

Session #4

Ecotourism and certification systems

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Parks in Europe, as well as around the World have quite a unique opportunity: they represent one of the few institutions that are able to streamline the local development based on real sustainable development principles. In our changing world, Parks need to play a more active role in facilitating, stimulating and integrating themselves in the regional development. This should always be done respecting the ultimate nature conservation objective specific to each Park, but creating the best opportunity for small scale local “green” businesses around and within the Park.

Ecotourism is one of the tools that can bring support for integrating both conservation and different traditions and local businesses into regional development. Therefore, Parks can work towards partnerships for establishing high quality ecotourism that stimulate regional sustainable development. One of the benefits for a Park with high management standards, including its regional development function is to be appreciated as a stimulator for a balanced development that will pay back in support for nature conservation.