

DORNA BASIN - MAJOR OBJECTIVE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM AND AGROTOURISM IN THE NORTH OF MOLDOVA

Vîntu Cătălin-Răzvan*, Chiran Aurel*, Gîndu Elena*, Jităreanu Andy-Felix*

*University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Iași, 3 Mihail Sadoveanu
Alley, 700490 Iași, Romania, e-mail: achiran@uaiasi.ro

PART I

Abstract

Agrotourism is specific for natural areas, connecting with rural touristic areas and, at the same time, a solution to highlight the potential of rural households by exploiting the possibilities of accommodation for receiving guests and providing services for short periods for relaxation, rest and recreational activities, therapeutic cures, but also for business, studies and arts and crafts documentation, meeting a particular hobby, etc., all of these achieved by carrying out activities within or outside rural households (Miron Mihaela, 1996; Bran Florina et al., 1996; Chiran A. et al., 2008; Czosz I., 1996; Ghereș Marilena, 2003; Rey R., 1999; Ungureanu D., 2005).

If we analyze agrotourism, we find that it is a particular form of tourism, more comprehensive, which includes both tourism activities themselves, but also economic activities such as agriculture (production, processing and marketing of finished products) made in rural households.

For tourism and agrotourism development in the north of Moldova, Dorna basin was taken in study, as a representative place in this area.

The agrotourism area, which combines all the local attractions, stirs interest in supporting village infrastructure improvement, strengthen the spiritual life of the Romanian village, creating public service homogenization promoter, at least in urban areas.

Key words: tourism, mountain agrotourism, Dorna basin

INTRODUCTION

The agrotourism economic system can be analyzed as an "open cybernetic system", which is influenced by and influences the external environment (Fig.1):

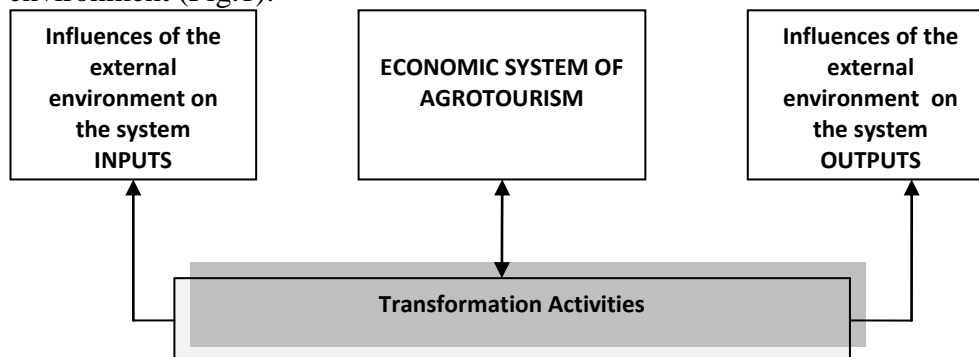


Fig. 1. The cybernetic agrotourism system (after Alecu I.N. and Constantin M., 2006)

Agrotourism can be an important source of revenue growth by combining various tourist services with agricultural activities.

The agrotourism market is subject to the same rules that generally apply to the tourist market, with some peculiarities that manifest at agrotourism level. In most cases, tourism needs satisfaction combines the consumption of integrated agrotourism products with the purchase of other products and services related thereto.

The agrotourism services market itself and the product market may be in a **relation of completion** (when the goods contained in the agrotourism product differ from those of trade - complementary or insufficient), **competition** (goods are identical or replace each other) or **indifference** (no influence on each other).

Rural and agro tourism product consists of **main components** (accommodation, food and transport) and **auxiliary components** (balneotherapy, leisure, sports, education, etc.).

The choice of destinations and tourism product is influenced by several factors (Gerasim T. and Gerasim D., 1999):

- **Natural** - geographical location, terrain, vegetation, fauna and climate; **Culture** - language, folklore, religion, art, politics, etc; **Human** - mentality and hospitality of local people, local government attitude to tourists; **Infrastructure** - utilities (telecommunications, energy and water supply, sewerage), other services such as the transportation, banking etc; **Tourist facilities** - transport, accommodation units, catering, sport, recreation, information etc; **Auxiliary services** - leisure (sports and popular activities), excursions, medical spa cures, herbal baths and tea baths, from local flora, participation in hunting and fishing parties, renting / selling the necessary equipment for the mentioned activities.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

To highlight the influence of a certain area on tourism and agrotourism, the authors referred to a case study, represented by Dorna basin, in the North-East of Romania. They have analyzed several indicators related to natural conditions, but also economic and financial, tourist and agro-tourist guesthouses and services, correlations of the rural tourism and agrotourism with the external environment.

The main focus was on analyzing conditions of soil and climate and numerous attractions offered by the Dorna basin.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In Europe, in the last decades, the effectiveness of alternative forms of tourism (unconventional) development as agrotourism, guesthouse tourism,

green tourism has been demonstrated, also as a result of multifunctional roles and environmental impact on rural areas (Tab. 1) (Alecú I.N. and Constantin M., 2006; Pascariu Gabriela - Carmen, 1996; Ungureanu D., 2005):

Table 1

Correlations of rural tourism and agrotourism with the external environment

Subject	Connection to tourism	Connection to major ecological issues
A – Impact on the environment		
Hunting and fishing	Increasing local tourism activity	Biodiversity loss
Energy production and consumption	Increasing the number of vehicles used due to tourism	Greenhouse effect Destruction of the ozone layer Air pollution
The use of water for human activities	Increased consumption of scarce resources during tourist seasons	Resource crisis
Land use and environmental change	Construction of accommodation, access roads, other infrastructure	Biodiversity loss Soil erosion
Emissions of gases in the atmosphere, water, soil	Increased tourism traffic in designated areas leads to increase of the quantity of emitted pollutants	Air pollution Water pollution Soil contamination
B – Changing the quality features of the environment		
Modifications of biological resources	Activities like hunting, fishing, land use and environmental restructuring can cause aggression on ecosystems and species	Biodiversity loss Soil contamination
Air pollution	Transport growth will lead to increasing quantities of air pollutants	Greenhouse effect Destruction of the ozone layer Air pollution
Quality of water	Increasing numbers of people in an area can lead to sewer infiltrations	Water pollution
Quality of soil	Increasing number of people in one area can increase the amount of pollutants and erosion, by raising new construction	Soil contamination and erosion
The health of the population and ecological disasters	Noise pollution and also that caused by gas emissions cause a worsening health, destruction of buildings of cultural value	Noise pollution Air pollution
C – Environmental protection actions		
Managing resources	Supplementing income from hunting and fishing induces a careful rationalization of resources Flora and fauna from tourist and agrotourism areas can arouse high interest	Biodiversity loss Soil contamination and erosion Resource crisis
Tracking and control of pollution	Monitoring resources can be imposed by the tourists' needs to enjoy quality water and air	Air and water pollution Noise pollution
D – Climatic conditions and biological resources		
Flora and fauna	Soil compaction and excessive hunting will have negative effects, but can also lead to better management	Biodiversity loss
Hydrological system	Rainfall may affect tourism demand	Soil erosion Resources crisis
Atmospheric system	Temperature and air pollution can influence tourism demand	Atmospheric pollution
Lithospheric system	Soil type may influence tourism demand	Soil erosion
Ecosystems	Forests, swamps, mountains can increase / reduce tourism demand	Resources crisis Biodiversity loss

Source: edited after Alecú I.N. and Constantin M., 2006

Rural tourism and agrotourism should be done as a balancing element between the local community, which fulfills the role of host, bidders and tourism industry. **Agrotourism**, although it is a newer concept

appeared on the tourism market, takes over much of the role of tourism and translates it into an area with great tourism potential, namely rural areas. At national level, there are many villages that have natural and anthropogenic conditions conducive to practicing various forms of tourism. In this regard, over time, a favorable environment for practicing this activity has been created, due to several factors: natural environment with picturesque specific, welcoming farms with hospitable people who have a specific artistic and cultural tradition of different areas or villages.

From the economic point of view, this area is unfavorable, primarily for its residents, who are obliged to value goods produced by their own means in the city, where they also have to find a job, because with the decline in rural activities (predominantly agricultural), the possibilities to earn an income are quite low.

Developing agrotourism leads to forecasting of motivations to both meet the need for rest and recreation of active urban population and the local resources capitalization that can meet tourists' demands. It follows that agrotourism is a plausible, feasible chance to increase the life of the local population and economy overall.

The offer of accommodation and agrotourism services is reflected in the homestead, which is the promoter of the motivation of the host to prepare and equip the inside and outside of the household in order to obtain an income, to invest and develop complementary activities to the initial concerns. Competition will underpin the competitiveness and increase the quality of their products and services to generate demand. Tourism demand is shifting towards accommodation, fresh food produced by small industry, craft, recreation, etc. Stimulating the ingenuity of the householder.

Agrotourism area, the place which combines all the local attractions, stirs interest in supporting village infrastructure improvement, strengthen the spiritual life of the Romanian village, creating public service promoter homogenization at least in urban areas. This can be achieved by:

- Establishing a long-term development strategy, linked to sector strategies (agriculture, environment);
- Implementation of the peculiarities and principles of sustainable development for each zone;
- The chance to become a promoter for other businesses;
- Actively supporting traditional concerns (such as handicrafts), favoring trade in such products with beneficial effects for both tourists and the local population;
- Increasing the financial resources of the rural population through better use of organic products and other local resources;
- Improving quality of life and ensuring the continuity of cultural identities.

Dorna basin or Country of Dorna is located in Suceava county (Fig.2):

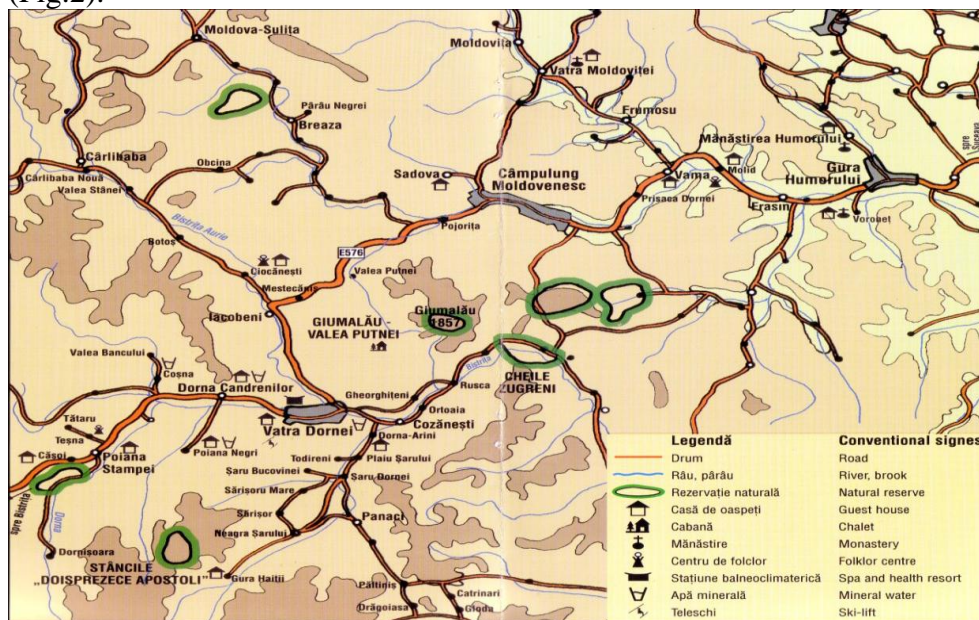


Fig. 2. Administrative-territorial location of Dorna Basin

It falls to the west of 25°5' and east of 25°30' east longitude, intersected parallel of 47°22' north latitude.

Dorna basin is enclosed by mountains: in the North, by the Suhard Mountains, in the N-E by the Giupalău Mountains, in the E-SE by Bistrița Mountains, in the South by the Căliman Mountains and in the West by the Bârgău Mountains.

Given the density and depth of fragmentation, we can separate two major subunits: **Dorna basin**, extended far to Bârgaie, through Coșnei and Dornișoara valleys and **Neagra Șarului basin**, on the valley of the creek with the same name, both dominated by Căliman and Grințieș mountains. These are individual also because of the other components of the natural landscape. Dorna basin is linked to neighboring lowlands through passes. Thus, the connection with Transylvania is ensured by Tihuța step (1,201 m), with Maramures by Prislop (1,416 m) and by Mestecăniș (1,099 m), with Moldova. Through available passes and hence the ways of communication we find: the railway passing from Moldova to Transylvania, respectively from Suceava to Cluj-Napoca and the national road network that links with Transylvania by E576 (DN17) Măgura - Vatra Dornei – Câmpulung.

Maramureș through DN18 to Sighetul Marmației, with Moldova by DN17A (Vatra Dornei – Rădăuți) and DN17B (Vatra Dornei – Crucea - Broșteni). Dorna basin, even though it is surrounded by mountains, is not an

isolated area, benefiting from a high accessibility level from the surrounding areas. From a climate perspective, Dorna basin is in a mountainous area with cool climate, with long periods of thermal inversions, particularly in winter, when the average temperatures drops below -6°C in January and during the summer, in July, do not exceed 14°C . Average annual rainfall is 600 mm, but the variation from one year to another is quite high. The basin is dominated by winds that blow from the SW, W and E, NE sectors, whose speed is generally low (rarely equals or exceeds 20 m/s).

The town of Vatra Dornei has been documented since the fifteenth century. It gradually evolved from a rural settlement to a well known spa. Only after 1850 its urban function is defined, with the mineral waters and peat mud capitalization. The town, which became a municipality a few years ago, has continued to represent a polarizing center of the entire basin. In tracing the basin boundary, an essential role is played by the land use. Thus, many towns were formed where there are arable lands (they occupy only 1% of the basin), mineral springs (such as Vatra Dornei, Șaru Dornei, Poiana Negri, Neagra Șarului, Negrișoara, Dorna Candrenilor, Poiana Stampa, Coșna) or important underground resources such as manganese, sulfur, slate (Șaru Dornei, Dealu Rusului, Iacobeni, Mestecăniș, Dornișoara).

Mountain meadows stimulated pastoral economy since ancient times, which was also an important factor for humanizing the basin, retention of links with the population of Transylvania and Moldova. Mountain meadows determined temporary houses, which climb to altitudes over 1,300 m. The whole region bears the imprint of pastoral swarming and scattering is so characteristic that it is very hard to pinpoint the villages from one another.

In its limits, the Country of Dorna includes 12 administrative units (10 communes: Dorna Arini, Dorna Candrenilor, Iacobeni, Panaci, Poiana Stampei, Șaru Dornei, Crucea, Cârlibaba, Ciocanești, Coșna and a town: Broșteni), polarized in the basin of Vatra Dornei (became a municipality in 2000) (Tab. 2). Dorna basin is located in an area where soil and subsoil resources abound. Therefore, this basin has developed an economy focused on better use of key natural resources - forests, minerals, mineral waters, pastures and meadows. The vast forest basin was served by two major operating units and transport of timber: Iacobeni and Vatra Dornei, both dismantled by 1989. The basin is one of the most important mining regions of the country, manganese being the subject of mining from Șaru Dornei, Dealul Rusului, Dealul Boambei. Through their quality, the **mineral springs** from Vatra Dornei, Coșna and Poiana Negri have imposed themselves both in the country and abroad, brands like Dorna, Poiana Negri, Bucovina, enjoying national and international recognition and appreciation.

Table 2

Administrative structure of the Dorna Basin

TOWN/COMMUNE	COMPONENT LOCALITIES	TOWN/COMMUNE	COMPONENT LOCALITIES	
1. Municipality of Vatra Dornei	Vatra Dornei	7. Com. Șaru Dornei	Neagra Șarului	
	Argestru		Gura Haitii	
	Roșu		Plaiu Șarului	
	Todireni		Șărișor	
2. Com. Dorna Arini	Cozănești		8. Com. Iacobeni	Șărișoru Mare
	Dorna Arini			Șaru Bucovinei
	Gheorghiieni			Șaru Dornei
	Ortoaia		9. Com. Ciocănești	Iacobeni
	Rusca			Mestecăniș
	Sunători			Ciocănești
3. Com. Dorna-Candrenilor	Dorna Candrenilor	10. Com. Cîrlibaba	Botoș	
	Dealul Floreni		Iedu	
	Poiana Negrii		Țibău	
4. Com. Coșna	Coșna		Cîrlibaba	
	Podu Coșnei		Cîrlibaba Nouă	
	Românești		Valea Stînei	
	Teșna	11. Com. Crucea	Chiril	
	Valea Bancului		Cojoci	
5. Com. Panaci	Panaci		Crucea	
	Catrinari	Satu Mare		
	Coverca	12. Town of Broșteni	Holda	
	Drăgoiasa		Holdița	
	Glodu		Broșteni	
	Păltiniș		Neagra	
6. Com. Poiana Stampei	Poiana Stampei		Dîrmoxa	
	Căsoi		Frasin	
	Dornișoara	Pietroasa		
	Pîlugani	Cotîrgași		
	Prăleni	Lungani		
	Tătaru			
	Teșna			

Source: after primary records of the County Council of Suceava

CONCLUSION

1. Agrotourism can be an important source of revenue growth by combining various tourist services with agricultural activities.
2. The offer of accommodation and agrotourism services is reflected in

the homestead, which is the promoter of the motivation of the host to prepare and equip the inside and outside of the household in order to obtain an income, to invest and develop complementary activities to the initial concerns.

3. The agrotourism area, which combines all the local attractions, stirs interest in supporting village infrastructure improvement, strengthen the spiritual life of the Romanian village, creating public service homogenization promoter, at least in urban areas.

4. Dorna basin or Country of Dorna is located in Suceava county and is enclosed by mountains: in the North, by the Suhard Mountains, in the N-E by the Giumalău Mountains, in the E-SE by Bistrița Mountains, in the South by the Căliman Mountains and in the West by the Bârgău Mountains; Dorna basin is not an isolated area, benefiting from a high accessibility level from the surrounding areas.

5. Dorna basin includes the towns of Vatra Dornei and Broșteni, 10 communes and 56 villages, located in an area where soil and subsoil riches abound, which allowed the development of a focus on better use of the main natural resources: forest, minerals, mineral waters, pastures and meadows.

REFERENCES

1. Alecu I.N., M.Constantin, 2006, Agroturism si marketing agrar.Editura CERES, Bucuresti.
2. Benea Marius-Călin, 2005, Bazele turismului, Editura Mirton, Timisoara.
3. Bran Florina, I. Istrate, V. Manole, 1996, Agroturism si turism rural, Editura Economica, Bucuresti.
4. Ciurea I.V., D.Ungureanu, 2006, Studiul privind potentialul agroturistic al comunei Panaci, Lucrări Stiintifice USAMV Iasi, vol. 49, seria Agronomie.
5. Czosz I., 1996, Agroturismul montan, Editura Mirton, Timisoara.
6. Drăgoi C., 2006 – Turism si activități sportive în spatiul montan, Editura EduSoft, Bacău.
7. Gherasim T., D. Gherasim, 1999, Marketing turistic, Editura Economica, Bucuresti.
8. Gheret Marinela, 2003, Agroturism.,Editura Risoprint, Cluj-Napoca.
9. Minciu Rodica, 2004, Economia turismului, Editura Uranus, Bucuresti.
10. Miron Mihaela, 1996, Comportamentul consumatorului, Editura All, Bucuresti.
11. Pascariu Gabriela-Carmen, 1996, Turism international. Studii de caz si lucrări practice, Editura "Gheorghe Zane", Iasi.
12. Popa C., 2004, Oportunități de dezvoltare a turismului rural si agroturismului în Regiunea de Nord-Est a României, Lucrări Stiintifice USAMV Iasi, vol. 47, seria Horticultură.
13. Rey R., 1999, Agroturismul – o sansă pentru dezvoltarea agriculturii în zonele de munte, Editura PanEurope, Iasi.
14. Tigu Gabriela, 2002, Turismul montan, Editura Uranus, Bucuresti.
15. Ungureanu D., 2005, Agroturismul – alternativă de dezvoltare a satului de munte, Editura Performantica, Iasi.
16. Ungureanu D., 2005, Rolul factorilor decizionali în dezvoltarea durabilă a spatiului rural-montan, Editura Performantica, Iasi.