



LEONARDO DA VINCI PROGRAMME

**ECO-ROUTE. – A ROUTE TO SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH
ECOTOURISM LABELLING**

**NATIONAL REPORT ON REVIEW
OF ECOTOURISM CERTIFICATION IN ROMANIA**

Review of legal Framework – Romania

There is a definition of ecotourism in *Law no. 137/1995* regarding environment protection: “ecotourism is the practice of tourism respecting the environment protection regulations”.

In Romania, the activities related to tourism are established by our Ministry of Transport, Construction and Tourism (web page: www.mt.ro) through State Secretary for Tourism. There are now specific elements regarding ecotourism products, only the general aspects regarding the organization and functioning of tourism activities.

The general rules are regulated by the Government *Ordinance no 58* from August 26, 1998 “*related to organizing and functioning of the tourism activities in Romania*”. In this Ordinance we have defined the following:

- Tourist reception structures 95
- with the following functions:
 - Touristy accommodation
 - Public alimentation
 - Recreation area
 - Transport
 - Bathing treatment.
- Tourism operators
- Non-governmental organization with tourism activities

The tourism operators have to hold a tourism license for operating specific activities and the operative management must be hold by a person that has a tourism patent.

To ensure the protection and rescue of tourists in mountain zones and resorts and on the beach is done by the local council to witch it appertains, by organizing rescue teams (Lifeguards).

Details regarding the structures for accommodations are regulate by *HG 1328* from December 27, 2001 and the *Ordinance 510* from June 28, 2002, “*the classification of the tourism structures for accommodation*”. Regarding this, we have defined:

- the accommodations are general classifieds by “stars” but for the rural pensions the classification is by “flowers”. This classification is for buildings, endowments and services offered. There are details regarding different types of reception structures with accommodation functions as well.

In accordance with *Ordinance no 170* from April 3, 2001, the tourism operators must to have license in tourism and the Executive Manager of these operators must to be licensed by the Ministry of Transport, Construction and Tourism. Also there are elaborations regarding the required criteria for the release of tourism license and tourism patent.

The Non-governmental organization with tourism activities must to have the approval of the Ministry of Transport, Construction and Tourism before to start their activities and must to respect the conditions from the **Ordinance no 26** from January 26, 2000.

The Tourism Operators must to have tourist guides licensed by Ministry of Transport, Construction and Tourism in accordance with **HG 305** from March 08, 2001. There are the definitions of: local guides (for local activities), national guides (at national and international level) and specialized guides (for certain segments of tourist services such as mountain services, art, supervisor, animation, natural habitat, fauna, flora, ornithology, sports <mountaineering, sky, snow sledge, rowing, swimming, yachting, flying, hang glider or paragliding>, and other specializations requested on the tourism market). The conditions and criteria respecting the selection, education, license and employment are established by the Ministry of Transport, Construction and Tourism.

There is an **Ordinance no 69** from January 28, 2003, which provide the rules regarding the contract between Tourism Agencies and tourists. The tourist is ensured for the risk of insolvency and/or bankruptcy of the tourist agency that provided the services (the tourist agency is obliged to be insured with an insurance agency).

The health insurance for the tourist is not the agency obligations, it is optional and it will be done only if the tourist requires.

“The national program to increase the quality of hotel services and for the launch of the “Q” mark” was launched by the **HG 668/2003**. Ministry of Transport, Construction and Tourism has to define during the year 2004 the conditions and criteria of certification for the services provided by hotels for obtaining the “Q” mark.

The general frame for developing any kind of activities in Romania on base of sustainable development of the society is provided by the **Law 137/1995** regarding environment protection.

HG 230 / 2003: The Public Central Authority for Tourism in collaboration with The Public Central Authority for Environment Protection, The Public Central Authority for Forestry and The Romanian Academy are elaborating the strategy for the development of ecotourism in the biosphere reservations, national parks and natural parks. The Public Central Authority for Environment Protection establishes the administrative structures for all the biosphere resorts, national parks and natural parks.

Law 82/1993 regarding the constitution of The Danube Dealt Reservation:

The reservation territory is divided in three zones:

- a. integral protection regime zones
- b. buffer zones with differentiation protection regime where certain human activities can be carried, as well as ecological reconstruction zones

c. economic zones, where traditional economic activities can be carried out.

The Reservation Administration, which is a public institution, has been established in order to manage the reservation matters having the following roles:

- issues license for managing economic-productive activities, tourism and pleasure for private and legal persons.
- oversees the right development of activities in the reservation
- authorizes the territorial arrangements and urbanism plans on the territory of the reservation
- to organize informational and educational actions

OUNG 236/2000 regarding protected natural areas, natural habitats, wild flora and fauna conservation. The administration of protected natural areas relays to:

- The Central Public Authorities for the Environment Protection and The Romanian Academy for the protected areas that were declared by laws adopted by the Government
- County and local public authorities for protected areas that were declared through decisions of these authorities

These authorities establish a public or private institution for the effective administration of these protected areas.

The national network of protected areas includes:

- a. Scientific reservations
- b. National parks
- c. Monuments of nature
- d. Natural reservations
- e. Natural parks
- f. Biosphere reservations
- g. Humid zones of international importance
- h. Natural sites of the universal natural patrimony
- i. Special areas of conservation
- j. Special areas of poultry-faun protection

According to the same act, caves are classified as following:

- Class A – includes caves of exceptional scientific value that requires strict measures of protection and conservation. These are not object of any arrangements or modifications of natural factors and do constitute scientific reservations. These can provide the object of speleologist exploitations, scientific research or documentation on base of Romanian Academy authorization.

- Class B – includes important caves for the size, the rarity and tourist potential. These can provide de object of speleologist exploitations, scientific research or ecologic tourism on the base of authorizations issued by the Romanian Academy.
- Class C – caves of local importance with special characteristics. These can provide de object of economic and social capitalization such as tourism, extraction of subterranean water or other utilities that do not affect the natural environment of the cave on base of the authorization issued by the local responsible authority.
- Class D – caves that are not included in A, B or C classes.

Law 192 / 2001 – regarding the piscicultural fund, fishery and aquacultures. The piscicultural fund administration, for the funds that belong to the public domain is done by the National Company for the Administration of the Piscicultural Fund. The mountain water sources are administrated by the National Direction of Forestry. They issue fishing permissions for legal persons, research institutes, fishing associations, private persons for commercial, recreate/sports or scientific purposes.

Law 107 / 1996 for waters. Regulations:

- any person has the right of free access, on their own responsibility, for walking and recreation, not causing any prejudices for the water, shores, channels or riversides, if there are not any restrictive impositions, on the shores that belong to the public domain
- the access is permit on the special arranged zones only if the conditions specified in the authorizations are met.
- the circulation on water course, natural lakes or see, with boats engineless is free
- for other activities (including those of bathing, tourism or pleasure activities) there will be issues authorizations by the National Company “Romanian Waters”

Flying performed by the flying on sight regulations and sportive flying are regulated by the **Romanian Aerial Code**. The Ministry of Transport is the authority that permits and licenses the aerial operators.

The General Sportive Hunting and Fishing Association – has the role of coordination and control regarding the hunting and the fishery fund and the hunting fund. It issues the permits and license for hunting and sport fishing, as well. It may organize:

- Competitions of sportive fishing, target shooting and dog hunting
- Hunting and fishing activities for foreign citizens
- Training for persons that want to practice hunting and fishing

During any activities of hunting or fishing, the regulations of Low 103/1996 regarding the hunting fund and protection of the hunt must be respected.

RENAR, the National Accreditation Association

In Romania, the activity of accreditation of laboratories and assessment of conformity bodies is realized by RENAR (Romanian Accreditation Association) and must respect the stipulations of Law 608/2001 regarding products conformity assessment. RENAR is also responsible for the certification of quality certification bodies.

RENAR, is a private association, of public interest, non profit, having its activity governed by Law no 245/2002. RENAR is the National Accreditation Body in Romania and it is recognised by the Romanian Government and operates on its behalf.

RENAR is full member of the **European Cooperation for Accreditation, EA**, since 1999, member of the **International Accreditation Forum, IAF**, since 2002, and founding member of the **International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation, ILAC**, since 1996. Its experts are involved in the activities of all the Technical Committees of these European and international accreditation bodies.

In March 2004 it was a meeting of the **Multilateral Agreements Committee of the European Cooperation for Accreditation, EA**, held in Netherlands, and RENAR was accepted as signatory to the Multilateral Recognition Agreement by EA for the accreditation of: *test laboratories, product certification bodies and quality management systems certifications bodies*. RENAR is already formally applied for other three, namely *the accreditation of environmental management systems certification bodies, personnel certification bodies and inspection bodies*.




RENAR, has deeply involved in the negotiations process for the Chapter “*Free Movement of Goods*”, thus supporting the efforts made by the Romanian Government for the accession in the European Union.

Website: www.renar.ro

Institutions with tourism responsibilities:

- The Ministry of Transport, Construction and Tourism, with:
 - General Board for Control and Authorization – with the following attributions:
 - ◆ Authorization of the economic agents and specialized personal in tourism, respectively: issues license for tourism agencies, classify the reception structures, issues tourism patents for specialized personnel, and license for qualified guides.
 - ◆ Performs the classification of beaches and tourist destinations, participates in the homologation of sky slow up and mountain routes.
 - ◆ Performs the control of quality for tourist services
 - ◆ Participates in the activities of classification of coach for tourist transportation
 - ◆ Collaborates in the elaboration of the development of tourism strategy
 - ◆ Collaborates in the elaboration of legal norms concerning the tourism domain.
 - General Board for Tourism Promotion
- The National Institute for Research and Development in Tourism – INCD Bucharest – which is subordinated to the Ministry of Transport, Construction and Tourism, and the main activities are to make researches for development and promotion of Romanian Tourism - <http://www.incdt.ro/>
- The National Centre for Training and Education in Tourism
- County Council – which is responsible for development of tourism at local level.

Private Organisations with activities in rural tourism:

<p>ANTREC – National Association for Rural, Ecological and Cultural Tourism</p> <p>http://www.antrec.ro (only Romanian language)</p>	
<p>OVR – Operation Village Roumaine</p> <p>http://www.ovr.ro</p>	
<p>Romanian Association for Accommodation and Ecological Tourism “Bed and Breakfast:</p> <p>http://www.bed-and-breakfast.ro</p>	
<p>Agrotourism Network – The “Microregion of economic and Social Development of Maramures Land” Association</p> <p>http://www.mtmm.ro</p>	
<p>The Initiative Group for Ecotourism (=Romanian Ecotourism Association.</p> <p>http://www.eco-romania.ro</p>	

Developing a Romanian Ecotourism label

Aim of the project: to create, promote and implement a system of accreditation for ecotourism, for eco-business (tour operators), eco-destinations (protected areas, rural communities) and eco-lodging (rural pensions).

Target groups:

1. tour operators, destinations (protected areas administrations, local administrations, local NGOs), pensions owners
2. Ministry of Transport, Construction and Tourism, Ministry of Water and Environmental Protection, The National Association for Travel Agencies, The Public Central Authority for Forestry – The Protected Areas Department

The project will be implemented at national level.

Changes:

1. will be implemented practical mechanisms for nature conservation and sustainable local development (including financial mechanisms) at destinations level
2. will change the mentality of the business sector regarding the environmental protection and local communities
3. to increase the quality of the ecotourism services
4. AER will promote at the international level only certified tour operators and eco-destinations
5. to increase the number of foreign tourists and to develop rural areas
6. to identify new eco-destinations

Results of the project:

1. 20 – 30 tour operators will be involved in the process of certification
2. at least 4 eco-destinations will be involved in the process of certification

Internet pages:

1. The Ministry of Transport, Construction and Tourism
 - <http://www.ministerulurismului.ro> (ROM+ENG)
 - <http://www.mt.ro> (ROM+ENG)
 - <http://www.mtromania.ro> (ROM+ENG)
2. General presentation of Romania regarding tourism:
 - <http://www.aboutromania.com> (ROM+ENG)
 - <http://www.rotur.ro> (only Romanian language)
 - <http://www.incdt.ro> (ROM+ENG)
 - <http://www.deepinside.ro> - (only Romanian language)
 - <http://www.romturism.ro> - (only Romanian language)
 - <http://www.romaniatourism.ro> (ROM+ENG)
 - <http://www.romaniatravel.com> (ROM+ENG)
 - <http://www.infotourism.ro> (ROM+ENG)
 - <http://www.infotravelromania.ro> (ROM+ENG)
 - <http://www.turism.ro> (ROM+ENG)
 - <http://www.pensiunituristice.com> (ROM+ENG)
3. Others
 - <http://www.mara-tour.ro> - Mara International Tour Travel Agency (ROM+ENG)
 - <http://www.alpinet.org> - mountain guide (ROM+ENG)

- <http://www.mountainguide.ro> (ROM+ENG)
- <http://www.skiresorts.ro> (ROM+ENG)
- <http://www.sportextrem.ro> (only Romanian language)
- <http://www.paragliding.ro> (ROM+ENG)
- <http://www.turismaventura.ro> -mountain adventure tourist program (ROM+ENG)
- <http://www.escalada.go.ro> -present some of the climbing areas in Romania (ROM+ENG)
- <http://www.romaniaclimb.com> (English version)
- <http://www.xsports.ro> (only Romanian language) – extreme sports
- <http://www.agrotour.ro> - rural tourism (English version)
- <http://www.rural-tourism.ro> - (only Romanian language)
- <http://www.rural-center.org> - The Center for Rural Assistance (ROM+ENG)
- <http://www.ruraltourism.ro> - (ROM+ENG)
- <http://www.speologie.ro> - speleology - (only Romanian language)
- <http://srsc.speologie.ro> -The Romanian Speleology & Karstology Society (ROM+ENG)
- <http://www.frspeo.ro> - The Romanian Federation of Speology (ROM+ENG)
- <http://www.eco-romania.ro> -The Initiative Group for Ecotourism (English version)
- <http://www.agmr.go.ro> - Romanian Asociation of Mountain Guides (ROM+ENG)
- <http://www.discoveromania.ro> - travel company specialising in rural and ecological tourism (English version)
- <http://www.apusenixperience.ro> - Experiences in Apuseni Mountains
- <http://www.retezat.ro> – Retezat National Park (only Romanian language)
- <http://www.riding-holidays.ro> -equestrian tourism in Transylvania (English version)
- <http://www.clcp.ro> - The Carpathian Large Carnivore Project (English version)
- <http://www.roumanie-ecotourisme.com> - (ROM+ENG)
- <http://www.deltadunarii.ro> - The Danube Delta (ROM+ENG)
- <http://www.pronatura.ro> - Association for Action in Protected Areas (ROM+ENG)
- <http://www.ecologie-sport-turism.ro> – Ecologie-Sport-Tourism Association (only Romanian language)
- <http://www.escapeecotours.com> – Escape Eco-tours (ROM+ENG)
- <http://www.carpat-events.ro> - Off road in Romania (ROM+ENG)
- <http://www.zalmoxisaventura.com> - Eco tourism Agency (English version)
- <http://albamont.greenagenda.org> - The Ecologist and Mountain Touring Club Albamont (ROM+ENG)
- <http://www.nnv.ro> - Nord Nord Vest Travel Agency (ROM+ENG)

Addition

The web sites mentioned in chapter 3 (others) are about organisations that are focused on ecotourism activities. Only few of them are only for accommodations (www.agrotour.ro/ , www.rural-tourism.ro , www.ruraltourism.ro) .

Other organisations that deals with ecotourism:

- <http://www.ecologie-sport-turism.ro> *Ecologie-Sport-Tourism Association (only Romanian language)*
- <http://www.escapeecotours.com> *Escape Eco-tours (ROM+ENG)*
- <http://www.carpat-events.ro> *Off road in Romania (ROM+ENG)*
- <http://www.zalmoxisaventura.com> *Eco tourism Agency (English version)*
- <http://www.nnv.ro/> - *Nord Nord Vest Travel Agency (ROM+ENG)*

Possible ecotourism products to label in Maramures County:

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|--|---|
| ➤ Flora and/or fauna watching | ➤ Mountaineering |
| ➤ Cave exploration | ➤ Rafting |
| ➤ Bicycle tours | ➤ Hang gliding |
| ➤ Participation in farmers/shepherds' life | ➤ Paragliding |
| ➤ Fishing | ➤ Ballooning |
| ➤ Hunting | ➤ Archaeological routes |
| ➤ Horseback riding | ➤ Cultural routes |
| ➤ Winter sports | ➤ Traditional craft (wood, painting, ceramics, textiles, icons, masks, ...) |
| ➤ Hiking tours | |
| ➤ Rural tourism | |