

FOREST TOURISM IN V KLÍŽ FORESTS

Sub mountainous village Velký Klíž is situated on the territory of the mountain Tríbeč, in Partizánske district. On cadastral territory of 4,241 hectares there live 920 inhabitants. Urbarium (special shared ownership type) of the village Velký Klíž associates about 600 owners of agricultural and forest land with total area 786 hectares. Annual cut is about 800 m³ of that about one half is fuel wood. Existing 248 ha of pasturelands of Urbarium V. Klíž is put on lease to Hunters' Association „Vrch Hora”.

Activity description

Urbarium Velký Klíž offers for visitors in urbarial forests various recreational services as:

- Accommodation facility: forester's house „Prameň“,
- Playground for children in the surroundings of forester's house,
- Sport trail – „S Veveričkou od Prameňa na Hôrku“,
- Football playground – „Hôrka“,
- Tourist hiking trails – marked in detail with leaflet provided,
- Cycling routes,
- Actions of forest education for pupils and families with children,
- Forest guides trained for special topics, e.g. „Pozorovanie života lesných obyvateľov“, (Observation of the life of forest inhabitants)
- Forest tourism on marked trails, places for rest with fireplace, table, benches and shelter.

Forester's house „Prameň“ has ten beds. It was built up in the place of former forester's house and has two rooms in the attic, kitchen, social room with fire, shower and toilet. Access to this house is on road, parking possible in garage. Outside there is sheltered area for 30 visitors with grill and in the surroundings there are wooden apparatus for training - horizontal bars, net, bowls, climbing construction for kids, wooden observatory for kids. In forest there is placed board with quizzes and test about marten life. There is prepared a system of 9 round trails (in total on the area of 652 ha of forest) where it is possible with help of brochure to learn about urbarial forests and to test obtained knowledge in the competition with Squirrel. Along the trails there are built up marked places for rest with springs, fireplaces and shelters.

“History” of case:

The most important challenges for innovations were efforts to diversify own production activities, ensure additional income for the members of Urbarium V. Klíž, enhance the development of the municipality and the region with the use of natural and cultural potential of the municipality. An idea to implement innovation has emerged from the article in the journal Les on successful use of pre-accession fund SAPARD for the purchase of forest machinery as well as from the training about SAPARD, measure – Diversification of activities.

The aim of innovation was to build up own facility that would serve for the accommodation of guests and provide background for other services being offered by Urbarium V. Klíž. 50% of the investment was financed from the measure of SAPARD – Diversification of activities. Problem situation that had been arising were solved operatively in the course of preparation and implementation of the project. They were connected mainly with administrative requirements concerning various confirmation documents (change in business, extracts from criminal record of all members of the board, confirmation documents from customs office, etc.). In the beginning it was necessary to persuade the shareholders of Urbarium V. Klíž about the need of investment. It required,

in addition to others, suspension of paying member shares for the period of two years of the project implementation. The most stressing moment was financing in the form of refunding where at certain moment a problem with cash flow of the project appeared. As 80% of investments (1.2 million SKK cca 40ths. €) were required from the first payment Urbarium V. Klíž had to find finances for pre-financing. Credit for about one half of the investment was obtained thanks to good personal relations from other urbarium.

Chronology:

- 2002 – idea emergence, training about SAPARD
- March 2003 – finishing of the project of forester's house Prameň, signing of SAPARD agreement,
- December 2003 – first payment,
- Summer 2004 – first visitors of forester's house Prameň,
- 2004 cooperation with the association ALEA (advertising materials, information, forest education, experience exchange),
- October 2005 – project of the account ORANGE to expand the activities (round trails, aids for forest education).

The results and benefits of the project can be divided into economic benefits, which are namely receipts of about 60,000 SKK (3000 €) per year for recreational services, especially accommodation, other receipts of the municipality related with providing services with regard to the needs of tourists as well as creating new jobs for local craftsmen involved into preparation and improvement of the project equipment.

Other benefits are recreation and education for the inhabitants of the municipality (mainly pre-school children and pupils from elementary schools) and creating an area for regular meetings of municipality organizations (Hunters' Association Vrch Hora and local unit of the Club of Slovak Tourists Ostrá, Club of pensioners, etc.) who participate in public beneficial activities (e.g. waste collection) and in improving the surroundings of the municipality and facilities for local inhabitants.

Actors (participants) and their tasks:

At personal and enterprise level there were involved 6 people into the preparation of own innovation project. They were, in addition to some members of the board of Urbarium V. Klíž, mainly family members, and in the phase of implementation also friends.

At inter-enterprise level the chairman of Urbarium providing credit, contractors – own realization of construction, design engineer – preparation of technical project, joiner workshop – equipment, infrastructure, maxillary.

At institutional level various offices were in question – issuing permits, confirmation documents and consents for construction. Hunters' Association Vrch Hora and local club of the Club of Slovak Tourist Ostrá carried out works in the building up facilities in the surrounding of the facility and marking of trails. In advertising of accommodation facilities and other services the municipality was very active (printing advertising materials) and the association ALEA (marketing on web, exhibitions of tourism) as well.

Relevance of public policy and programmes

Subsidies or obtaining non-refundable financial contribution was decisive for the success of innovation. For successful implementation of the project there was used support from pre-accession funds of the EU (SAPARD). At the level of regions there are possibilities in the framework of Regional Operational Programme or local initiatives of mayors and interest associations.