

## Model of integral green economy as a holistic approach for development of tourism offer in pilot EDEN destinations

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For the Model of Integral Green Economy, developed by Ronnie Lessem and Alexander Schieffer, which was presented on many practical cases in book *Integral Green Slovenia*, we tried to present practical value also in development and cooperation of EDEN destinations in the project EDEN55plusNW.

There are **five pilot EDEN destinations** in the framework of EDEN55plusNW project: Vulkanland (AT), NP Northern Velebit (HR), River Kolpa (SI), Idria (SI) and Logarska dolina - Solčavsko(SI).

The partners of the project (Srce Slovenije, Center za idrijsko dediščino, Provital, Agencija M, Steirisches Vulkanland, Stadtgemeinde Feldbach, Nacionalni park Sjevni Velebit and Università della libera AUSER di Trieste) want to **promote cooperation among the EDEN destinations** aiming to create integral tourist programmes for seniors 55+, **to prolong the season in EDEN destinations and to encourage SMEs to design custom-made offers for seniors.**

Coordinated action and promotion of each EDEN destination require **coordinated action of different stakeholders**, from municipalities and public sector to the enterprises and private tourism providers to different societies and other interested parties.

For preparing a coordinated action of an EDEN destination we posed these **three key questions**:

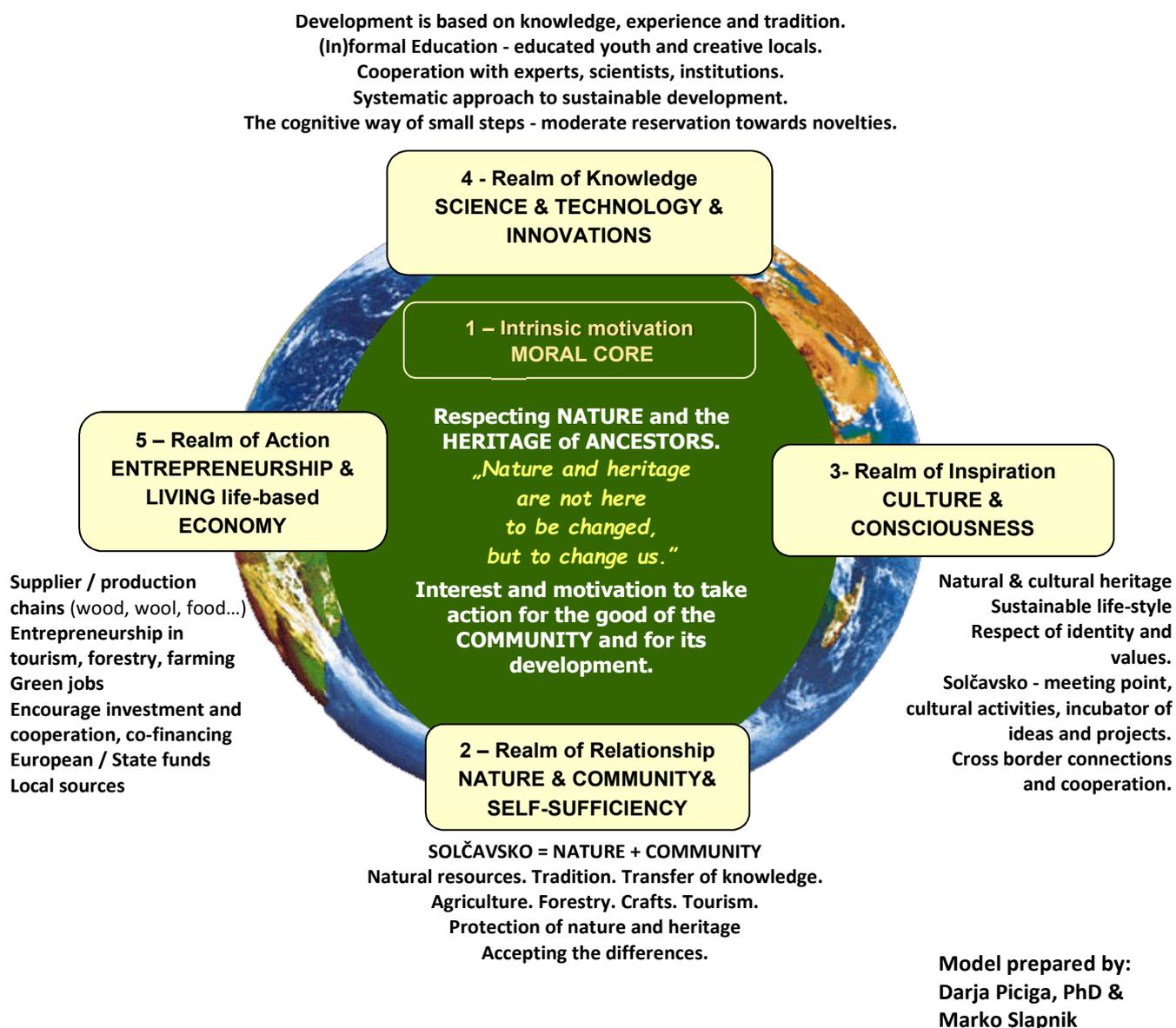
1. What does the title European Destination of Excellence relate to? **Which are the key topics** to distinguish an EDEN destination?
2. **What has already been done** to develop and present the key topics of EDEN destination and how do individual stakeholders cooperate and connect?
3. **What can your organisation do** to be recognized as an active part of European Destination of Excellence?

### What about sustainable development and Integral Green Economy?

Principles of sustainable development are integrated in the basis of EDEN destinations, because the main criteria for selection of European Destinations of Excellence are three pillars of sustainability.

About Integral Understanding of the Economy prof. Ronnie Lessem and prof. Alexander Schieffer wrote: "The integral economics model has its starting point in its centre, in the moral core of a society. The 'southern' natural and communal realm promotes the 'Self-Sufficient community-based Economy'. The 'eastern' cultural and spiritual realm promotes a 'Developmental culture-based Economy'. The 'northern' scientific and technological realm promotes a 'Social knowledge-based Economy'. The 'western' realm was promoted in the past through a neoliberal market economy. But below the surface we can recognise the gradual emergence of what we called a 'Living life-based Economy' – which is basically a creative revisiting of the Anglo-Saxon economic model with a strong focus on ecology and sustainability.

**Figure 1:** Sustainable development of Solčavsko presented in the framework of an integral green economy (designed by Darja Piciga and Marko Slapnik)



Using the model of integral green economy adapted for Solčavsko (Figure 1), this EDEN destination was presented and key questions from different viewpoint were answered. During the project, a similar model for each EDEN destination has been prepared. Individual tourism providers and SMEs had answered the questions from their viewpoint.

These basic principles of a model of integral green economy have been adjusted and connected with the actual condition in EDEN destination Solčavsko. Using this model helped us find answers to the key questions for a coordinated action of this EDEN destination.

**Representatives of pilot EDEN destinations and tourism providers (SME's) answered three key questions** (Which are the key topics...? What has already been done...? What can your organisation do...?) **from each of the five views** (View 1 – Moral core: intrinsic motivation; View 2 – Nature and community; View 3 – Culture and spirituality; View 4 – Science and technology; View 5 – entrepreneurship and life-based economy).

The model of a holistic view on development of the EDEN destination was used for the benefit of individual stakeholders (small and mid-range companies) enabling them to gain a broader insight into the destination development.

Stakeholders gain a better insight into their role for the process of the holistic destination development and can influence the development more consciously regarding the activities in the destination.

The model can be also used for an overall view on the evaluation of development activities defining the starting and finishing condition and the criteria (indicators) by which the current development stage can be determined at every evaluation.

Author of this article presented the 'Model of integral green economy as a holistic approach for development of tourism offer in pilot EDEN destinations', as the idea of European Destination of Excellence and also the project EDEN55plus on 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference INTEGRAL GREEN ECONOMY FOR A BETTER WORLD – IGE2017 in Ljubljana on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017 and on meeting Values for Sustainable Development in Slovenska Bistrica, 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017.

### **Key References:**

Piciga, D., Schieffer, A., Lessem, R., 2016. Integral Green Slovenia: Towards a Social Knowledge and Value Based Society and Economy at the Heart of Europe. Routledge, UK.

Schieffer, A., Lessem, R., 2017. Catalysing integral transformation: a local-global movement for the integral renewal of people and planet. Trans4M. Available at: <http://www.trans-4-m.com/> (10. 01. 2017)

## Appendix: Answers on key questions for Solčavsko

### View 1 – Moral core: Intrinsic motivation of the community – life quality

#### **A. Key topics:**

Respecting the nature and the heritage of our ancestors as well as the interest and motivation for the community's welfare and its development and life quality.

#### **B. Already done:**

Connecting local people (enterprises, societies, study clubs...), connecting the tourism providers (integral tourist programmes...).

#### **C. To do:**

Cooperation of different stakeholders for the welfare of the community (life quality of the locals, personal satisfaction, less stuff – more meaning) and connecting for promotion and marketing activities in tourism and other activities.

Common work: dreaming, planning, doing, celebrating („dragon dreaming principle“)

### View 2 – Realm of Relationship - nature and community

#### **A. Key topics:**

Throughout the centuries, the relation between the people and nature has based on the natural resources used sustainably in the traditional activities of the locals, lately also in tourism. Nature and heritage protection, knowledge transfer and accepting the differences are the cornerstones for the future of enduring communities.

#### **B. Already done:**

Nature protection and stressing its importance in nature parks and at farmsteads, nature interpretation in tourist programmes.

Stressing the importance of tradition and identity at different events and celebrations, ethno-animation, themed evenings, ‚BICKA‘ Sheep Wool Festival...

#### **C. To do:**

Stressing the systematic nature protection (Logarska dolina, Robanov kot, NATURA 2000, natural values, plant and animal species) and moderate sustainable tourism use, taking into account the capacity of the location (tourism programmes, infrastructure, carrying capacity...)

Planned nature interpretation for the locals and tourists in nature-places events, tourist programmes – pure experiences in the nature and at the heritage... (including the silence, darkness, natural sounds...). Creating and presenting the integral/complete tourist programmes and stressing their value.

### View 3 – Realm of Inspiration - culture and spirituality / consciousness

#### **A. Key topics:**

Coexistence of cultural heritage and nature directs and gives the development attitude for the future: sustainable lifestyle and respecting the identity and values.

#### **B. Already done:**

In the past, Solčavsko has excelled in cultural heritage protection and identity, as well as an incubator of projects and regional and international connections.

**C. To do:**

Planned cultural heritage interpretation for locals and tourists at events in tourist programmes – pure experiences in the nature and at the heritage... Encouraging the heritage development, identity and values. Cooperating in networks, creative implementing of ideas in cooperation. Creating stories, storytelling and passing on the key stories of the destination and providers.

**View 4 – Realm of Knowledge – Science, technology and innovations**

**A. Key topics:**

Development is based on knowledge, experience, tradition and creativity of the locals, cooperation with experts, systematic approach to sustainable development, the cognitive way of small steps...

**B. Already done:**

Encouraging (in)formal education and skills – creative locals, cooperation of experts and organizations. Systematic approach to sustainable development since 1992. Cognitive small-steps-approach– locals have been traditionally reserved towards the novelties, new knowledge and technology.

**C. To do:**

Encouraging of conservation and passing on the traditional local specific knowledge  
Presenting the traditional/everyday activities in tourism (wool – felt, forest-wood-table, pasture-animals-food...). Including young educated locals. Use of new knowledge and technology for interpretation for comparative of EDEN destination (clear information, unified image of the destination). Encouraging the soft-sustainable mobility in tourism.

**View 5 – Realm of Action – entrepreneurship and living life-based economy**

**A. Key topics:**

The basis of entrepreneurship are the supply chains (wood, wool, culinary...). This is reflected in tourism, wood production and agriculture.

**B. Already done:**

Encouraging the development of green workplaces (project Mladi veter - Young wind)  
Encouraging the investments and entrepreneurial cooperation of local stakeholders using the European and government funding as well as the local resources.

**C. To do:**

Continue to encourage creation of green workplaces, evaluation...  
Recognizing the trends and creating a clear development vision of the tourist destination and operative plans including all the stakeholders (review and update of the Strategy 2011-2015)  
Encouraging of investments in accordance with the development vision and activities for achieving the set goals.  
Facilitating the access to the destination and transport around the destination.