The importance of tourism routes as part of regional cooperation agreements

International Seminar: Multidestination Opportunities for Regional Integration

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Tourism routes

- Topic of interest involving various destinations
- Offer different activities and attractions
- Large distances, crossing more than one country, or short ones within a same region or country
- Its appeal resides in the integrated development based on a specific topic
- Facilitate the development of cross-border tourism

Easy level and short duration trails are booming because ... it is a feasible challenge ... allows access to remote locations ... generates income in local communities
Tourism routes

• Disperse demand all year round and throughout the territory
• Travelers seeking an enriching experience
• Opportunities for sustainable tourism development, as they have potential to:

  ✓ Spread tourism demand and income
  ✓ Create new and innovative products
  ✓ Open new destinations and/or revitalize destinations in decline
  ✓ New market segments
  ✓ Foster public-private partnerships
  ✓ Protect and promote the natural and cultural heritage
  ✓ Generate funding
  ✓ Develop cultural understanding
Tourism routes

Key role in promoting regional development and integration, as they:

- Create networks within a region or linking multiple regions or countries
- Create opportunities to generate employment and business opportunities in less favoured regions
- Open new destinations and/or revitalize destinations in decline;
- Strengthen economic linkages, social cohesion and cultural understanding
Tourism routes: Challenges

- Effective coordination mechanisms and governance
- Effective management with a comprehensive and sustainable approach to the conservation of the route
- Integrated product development approaches and the effective clustering of services attractions along the value chain
- Development of a common and truly “shared” brand
- Infrastructure planning, development and financing
- Engagement of local communities
- Proper inclusion of tourism cooperation and routes development in regional cooperation agreements and processes
Introduction to the UNWTO Silk Road Programme

- 32 Committed Silk Road Member States
- Recent incorporation of Spain: strengthening the Western Link of the Silk Road
- Focus on both land and maritime tourism routes
- Pioneer Work: Adoption of the Samarkand Declaration on Silk Road Tourism (1994)
Introduction to the UNWTO Silk Road Programme

✓ The Silk Road Programme functions as a collaborative platform:

✓ Work philosophy based on best-practice examples, available interests and common goals/objectives

The Silk Road Action Plan 2014/2015:
3 Key Focus Areas:

✓ Marketing and Promotion
✓ Capacity Building & Destination Management
✓ Travel Facilitation
Introduction to the UNWTO Silk Road Programme

- Strong engagement from Member States, UN Agencies and Affiliate Members
- Silk Road Task Force group: annual meetings and frequent updates/exchange
- Increased brand awareness among the private sector, consumers, researchers, etc.
- Increase in transnational route development projects
- Improvements in travel facilitation
SILK ROAD PRIORITIES

- Provide a quality experience to the visitor without harming cultural or natural site values.

- Design a holistic planning

- Identify nodes (big cities) along the Silk Road, connecting routes and the corridors

- Collaborate in the elaboration of trans-national perspectives

- Share lessons, professional experiences and knowledge

Fuente: Organización Mundial de Turismo
Establish appropriate rules and protocols

Implement trans-national, national and local monitoring systems

Provide consistent and informative communicational tools with a clear, professional site interpretation centers

Invest in intangible cultural heritage

Innovation and technology

Fuente: Organización Mundial de Turismo
The Potential of the Silk Road: Opportunities and Benefits

Marketing & Promotion: Higher Output

- Established brand
- Potential of 32 Member States
- Coordinated promotion on the international stage: annual events at ITB Berlin, WTM London, FITUR Madrid, etc.
- UNWTO media channels

Capacity Building: Value Increase

- Knowledge transfer
- Capacity building projects offering industry support
- Profitable partnerships for both the public and private sector
- Networking opportunities
- Interrelated tourism sites: ideal for cross-border and regional investment opportunities

Travel Facilitation: Positive Support

- Forums that foster exchange and confidence
- Data/research support
Thank you very much!