate impact. Because the strengthening of Sustainable Tourism requires a system-wide approach that takes into consideration governance, cultural, educational and social interests, SCALE™ monitoring and evaluation helps stakeholders assess the impact of their activities in each of these areas. SCALE™ encourages the use of participatory monitoring and evaluation as a process for collaborative problem solving.

The need to increase the impact of development efforts in all sectors is a challenge facing development practitioners worldwide. Tackling this challenge requires solutions and processes that address the complex nature of the development issue with a system-wide approach that takes into consideration the intricate relationships between governance, civil society, cultural, educational, and environmental interests.

SCALE™ evolved from USAID’s 12 years of experience implementing GreenCOM, the global environmental communication project. GreenCOM demonstrated that strategic communications was an effective management tool to catalyze system-wide change and widespread adoption.

Annex 2

WSR Participants' Notebook (Workshop Agenda, Framework and Self-Managed Exercises)



USAID | **ALBANIA**
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Strategic Planning Workshop

*“Improving Livelihoods in Albania
through
Sustainable Tourism Development”*

Adriatik Hotel - Durrës
January 20-22, 2009

Improving Livelihoods in Albania through Sustainable Tourism Development

Whole-System-in-the-Room (WSR) Strategic Planning Workshop

January 20-22, 2009

Workshop Program

First Day – January 20

Official Opening of Workshop: 10:00 – 11:00 AM
Opening Speeches

Continue Workshop Registration and Hotel Check In: 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Lunch: 12:00 – 1:00 PM

Overview of WSR Workshop: 1:00 – 1:30 PM
Introduction of Mixed Groups
Purpose of WSR workshop
Agenda, Background, Learning Curve, Basics, Four Rooms, Ground Rules and Working Agreements

Reviewing the Past: 1:30 – 3:00 PM
Timelines - Collect Information (Worksheet 1)
Mixed Groups – Discuss and Prepare Report (Worksheet 2)

Coffee: ongoing in room from 3:00 – 3:30 PM

Reviewing the Past: 3:30 – 5:00 PM
Presentation of Reports to Whole Group
Whole Group Discussion

Focus on the Present: 5:00 – 6:15 PM
Making the Mind Map (Worksheet 3)
Reactions/Placing the Dots (voting)

Break: 6:15 – 7:00 PM

Dinner & Entertainment: 7:00 – 9:00 PM

Second Day - January 21

Breakfast: 7:30 – 8:30 AM

Focus on the Present cont.: 8:30 – 10:00 AM
Review Map with Whole Group/Group Discussion
Stakeholder Responses to Trends (Worksheet 4)

Coffee Break: 10:00 – 10:30 AM

Focus on the Present cont.: 10:30 AM – 12:00 noon
Presentation of Reports and Whole Group Discussion

Focus on Future: 12:00 noon – 3:00 PM (*Lunch available between 1:00 – 2:00 PM*)
Mixed Groups prepare Future Scenarios (Worksheet 5)

Coffee: ongoing in workshop room from 2:30 – 4:00 PM

Focus Future cont.: 3:00 – 4:00 PM
Present Future Scenarios Group by Group

Focus on Common Ground: 4:00 – 6:00 PM
Discover Common Ground (Worksheet 6)

Dinner & Entertainment: 7:00 – 9:00 PM

Third Day – January 22

Breakfast: 7:30 – 8:30 AM

Focus on Common Ground Cont.: 8:30 – 9:30 AM
Confirm Common Ground with Whole Group (reality discussion)

Work Planning Session: 9:30 – 10:45 AM
Action Planning (Worksheets 7 and 8)

Coffee Break: 10:40 – 11:15 AM

Work Planning Presentation: 11:15 AM – 12:15 PM
Stakeholder Commitment to Action Plans

Next Steps for Collaborative Actions: 12:15 PM – 12:45 PM
Individual Commitments

Closing: 12:45 – 1:15 PM

Lunch: 1:15 – 2:15 PM

Check-out of hotel: 2:15 – 2:45 PM **Bus Departs at 3:30 PM**

Learning Assumptions for the Whole-System-in-the-Room (WSR) Workshop

We believe that each of us...

1. Has a unique learning style. Some learn best by reading, others by doing, still others by discussing or listening or thinking out loud. We encourage all modes.
2. Learns at a different rate. Inevitably some will think the meeting is slow, others too fast.
3. Learns different things from a common experience. We need not agree to accomplish our task.
4. Learns best from our own experience.
5. Learns more in one workshop than the world will permit us to apply. Hence we focus on local action within a global context.
6. Has the ability to help and teach others. We are all resources here.

No workshop design can accommodate all these realities at every single moment. However, we can design so that each person has a chance to learn in a variety of ways over time and can revisit issues before having to close on action plans. In the WSR workshop we provide a variety of modes that enable each person to find a way to learn what they need. We hold off action until the last session, thus giving diverse people a chance to get a common fix on the task.

We believe **the key** to interactive, task-focused large group meetings under these conditions are:

- ◆ Attending to time
- ◆ Doing the best we can with each task IN THE TIME AVAILABLE
- ◆ Staying mindful of the 4-room apartment
- ◆ Using a variety of session methods
- ◆ Practicing PATIENCE

Working Agreement

Workshop Facilitators: Larry Knox & Tareq Abdalla

Workshop Facilitators' Role and Responsibilities

- Set Times and Tasks
- Large Group Discussions
- Keep Purpose up Front

Participants Role and Responsibilities

- Provide Information/Analysis
- Manage Own Small Groups
- Future Scenarios / Action Steps

Ground Rules

- Provide Information Analysis
- All Information Written on Flip Charts

- Strict Time Frames
- Seek Common Ground and Action

- Differences/Problems noted, explored, understood...not worked.
- Have Fun!!!

Group Self-Management Tips

Each small group manages its own discussion, data, time, and reports. Here are useful roles for self-managing this work. Leadership roles can be rotated if you wish.

- **Discussion Leader** – Assures that each person who wants to speak is heard within time available. Keeps group on track to finish on time.
- **Timekeeper** – Keeps group aware of time left. Monitors reporters and signals time remaining.
- **Recorder** – Writes group's output on flip charts, using speaker's words. Ask people to restate long ideas briefly.
- **Reporter** – Delivers report to large group in time allotted.

FOCUS ON THE PAST WORKSHEET
Creating a Time Line

***Reports are due at _____ o'clock.**

Purpose: To put the Albanian Tourism sector in the broadest possible context and establish implications for this meeting.

Task:

1. Alone, think about notable milestones from three perspectives:
 - **Personal:** Key experiences in your life.
 - **Global:** Significant world events that have shaped our global society.
 - **Local:** Critical events/developments in Albania.
2. Using a marker put your items on the time lines on the wall, using words and/or pictures.

You can go directly to the timelines or make notes below first.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES (include your experience with Albanian tourism.)

1920 – 1944

1944 – 1990

1990 – Present

SIGNIFICANT GLOBAL EVENTS

1920 – 1944

1944 – 1990

1990 – Present

LOCAL EVENTS (including Albanian tourism events)

1920 – 1944

1944 – 1990

1990 – Present

FOCUS ON THE PAST

- Stories and Implications -

***Reports are due at _____ o'clock.**

Purpose: Tell stories of what has gone before in Ethiopian Tourism as a context for planning a shared future.

Self-manage: Select a discussion leader, recorder, time keeper and reporter.

GROUP ASSIGNMENTS

1. **Group(s)** _____
 - a. Using data from the **Personal** time line, tell a story about key experiences in the lives of the people here.
 - b. What connections do you make between your story and the work we have come to do?

2. **Group(s)** _____
 - a. Using the **Global** time line, tell a story about how the world has changed over time.
 - b. What connections do you make between your story and the work we have come to do?

3. **Group(s)** _____
 - a. Using the **Local** time line, tell a story of the recent past.
 - b. What connections do you make between your story and the work we have come to do?

Prepare a **4-minute** summary report.

FOCUS ON THE PRESENT WORKSHEETS

- Mapping Trends Affecting Albanian Tourism -

Purpose: Create the broadest possible social, economic, and technological context for dialogue and decision-making (i.e. get everybody talking about the *same* world.

Question: What are the present trends affecting Tourism in Albania that all need to consider as we plan for the future?

Ground Rules for Mind-Mapping:

1. A trend implies direction of movement, from more to less, less to more, greater to smaller, smaller to greater, and so on. We want to *observe* what is happening and defer judgment and analysis.
2. This is a group brainstorm – no evaluation, no censorship, no agreement is required.
3. The person who names a trend says where it goes on the map.
4. Opposing trends are OK when backed up by examples.
5. Give concrete examples of your trends. Say **Who** and/or **What** leads you to your observation..

FOCUS ON THE PRESENT

- How Trends Affect the System -

***Reports are due at _____ o'clock.**

Purpose: To discover stakeholders' core concerns and find out what people are doing now and what they want to do in the future.

Self-manage: Select a discussion leader, recorder, time keeper and reporter.

Task:

1. Determine the few key trends (three to five) of greatest concern to **your stakeholder group**.
2. On a second flip chart sheet, make a list of the things you are doing *right now* to respond to these trends. Circle the three actions you are doing that make you most proud.
3. On a third flip chart sheet, list the things you are **not** doing now that you want to do in the future. Circle the three actions that you are **not** doing that make you the most sorry.
4. Prepare a 4-minute report on the trends that are of priority to you, the actions that make you proud, and those that make you feel sorry.

DESIRED FUTURE SCENARIOS WORKSHEET

***Presentations are due at _____ o'clock.**

Purpose: To imagine a future you are willing to work toward.

Self-manage: Select a discussion leader, recorder, time keeper and reporter.

Task: Put yourself 10 years in the future.

Today is January 21, 2019. Visualize what is happening in the community (business, network, etc.) now regarding sustainable tourism. You have made your dreams of ten years ago a reality.

1. On a flip chart, note the following :
 - What is life like today regarding tourism?
 - Describe notable policies, programs, and structures that exist now.
 - How do you sustain progress in tourism?
 - Think back to the year of the future search. What was the biggest barrier you had to overcome back then to get moving?
 - How did you do it?
2. Choose a **CREATIVE** way to present your desired future as if it is happening right NOW (drama, story, poem, music, art, TV show, or whatever you decide). NOTE: Use the **present** tense. « We are ... » or « We have ... » or « We do... »

Your scenario should be:

- **Feasible** – The know-how exists to implement it.
- **Desirable** – Society benefits.
- **Motivating** – You have worked hard to make it happen.

(You have 5 minutes per scenario)

DISCOVERING COMMON GROUND WORKSHEET

Purpose: To describe the key features desired by all.

Self-manage: Select a discussion leader, recorder, time keeper and reporter.

Task:

1. Each group prepares a list of common ground elements that reflects what you believe everyone here wants now and in the future. This could include values, policies, and procedures to be designed. These are your « minimum critical specifications » for your new direction.
2. Join another group and compare your common ground lists. Merge into one list. If you disagree about an item, put it on the **Not Agreed** list.
3. Cut your merged list into strips, one item per strip, and putt hem on the wall.
4. The whole group will revisit the common ground for as long as it takes to come to agreement. We will hear and accept differences if they arise. Items that are not accepted by all will be moved to the **Not Agreed** list.

GROUP ACTION PLANNING WORKSHEET

- Voluntary, Task Force, or Stakeholder -

(This sheet is to record group planning ideas and decisions)

Your group is _____

***Reports are due at _____ o'clock.**

Purpose: To identify short and long term action steps to implement the common ground agenda.

Self manage: Select a discussion leader, recorder, time keeper and reporter.

Task

1. Create short term actions (next three months)

What?	How Measure Success?	Help needed from?	Date due?
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2. Create long term actions (next 3 years)

What?	How Measure Success?	Help needed from?	Date due?
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INDIVIDUAL ACTION PLANNING WORKSHEET

- This page is for your own use -

Purpose: To identify short and long term action steps to implement the common ground agenda.

Task

3. Create short term actions (next three months)

What?	How Measure Success?	Help needed from?	Date due?
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4. Create long term actions (next 3 years)

What?	How Measure Success?	Help needed from?	Date due?
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Annex 3

WSR - Albania Attendees List

	Institution	Representative	Title	Mobile	Telephone	Fax	Email address
1	National Government						
1	National Tourism Agency	Mr. Sokol Kongoli	Chief of Publication&Promotion	682094787	(04)2273281	(04)2273778	kolialba@yahoo.com
2	Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration	Ms. Arjana Sinoimeri	Specialist of Nature Protection Policies	682212245	(04)2270027		asinoimeri@moe.gov.al
3	Institute of Cultural Monuments	Mr. Artur Luzati	Specialist	682264217	(04)22340347	(04)22340347	imk@albmail.com
4	Ministry of Economy, Trade & Energy	Mr. Denis Roka	Specialist of SME Sector	692465274	(04)2222245		droka@mete.gov.al
5	Ministry of Public Works, Transport & Telecommunications	Ms. Eriela Zisi	ICZM Project Assistant	683757888	(04)2273738	(04)2273738	eriel.zisi@yahoo.com

	Institution	Representative	Title	Mobile	Telephone	Fax	Email address
2	Regional Government						
1	Butrint National Park	Mr. Ylli Cerova	Director	682077521	(0852)24600	(0852)24600	ylli_cerova@yahoo.fr
2	Regional Directorate of Cultural Monuments	Mr. Spartak Drasa	Regional Director	692074015	(0842)62441	(0842)62441	drmkgj@hotmail.com
3	Antigonea Archeological Park	Mr. Engjell Serjani	Director	692058037	(0826)6312	(0842)62441	eserjani@hotmail.com
4	Administration & Coordination Office of Museum City of	Mr. Raimond Kola	Director	692064546	(0842)69001	(0842)69001	mondikola@yahoo.com
5	Municipality of Saranda	Mr. Aristotel Bita	Director of Tourism	692088245	(0852)23402	(0852)22380	telibita@yahoo.com
6	Municipality of Himara	Mr. Stefo Mato	Deputy Mayor				bashkiahimare@yahoo.com
7	Municipality of Korca	Ms. Sofjola Kotelli	Director of Tourism	692476015	(082)244816	(082)243353	bashkiko@albmail.com
8	Commune of Antigonea	Mr. Ylli Muho	Head of Commune	692023887	(0882)93039	(0882)93039	yllimuho@yahoo.com

	Institution	Representative	Title	Mobile	Telephone	Fax	Email address
3	Private Sector Tour Operators						
1	Gulliver Ok	Ms. Sonja Popa	Manager	684014861	(04)2227626	(04)2227626	soniapopa@hotmail.com
2	Albania Holidays	Ms. Jonista Begaj	Sales Manager	692641630	(04)2235688/498	(04)2235498	k.gerxhani@albania-holidays.com
3	Albtours D	Mr. Edmond Basho	General Manager	692036006	(052)223627	(052)231781	albtours@albaniaonline.net
4	Shkodra Travel	Mr. Astrit Kurti	General Manager	692040434	(04)2266420	(04)2266420	shkodratravell@yahoo.com
5	Sipa Tours	Mr. Arben Cipa	Owner	686024700	(0852)26675	(0852)26675	info@sipatours.com

	Institution	Representative	Title	Mobile	Telephone	Fax	Email address
4	Tourism Services						
1	Hotel Mondial	Mr. Zak Topuzi	Administrator	682022489	(04)2232372	(04)2232372	z.topuzi@hotelmundial.com.al
2	Hotel & Services Consulting	Mr. Dorian Kaba	President	682001976			d_kaba@yahoo.com
3	Austrian Airlines	Mr. Emil Olovanov	Country Manager	692034544	422235028	42235026	emil.olovanov@austrian.com
4	Celesi Design and Publicity Guides	Mr. Ylli Sula	General Manager	682057070	42235128		ysula@celesi.com
5	TV Gjirokastra	Mr. Blerim Kore	Journalist	692086122	84262388	84262388	blerimkore@yahoo.com
6	National Geographic	Mr. Costas Christ	Guest speaker	(+1)20732 69099			cosal@tamusafaris.com
7	Hotel Kalemi	Mr. Dragua Kalemi	Owner	682234373			draguak@yahoo.com

	Institution	Representative	Title	Mobile	Telephone	Fax	Email address
5	Donors&Development Organizations						
1	Culture and Heritage for Social & Economic Development, UNDP-	Ms. Lauren Bohatka	UNESCO Asst.Prog.Spec	692020276			lauren.bohatka@undp.org
2	SNV	Mr. David Milne	Tourism Knowledge Network Leader	692053593	(04)2255800	(04)2255801	dmilne@snvworld.org
3	TAM-BAS Programme – Albania	Ms. Kleta Dhefto			(04)2259439	(04)2259439	
4	US Peace Corps	Ms. Diana Djaloshi	Program Manager	692088348	(04)2365033	(04)2364983	hdenham@al.peacecorps.gov
5	Albanian Agricultural Competitiveness (AAC) Program	Mr. Sabah Sena	Association Development Specialist	684073734	(04)2256839	(04)2230636	sabah_sena@dai.com
6	OECD	Dr. Peter Keller	Director Tourism Institute University of Lausane	(+41)7930 17280	(+41)21 6923487	(+41)21 6923303	peter.keller@unil.ch
7	Petreas Assocs (on behalf of Hellenic Aid)	Mr. Christos Petreas	Special Advisor Hellenic Aid	(+30)6945 701045	(+30)2106846 106	(+30)210689 5451	christos@petreas-associates.com
8	Embassy of Greece	Mr. Spyros Economou	First Secretary for Economic & Commercial	(+355)686 026588			ecocom-tirana@mfa.gr
9	GTZ	Mr. Luan Dervishej					

	Institution	Representative	Title	Mobile	Telephone	Fax	Email address
6	Universities						
1	University of Tirana	Mr. Martin Mato	Head of German Dept. & Foreign Faculty	692339195	(04)2232786	(04)2340210	marti3001@yahoo.com
2	University of New York in Tirana	Ms. Monika Struga	Director Graduate School of Business	683037702	(04)2273056	(04)2273059	monikastruga@unyt.edu.al
3	European University for Tourism	Prof. Salvatore Messina	Rector	694043334	(04)2265265		rector@euft.eu
4	University Fan S. Noli of Korça	Ms. Eleina Qirici	Director Tourism Dept.	686010552	(082)252134		elenaqirici@yahoo.com
5	University of Elbasan	Mr. Ilir Bejtja	Head of Marketing Section	692071156	(054)240054	(054)253253	i_bejtja@yahoo.com
6	George Washington University	Mr. Juan Kelsner	Professor of Tourism	(+1)			juanlk@gwv.edu

	Institution	Representative	Title	Mobile	Telephone	Fax	Email address
7	Economic Development & Finance						
1	Opportunity Albania, Microcredit Institutions	Mr. Bledi Sena	Business Development Manager	692073259	42237698		bsena@opportunity.al
2	Nathan & Associates	Mr. Gary Lazor	Principal Associate	(+1)70340 90087	(+1)70351677 34		glazor@nathaninc.com
3	Solimar International	Mr. Simon Jones	Vice President	(+1)20251 86192			s.jones@solimarinternational.com
4	Environmental Center for Development Education and	Ms. Albana Bregaj	Projects Cordinator	692386853	42234851	42234851	bregajalbana@yahoo.com
5	Regional Development Agency Korça	Mr. Aurel Grabocka	Director	682034464	82242626	82242626	rdakorca@yahoo.com

	Institution	Representative	Title	Mobile	Telephone	Fax	Email address
8	Associations & NGO's						
1	Gjirokastra Conservation & Development Organization - GCDO	Mr. Sadi Petrela	Director	692078767	(0842)67077	(0842)67077	spetrela@gjirokastra.org
2	Tumulus in Kamenica	Mr. Skender Aliu	Director of Kamenica Museum	692687009	(082)243185		skenderaliu@hotmail.com
3	NATGA	Mr.Fredi Dono	President	684014915	(04)2239282	(04)2239282	uno_agency@yahoo.com
4	Albanian Handicraft Association	Mr. Petrit Metohu	President	682090300			pmetohu@kash.alb.org
5	Tourism/Visitor Information, Korçë	Ms. Orieta Glozheni	Manager	684023780	(082)243697	(082)243697	orietag@yahoo.com
6	National Albanian-American Council	Ms. Jonida Sinani	Programme Officer	692062862	(04)2267670	(04)2267670	jsinani@naac.org

	Institution	Representative	Title	Mobile	Telephone	Fax	Email address
9	Observers						
1	Embassy of Greece	Mr. Alexios Zannos	Deputy Head of Mission	682025449			alzannos@mfa.gr
2	USAID	Mr. Son Nguyen	EG Team Leader				
3	USAID	Ms. Alma Kospiri	SME & Trade Development Specialist				
4	USAID	Dr. Kristaq V. Jorgji	Agriculture Specialist				
5	USAID	Ms. Suzana Cullufi	LGPA CTO				
6	USAID	Ms. Stephanie Pepi	DOC				
7	USAID/GDA	Ms. Nancy Wildfeir					
8	USAID	Ms. Brunilda Muca					
9	LGPA/USAID	Mr. David Smith	Chief of Party				
10	Albania Holiday	Mr. Armand Ferra	Owner				
11	ATA(Albanian Tourism Association)	Mr. Kliton Gerxhani	President				
12	NAAC	Ms. Blerina Balila					
13	Korca Municipality	Mr. Niko Peleshi	Mayor				
14	Hotel Belvedere	Ms. Ada Stafa	Administrator				
15	UNDP	Mr. Stephan Doempke	Programme Coordinator				stephan.doempke@undp.org

	Institution	Representative	Title	Mobile	Telephone	Fax	Email address
10	Organizers						
1	Facilitator	Mr. Larry Knox					lknox26@gmail.com
1	AED	Ms. Kristina Dunlevy					kdunlevy@aed.org
2	AED	Mr. Patrick Papania					ppapania@aed.org
3	AED	Mr. Tareq Abdalla					tabdalla@aed.org
4	AED	Mr. Elton Orozi					eltoni_o@hotmail.com
5	AED	Ms. Nevila Popa					nevilapopa@gmail.com
6	US Peace Corps - Gjirokaster	Mr. Allan Zaretsky	Workshop Reporter	693475470			allan.zaretsky@gmail.com
7	Helper	Ms. Emanuela Kola		693441184			kolaema@gmail.com
8	Helper	Ms. Blerina Ago		692035634			agoblerina@hotmail.com
9	Helper	Mr. Anki Rama		693646011			ani_19_tr@hotmail.com
10	Helper	Mr. Fation Elezi		693202692			toni_br_27@hotmail.com
11	Interpreter	Mr. Alfred Caushi		682069369			
12	Interpreter	Mr. Erlis Hereni		692248930			