SEVENTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

THEME
Coordination of National and Regional Activities
(ERA-NET scheme)

Grant agreement for: Coordination Action

Annex I - "Description of Work"

Project acronym: *ERNEST*
Project full title: *European Research NEtwork on Sustainable Tourism*
Grant agreement no.: *(same as proposal no)*

Date of preparation of Annex I (latest version): *February 2008*
Date of approval of Annex I by Commission: *(to be completed by Commission)*

Contents page

PART A:

A1: Budget breakdown form (copy of A3.2 form of the GPFs).

Project Number 1		219438		Project Acronym 2		ERNEST	

One Form per Project							

Participant number in this project 8	Participant short name	Estimated eligible costs (whole duration of the project)				Total receipts	Requested EC contribution
		Coordination / Support (A)	Management (B)	Other (C)	Total A+B+C		
1	RT	364,983.92	46,964.50	0.00	411,948.42	0.00	411,948.42
2	CCTD	148,045.20	16,422.70	0.00	164,467.90	0.00	164,467.90
3	Basquetour	156,566.50	19,889.50	0.00	176,456.00	0.00	176,456.00
4	Prefecture of Ilia	112,370.00	11,062.00	0.00	123,432.00	0.00	123,432.00
5	SE RDA	123,926.00	10,420.00	0.00	134,346.00	0.00	134,346.00
6	DG R+D+I	108,284.00	11,583.63	0.00	119,867.63	0.00	119,867.63
7	NORDA	120,298.00	8,708.00	0.00	129,006.00	0.00	129,006.00
8	South West Tourism	151,613.00	16,358.50	0.00	167,971.50	0.00	167,971.50
9	DFNA, NZ	144,249.38	16,077.63	0.00	160,327.01	0.00	160,327.01
10	GEN CAT	126,008.00	12,988.00	0.00	138,996.00	0.00	138,996.00
11	CRA	81,603.00	9,564.00	0.00	91,167.00	0.00	91,153.00
12	RER	83,446.50	10,259.50	0.00	93,706.00	0.00	93,706.00
TOTAL		1,721,393.50	190,297.96	0.00	1,911,691.46	0.00	1,911,677.46

A2: Project summary form (copy of A1 form of the GPFs).

Project Number 1	219438	Project Acronym 2	ERNEST

ONE FORM PER PROJECT			

GENERAL INFORMATION			
Project title 3	European Research NEtwork on Sustainable Tourism		
Starting date 4	The first day of the month after the signature by the Commission		
Duration in months 5	48		
Call (part) identifier 6	FP7-ERANET-2007-RTD		
Activity code(s) most relevant to your topic 7	ERANET.2007.1: Horizontal ERA-NETs		
Free keywords 8		tourism, sustainability, research, social dialogue, measurement, cooperation, collaboration, joint activities	

Abstract 9 (max. 2000 char.)
The ERNEST "European Research Network on Sustainable Tourism" project will address the issue of sustainable development in tourism through coordination and collaboration among regional research programmes. ERNEST will be a horizontal ERA NET action, not directly linked to one specific cooperation theme but with much European added value. The overall objective is to develop and strengthen a framework for coordinating regional research programmes on sustainable tourism. Within this platform regions will share and build on research work already underway at regional level, making it more productive and efficient through exchange and planning and implementation of joint activities. The specific objectives are as follows: • identify and exchange information and knowledge on research programmes that regions wish to coordinate; • identify within the research programmes elements related to social dialogue (participative processes for programming including all relevant stakeholders) and measurement of tourism impact; • define and prepare joint research activities on tourism research; • implement joint activities in these fields according to common needs, particularly concentrating on training, exchange and evaluation at an interregional level; • fund joint interregional research on sustainable tourism through joint calls; • promote productive cooperation and collaboration in research both in terms of interregional cooperation and cooperation at regional level, including public private partnerships; • allow partners to define together long-term and ambitious strategies in line with the European Union policy of sustainable development that each region could not easily reach on its own.

List of Beneficiaries

Beneficiary Number *	Beneficiary name	Beneficiary short name	Country	Date enter project	Date exit project
1(coordinator)	Regione Toscana	RT	Italy	Month 1	Month 48
2	Cité de la Culture et du Tourisme Durable	CCTD	France	Month 1	Month 48
3	Basquetour (Basque Government - Industry, Commerce and Tourism Department)	Basquetour	Spain	Month 1	Month 48
4	Prefecture of Ilia	Prefecture of Ilia	Greece	Month 1	Month 48
5	South-East Regional Development Agency	SE RDA	Romania	Month 1	Month 48
6	Govern de les Illes Balears	DG R+D+I	Spain	Month 1	Month 48
7	Regional Development Agency of North Hungary (NORDA)	NORDA	Hungary	Month 1	Month 48
8	South West Tourism	SWT	UK	Month 1	Month 48
9	Danish Forest and Nature Agency, Nord Zealand	DFNA, NZ	Denmark	Month 1	Month 48
10	Generalitat de Catalunya	Gen Cat	Spain	Month 1	Month 48
11	Conseil Régional d'Aquitaine	CRA	France	Month 1	Month 48
12	Regione Emilia Romagna	RER	Italy	Month 1	Month 48

PART B

B1. Concept and objectives, contribution to the coordination of high quality research, quality and effectiveness of the coordination mechanism and associated work plan

B 1.1 Concept and project objective(s)

The **ERNEST** "European Research Network on Sustainable Tourism" project will address the issue of sustainable development of the tourism sector through coordination and collaboration among regional research programmes.

ERNEST will be a horizontal ERA NET action, therefore not directly linked to one specific cooperation theme but with much European added value. Research and innovation to promote sustainable tourism remains an important and current theme and one that is recognised as crossing over several areas of research, including transport (new means of collective transport, safety, combating congestion), energy (optimising consumption, new sources, avoiding waste of resources), environment (impact and conservation techniques), food and agriculture (gastronomic and agro tourism), socio-economic sciences and the humanities (quality of life, maintaining local identity) and health (impact on the health system, dealing with risks of epidemics and transmission of disease).

According to the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) "*Sustainable development seeks to meet the needs and aspirations of the present without compromising the ability to meet those of the future.*" The Manila Declaration on World Tourism (1980) confirms that: "*as a powerful instrument of development, tourism can and should participate actively in the sustainable development strategy*" and that "*tourism development shall be based on criteria of sustainability, which means that it must be ecologically bearable in the long term, as well as economically viable, and ethically and socially equitable for local communities.*"

Tourism is in fact a powerful economic sector both at European and at world wide level. The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) states that tourism is one of the world's largest industries, employing approximately 231 million people (not the mention those economic actors who are indirectly involved) and generating over 10.4 % of world GDP. The WTTC also states that tourism and travel are expected to grow at a level of 4.3% over the next ten years. In Europe turnover related to tourism grew by around 25% between 1999 and 2002. In 2004, foreign tourists spent more than 860 million nights in European accommodation. Tourism amounts for 4% of the Community's GDP and when the links to other sectors are taken into account, the contribution of tourism to GDP is estimated to be around 11%. Furthermore, the job creation rate in tourism is above average compared to the European economy as a whole. In the last decade, the annual growth rate of people employed in the HORECA (Hotels, Restaurants, and Cafes) sector has been almost always above the growth rate of total employment. An important reason for the contribution of the tourism industry to job creation, in particular with regard to the employment of women, young and less skilled persons, is the high degree of part-time employment and flexible working conditions.

The Rio Earth Summit Agenda 21 (1992) stated that tourism is one of the few economic activities capable of providing economic incentives for environmental preservation. Indeed, it is vital to demonstrate the economic sustainability of tourism based on valorising the cultural and environmental heritage and on optimisation of tourism flows and regulation of environmental impact.

Sustainable tourism plays a major role in the preservation and enhancement of our range of cultural, natural and intangible heritage which in turn has a positive impact on employment and growth creation. However, as noted in the recent European Commission communication "A renewed EU Tourism Policy: Towards a stronger partnership for European Tourism", it is also true that tourism can become the victim of its own success if it does not concentrate on sustainable means of development. Biodiversity, ecosystem function, natural resources and non-renewable cultural heritage or even the functioning of urban areas may be threatened by the uncontrolled development of tourism.

Numerous international initiatives and strategies have been identified to promote sustainable development in tourism, Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development being of particular importance.

At EU level immense consideration has been afforded to the theme as shown by the wealth of documents and strategies stressing the importance of sustainable tourism and providing ideas and input on how to achieve it, for example "Sustainable tourism and nature 2000 - Guidelines, initiatives and good practices in Europe" (2000) and "*La promotion de la protection de l'environnement et du développement durable en matière de tourisme: vers une Agenda 21 européenne du tourisme* (2001)". The challenge of sustainable development and the imperative for change were recognised by the European Council in Gothenburg in 2001 with the adoption of the Sustainable Development Strategy to which an external dimension was added in 2002 at the European Council in Barcelona. The principles and objectives of sustainable development – economic prosperity, social equity, environment protection and international responsibilities – were reaffirmed by the European Council in June 2005 when they adopted guiding principles for sustainable development and also figured centrally in the discussions of European Heads of State and Government at Hampton Court in October 2005, as quoted in the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on the review of the Sustainable Development Strategy COM(2005) 658 of the 13.12.2005. Also fundamentally important for sustainable development is the Lisbon Strategy for the development of a European economy capable of sustaining growth and producing high-quality jobs. The Lisbon Agenda was renewed in 2005 under the EU Strategy for Growth and Jobs which specifically aims to encourage the sustainable use of resources. Further improved strategies for sustainable tourism at European level are still underway, including the industry and tourism policy launched in 2006 to produce more jobs and competitiveness in a framework of sustainability.

Sustainable tourism fits into an overall concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) of enterprises. CSR is a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis. (Commission Green Paper 2001 "Promoting a European Framework for Corporate Social Responsibility", COM(2001)366 Final). CSR covers social and environmental issues and is about integrating social and environmental concerns into business strategy and operations. CSR is a voluntary concept, an important aspect of which is how enterprises interact with their internal and external stakeholders (employees, customers, neighbours, non-governmental organisations, public authorities, etc.)

Despite the recognised importance of research, innovation and investigation into sustainable tourism, when we turn to research in this field (as in so many other fields) we see a general context of generally fragmentation of research activities, programmes and policies across Europe. This ongoing problem is highlighted in the European Commission Green Paper "The European Research Area: New Perspectives" (COM(2007) 161 of the 4th of April 2007). Fragmentation prevents Europe from fulfilling its research and innovation potential, at a huge cost to Europeans as taxpayers, consumers, and citizens.

It is clear from this selection of a much wider availability of literature on sustainable development and tourism, that research and innovation to promote sustainable tourism is an important, current theme. It is also clear that in Europe we have not yet managed to overcome the fragmentation of research activities which limits our potential for growth. The ERNEST project aims to use the ERA NET tool to address these issues.
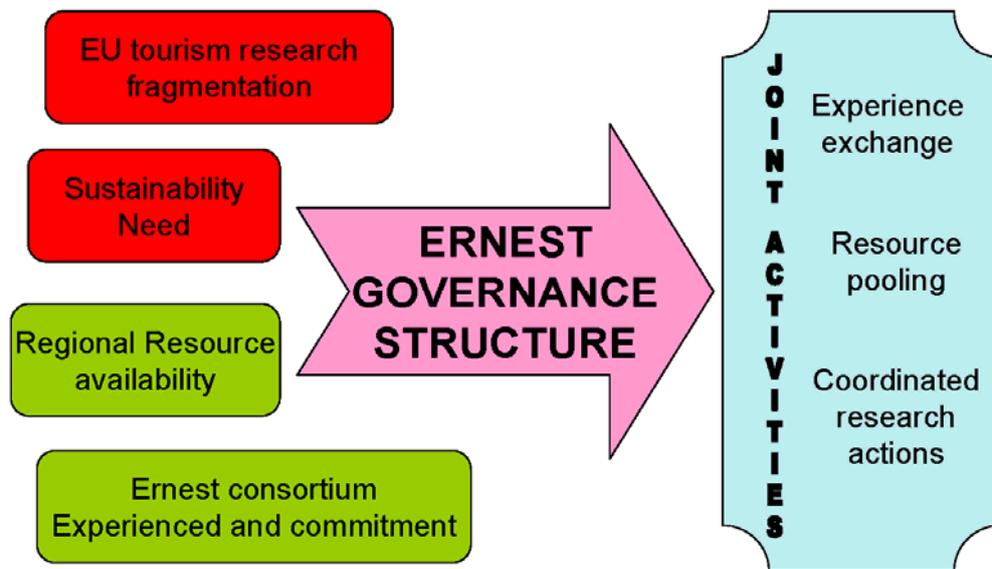
Figure 1: the ERNEST concept

The ERNEST Project – specific research themes

In all the ERNEST partner regions, as in many others in Europe, tourism is or is becoming a fundamental economic sector but one which can put territory itself at risk. We are witnessing an evolution in the tourism market dominated on the one hand by a considerable growth in standardised costal resorts and, on the other, by the growth of destinations with a higher cultural or nature content. Policies for tourism development often do not take into consideration the principle of social and environmental sustainability and instead concentrate on short to medium term economic gain.

The ERNEST project will promote research into addressing these issues and is based on the concept of research on sustainable tourism having a "two pillar operative structure" which the project will share and develop among its partners. The two pillars are:

• social dialogue

• measurement

The first research pillar is based on **SOCIAL DIALOGUE** both at a programming and management level.

One key problem emerging from European experiences is the necessity to involve local collectives in integrated and coordinated research for a balanced and sustainable tourism development, while raising awareness of the fact that this approach is the one which will guarantee the highest level of long term stability and quality of life. In fact, in the tourism sector, the distance between the needs and the level of fragmentation among tourist operators and enterprises, the local population and public administrations often result in a substantial difficulty in formulating policy for sustainable development. Social dialogue is seen as one potential solution.

Social dialogue has been widely adopted in the European Union since the 1990s and covers a wide range of economic and social policies. According to the UN International Labour Organisation, social dialogue includes all types of negotiation, consultation or simply exchange of information between, or among, representatives of governments, employers and workers, on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy. It includes all types of information sharing, consultation, negotiation and concertation (joint decision making). Social dialogue can consist of tripartite or bipartite relations, with or without government involvement, and can take place at national, regional or enterprise level.

The main goal of social dialogue is to promote consensus building and democratic involvement among the main stakeholders. Successful social dialogue structures and processes have the potential to resolve important economic and social issues, encourage good governance, advance social and industrial peace and stability and boost economic progress.

The importance of social dialogue in tourism was highlighted by the European Commission's expert working group on sustainable tourism (Working Group D - Promoting environmental protection and sustainable development in tourism) who stated that: "The active participation and commitment of all identified stakeholders towards the effective implementation of sustainable tourism principles in their respective areas of competence is crucial. More specific contributions regard their respective competence fields, such as those of destination management and tour operators, but also the tourists themselves." It is clear that tourism is an theme of cross sector interest. It covers cultural heritage, public infrastructure, accessibility, environmental protection (energy, waste, pressure of concentrated tourist presence), operational levels of SMEs in the tourism sector and of service providers. Therefore, tourist destinations at various levels (regional, provincial, individual cities) see the involvement of many different public and private actors who, in order to guarantee sustainability of their actions, must share the programming and behavioural consequences.

The inclusion of private enterprises operating in the tourism sector is of vital importance. These enterprises are the economic drivers of tourism, the main actors that can ensure the continued economic contribution to our regional economies and are, therefore, the actors who can put into practice any developed sustainable tourism strategies. Although some big international companies contribute to this sector, it is mainly dominated by SMEs. Around 2 million enterprises operate in the European tourism industry employing about 4% of the total labour force (representing approximately 8 million jobs directly related to tourism). Therefore, the importance of an open and constructive dialogue with these actors cannot be stressed enough.

In order for social dialogue to take place there must be a political will and commitment to engage in social dialogue on the part of all the parties and appropriate institutional support. Therefore, for social dialogue to work the regional government cannot be passive even if it is not a direct actor but instead must provide essential support through the establishment of the legal, institutional and other frameworks which enable the parties to engage effectively. Furthermore, social dialogue processes must be well managed, well facilitated and must involve all relevant stakeholders. In the case of sustainable tourism these would be the public authorities, the local stakeholder, the tourist and the private stakeholder.

Some tools used to promote social dialogue are identified as:

- Surveys. A set of questions and a group of informants are selected and an identical questionnaire is addressed to all informants. Informants are generally chosen as a representative sample of the wider population.

- Interviews (structured and semi-structured). This is a continuous approach where are series of interviews are planned and informants are identified progressively making use of findings from earlier interviews. Informants explore a range of different types of knowledge or perspectives.

- Qualitative appraisal techniques such as Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and Participatory Action Research (PAR). These approaches all have value when considering widening participation initiatives and enable the development of socially and culturally appropriate solutions. They take place in the "real world" and therefore start from problems and issues that are raised in society. They involve all stakeholders who are likely to be affected by or involved in the issue. The aim of the research is to achieve practical outcomes, to make a real difference, therefore providing a link between research and action.

With these conditions in place and using the most appropriate techniques, through social dialogue on the theme of sustainable tourism, it becomes possible to identify real development objectives connected to actual territorial needs through productive cooperation between stakeholders. This

process forms the foundation on which future research activities can be based, thus providing continuity of actions.

The research topics which ERNEST would address particularly concern the most appropriate means of social dialogue to be used as a means of facilitating consensus building on sustainable tourism development and raising awareness among the population on the importance of the theme with regards to:

- Participation (tools and methods) – analysis into the use of the above mentioned tools and techniques (surveys, interviews and qualitative appraisal techniques.

- Dialogue with enterprises – how to involve enterprises in all levels of dialogue and to promote the idea of sustainability in a context of CSR.

- Overcoming the limits to public-private relations – social dialogue can be limited by structures of relations and institutions which make it difficult for the public sector and the private sector to dialogue, to cooperate and to work together. Potential solutions to this problem and examples of good practices already carried out or underway will be analysed.

- Communication (levels, tools and methods) – taking into consideration the best way to contact the identified stakeholders, to communicate with them and to encourage them to communicate with one another. Issues include: what groups of people should be brought together? Should it be physical meeting or virtual communication or both? What communication tools can facilitate social dialogue? What skills should a facilitator avail or and what methods can he/she adopt?

- Machinery or processes for bipartite (two participants), tripartite (three participants) and multipart social dialogue – how to organise and develop these process, what mechanisms are needed and how do they differ depending on participant numbers.

- Establishing or strengthening legal frameworks – analysis into the feasibility of strengthening the legal framework surrounding social dialogue and whether or not it can become an established process and instrument in the regions involved.

The second connected research pillar concerns **MEASUREMENT**.

In order to ensure a sustainable development of tourism we must have the tools and approaches which allow us to recognise the limits and the thresholds of tolerance of the territory and society. Having evaluated the situation we are then in the position to propose potential solutions to adapt future initiatives accordingly. In other words we need to identify and implement environmental, social, economic and institutional indicators and measures which enable us to evaluate current situations and interventions in the tourism sector.

Indicators are defined in the UNWTO Guidebook as "measures of the existence or severity of current issues, signals of upcoming situations or problems, measures of risk and potential need for action, and means to identify and measure the results of our actions. Indicators are information sets which are formally selected to be used on a regular basis to measure changes that are of importance for tourism development or management." Different types of indicators include: aggregate indices which characterise progress towards sustainable development; headline indicators with short core sets of indicators closely linked to policy priorities; goal-oriented indicators used in tracking performance and linked to policy priorities.

Used properly, indicators can become key management tools – performance measures which supply essential information both to the managers and to all of the stakeholders in tourism so that they can anticipate and prevent unacceptable and unsustainable outcomes. Good indicators can provide up to date information to deal with pressing issues and to help guide the sustainable development of a destination.

Some of the potential benefits from good definition and use of indicators therefore include: better decision-making through lowered risks or costs; identification of emerging issues thus allowing prevention identification of impacts and corrective action when needed; performance measurement evaluating progress in the sustainable development of tourism; reduced risk of planning mistakes through identifying limits and opportunities; greater accountability through the provision of credible information for the public and other stakeholders of tourism. Furthermore, indicators can be tools for public information and education, helping to highlight key concerns for the public and the results of indicators use may well foster demand for action.

Much work has been carried out at European and global level on the theme of indicators for sustainable development, and specifically for tourism. Despite their growing popularity, however, their effectiveness in influencing actual policy and practices often remained limited. Key challenges remain:

- Ensuring that indicators are integrated into mainstream policy mechanisms;

- Continuing methodological uncertainties and debates about what and how to measure and how to link specific indicators to time-bound targets and thresholds;

- Limited comparability of indicator systems to through the use of different indicator frameworks;

- technical issues, particularly related to problems with data availability and quality, common definitions and the lack of long-term, consistent monitoring mechanisms that would supply data with adequate temporal and spatial resolution.

Therefore, it is not enough to propose a set of indicators. The conditions for implementing them and using them correctly must also be in place. These challenges can only be overcome with a coordinated effort.

To this end a shared methodology, common framework or definition of measures would have high added value in all areas participating in the ERNEST project. While common frameworks do not automatically lead to common measures and certainly not to coordinated action, they are important components of an enabling environment and governance mechanism in which cooperative action can emerge.

The ERNEST project will allow a comparative monitoring of different experiences and the collection of a set of data on sustainable tourism with corresponding results and shared terminology. It will allow easier comparability of indicators, targets and thus performance and will present opportunities for institutional cooperation and coordinated action.

In order to create this methodology it is first necessary to collect the necessary information from each interested area on existing policies for sustainable tourism development thanks to the identification and application of these environmental, economic, social and institutional indicators. Different techniques for data collection, definition of indicators and definitions of common frameworks and methodologies will be considered within the measurement pillar.

One example of a possible approach is the Balanced Scorecard Approach developed in the early 1990's by Drs. Robert Kaplan (Harvard Business School) and David Norton to address the challenge of defining a well-rounded but focused suite of measures. The balanced scorecard is a management system (not only a measurement system) that enables organisations to clarify their vision and strategy and translate them into action. It provides feedback around both the internal business processes and external outcomes in order to continuously improve strategic performance and results. It is a business focused approach and would have to be adapted to more development led interventions. The features which make it so popular, such as its simplicity, its range of perspectives, the pragmatic accommodation of focus and comprehensive coverage, would be maintained but the concept would have to be adapted to directly address the issue of sustainable development. The approach has relevance to sustainable tourism in which the main challenge is to ensure the continued economic benefit for those involved in and connected to the sector, without harming the social, cultural and

ecological environment that surrounds it. The possibility to adapt the approach will be analysed during the ERNEST project.

10 strategic research areas which fully highlight the horizontal nature of research into sustainable tourism have been identified for analysis during the ERNEST project and are as follows:

- Impact of transport

- Residents' quality of life

- Quality of work

- Widening the relations between demand/offer (geographical and seasonal concentration of tourism)

- Active conservation of cultural heritage

- Active conservation of environmental heritage

- Active conservation of distinctive identities of destinations

- Reduction and optimisation of use of natural resources with particular reference to water

- Reduction and optimisation of energy consumption

- Reduction of waste and better waste management

In general terms, within these strategic research areas the ERNEST regions should concentrate on:

- what exactly should be measured with the indicators in order to successfully evaluate tourism development in terms of sustainability;

- what operative models are needed in these field (including whether the Balanced Scorecard approach can fit into this context);

- how systems for revealing and correcting territorial characteristics can be activated;

- how a common framework among regions can be identified, developed and implemented.

There are clear reasons for choosing to concentrate on the two above described pillars.

A number of partners have already undertaken research activities in this field and, therefore, have considerable know-how to share. For example, research on measurement is already underway in the partner regions of the ERNEST project and exchange among some partners has begun with the INTERREG IIIB project EVIMED. The ERNEST project will bring together the knowledge available in the participating regions and in European and international literature on the subject listed below (section 3.1). Therefore, the ERNEST project will allow partner regions to share their experience, knowledge and good practices in this field and take that experience further. It will help partners to further develop the work and to develop common methodologies on how to identify and utilise these indicators, how to diffuse the results and the benefits and how to transfer them to others currently developing a strategy on sustainable tourism.

Furthermore, these two pillars represent the basis on which further research activities on sustainable tourism can be based by providing the conditions in which tourism related research can match territorial needs and can be clearly measured and evaluated. It is fundamental for the public administration to put in place models and platforms for all types of coordination and social dialogue, considering 3 fundamental phases:

- Phase 1: programming (what type of development should we reach in each destination in order to guarantee the compatibility of these activities with other activities and with the residents' quality of life? What specific objectives are proposed?)

- Phase 2: operation (what behaviour must each single actor in the tourism system have in order to maintain the necessary level of sustainability in line with the programming choices and the relative development objectives?)

- Phase 3: verification and control (how and when should monitoring and verification be undertaken to evaluate the specific objectives?)

In each of the 3 phases it is necessary to define indicators which can reveal and measure the activities and functions undertaken. For each indicator it is also necessary to define the contact person who is responsible for this evaluation phase.

In the programming phase, for each of the 10 themes stated above it is necessary to define, the objective parameters, the person responsible, tools for measuring/revealing, eventual behavioural corrections, actions for prevention or sanctions to be implemented if correction measures are not respected, and the person capable of putting into place sanctions or prevention measures.

Research activities on each of the 10 themes should provide the elements necessary to identify the objective parameters, behaviours, methods and instruments for measurements and communication systems.

The table below summarises the overall research areas which the ERNEST project will bring together and build on:

Social Dialogue	Measurement
Participation (tools and methods)	Transport
Overcoming the limits to public-private relations	Quality of life and work
Communication (levels, tools and methods)	Widening demand and offer
Machinery or processes for bipartite and tripartite social dialogue	Conservation of cultural and environmental heritage and distinct identity
Legal frameworks	Reduction and optimisation of use of natural resources (water)
	Reduction and optimisation of energy consumption
	Reduction of waste and better waste management

Table 1: Summary of Research Areas

Figure 2 (below) illustrates the connection between the two pillars as coordinated by public government. The ERNEST project will analyse and follow this approach in the field of research on sustainable tourism in order to promote policy development in this area.
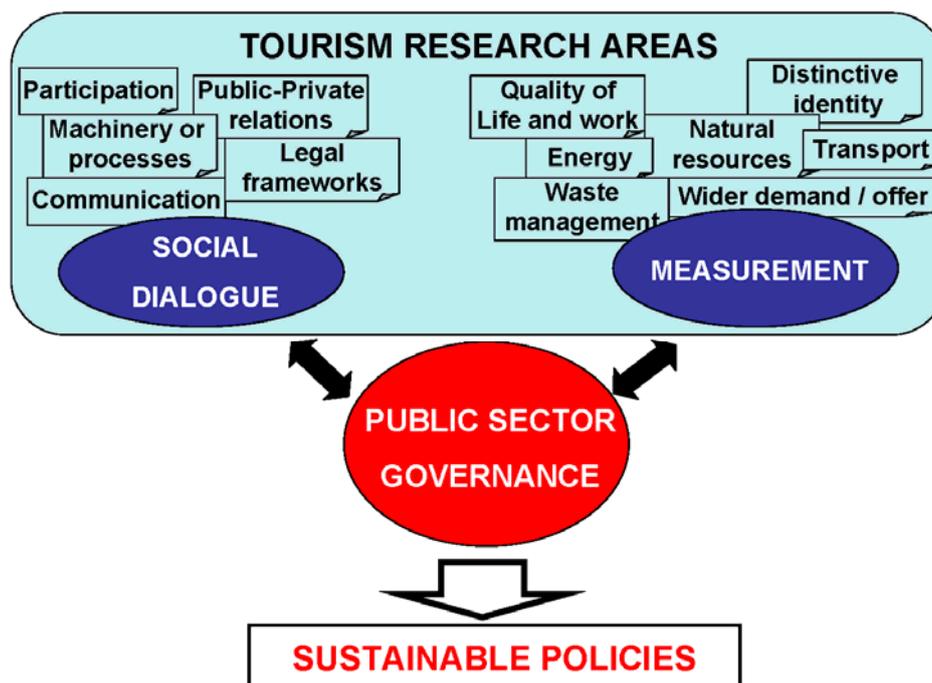
Figure 2: the two pillar approach

ERNEST partners

Between the two above described research pillars, the direction and leadership of the public administration, in this case at regional level, is necessary. The ERNEST project involves the most important programme owners and managers in the relative regions as shown below.

Regione Toscana (Italy) – (1) Programme Owner

Research in tourism in Tuscany is funded through the DOCUP programme (Single Programming Document 2000-2006) measures 2.8 (information society – budget over 6 years €25,276,420) and 1.8 (pre-competitive and industrial research – budget over 6 years €21,479,382). The DOCUP is the programming document through which the region uses European and regional funds to favour the development and competitiveness of enterprises, to promote the creation of new entrepreneurial initiatives, to increase employment, to characterise the territory with new services and infrastructures and to safeguard the environment.

Within DOCUP research and innovation are considered strategic issues to which the regional actors must look in order to increase competitiveness, innovation and development. Therefore, this programme has financed a number of research and innovation projects on tourism. Some examples of projects financed under this programme include: "Benvenuti in Mugello – Integrated system for tourism services; ''SIPARIO" - services for enterprises, culture and tourism; MUVE - Evolved Virtual Museum;.

Tuscany will continue financing actions favouring research and innovation in sustainable tourism through the Regional Development Plan 2006 to 2010 and the Regional Operative Programme (Competitiveness) 2007 to 2013.

Cité de la Culture et du Tourisme Durable (France) - (1) Programme Owner

Cité de la Culture et du Tourisme Durable (CCTD) owns a number of strategic research programmes which finance of a number of research projects on: analysis of the socio-cultural and environmental impacts; Site management (operational implementation of the concept of capacities for tourism responsibility in the framework of the local AGENDA21); creation of a process of certification of tourism development projects; study of social representation of tourist destinations and effects of their

sustainable development; marketing of the "Sustainable destination" to bring added value to culture and material / immaterial heritage.

Some specific examples of research programmes of which CCTD is owner are: "EQUALTO" - research on the creation of a certification of sustainable tourism projects integrating social, environmental and economic indicators; "Accueil et territories" – research programme on the rights and responsibilities of inhabitants and visitors; "Veille, observation et de connaissances partagées" – research programme on the implementation of shared tools for the observation of and increased knowledge on heritage and sustainable tourism.

CCTD also jointly manages research programmes on tourism with the Centre national de Formation de la Fonction Publique and the FROTSI on the evolution of institutional tourism trades.

Basquetour (Spain) - (2) Programme Manager

Basquetour, a public limited company which depends on the Basque Government (Industry, Commerce and Tourism Department), manages the programmes described below on behalf of the Basque government.

The R+D+i strategy for tourism drawn up by the Basque Government's Department of Trade, Industry and Tourism (DICT) within the framework of the 2006-2009 Business Competitiveness and Innovation Plan defines R+D+i as a key course of action to improve competitiveness in Basque companies operating in the sectors identified as priority by the main regional framework of science and research.

Within this strategy the main programme for research in tourism is e-tourgune. e-tourgune is a programme of activities around the strategic research area of tourism within the global innovation strategy. It provides a strategic and financial framework over 3 years to promote cooperation among technology centres, universities and private companies. e-tourgune provides the framework to fund R&D projects within different funding programmes and provides the strategic lines on which these projects may be funded. The programme covers: research projects for increased tourism competitiveness; technological innovation within the tourist industry and for technology-tourism projects; cooperation to define, develop and implement new technology; promoting knowledge of the applications of new technology in training programmes.

Some examples of the R&D activities include: ZERBITUR: Integrated platform of contents to provide new added-value services for the tourist industry; TourMETRIC: Model for assessment of competitiveness in the Basque tourist industry; TuriMAT: Systems for modelling and assessing acceptance of technology. Other priority activities include staff training, international cooperation, scientific and technological supervision and technology transfer.

Prefecture of Ilia (Greece) - (2) Programme Manager

The Prefecture of Ilia has received national funding through the "Information Society" initiative under the national strategy "Knowledge Society" aimed at the promotion of research and innovation in all fields. The initiative's target increased productiveness and competitiveness. Its main priority is the development of research in order for Greece to keep up with other European countries in this field. More specifically, the initiative aims at: the development and the implementation of research projects by public bodies; the promotion of the existing research centres to the international level; the dissemination and utilisation of the results of the research activity.

The Prefecture of Ilia has been responsible, managing the funds and financing projects, for a measure funded by the initiative "Information Society" regarding the promotion, the strategy and the best practices on issues of broadband. This measure includes as a priority action line cooperation for research, innovation and transfer of knowledge in the field of tourism as part of broadband. In line with the ERA NET definition of "programme" this strategically planned measure lasts for 4 years, until 2008, and is composed of a number of research projects focused on a defined subject area. More specifically, the measure funds the development of research studies on how broadband has influenced tourism in Ilia and in the region of Western Greece. Moreover, the measure includes a) the development of a portal on broadband issues, which provides information on tourist destinations and

b) the creation of an innovative model on development and utilisation of broadband infrastructure. The measure aims – through the conduction of research – to attract more tourists and promote sustainable tourism.

South East Romania Development Agency (Romania) – (3) Programme owners which do not have a running or fully fledged research programme at the moment of submitting the proposal, but are planning, and have committed, to set up such a programme

SE RDA has already been involved in the implementation of the National Development Plan at regional level and the institutional construction for elaborating and implementing the Social and Economical Cohesion Policy at regional level.

Development of sustainable tourism in Romania is fully in line with the Community Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion 2007-2013. The regional operational programme has a priority axis which stresses that the development of tourism should take into account the principle of sustainable development, concerning the preservation of natural and cultural assets, and also the reduction of human pressure on the environment. This axis will contribute to improving the Regions' attractiveness and to the creation of more and better jobs.

The South East Romania Development Agency is therefore planning, and has committed, to set up a programme of research and innovation in the field of tourism (see letter of commitment, Annexe 1)

Balearic Isles (Spain) – (1) Programme Owner

Since 2005 the R+D+i policy of the Balearic Islands has taken research and innovation in tourism into account through the Science, Technology and Innovation Plan (2005-2008). One specific objective of this Plan is to promote scientific and technological research on thematic areas of strategic interest: Tourism; Environment (Marine Science and Technologies); and Health Sciences. Tourism R+D and innovation activities are therefore a high priority area.

The research programmes on tourism specifically finance interventions aimed at: boosting human resources; reinforcing the scientific basis; promoting the articulation of the Balearic Innovation system; supporting innovation and the creation of innovative enterprises; promoting a scientific culture, and social interest in science, technology and innovation. A new a new R+D centre in tourism (CIDTUR) has just been founded with an agreement with the national Ministry of Science and Technology. The centre was created with the aim of developing research projects on themes and activities relating to tourism and complementary activity sectors (such as ICT, energy , construction, nautical, sustainability, etc.) and of promoting innovation in tourism enterprise. The research of this centre focuses on the sustainability and competitiveness of tourism activity and the development and application of technologies to achieve a growth in tourism activities.

NORDA (North Hungary Regional Development Agency)– (3) Programme owners which do not have a running or fully fledged research programme at the moment of submitting the proposal, but are planning, and have committed, to set up such a programme

The statutes of NORDA identify scientific research at regional level as one of the agency's fields of competence. NORDA elaborated and currently manages the Regional Development Programme 2007-2013 and has been designated as the Intermediate Body for the implementation of the 2007-2013 Regional Operational Programme.

The region of North-Hungary – being an Objective 1 region – will be eligible for a substantial amount of Structural Funds during the financial period in the period 2007-2013. In order to prepare for this, a mid-term regional development plan has been conceived by the Regional Development Agency of North-Hungary, which designates 5 main thematic development areas, one of which is "Strengthening tourism potential".

As part of the II National Development Plan (ÚMNFT), the ROP Action Plan in its present construction contains actions under this priority axis (measure 2.3), which intend to strengthen the connection between innovation, research and tourism. Namely it supports the establishment of a Tourism

Research and Innovation centre - in cooperation with the North Great Plain region - within the upcoming 2 year period.

NORDA is therefore planning, and has committed, to set up a programme of research and innovation in the field of tourism (see letter of commitment, Annexe 1)

South West Tourism (SWT) – (2) Programme Manager

Strategic planned research and sustainability work is managed by SWT using UK Government funding accessed via the SW Regional Development Agency.

South West Tourism manages regional research activity through a Regional Research Group with the 9 sub-regional destinations and is involved in the SW Regional Research and Intelligence Observatory. South West Tourism's strategically planned research programmes therefore directly fund (with a budget of around £0.5 million annually) tourism research projects focused on audits, development research and studies within the regional Destination Management Organisations.

Research programmes include a number of surveys on community attitude, state of tourism, sustainable business practice, annual SW visitors and business/members. SWT also have a licence to use REAP (Resources and Energy Analysis Programme developed by Stockholm Environment Institute) to investigate and develop a resource accounting tool for sustainable consumption and production related to tourism, investigating tourism's Ecological and Carbon Footprint at both a regional and sub regional level.

Danish Forest and Nature Agency, Nord Zealand – (1) Programme Owner

The Danish Forest and Nature Agency, Nord Zealand (DFNA, NZ) is part of and reports to the national government (State Forrest district) under the Danish Ministry of Environment. As such the DFNA, NZ uses national funding to carry out strategically planned research programmes composed of research projects focused on tourism and sustainability of tourism resources. With this budget DFNA, NZ undertakes the co-ordinated management of research projects which see the participation (practical and financial) of local councils and a wide variety of stakeholders including, to name but a few, the Danish Agriculture Society, Danish Forest Society and the Society Friends of Nature parks. Future projects under this programme are currently being defined. Existing projects include research on extension of waste water treatment and clear water and nature care.

Generalitat de Catalunya – DG Turisme –Observatory of Tourism – (2) Programme Manager

The Observatory of Tourism depends directly on the DG of Tourism of Catalonia, which forms part of the Regional Ministry of Innovation, Universities and Enterprises of the Government of Catalonia (Generalitat de Catalunya). The Observatory of Tourism was created by the Regional Government, with the objective of improving knowledge and promoting research, innovation and technology transfer, emphasising territorial and social planning in order to build a sustainable tourist model.

Included in the frame of the global Programme for Research and Innovation of Catalonia and financed by the regional government, the Observatory of Tourism launched in 2005 a specific Research Programme on Tourism. The Observatory manages this strategic programme and is thus in charge of strategic planning, manages the funds and finances numerous research projects. Over the last two years 14 research projects have been developed within this Programme. The programme is ongoing and has an overall budget of more than 600,000 euro.

Conseil Régional d'Aquitaine – (1) Programme Owner

The Conseil Régional d'Aquitaine is programme owner of the DOCUP programme 2000-2006, Objective 2. Measure 3.2 of this programme was entitled "Development of tourism" and had a budget of 31.5 million euros over 7 years.

The work undertaken in this programme will be continued with the ERDF Regional Operative Programme (Competitiveness) 2007-2013. the Conseil Régional d'Aquitaine is owner of this

programme. Measures related to the ERNEST project include: measures 1.2 (innovation and competitiveness of firms), 2.1 (information technology), 3 (climate change and environment development), 4.1 (integrated coastal zone management). Furthermore, the Regional Operative Programme EAFRD (Rural development) 2007-2013 of which the Conseil Régional d'Aquitaine is owner, contains the following measures which are relevant to the ERNEST project: 312 (enterprise development) and 313 (promotion of tourist activities).

These programmes have financed and will continue to finance research and innovation projects on tourism. Some examples of projects financed include the development of public-private relations in tourism, the increase of innovation in tourism enterprises, the development of innovative technologies for reducing the impact of tourism on environment and on citizens' quality of life and the protection of environmental and cultural heritage.

Regione Emilia Romagna (Italy) – (1) Programme Owner

With its Economic and Financial Policy Document 2006-10 (*Documento di Politica Economica e Finanziaria - DPEF*) the Regione Emilia Romagna has identifies priority objectives for development, innovation, quality and competitiveness in the regional tourist sector. Within the Regional Operative Programme 2007 to 2013, the Regione Emilia Romagna has identified a number of priority lines linked to research in tourism. These include one axis on "valorisation and promotion of cultural and environmental heritage in support of socio-economic development and of sustainable tourism."

Within this overall framework, in January 2008 the ROP first call for proposals was launched to finance project concerning "valorisation of the cultural and environmental heritage" and related integrated promotion activities. Calls related to industrial research, technology transfer, innovative enterprise development and energy, environment and sustainable development, in which tourism related enterprises can participate, are currently being defined.

In November 2007, in the framework of the Regional Plan for Industrial Research, Innovation and Technology Transfer (PRRIITT) the first call for programmes developed by research and technology transfer centres and by innovation centres forming part of the High Technology Network, was approved. This call built on work undertaken during DOCUP Objective 2000-2006 to support innovation and research projects which benefited, among others, aggregations of tourist enterprises.

In addition to the project partners themselves, the participating regions can also lay claim to a large number of regional actors active in the field of sustainable tourism research. These actors should be of support in addressing the research topics. They are listed below is section 2.3.

Project Objectives

The **overall strategic objective** of the ERNEST project is to develop and strengthen a framework for the coordination of regional research programmes on sustainable tourism. Within this platform regions will share and build on research work already underway at regional level and make it more productive and efficient through exchange and through the planning and implementation of joint activities.

Within this context the **specific project objectives** are as follows:

- to identify and exchange information and knowledge on research programmes that each region wishes to coordinate or open up mutually;

- to identify within the research programmes elements related to a "two pillar operative structure" of social dialogue (participative processes for programming including all relevant stakeholders) and measurement of tourism impact;

- to define and prepare joint research activities on the two above mentioned aspects of tourism research, including methods of communication and participation, indicators, operative measures and systems for revealing and correcting negative territorial characteristics and building on positive characteristics;

- to implement joint activities in these fields according to common needs, particularly concentrating on training, exchange and evaluation at an interregional level;

- to fund joint interregional research on sustainable tourism through joint calls;

- to promote productive cooperation and collaboration in research both in terms of interregional cooperation and cooperation at regional level, including public private partnerships;

- to allow partners to define together long-term and ambitious strategies in line with the European Union policy of sustainable development that each region could not easily reach on its own.

B 1.2 Contribution to the coordination of high quality research

Research is vital to the creation of a European Knowledge Society. It is a key feature of competitiveness and a fundamental instrument for the achievement of the objectives set in Lisbon in 2000. However, its potential for competitiveness is limited by the lack of coordination. Coordination means to go beyond the fragmented logic of single actors in order to reach a programming logic where actors work towards the same strategy with common and shared actions. Only with European-wide research strategies and actions can Europe keep up with great and emerging powers such as the United States, Japan, China and India.

On one hand, it is true that the EU and its member States should invest more: R&D expenditure as percentage of GDP in Europe has stagnated since the mid nineties, while competitors such as China or Japan have been increasing their efforts in this sense. The EU R&D investment deficit against US has also remained constant in these years (in 2005 only 1.84% of GDP was spent on R&D in EU-27, lower level than in US, Japan, China and South Korea).

On the other hand it is also relevant to see how this percentage of European GDP is spent. In other words, we must consider the level of coordination. This picture also provides cause for concern. In EU, national and regional research funding remains largely uncoordinated. The biggest issues concern the dispersion of resources, the excessive duplication, and the lack of spill-over and, in general, the failure for Europe to play a global role facing the challenges of globalisation. For that reason the European Research Area vision, according to the above mentioned Green Paper (2007), must include the joint programming, implementation and evaluation of public research investments at communitarian level on topics that go beyond the capacities and the capabilities of a single member state.

The ERNEST proposal becomes part of this attempt to go beyond the individual regions and the individual state in the field of sustainable tourism. The ERNEST project will bring the actors together to coordinate and add value to their individual activities. ERNEST will foster this coordination among actors with a common shared vision on sustainable tourism, thus offering the chance to share the work already underway at regional level and to take it further, to make it more productive and efficient through exchange and through the planning and implementation of joint activities. This will be carried out through:

- systematic exchange of information & best practices;

- definition and preparation of joint activities, including common training and learning sessions, personnel exchange, commonly defined action plans;

- pooling resources between regional, national and community programmes;

- implementation of joint activities and funding of transnational research.

Despite numerous political declarations, the scientific and technical analysis into sustainable tourism is not as developed as it should be and research in tourism is relatively new. Therefore, those currently active in this field need all the more support and encouragement to ensure that their work is relevant, recognised and addressing the right issues. The project is based on an initial group of partners who,

as shown above, are key actors in their regional research systems and which are already active in this field. The partners have all expressed a desire to move their work forward to orientate new, connected and coordinated research.

In terms of high quality research, ERNEST is a guarantee in that:

- the partners have a long and proven experience in these research sectors;

- the actions are not only oriented towards an analysis of the current situation but also the identification of corrective actions to achieve sustainable objectives;

- the involvement of regional governments and agencies, as implementer of the policies under examination, guarantees the application of research results in the respective territories.

ERA NET is considered the most appropriate type of funding to achieve the objectives of the ERNEST project. The objective of ERA-NET actions is to develop and strengthen the coordination of national and regional research programmes by providing a framework for programme owners and managers. As shown by the above objectives, ERA NET will indeed provide the ERNEST regional authorities with the necessary space and resources to identify strategically planned research programmes they wish to coordinate or open up mutually.

ERNEST has a clear European added value. It addresses fragmentation of research in 13 different regions that are at different levels of development in terms of research on sustainable tourism. Some regions have long established research programmes. Others, despite experience in this sector, are just now implementing a formal research programme. Coordination and cooperation within ERNEST will be of mutual benefit in this case, both for the successful implementation of new programmes and potential improvements for existing programmes.

The project also dedicates time and resources to attracting new partner regions from those European regions that are active in this field but want to take their research on sustainable tourism a step forward. ERNEST will ultimately involve far more regions than the, already significant, initial partnership.

Furthermore, a number of ERNEST partners will pool their own resources to fund at least one joint call involving actors in different region in projects on sustainable tourism research. The ERA NET offers the ERNEST regions the chance to build up to this point through 2 years of networking, exchange, planning and initial preparatory activities.

B 1.3 Quality and effectiveness of the coordination mechanisms and associated work plan

The project will be implemented through 3 thematic and 4 horizontal work packages which are described in detail below. The proposed work plan and its governance structure are carefully devised to ensure the achievement of the project objectives, which are reflected in the content of each WP. The division of the work plan into different work packages (WP) makes each step more manageable and allows each action to be carefully monitored and evaluated. Furthermore, a work package leader has been appointed for each work package in the project. The work package leader will be responsible for the coordination, planning, monitoring and reporting of the WP (including contributions to progress reports) and for the detailed coordination of this work WP with other project WPs. The partners allocated the task of leading a work package have been chosen for their proven experience which ensures them to be capable of undertaking all the foreseen activities.

In accordance with the ERA NET objectives, the networking and mutual opening of research programmes will follow a long term and flexible approach over 48 months (detailed in the work package description below). The work plan of the ERNEST project follows the "step-by-step" approach proposed by the ERA NET guidelines:

1) Information exchange;

2) Definition and preparation of joint activities and 3) Implementation of joint activities;

4) Funding of joint trans-national research.

These specific work packages are flanked by 4 horizontal work packages which ensure efficient project coordination, correctly implemented project management and administration, widespread dissemination and identification and involvement of potential new partners.

B 1.3.1 Timing of work packages and their components:

ERNEST — Timing of the different WPs and their components

Work packages/ deliverables		Year 1 (1–12)	Year 2 (13–24)	Year 3 (25–36)	Year 4 (37–48)
WP 1	Consortium coordination				
1.01	Project quality handbook	X (month 4)			
1.02	Detailed 4 year Project Action Plan	X (month 5)			
1.03	Recommendation report on long term road map				X (month 42)
WP 2	Information Exchange	(months 1–12)			
2.01	Survey 1 – Mapping of Regional Policies, Strategies, Programmes & Capabilities	X (month 10)			
2.02	Survey 2 – Interregional comparison		X (month 14)		
WP 3	Definition / preparation / implementation of joint activities		(months 13–36)		
3.01	Action plan for joint activities		X (month 21)		
3.02	Final report on joint activities				X (month 42)
WP 4	Trans-National/Regional Joint Call Implementation			(months 25–48)	
4.01	Join call			X (month 26)	
4.02	Lessons learned from joint calls				X (month 45)
WP 5	Outreach and Communication	(months 2–48)			
5.01	Communication strategy	X (month 5)			
5.02	Stakeholder involvement strategy	X (month 5)			
5.03	Website and User Manual	X (month 7)			
WP 6	Identifying and attracting new partners	(months 2–44)			
6.01	Presentation of Potential Partner Regions	X (month 6)			
6.02	Report on new partner activity				X (month 42)
WP 7	Project Management				
7.01	Consortium agreement	X (month 4)			
7.02	Mid term progress report		X (month 24)		
7.03	Financial audit				X (month 48)
7.04	Final progress report				X (month 48)

Work package list / overview:

Work package No	Work package title	Type of activity	Lead participant No	Person-months	Start month	End month
WP 1	Consortium Coordination	COORD	1	31	0	48
WP 2	Information Exchange	COORD	3	26,1	0	10
WP 3	Definition / preparation / implementation of joint activities	COORD	2	70,7	9	43
WP 4	Trans-National/Regional Joint Call Implementation	COORD	1	45,9	24	46
WP 5	Outreach and Communication	COORD	5	34	2	48
WP 6	Identifying and attracting new partners	COORD	1	19,6	0	46
WP 7	Project Management	MGT	1	32,1	0	48
	TOTAL			259,4		

List of Deliverables

Del. no.	Deliverable name	WP no.	Lead beneficiary	Estimated indicative person-months	Nature	Dissemination level	Delivery date
1.1	Project quality handbook	1	RT	1.5	R	CO	4
1.2	Detailed 4 year Project Action Plan	1	RT	2.5	R	PP	6
1.3	Recommendation report on long term road map	1	RT	4	R	PU	42
2.1	Survey 1 – Mapping of Regional Policies, Strategies, Programmes & Capabilities	2	Basquetour	4	R	RE	6
2.2	Survey 2 – Interregional comparison	2	Basquetour	2	R	RE	10
3.1	Action plan for joint activities	3	CCTD	3	R	RE	18
3.2	Final report on joint activities	3	CCTD	2	R	PU	45
4.1	Joint call	4	RT	2	R	PU	25
4.2	Lessons learned from joint calls	4	RT	2	R	PU	45
5.1	Communication strategy	5	SE RDA	2	R	RE	5
5.2	Stakeholder involvement strategy	5	SE RDA	4	R	RE	5

5.3	Website and User Manual	7	SE RDA	2	O	PU	7
6.1	Presentation of Potential Partner Regions	6	RT	1,5	R	CO	6
6.2	Report on new partner activity	6	RT	2	R	CO	40
7.1	Consortium agreement	7	RT	0,5	O	CO	4
7.2	Mid term progress report	7	RT	1	R	CO	24
7.3	Financial audit	7	RT	3	O	CO	48
7.4	Final progress report	7	RT	1	R	CO	48

Work Package 1 (WP1)

Work package number	1				Start date or starting event:				0			
Work package title	Consortium co-ordination											
Activity Type	COORD											
Participant number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Person-months per participant:	10,4	2	2	1,8	2,1	1,8	1,9	1,8	1,8	1,8	1,8	1,8

Objectives

The Consortium Co-ordination Work Package has the following objectives:

- To establish the ERNEST Network (governance and organisational structure)

- To ensure efficient overall consortium coordination

- To ensure continuous technical and methodological monitoring, quality control and eventual resultant modifications

- To ensure the long term sustainability of the ERNEST network activities

Description of work

The Regione Toscana, project coordinator, will have the overall responsibility of coordination for this work package. The Regione Toscana has proven experience in managing networks and projects related to innovation and research, including the ERIK Network (European Regions Innovation and Knowledge Network), the AGATA and MEROPE projects (INTERREG IIIB) and specifically on tourism, including the EVIMED project (INTERREG IIIB). The Regione Toscana is also partner in ERA STAR Regions (ERA NET action).

All partners will be expected to participate actively in the steering committee and the policy group. They will also participate in project meetings and will contribute where necessary to monitoring actions and corrective measures. All partners will also be expected to contribute to the content of deliverables.

Meetings

The WP coordinator will be in charge of organising meetings. The kick off meeting will be held in Florence in month 2 and will be hosted by the Regione Toscana. The location of subsequent meetings will be decided among partners. The participation of the European Commission at these meetings will be encouraged.

Meetings will be held every 4 to 6 months. An indicative programme of meetings is as follows:

- Kick off meeting – month 2

- 2nd meeting – month 6

- 3rd meeting – month 12

- 4th meeting – month 18

- 5th meeting – month 24

- 6th meeting – month 30

- 7th meeting – month 36

- 8th meeting – month 42

The WP coordinator will have the responsibility of: proposing an agenda (in collaboration with the host partner); preparing material on project advancement to be presented; organising the venue and necessary material (in collaboration with the host partner); chairing the steering committee meeting; preparing and circulating the meeting minutes to all partners and to the European Commission.

Establishing the ERNEST Network (governance and organisational structure)

The network governance structure is described in detail in section 2.1. The first task in WP1 will be to establish the different units of the coordination structure. This will be initiated at the ERNEST kick off meeting. Therefore, the kick off meeting will see the definition and establishment of the **Steering Committee** and the **Policy and Advisory Group**.

The technical and administrative **Steering Committee** aims to ensure full participation of each partner and to accomplish and coordinate project activities in the most effective and efficient way for all. Steering Committee meetings will be held once every 4 to 6 months.

The **Policy and Advisory Group** will be formed of governmental or high-level representatives (ministers or high level officials depending on who the partner decided is best suited), one for each partner and will have the responsibility of steering ERNEST activities towards potential sustainability and mainstreaming in regional programmes. Independent scientific experts will be invited to participate in the group. The policy and advisory group will meet once a year. The group is described in detail in section 2.1.

The project coordinator will prepare a Project Quality Handbook (deliverable 1.1) which defines the governance structure, the role and responsibilities of each unit and of each participant. The Handbook will also explain the functioning of an ERA NET action and the unique features of the ERNEST project. The objective of this handbook is to facilitate cooperation within the ERNEST governance units by defining a set of rules and instructions. The document will follow ISO 9000 written standards, prepared by the International Organisation for Standardisation. This will be an internal document addressed to the partnership and European Commission officers and available on the reserved area of the project web site.

The 4 Year Project Action Plan (deliverable 1.2) will also be developed at the beginning of the project by the WP coordinator, with input from project partners during the kick of meeting and through subsequent email contact. This Action Plan will include specific objectives, actions, activities and communication strategies and the related time scales and budget. The Action Plan will also include a risk analysis in order to identify, and ultimately avoid potential risks to successful project implementation. The risk analysis will follow a standard format:

- Establishing the context (Identification of risk in a selected domain of interest)

- Mapping out the social scope of risk management, the identity and objectives of stakeholders, the basis upon which risks will be evaluated and constraints.

- Defining a framework for the activity and an agenda for identification.

- Developing an analysis of risks involved in the process.

- Mitigation of risks using available technological, human and organisational resources.

Monitoring and evaluation

The WP coordinator is responsible for continuous project monitoring and evaluation. The WP coordinator will either carry out or commission a monitoring activity once a year (4 times throughout the project). The evaluation will concern both methodological / organisational features of the project and technical / operational features. It will be used as a learning tool to understand better how the project is developing and will help to identify any implementation problems and to solve them with corrective measures. Along with the partner(s) which the measures concern, the WP coordinator will be responsible for ensuring that these measures are then implemented.

Ensuring the long term sustainability of the ERNEST network activities

This task is to some extent transversal to all work packages. However, the task will be coordinated within WP1 by the WP coordinator who will preside over a 'think tank' of ERNEST partner representatives (and external experts where considered to be of added value) formed to deal with this task.

Durable cooperation will come through practical / technical and political means. The task force will analyse and evaluate the situation on both sides. In terms of political means, following indications from the policy group, the task force will identify points in common, potential political or legal obstacles and propose a set of recommendations for cooperation agreements or memorandums of understanding to present to the policy group. In technical terms, the think tank will analyse where joint activities and actions can be continued, how the project results can be used and what future funding opportunities exist (European Commission, autonomous funding). This analysis will include a study of other similar networks as good practices.

The task force will work on a concept of variable geography, meaning that the proposals will not necessarily have to involve all partners to the same extent. Some proposals may concern bilateral cooperation or may be particularly relevant to a certain group of regions. The overall goal must be to ensure that the work and results of ERNEST are not lost but instead have a long term future in some form. The recommendations will be made public in a report.

Deliverables (brief description and month of delivery)		
ID	description	month of delivery
1.1	**Project quality handbook** Outlines programme rules and information on project management and running, including each partner's specific responsibilities.	4
1.2	**Detailed 4 year Project Action Plan** Describes in detail actions and activities to be undertaken over 4 year project duration.	6
1.3	**Recommendation report on long term road map** Recommendation for durable cooperation (political and technical)	42

Work Package 2 (WP2)

Work package number	2		Start date or starting event:						0		
Work package title	Information Exchange										
Activity Type	COORD										
Participant number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Person-months per participant:	3,2	2	3.3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1,8	1,8

Objectives

The Information Exchange Work Package has the following objectives:

- to identify and exchange information and knowledge on structures and research programmes that each region wishes to coordinate or open up mutually

- to identify within the research programmes elements related to a "two pillar operative structure" of social dialogue (participative processes for programming including all relevant stakeholders) and measurement of tourism impact

- To improve communication, develop better reciprocal knowledge and promote trust-building among programme owners or managers in the field of sustainable tourism

- To identify strong, weak and common points of each regional tourism research system and tourism sector (in terms of sustainability)

Description of work

This WP will be coordinated by Basquetour. Basquetour has a wide experience in this field as shown by the projects in which it has participated together with Innobasque (participating as third party). Both organisations have extensive experience in ERA-NET, coordinating MANUNET ERA-NET, and participating in HY-CO and COMPERA. Innobasque participates in INNONET projects such as INNET and, in liaison with the Basque Government, participates in MNT-ERANET (management group), EUROTRANS-BIO, and eTRANET.

All ERNEST partners will participate in the Information Exchange work package by analysing and presenting their knowledge and experience. Each partner is responsible for preparing for and attending 2 project meetings, for contributing to and checking / providing feedback to the 2 deliverables, to organising 2 regional level seminars.

As coordinator of WP5 on outreach and communication, SE RDA will have an extra role to play in terms of regional meetings in each partner's territory (person months included in WP6). This includes providing the necessary project material, collecting and bringing together reports on meetings in order to keep the communication strategy up to date on activities undertaken.

Regional structures and programmes – Initial Exchange

This work package will begin from the outset of the project and will last for 10 months. At the kick off meeting each partner will present their region (including their respective industry, research community and RTD landscape), their tourism sector, their research programmes, policy and priorities concerning sustainable tourism and existing programme management approaches. These presentations will concern present and future planned activities and will not focus on past activities, except as background information. The meeting will also see the presentation and discussion of an initial regional SWOT analysis for each partner, particularly concentrating on regional best practices in the field of research and / or sustainable tourism and on regional weaknesses in these fields. This initial information will be "networked" through exchange. The meeting will offer the chance to pool the knowledge available and perform a cross analysis of available data and information.

Partners will also initiate a discussion on areas of interest and research boundaries to be considered in this project, for example:

- How do we define tourism – a wide concept including all the supply chain or more restricted?

- What types of tourism are we interested in?

- What does sustainable tourism mean for your region (definitions, activities, policies)?

Following the meeting each partner will contact and engage open dialogue with their regional stakeholders to present the project and to discuss some of the information available on their regional systems. This allows partners to have a real overview of the territory, of different perspectives and to promote collaboration and dialogue. Partners will further develop the proposed SWOT analysis together with the regional stakeholders. Partners will produce a written report of their regional experience and actions (including the input of regional stakeholders). A template will be prepared by the WP leader for the meetings and the reports to ensure that

comparable questions and structures are used.

The WP coordinator will use these reports to produce the first deliverable (2.1) "Survey 1 – Mapping & Coordination of Regional Policies, Strategies, Programmes & Technological Capabilities" which will map these initiatives, programmes and regional features. The report will be circulated among partners for comments and input. It will be approved in month 6 at the 2nd project meeting.

Common points among ERNEST partners

The second project meeting will use participative methods to compare the information presented in the first deliverable and to identify:

- Points in common and complementarities between systems and programmes

- New opportunities and gaps in research

- Proposed solutions for existing weaknesses

- Potential areas for cooperation and wider exploitation of results

One possible participative method is that of the knowledge café. A Knowledge Café is a simple means for a group of people to have an open, creative conversation on a topic of mutual interest to gain a deeper collective understanding of the subject and the issues involved. It is method of collaborative inquiry, based on the assumption that people already have knowledge and experience on the subject of discussion, that maximizes the opportunity for participants to provide and receive advice and inspiration from their peers. It is held in an open, comfortable environment with a facilitator present. Groups of around 4 people work together on specific topics with one person acting as leader and reporter for the group. After a set amount of time, the leader stays in the same place while participants change tables. The leader provides the new participants with a summary of what was done before and the new group builds on it and then turns to the next question. After addressing all questions, the group leaders presents the findings and the facilitator draws the conclusions. These conclusions would form the basis of the final report.

Following the meeting partners continue the dialogue with regional stakeholders and present the results of the participatory session to their territory. Regional stakeholders will be given a chance to express their opinion. The results of the participatory session and the regional dialogue will be used to prepare the Survey 2 – Interregional Comparison (deliverable 2.2). The deliverable will be circulated among partners and the final draft will be approved by project partners in month 10, which represents the official end of this work package.

Moving from WP2 to WP3

Following these two levels of information exchange, the network will reach the maturity to develop some joint activities. The work carried out in this WP and the deliverable 2.2 lay the basis for identifying, defining and implementing joint actions in WP3. Therefore, in the last month of WP2 the coordinator will dedicate time to exchange with WP3 coordinator in order to ensure a smooth pass over from one WP to the next.

Deliverables (brief description and month of delivery)		
ID	description	month of delivery
2.1	**Survey 1 – Mapping & Coordination of Regional Policies, Strategies, Programmes & Technological Capabilities** (best practices and weak points)	6
2.2	**Survey 2 – Interregional Comparison** (including constraints and solutions to further cooperation)	10

Work Package 3 (WP3)

Work package number	3	Start date or starting event:	9
Work package title	Definition / preparation / implementation of joint activities		

Activity Type	COORD											
Participant number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Person-months per participant:	7	9,7	5,2	6,5	6,5	5,3	6,5	5,2	5,2	5,2	4,2	4,2

Objectives

The Definition / preparation / implementation of joint activities Work Package has the following objectives:

- to define and prepare joint research activities on sustainable tourism research, including methods of communication and participation, indicators, operative measures and systems for revealing and correcting negative territorial characteristics and building on positive characteristics

- to implement joint activities in these fields according to common needs, particularly concentrating on training, exchange and evaluation at an interregional level

- to bring added value to individual regional actions on sustainable tourism through cooperation

Description of work

This WP will be coordinated by Cité de la Culture et du Tourisme Durable. With the aim of preparing common research programmes and on the basis of the work carried out in WP2, CCTD will make all its technical and communication tools available to the ERNEST project (Internet, Intranet, Extranet). These tools are currently being modernised and development will ensure that they are completely adapt for the leadership of WP3. The CCTD research centre and strategic framework also respond perfectly to the WP3 needs, notably for the work on indicators and corrective measures.

CCTD has a wide experience in the field of research, training and evaluation (described in detail below). CCTD will use this experience, founded on pragmatic and cooperative approaches, to successfully coordinate the WP. CCTD will coordinate WP3 through constant coordination and exchange with the whole consortium. This will be particularly important in the construction of criteria for programme evaluation, taking into account local, interregional and international dimensions.

All ERNEST partners will participate in the initial phase of defining and preparing the joint actions. Each partner will organise a regional consultation seminar, participate in project meetings, contribute to definition of the action plan, reports and of WP deliverables,

ERNEST partners will all be involved in implementation of joint activities though the activities will vary and depends on the results of initial analysis. Partners 11, 12 and 13 will have a lesser role in terms of organising joint activities, though they will be extremely active in participation. The number of person months are therefore lower than the other partners. In detail:

- Conseil Régional d'Aquitaine

- Regione Emilia Romagna

As coordinator of WP5 on outreach and communication, SE RDA will have a role to play in terms of regional meetings in each partner's territory (person months included in WP6).. This includes providing the necessary project material, collecting and bringing together reports on meetings in order to keep the communication strategy up to date on activities undertaken.

Initial preparation

The first month of this WP will involve intense exchange between the coordinator of WP2 and WP3 in order to ensure a smooth transfer from one WP to the next. The information gathered in the two deliverables from WP2 will form the initial basis for identifying the type of cooperation and the areas which will be addressed and which activities should be actively defined and prepared.

Defining and preparing joint activities

As with WP2, definition of activities will take place through a wide consultation process at regional and project level. The issue of sustainable tourism also involves numerous public and private actors in various different thematic fields. The ERNEST project will bring these actors together at a local and regional level as

well as at an interregional level in order to coordinate and add value to their individual activities. 1 regional meeting will be held in each region within the 1st 2 months of the WP (results ready for 3rd project meeting, month 12). The regional consultation process is particularly important to ensure that the joint actions are responding to real territorial demand.

At project level exchange will take place during project meetings. The first consultation process will begin at the 3rd project meeting (month 12) where participative methods (such as the knowledge café) will be used to fully understand the actions that different partners would be interested in carrying out and when common points of interest can be found. Partners will also identify and consider any potential legal and / or administrative barriers to joint actions and how they could be resolved. Particular attention will be paid to the development of joint actions in the fields of:

- joint education and vocational training (including e-learning)

- personnel exchange and study visits

- equipment / facility sharing

- interregional evaluation procedures (common evaluation criteria and methods of implementation)

- specific cooperation agreements

Following the meeting partners will present the results of the participatory session to their territory. Regional stakeholders will be given a chance to express their opinion and their interest in the joint activities.

The results of the participatory session and the regional meetings will be used to prepare an action plan for joint strategic activities among ERNEST partners (deliverable 3.1). This action plan will include: Identification and detailed description of action; Added value of action to participating regions; Budget; Timescale; Participants (ERNEST partner and regional) and the role of each participant. The action plan will also include the description of any identified obstacles and complications and means of overcoming them. The action plan will be circulated among partners and the final draft will be approved at the 4th project meeting (month 18).

Implementing Joint Activities

Following the approval of the action plan working groups will be formed to undertake the joint actions that have been agreed upon. The time scale for each action depends on its content (and will be established in the action plan).This phase will be overseen by the WP coordinator and working groups will be asked to report regularly by email and at project meetings.

For each joint action carried out a report will be produced to present the activities and the results. In the report it will be essential to establish further cooperation activities that could be born from this experience. The reports will be brought together by the WP coordinator and used to prepare the Final Report on Joint Activities (deliverable 3.2) which will analyse all the joint activities implemented within the ERNEST project in the field of sustainable tourism research and recommendations for continued cooperation. The Final Report on Joint Activities will include an analysis of the project's performance in terms of the horizontal issues of gender and of science and society related issues. It will be circulated among partners and approved in month 43, official end of this WP.

Deliverables (brief description and month of delivery)		
ID	description	month of delivery
3.1	**Action plan for joint activities** (results of regional and interregional dialogue, identifying the actions to be carried out and the means of undertaking them)	18
3.2	**Final report on joint activities** (after conclusion of joint activities, presents and analyses the activities carried out and potential areas of continued collaboration)	43

Work Package 4 (WP4)

Work package number	4	Start date or starting event:	24
Work package title	Trans-National/Regional Joint Call Implementation		
Activity Type	COORD		

Participant number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Person-months per participant:	5,4	4	3,5	3,5	4,5	3,5	4.5	3,5	3,5	4	3	3

Objectives

The Trans-National/Regional Joint Call Implementation Work Package has the following objectives:

- to fund joint interregional research on sustainable tourism through joint calls

- to promote productive cooperation and collaboration in research both in terms of interregional cooperation and cooperation at regional level, including public-private partnerships

Description of work

This WP will be coordinated by the Regione Toscana. The Regione Toscana is partner in ERA STAR Regions (ERA NET action) which has already launched one joint call and is currently preparing a second. The Regione Toscana has also gained experience in interregional calls through coordinating to work packages in the INTERREG IIIC project DEPURE which has successfully financed two interregional calls for sub projects. The Regione Toscana has also provided expert support for the participation of two interregional calls for the ERA NETs MANUNET and ERA SME.

The concept of variable geometry applies to this WP. The ERNEST partners who have already assured participation in and funding for joint calls are: Regione Toscana, CCTD, NORDA, Catalonia and Aquitaine. The other partners have expressed a strong interest and intention to participate. They will verify and confirm their availability during the initial project phase. This activity may also see the participation of regions from outside the consortium, contacted during WP6 (see below).

One joint call for research project proposals is currently foreseen. Depending on the financial resources available and on the levels of interest, there may be a possibility of publishing more than one joint call.

Writing the joint call

Thanks to the work carried out in WP2 and WP3, at the beginning of WP4 the ERNEST partners will already a have a good knowledge of each other's region and their position on research in sustainable tourism. This knowledge will be used to write the joint call for research project proposals. The projects will be in the form of interregional research projects or actions on sustainable tourism. The projects will be particularly concentrated on the joint pillar topics of social dialogue and measurement. However, the financing of joint projects will not be limited to these themes. Work in WP2 and WP3 will bring to light any other areas of research interest for participating regions.

The joint call will ask research project participants to define a joint strategy including: planning, research activities, evaluation, dissemination of results and experiences. Each project will have at least 2 partners from 2 different regions.

The content of the call and the evaluation process, including evaluation criteria, will be discussed at the 5th project meeting. The WP coordinator will then provide a draft version which will be circulated among partners for comments. Approval will be provided by written communication. The WP coordinator will send the approved version to all partners.

Publicising the joint call

The regional meetings held in the previous 2 WPs become essential in the dissemination of the joint call. Actors who have participated in regional meetings will be re-contacted and the call will be presented to them. This could be at a regional meeting and / or through other means such as direct email or telephone contact. In order to ensure a still wider dissemination, the calls will be published on regional websites and partners will also identify the best further means of dissemination at regional level according to their regional characteristics. Partners will follow regional legislation for the publication of calls for proposals.

The joint call (deliverable 4.1) will also be published on the ERNEST web site. It will be sent to other interested regions outside the ERNEST consortium as identified during WP6 (described below).

Evaluating the joint call proposals

The projects will be evaluated at regional and interregional level in a two phase process. Partners will choose the regional evaluation committee which is most suitable to their requirements.

At interregional level, a group of experts from different ERNEST regions will evaluate the call. The experts should have technical and management skills. These experts will be nominated by ERNEST partners from internal or external personnel.

The exact criteria to evaluate proposals will be confirmed during the project duration (as described above) but will include: technical relevance, added value of interregional cooperation, quality of partnership, relevance to the theme of sustainable tourism, expected impact, dissemination activities, management structures and potential sustainability.

Implementing joint call activities

Each partner will be responsible for overseeing the activities carried out in their own region. This includes frequent meetings, telephone and email contact with those developing the activity. Feedback will be required at different stages of activities (specified in the call and the agreements signed with participants) and when projects meet set milestones.

The WP coordinator will be in charge of overseeing all activities and of ensuring the correct level of interregional activity is maintained. The WP coordinator will be responsible for collecting final reports and for using them to prepare the report on Lessons Learned from Joint Projects (deliverable 4.2) which will describe and analyse each project and present some lessons learned, including possibilities for continued cooperation. This document will be circulated among ERNEST partners and project developers for their comments. It will be approved by written communications and will be circulated at ERNEST events, in particular the final conference.

Deliverables (brief description and month of delivery)		
ID	description	month of delivery
4.1	**Joint call** (widely published document, call for interregional research proposals)	25
4.2	**Lessons learned from joint projects** (description and analysis of each joint project including possibilities for further collaboration)	45

Work Package 5 (WP5)

Work package number	5			Start date or starting event:				2			
Work package title	Outreach and Communication										
Activity Type	COORD										
Participant number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Person-months per participant:	4,5	2,3	2,3	2,3	6,7	2,3	2,7	2.3	2,3	2,3	2	2

Objectives

The Outreach and Communication WP has the following objectives:

• To encourage the participation of regional actors in ERNEST activities

• To raise awareness of issues related to sustainable tourism within the participant regions

• To promote the activities and results of the project at regional, national and European level

• To encourage synergy and cooperation will other related projects and networks

• To increase the possibility of durable and extended cooperation and / or mainstreaming of activities

Description of work

This horizontal work package will be coordinated by the South East Romania Development Agency. SE RDA has a proven experience in communication activities for networks and cooperation projects through its work coordinating the ARISE project (FP6), participating in a project on Environmental Policies and Urban Management with partners from Italy, Romania and Bulgaria and in various other projects under RDA-NET CEDA II and the INTERREG III B CADES programmes.

All partners will be involved in outreach and communication activities at regional and European level. One partner from each MS will be in charge of translating materials and content into their own language where necessary. Where more than 1 partner comes from the same MS, budget has been allocated to 1 of them for translation costs.

Where feasible and effective, joint dissemination activities can be carried out. This is particularly useful in the case of partners who are geographically close to one another.

Preparation of Communication Strategy

The first activity in this work package will involve the preparation of the project Communication Strategy (deliverable 5.1). This document will be prepared by the WP coordinator following input from all partners during the project kick off meeting. The document will include a description of what activities will be carried out, the objectives, target groups and content of each, the means of promoting them, partners involved and to what extent and the budget for each activity. As an annexe to this document, each partner will prepare an individual stakeholder involvement plan for their region (deliverable 5.2) to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are aware of the ERNEST project and to encourage their involvement. As each region may have different mechanisms for involvement or different characteristics, the documents should be prepared by the partner themselves and should not be in the form of a global project blueprint. These documents will be continuously updated. Both documents will be approved in month 5 and will be discussed at the 2nd project meeting (month 6) in order to define means of implementation.

Implementation of communication plan

After the initial planning and approval of the communication plan and stakeholder involvement plan, information and dissemination activities will begin through each partner's communicational channels. This also means that dissemination and communication activities will be shared with local partners and each partner will exploit the local network to further spread the information.

The overall aim is to increase awareness of the need for sustainable tourism among the population and, specifically, among those who are involved in tourism as an activity. To this end the communication strategy will be divided into a general campaign aiming to reach as many people as possible and a specific campaign directed to the target groups identified. Therefore, activities will directly or indirectly involve:

- public authorities;

- research institutes;

- service providers (tourism and other related sectors e.g. energy provides, waste management services, transport providers);

- enterprises connected to or operating in tourism;

- local population;

- tourists;

- relative associations or organisations.

The means used to publicise the project include the preparation and diffusion of material such as leaflets, brochures, and short reports to inform the citizens on project activities and particularly on the theme and importance of sustainable tourism. Publications will have a similar format for all partners and will be translated into each partner's language. They will be prepared in accordance with European Commission regulation on publicity of European funded projects, including the relevant logos and information on the source of funding and the EU programme aims.

The project foresees the production of a new project web site which will have a public section presenting the project's aims, consortium and activities along with the ERA-Net scheme itself. The web site will have a user manual for partners (deliverable 5.3). The results of joint activities (including the joint calls) will also be published here. The web site will also have a reserved section in which partners and European Commission officers can access work in progress and internal project information. The technical development of the web site will be undertaken by the Regione Toscana. The content and updating will be the responsibility of the WP coordinator with input from all partners.

Awareness raising will be further pursued through targeted workshops and meetings, connected with the activities of WP2 and WP3. Each partner is responsible for organising meetings at regional level at least every 6 month to a year. The project also foresees 4 interregional joint workshops. These meetings or workshops will have the aim of further involving the most important target groups identified above and will therefore be organised in a fully participative manner (using techniques like the "knowledge café"). Minutes of each event will be provided to the WP coordinator who will also be in charge of overseeing the successful undertaking of the various initiatives. Partners who will organise an interregional event are: RT, SE RDA, NORDA and CCTD.

The project also places importance on collaboration with other European networks and projects dealing with related issues. In this way ERNEST can widen its added value. Wherever possible events and initiatives will be organised in collaboration with other networks or projects and participation of the ERNEST partners at related events is encouraged. To this end, the role of the Brussels offices of all partners will be vital as their geographical position allows them to be up to date on existing projects and to investigate possibilities for collaboration.

Collaboration with the recently created European Network for a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism will be of particular importance. This network is currently led by Toscana, Catalonia and PACA and includes a number of ERNEST partners as members. Through this network dissemination of ERNEST activities will be facilitated, including participation in events and potential new project participants (WP6).

Final conference

The project will end with a 1 day international conference in Florence. The conference will be organised by the WP coordinator and the project leader with support from all project partners. The conference will give space to the technical and political aspects of research into sustainable tourism. (described in detail in Section 3.2)

Deliverables (brief description and month of delivery)		
ID	description	month of delivery
5.1	**Communication strategy** (description of communication activities, objectives, target groups and content, means of promoting them, partners involved and to what extent and budget)	5
5.2	**Stakeholder involvement plan** (individual stakeholder involvement plan for each region)	5
5.3	**Web site and user manual**	7

Work Package 6 (WP6)

Work package number	6				Start date or starting event:				0		
Work package title	Identifying and Attracting New Partners										
Activity Type	COORD										
Participant number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Person-months per participant:	5.3	1.2	1.2	1.5	1.5	1.1	1.5	1.1	1.5	1.5	1.1	1.1

Objectives

The Identifying and Attracting New Partners WP has the following objectives:

- To include one new partner in the consortium
- To establish ERNEST as an open network of sustainable tourism research
- To identify potential partners or collaborating regions
- To encourage the participation of potential partners or collaborating regions

Description of work

This horizontal work package will be coordinated by the Regione Toscana. The Regione Toscana has experience in this type of activity particularly through coordinating the ERIK Network where one specific action was dedicated to attracting new associate members.

As this WP is connected to WP5 on Outreach and Communication, SE RDA (WP5 coordinator) will be involved in planning and documenting WP6 in the Communication Plan and any other activities requiring integration with WP6 initiatives. NORDA will have a specific role in contacting and promoting synergy with regions in the Shining Mountain project of which they are partner. Members of the European Network for a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism (described above) will also have an important role to play.

Each partner will have a clearly defined role in identifying and contacting new partners as described below.

The ERNEST project starts with a significant sized consortium which sees the participation of a number of active regions with a proven experience and / or interest in research into sustainable tourism. However, the ERNEST project would like to see this group of regions grow over the four year project period. ERNEST will be an open network in that it will accept new associate members into the consortium through its duration, adhering in all cases to the criteria for participation in ERA NET actions. By attracting a large number of regions ERNEST will have an ever greater role in addressing problems of research fragmentation in Europe.

These regions would not have funding from the European Commission but the project leader does have a budget to cover some participation costs and, where interest and commitment is shown, they would be admitted to participate with regional resources in the joint calls.

Identifying new regions

The first step in this WP is that of identifying potential partners. Some regions have already been identified by partners during project preparation and some have already expressed an interest in the project development. These include: Bremen (DE), Ireland (IR), Bretagne (FR), PACA (FR), Sicily (IT), Andalusia (ES), Malopolska (PL), Scotland (UK), Lower Austria (AU), SHINING Mountains project partners - Montefeltro (IT), Appennino (IT), West Macedonia (GR), Pelion (GR), South West Bulgaria (BG) and Kosice Self-Governing Region (SK).

Each partner will provide additional information on potentially interested and eligible regions. These regions should represent a wide geographical spread across Europe and may include areas outside Europe in order to promote the global nature of the issue of sustainable tourism. This information will be found through:

- contacts existing from other projects or networks (carried out by individual partners);
- analysis of the situation (i.e. regions active in research on sustainable tourism) at each partner's national level (carried out by individual partners);
- analysis of the situation in states not represented in ERNEST and/or outside Europe (carried out by the WP coordinator).

On the basis of this contribution a report named Presentation of Potential Partner Regions (deliverable 6.1)

will be prepared by the WP coordinator compiling information on each region and in particular on their tourism sector, experience on sustainable tourism actions and research programmes and activities in this sector. This report will be available to project partners and to European Commission officers.

Contacting new regions

Following the preparation of the report each partner will be responsible for contacting a number of these regions in order to present the ERNEST project and the opportunities it offers. Allocation of regions will depend on already established relations and on linguistic skills. In general, contact will initially made by email with follow up telephone calls. A standard text for the email will be prepared by WP coordinator and once approved will be translated into each language. If regions are interested in the project they will be re-contacted by the WP coordinator.

The WP coordinator has a set amount of funding to pay for the participation of potential partners at ERNEST meetings. This participation will be encouraged in order to allow regions to get a feel of the project and to get to know each other. Where regions outside of the consortium are participating the meeting agenda will be adapted accordingly. The meeting will be divided into two sections. The first will be an internal consortium meeting related to administration, financial issues and general management issues. The second will be open to the external regions and will be more open, presenting project activities and including time allowing presentation of the external region and relative experience.

Interested regions will also be placed on an ERNEST mailing list to receive updated information on project events and initiatives.

This WP should help to ensure the growth and sustainability of the ERNEST project. To this end the results of the WP activities will be collected and analysed in the Report on New Partner Activity (deliverable 6.2). The report will summaries the actions undertaken to involve new regions and analyse their effectiveness. It will describe the regions involved, how and what actions were undertaken together. It will also identify points for future collaboration. The information in this report will be taken into consideration in the preparation of deliverable 1.4 "Recommendation report on long term road map".

One new region will be incorporated into the consortium as a full partner in the first 2 years of the project.

Deliverables (brief description and month of delivery)		
ID	description	month of delivery
6.1	**Presentation of Potential Partner Regions** (description of regions identified and contacted)	6
6.2	**Report on New Partner Activity** (summary of actions undertaken, regions contacted, outcomes, analysis of methods used, input to long term road map)	45

Work Package 7 (WP7)

Work package number	1						Start date or starting event:			0		
Work package title	Project management											
Activity Type	MGT											
Participant number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Person-months per participant:	8.3	2.7	2.7	2.2	3	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.3	1.3

Objectives

The Project Management Work Package has the following objectives:

- To successfully undertake and complete the financial and administrative management of the project

Description of work

The Regione Toscana, project coordinator, will have the overall responsibility for project management. The Regione Toscana has proven experience in managing networks and projects related to innovation and research, including the ERIK Network (European Regions Innovation and Knowledge Network), the AGATA and MEROPE projects (INTERREG IIIB) and specifically on tourism, including the EVIMED project (INTERREG IIIB).

Other partners will be expected to participate by providing administrative and financial information by the required deadlines.

Ensuring overall project management

The CCU (described in detail in section 2.1) will be in charge of the daily running and organisation of the project and, therefore, the efficient management of all technical, financial and administrative aspects. The CCU will ensure that these aspects are implemented in accordance with the project contract and the rules of the Seventh Framework Programme for the management of Coordination Support Actions.

Specifically, the CCU will be responsible for:

• Partnership management including activities related to the maintenance of the consortium agreement;

• Overall legal, ethical, financial and administrative management

• Contact with the European Commission on administrative and technical issues;

• financial reporting (intermediate and final) including for each of the participants obtaining the certificates on the financial statements or on the methodology;

• administrative reporting.

The CCU will base its actions both on the Project Quality Handbook (described above WP1) and on the 4 Year Project Action Plan (described above WP1) which it will be responsible for developing at the beginning of the project, with input from project partners.

The CCU will collect and review technical information about activities pertaining to the project actions and will draw progress documentation to be submitted to the European Commission. The project will produce an intermediate and a final report (based in part on the project monitoring and on partner inputs). These reports will include comprehensive administrative and financial statements and resume the project activities, progress, expenditures, incomes and other necessary information. The final progress report will also include the results of an external financial audit commissioned by each project partner. The reports will be circulated around partners and will also be made available to partners and European Commission officers on a reserved section on the project web site (accessible with personal user name and password).

Deliverables (brief description and month of delivery)		
ID	description	month of delivery
7.1	**Consortium agreement**	4
7.2	**Mid term progress report** (only for members of the consortium including the Commission Services)	24
7.3	**Financial audit** (carried out by external auditor)	48
7.4	**Final progress report** – only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	48

Project Effort Form1: Summary of staff effort

Participant no./short name	WP1	WP2	WP3	WP4	WP5	WP6	WP7	Total person months
1. RT	10,4	3,2	7	5,4	4,5	5,3	8,3	44,1
2. CCTD	2	2	9,7	4	2,3	1,2	2,7	23,9
3. Basquetour	2	3,3	5,2	3,5	2,3	1,2	2,7	20,2
4. Ilia	1,8	2	6,5	3,5	2,3	1,5	2,2	19,8
5. SE RDA	2,1	2	6,5	4,5	6,7	1,5	3	26,3
6. DG R+D+I	1,8	2	5,3	3,5	2,3	1,1	2,1	18,1
7. NORDA	1,9	2	6,5	4,5	2,7	1,5	2,2	21,3
8. South West Tourism	1,8	2	5,2	3,5	2,3	1,1	2,1	18
9. DFNA, NZ	1,8	2	5,2	4	2,3	1,5	2,1	18,4
10. Catalonia	1,8	2	5,2	3,5	2,3	1,5	2,1	18,9
11. CRA	1,8	1,8	4,2	3	2	1,1	1,3	15,2
12. RER	1,8	1,8	4,2	3	2	1,1	1,3	15,2
Total	31	26,1	70,7	45,9	34	19,6	32,1	259,4

Project Effort Form 2 - indicative efforts per activity type per beneficiary

Exchange activities	1. RT	2. CCTD	3.Basquetour	4.Ilia	5.SERDA	6.DG R+D+I	7.NORDA	8.SWT	9.DFNA, NZ	10.GEN. CAT	11.CRA	12.RER	Total Activities
WP2: initial exchange	1,7	1	2	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,3	1,3	17,8
WP2: common points	1	0,5	0,8	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	6,8
WP2: moving to WP3	0,5	0,5	0,5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,5
Total "exchange"	3,2	2	3,3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1,8	1,8	26,1

Joint Actions (including joint calls)	1. RT	2. CCTD	3.Basquetour	4.Ilia	5.SERDA	6.DG R+D+I	7.NORDA	8.SWT	9.DFNA, NZ	10.GEN. CAT	11.CRA	12.RER	Total Activities
WP3: Initial preparation	1	2	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	8
WP3: defining and preparing activities	1	2	0,5	1	1	0,5	1	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	9,5
WP3: implementing activities	5	5,7	4,2	5	5	4,3	5	4,2	4,2	4,2	3,2	3,2	53,3
WP4: writing joint call	1,4	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	6,9
WP4: publicising joint call	1	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	6,5
WP4: evaluating projects	1	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	6,5
WP4: implementing activities	2	2,5	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	2,5	1,5	1,5	26
Total "joint actions"	12,4	13,7	8,7	10	11	8,8	11	8,7	8,7	9,2	7,2	7,2,	120,2

Coordination and management activities	1. RT	2. CCTD	3.Basquetour	4.Ilia	5.SERDA	6.DG R+D+I	7.NORDA	8.SWT	9.DFNA, NZ	10.GEN. CAT	11.CRA	12.RER	Total Activities
WP1: meetings	3	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	8,5

WP1: establishing network	3	0,7	0,7	0,6	0,7	0,6	0,7	0,6	0,6	0,6	0,6	0,6	10
WP1: monitoring	3	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,4	0,4	8,3
WP1: ensuring sustainability	1,4	0,3	0,3	0,2	0,4	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,3	0,3	4,2
WP7: overall management	8,3	2,7	2,7	2,2	3	2,1	2,2	2,1	2,1	2,1	1,3	1,3	32,1
Total "coordination and management"	18,7	4,7	4,7	4	5,1	3,9	4,1	3,9	3,9	3,9	3,1	3,1	63,1

Dissemination and enlargement activities	1. RT	2. CCTD	3.Basque tour	4.Ilia	5.SE RDA	6.DG R+D+I	7.NORD A	8.SWT	9.DFN A, NZ	10.GEN. CAT	11.CRA	12.RER	Total Activities
WP5: preparing communication strategy	1	0,3	0,3	0,3	1,7	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,3	5,7
WP5: implementing communication strategy	1,5	1,4	1,4	1,4	3	1,4	1,9	1,4	1,4	1,4	1,1	1,1	18,4
WP5: final conference	2	0,6	0,6	0,6	2	0,6	0,5	0,6	0,6	0,6	0,6	0,6	9,9
WP6: Identifying new regions	3	0,7	0,7	1	1	0,6	1	0,6	1	1	0,6	0,6	11,8
WP6: Contacting new regions	2,3	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	7,8
Total "dissemination and enlargement"	9,8	3,5	3,5	3,8	8,2	3,4	4,2	3,4	3,8	3,8	3,1	3,1	53,6

TOTAL	44,1	23.9	20.2	19.8	26.3	18.1	21.3	18	18.4	18.9	15,2	15,2	271

Milestone no.	Milestone name	WPs no's.	Lead beneficiary	Delivery date from Annex I	Comments
*List and schedule of milestones*					
M1	Governance units set-up	WP1	RT	2	Means of Verification: Approval during kick off meeting
M2	Consortium agreement approval	WP7	RT	5	Means of Verification: Document signed
M3	Approval of Communication Strategy	WP5	SE RDA	5	Means of Verification: Written authorisation from partners
M4	Approval of 4 year action plan	WP1	RT	5	Means of Verification: Written authorisation from partners
M5	Approval of Joint Action Plan	WP3	CCTD	18	Means of Verification: Written authorisation from partners
M6	Mid term progress report approval	WP7	RT	24	Means of Verification: Written authorisation from partners
M7	Joint call launched	WP4	RT	25	Publication of call
M8	Approval of joint call proposals	WP4	RT	30	List of approved proposals
M9	Joint actions completed successfully	WP3	CCTD	43	Publication of final joint actions report with action evaluation
M10	Agreement for Durable Cooperation	WP1	RT	42	Written authorisation from partners
M11	Final progress report approval	WP7	RT	48	Written authorisation from partners

*to be completed at end of negotiation phase

Review no.	Tentative timing, i.e. after month X = end of a reporting period	planned venue of review	Comments , if any
*Tentative schedule of project reviews**			
1	After project month: X		
2	After project month: X		
3	After project month: X		
…	**………………**		

B2 Implementation

B 2.1 Management structure and procedures
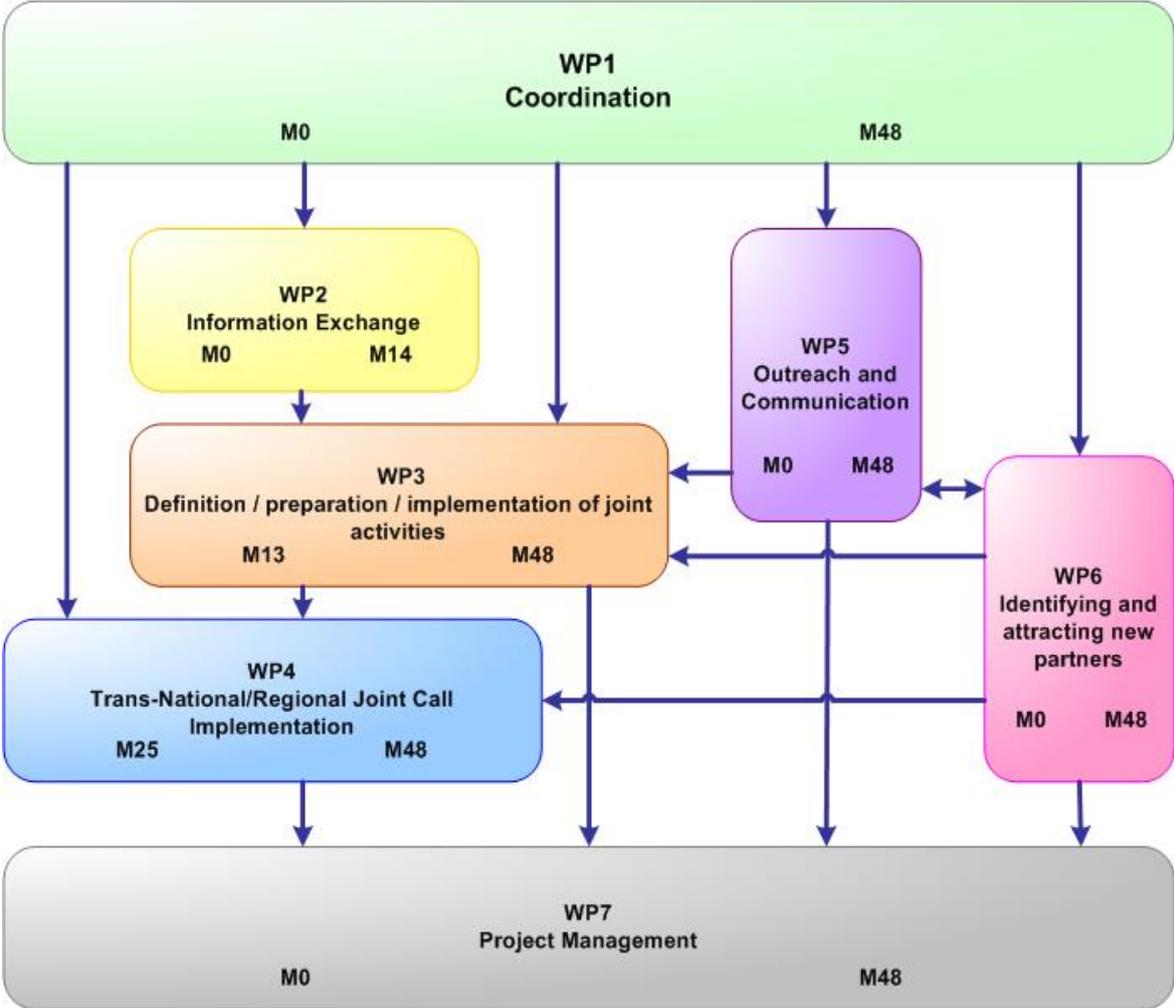
The ERNEST governance structure will be organised according to the following structure:
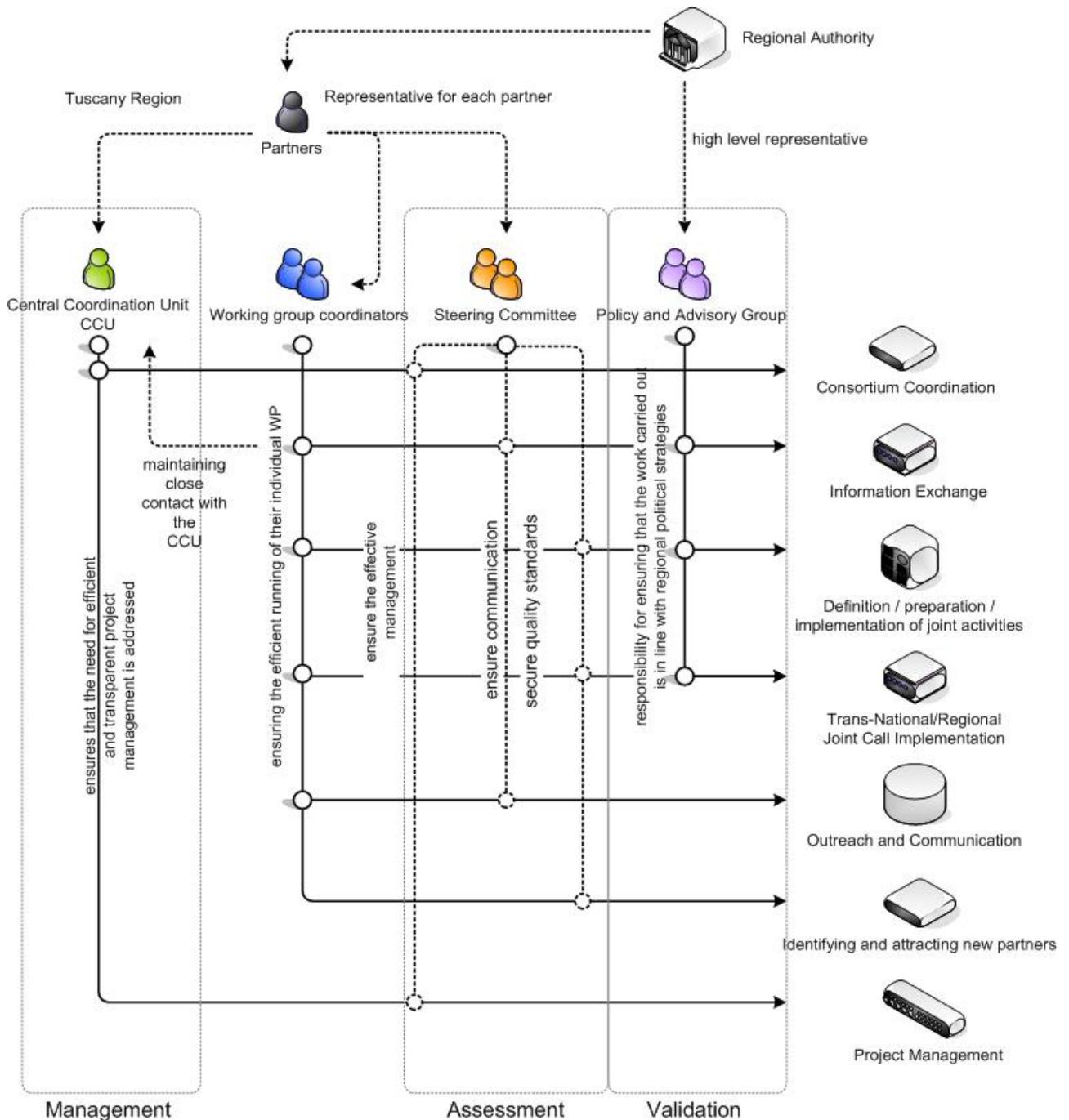
Figure 3: Network Governance Structure

Each component is described in detail below. The structure is matched to the complexity and scale of the project as it is simple and well defined enough to ensure efficient project implementation but it manages to address each project governance "need" and ensures a central structure which coordinates each unit:

- Central Coordination Unit – ensures that the need for efficient and transparent project management is addressed

- Steering Committee – ensures that the need for high project standards and partner participation is addressed

- Policy and Advisory Group – ensures that the political and technical need is addressed

- Work Package coordinators ensure that the technical need is addressed.

Each group and their relative procedures are described below.

Central Coordination Unit (CCU)

The central coordination unit (CCU) will be formed by the Regione Toscana as project coordinator. The CCU is responsible for the daily running and organisation of the project and, therefore, the coordination of all technical, financial and administrative aspects. The CCU will ensure that these aspects are implemented in accordance with the project contract and the rules of the Seventh Framework Programme for the management of Coordination and Support Actions (Coordinating). The CCU will have responsibility in particular for WP1 and WP7.

The CCU is also the centre for communication flow between the different bodies. It is therefore responsible for maintaining contact between partners and with other related projects or networks. It is the single point of contact between the participants and the European Commission. The main communication channels will be phone, email, and fax. ERNEST partners and European Commission officers will also have access (with personal user name and password) to a reserved section on the project web site. This section will be used to upload and store presentations and documents which can be useful for the development of the project.

Evaluation and monitoring

The CCU is also responsible for continuous project monitoring and evaluation. The CCU will undertake or commission a yearly evaluation. This formative evaluation will primarily be undertaken to answer questions about the project to help make more informed decisions related to its current and future operation. The evaluation will help to solve any implementation problems as soon as possible or build on evident success in order to guarantee an efficient functioning and a successful execution of the project. As a result of the formative evaluations, revisions or corrective measures may be made to the operation of the project. Along with the relative partner(s), the CCU will be responsible for ensuring that these measures are implemented.

This evaluation must contain both quantitative and qualitative indicators and data and must take account of the process involved in transforming inputs to outputs and outcomes. It should be an open an honest evaluation concentrating not only on the successes but also on the limitations of the project.

The evaluation will use the following proposed performance indicators and additional indicators identified throughout project implementation:

- No. of regional/local research programmes identified and analysed in field of sustainable tourism

- No. actors involved: public authorities; public equivalent bodies; research entities; private bodies

- No. of dissemination events organised or participated in / No. participants / No. MS represented

- No. of regional/local policies and instruments improved or developed in field of sustainable tourism

- No. of staff members with increased capacity (awareness / knowledge / skills) resulting from exchange/ joint activities / dissemination of experience at interregional events

- No. of new projects/activities/approaches resulting from the exchange/ joint activities / dissemination of experience at interregional events

- No. of good practices identified and made available / transferred to other regional and local

In order to successfully carry out the functions and responsibilities of the CCU the Regione Toscana will avail of its offices in Tuscany and in Brussels.

The CCU will avail of the hipergate management software in order to facilitate efficient project management. Hipergate is an open source web based application suite which includes a range of technical requirements and functional coverage. Hipergate offers collaborative and group tools (e.g.

calendar, directory, discussion forums, reservation of shared resources), content management modules (e.g. personal and group contacts, import systems) and project management and support issues (e.g. hierarchic projects tree, pending tasks tracking). Hipergate is considered suitable for the ERNEST project as it is free, open source, runs on multiple databases and operating systems, supports multiple languages and has a professional services support network.

Steering Committee (SC)

A technical and administrative steering committee will be formed with a representative from each partner. The choice of representative depends on the technical ability and experience of the person in this field.

The main aim of the SC is to ensure full participation of each partner and to accomplish and coordinate project activities in the most effective and efficient way for all.

The steering committee will in particular:

- ensure the effective management and coordination of the project;

- provide professional technical and administrative support;

- secure quality standards and provide efficient quality control and on time delivery of results;

- ensure the most effective communication among partners and towards the outer public at regional, national and European levels;

- examine an approve official documents and decisions;

- monitor and review ongoing activities on the basis of established objectives.

At the beginning of the project a kick-off meeting will be organised in Florence by the lead partner in order to define the decision making rules for the steering committee and the detailed plan of action. Activities to be undertaken at the meeting will also include the internal project "quality plan", meaning the detailed definition of how the work will be divided and developed both in terms of time and of division of labour along with a set of indications for good project management. Following the kick off meeting, one steering committee meeting will be held every six months (8 meetings foreseen in all).

Policy and Advisory Group

The ERNEST consortium recognises that political commitment to the project is vital for the sustained added value and potential mainstreaming of the actions developed throughout its duration and eventual future activities.

Therefore, a Policy and Advisory Group composed of one high level or governmental representative from each partner region will be formed in order to ensure the involvement of regional policy makers. This representative will be named by the partner depending on the different regional situations and who they deem to be most appropriate. The network co-ordinator will chair the Policy Group. In support to the Policy Group, external high level advisors could be considered for: Scientific / strategic advice (including industry if appropriate); Legal advice, i.e. case studies / scenarios towards sustained co-operation.

The Policy and Advisory Group will have overall responsibility for ensuring that the work carried out within ERNEST is in line with regional political strategies. Representatives will be provided of updates on the work in order to allow them to monitor the work performed, to review the objectives and progress achieved and provide advice on corrective actions, changes of direction or improvements when necessary. To this end the policy group will invite independent scientific experts to participate in the group's activities. They will be chosen by the project partners according to their expertise in this field and will provide valuable advice on the technical content of the project, including means of implementing eventual improvements and corrections. It will also have the responsibility of steering ERNEST activities towards potential sustainability as the deep involvement of high level political

representatives will strengthen the cooperation process. At regional level this involvement will be fundamental for potential mainstreaming of ERNEST actions in regional programmes.

The Policy Group will meet once a year and will be kept up to date on activities in the intervening period by the CCU.

Working group coordinators

The working group coordinators have been chosen for their proven experience in the relative field and for their demonstrated commitment to the activities identified (as demonstrated in WP descriptions).

Working group coordinators will be in charge of ensuring the efficient running of their individual WP. They will also be responsible for maintaining close contact with the CCU and with other coordinators where necessary. This will ensure that the overall objectives and work plan are being adhered to and will promote effective synergy between actions.

Contact with the CCU will be maintained through email and telephone, along with written reports when requested and thorough updates at project meetings.

Decision making process

The decision making process in ERNEST will follow a democratic process as follows:

- Define the Problem – what is the problem? What is the present situation and future objectives?

- Analyse the Problem – why is there a problem? Who does it affect and how? What is the time frame?

- Develop Possible Solutions – ideas and list of pros and cons for each possible solution

- Select a Solution – is the recommended solution practice and supported by credible and compelling facts of data? How does it solve the problem? Does it meet the timeframe?

- Develop Action Plan - Identify action steps to bridge the gap between present condition and future objective using the recommended solution.

- Approve Action Plan

- Implement Action Plan

The Steering committee will approve all major project decisions and deliverables. This will either be done at project meetings or by written consent via email.

The CCU and relative WP coordinators will be in charge of decisions related to the everyday running of the project. Partners will be informed and asked to comment on all important decisions.

B 2.2 Beneficiaries

Regione Toscana (Italy)

The Regione Toscana is the lead partner of the ERNEST project, coordinator of WP 1, 4 and 6 and will participate in all project WPs.

The ERNEST project will see collaboration between 2 sectors of the department of Economic Development of the Regione Toscana: the Sector for Tourism and Trade and the Sector for Innovation and Research. The Sector for Tourism and Trade is in charge of development policies for tourism, trade, spas and exhibitions sectors. The office is in charge of the study & development of legislation, financial support to SMEs, coordination of policies for territorial marketing on tourism and sustainability. It counts on an annual budget of 80 million euros and has a staff of 25 people. The

Sector for Innovation and Research has an annual budget of 45 million euro and a staff of 22 people. The sector has participated in 25 European projects, 6 as coordinator and is in charge of 4 DOCUP measures, financing over 600 projects since 2002, on: Financial Engineering, Innovation in SMEs, Industrial Research and the Information Society.

The Regione Toscana has long been undertaking research, promotion and implementation of operational projects in sustainable tourism. These include: the protocol "Welcome to Tuscany" which supports the spread of good practices on tourism hospitality; the "Orange Curtains" project to introduce an environmental quality label in tourism and the organisation of Euromeeting. The Regione Toscana also invests in innovation and research in sustainable tourism development both through direct financing and financing research in the framework of the DOCUP. Some examples of tourism projects financed are "Elba insieme" (integrated telematics system for Elba Island), "Benvenuti in Mugello" (electronic marketing), "Terra 3D" (GIS applied to tourism), and "ROSA" (multimedia tourism services). In addition to regional research projects, Tuscany is active in European projects. Tuscany is lead partner of EVIMED (INTERREG IIIB), which elaborates sustainable tourism policies using environmental, economical and social indicators, and partner in NURMEDIT (INTERREG IIIB) which promotes the development of small urban centres through tourism.

Tuscany will continue actions favouring sustainable tourism through the Regional Development Plan 2006 to 2010. Tourism policy is recognised as an Integrated Regional Project (which define precise priorities, instruments and resources). The plan aims to promote a more efficient and modernised service sector regarding sustainable tourism services. It reserves an important place for innovation and research and states the intention to create a Regional Space for innovation and research in Tuscany.

The staff members who will be undertaking the work on the ERNEST project will be:

Paolo Bongini – Area Coordinator for Tourism, Trade, Spas and Tertiary Activity and Head of Sector for Tourism Development and Promotion for the Regione Toscana. Among his main activities are: programme design (including legislation) for regional activities on development of tourism and trade and spas, funding public and private actors operating in these sectors, the implementation of the Tuscan programme for economic promotion for tourism and territorial marketing. He is also responsible, in collaboration with other offices of the Regione Toscana, for international cooperation in these areas. Mr Bongini has also taught at the University of Firenze (faculty of economics) on the economic history of tourism. His working languages are Italian (mother tongue) and French.

Maria Luisa Mattivi – Maria Luisa Mattivi is in charge of documentation on tourist policies for the Regione Toscana. She has a degree in Modern Languages and Literature from the University of Bologna, and a Master in Communication and Media, especially focused on public & social communication and destination marketing, from the University of Florence. She has a long professional experience in tourist promotion and communication, including regional and interregional projects. Since 2005 has been coordinating an interregional project on the promotion of the Italian sector of conference and events, which aims to optimise tourist flows and establish means of dialogue with the stakeholders. Her working languages are Italian (mother tongue) and English.

Paolo Frosini - Paolo Frosini has a first class degree in Electronic Engineering and a PhD in Computer Engineering from the University of Florence. Employed by the Regione Toscana, Sector for Innovation and Research since 1998, he has been project manager of several national and European projects, including projects funded by INTERREG, eTen and Framework Programmes. At a regional level he is responsible for the technical evaluation and monitoring of DOCUP measure 2.8. "Support for the development of the Information Society". His working languages are Italian (mother tongue) and English.

Cité de la Culture et du Tourisme Durable (France)

The Cité de la Culture et du Tourisme Durable is coordinator of WP3 and participates in all project WPs.

The Cité de la Culture et du Tourisme Durable (CCTD) is considered one of the major actors on sustainable tourism in its region. Created in 2005, CCTD's objective is to conduct networked research

and training programmes on the development of sustainable tourism and the valorisation of heritage. The CCTD is a Rural Pole of Excellence (*Pôle d'Excellence Rurale* - PER) under Public-Private management (Community of the Councils of Luberon, Durance, Verdon and the *Association de préfiguration* CCTD). The CCTD brings together a pole of multi-disciplinary expertise on training, observation, applied research and tourism development and the valorisation of cultures and heritages operating in networks. The CCTD benefits from high performance equipment for seminars, research and training and is equipped with new technology and a documentation centre. The CCTD works in closed collaboration with the PACA regional administration, the department of Alpes de Haute-Provence and the Council of Luberon-Durance-Verdon. CCTD is fully supported in this project by the General Council of the Alpes de Haute-Provence as shown by the letter of support in Annexe 1.

In its 3 years of operation the CCTD has acquired important experience in these domains. Most notably CCTD has managed: European programme DAEDALUS (Creation of web site for valorisation of heritage in the Mediterranean) and the organisation of meetings among the 8 project partners; Meeting of the UNESCO-UNITWIN network "Culture, Tourism and Development" (world wide university network); Participation in the national summer school on training and research in tourism; Projects in the framework of INTEREG III B (EVIMED) and IIIC programmes (EDDT – Back Bone of Territorial Development); Training programmes in Tunisia and Morocco; University training modules: *Université Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne* (IREST); *Université de Paris 13 Nord (SEG)*; *Université de la Méditerranée Aix Marseille II* (CEDERS) ; Consortium on specialised professional seminars and training (CNFPT); Models of sustainable tourism development (Tanger-Tétouan).

The staff members who will be undertaking work on the ERNEST project will be:

Jean-Pierre Martinetti – *Chief Executive of the CCTD and Director of the Agency for Tourism Development, Alpes de Haute Provence.* With a PhD in Tourism Economics and a diploma in Law and Political Science, Mr Martinetti has been councillor to the Cabinet of Ministers for External Trade and Tourism, director of the Regional Tourism agency and director of Tourism and of the Trade Union for Mountain Planning in Alpes de Haute-Provence. He was co-editor of the White Paper on French Hotel Businesses (1993), the Corsica Planning Model (1992) and the Regional Nautical Plan. He oversaw the elaboration and implementation of the Tourism Development Model of Alpes de Haute-Provence. Being a specialist in sustainable tourism and local development, Mr Martinetti is associate professor at the Université Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne and French expert to the European Commission in the "Tourism Sustainability Group". He also participated in the elaboration of the Commission report on Agenda 21 of European Tourism.

Jean-Dominique Gontrand – *Consultant manager / Tourism Engineer CCTD.* Jean Dominique Gontrand has a long experience in this field at the head of private and public organisations. He is currently a senior consultant in tourism, strategies for territorial development and professional training. On behalf of a number of French and foreign territorial collectives and enterprises he provides experience on project preparation, training programmes, marketing and communication strategies, tourism development programmes and European programmes. He has undertaken some important studies related to tourism (e.g. agricultural chains and territorial development in Haute Provence, network of cultural heritage, sustainable development model for the region of Tanger) and to marketing and communication in various cities and regions. He has also taught at many French and international universities and schools on the theme of engineering of cultural projects and sustainable tourism and leads research on sustainable tourism and marketing issues.

Julien Auray – *In charge of sustainable tourism for the Agency for Tourism Development, Alpes de Haute Provence.* Julien Auray is in charge of studies in the tourism sector, of the strategic framework, the elaboration of the tourism strategy for the department of Alpes de Haute Provence and of the development of environmental quality measures for tourism professionals. After 4 years of university studies in geography and environment he specialised in 2003 in tourism issues with a Masters in "tourism planning development and promotion". Among his professional achievements Mr Auray has undertaken a number of tourism related studies, including the impact of the UNESCO heritage classification on the city of Lyon and has created tourist products for the hotel chain Logis de France.

Basquetour (Spain)

Basquetour is coordinator of WP2 and participates in all project WPs.

Basquetour is the Basque Tourism Agency, a public limited company which depends on the Basque Government (Industry, Commerce and Tourism Department). Among its aims are: executing marketing actions and promotion of the Euskadi Brand and encouraging strategies to promote competitiveness of tourism companies and the region. Factors identified to improve competitiveness include training, quality, innovation and creation of new tourism products related to segments like nature, wine and active tourism.

In its coordination of WP2 Basquetour will avail of the support (Third Party) of Innobasque. Innobasque is the new agency launched from the presidency of the Basque Government in order to merge different entities that existed before. Innobasque, the Basque Agency for Innovation, is a non-profit association set up to coordinate and promote innovation in all fields in the Basque Country, and to foster entrepreneurial spirit and creativity. The operational model is based on activities that promote the values and attitudes associated with innovation in Basque society, on actions that spread the image of an innovative Basque Autonomous Community to the outside world as an advanced centre for RDI, as well as activities that generate the dynamics for innovation in Basque companies and organisations. Innobasque has absorbed 100% of the rights & duties on the previously existing entity Eurobulegoa. Eurobulegoa has been merged into Innobasque creating its Internationalisation Area. This department is in charge of the internationalisation strategy of the RDI programmes for the Basque Government. The Internationalisation Area, former Eurobulegoa, has extensive experience in ERA-NET, coordinating MANUNET, and participating in HY-CO and COMPERA. Eurobulegoa participates in INNONET projects and, in liaison with the Basque Government, in MNT-ERANET (management group), EUROTRANS-BIO, and eTRANET.

The R+D+i strategy for Basque tourism drawn up by the Basque Government's Department of Trade, Industry and Tourism (DICT) within the framework of the 2006-2009 Business Competitiveness and Innovation Plan defines Innovation (R+D+i) as one of the key courses of action to improve competitiveness in Basque companies operating in the sectors targeted by regional main framework of science and research and policies. A specific R+D+I strategy exists for tourism and is integrated in the Innovation System. Basquetour is committed to working with regional partners to ensure long-term tourism sustainability. Policies and research will make optimal use of resources, respect social-cultural characteristics and ensure viable, long-term economic development.

The Basque tourism department, and in particular Basquetour, has taken an active part in collaborative interregional tourism development with a view to reinforcing links between the Basque Country within *España verde* umbrella (integrating 4 northern autonomous regions of Spain for the last 10 years), as well as interregional cooperation within the Pyréné Atlantique in France.

The staff members who will be undertaking work on the ERNEST project will be:

Mercedes Rodríguez - Mercedez Rodríguez has a BA in education and a Masters in Leisure. She has worked as Director of Education of the Cultural education programme for the Local Government of Biscay and as Head of the Research and New Projects and Coordinator for investigations on Leisure and community development. She has also been Deputy Mayor of Portugalete and Director of Tourism Administration and Competitiveness of the Industry, Commerce and Tourism Department of the Basque Government. She is currently General Director of Basquetour.

Javier Yarza Urkiza - Javier Yarza Urkiza has a degree in Politic Sciences and Sociology and an MBA in Economics and Enterprise Management. He has worked in the private sector in administration roles and as department director and manager in industrial and audio-visual communication companies. In the public sector he has been a technician at the Basque Statistics Institute EUSTAT, Sociology Studies manager at the Presidency of the Basque Government and manager of the technical cabinet of the mayor's office of Vitoria-Gasteiz. He is currently Head of Competitiveness for Basquetour.

Aurkene Alzua - (Director of European projects and initiatives) Aurkene Alzua has a Ph.D. in Outdoor Recreation and International Tourism from the Purdue University, U.S.A (1999). She is director of the Basque Cooperative Research Centre in tourism. In addition, she is Assistant Professor at the University of Deusto (San Sebastian, Spain) and Director of the Master of Arts in Euro culture for the Faculty of Humanities. Dr. Alzua is director of the research team "eK+i. Culture, Development and Innovation in Europe" at the University of Deusto and a permanent member of the Basque Council of

Culture. Her latest work focuses on innovation in the Basque tourism sector which include projects related to elaboration of indicators to asses the degrees innovation and technology used of the Basque tourism sector and recommendation for the Basque R+D+I tourism policy development.

Prefecture of Ilia (Greece)

The Prefecture of Ilia will participate in all project WPs.

Ilia is a prefecture which covers the area of Elis in the Western Peloponnese and the Western portion of Greece. The democratically elected prefecture administration covers 22 councils. The Department of information will participate in the ERNEST project.

Achieving sustainability of tourism is a primary goal in Ilia. Its priorities are promoting and exploiting Archaeological and Historical sites with special emphasis on promoting the role of Ancient Olympia, exploiting the coastline by upgrading the two main parts of the prefecture, those of Katakolo and Killini in order to achieve sustainable tourism and protecting and making the most of areas of natural beauty.

The Prefecture Authority of Ilia, Department of Information, has undertaken projects within the framework of European Programmes and Initiatives such as INTERREG, LIFE and LEADER projects. It has participated in many European networks and has developed cooperation in many fields.

The Prefecture of Ilia's experience in European cooperation on tourism involves the following projects: project "Landscape Protection and Development – Innovative Methods for Environmental Management of the landscapes of I.S.E.O. lake", as part of the INTERREG III B CADSES programme; "Human Resources and Development Planning on both sides of Ionian Sea" in the framework of INTERREG III B ARCHIMED with tourism as one of the 6 thematic areas; "INNOVA – Actions for the Transfer of Innovation in Strategic Sectors" (INTERREG IIIA) where tourism is one of 4 strategic sectors; and "The role of Mother in History" (INTERREG IIIA) which promotes innovation in cultural tourism by presenting the beneficial role of women in culture and economy of the region.

Furthermore, Ilia has signed an Agreement with other Prefectures of Western Greece, the Ionian Islands and Southern Italy with a view to the promotion of cooperation within the programme INTERREG III A: GREECE – ITALY, with special emphasis on sustainable tourism development.

The staff members who will be undertaking work on the ERNEST project will be:

Vassiliki Karakitsou - Vassiliki Karakitsou is a graduate in Political Science from the Pantion University of Athens in Greece and has an excellent command of English. She has been working for the Prefecture of Ilia since 1985. Within the Prefecture she has worked in the Department of Programming and Planning and as the Head of the Department of Research and Studies. Her main duties are the planning and monitoring of the public investment programmes and participation in European initiatives. From 2004 until now she has been the financial manager for projects financed on many European programmes such as Information Society, INTERREG, LEADER, LIFE and INTI.

Peter Groumpos - Peter Groumpos has a Ph.D from the State University of Buffalo in the USA. He has been the Manager of Laboratory of Automation and Robotics since 1990 and Manager of PSP project management company (EDIP-PSP) since 2006. Since 2004 he has also been the President and CEO of the Patras Science Park. Presently he is the National Representative to the High-Level Group for EUREKA and to the IST programme. He organises the Advanced Summer Institute and has organised as a General Chairman more than 10 International Conferences in Greece and other parts of Europe. Mr Groumpos also has a vast experience in leading a number of EC and Greek research projects as well as in assisting and monitoring industry oriented R&D projects.

South East Romania Development Agency (Romania)

South East Romania Development Agency is coordinator of WP5 and will participate in all project WPs.

The South-East Regional Development Agency (SE RDA) is one of the 8 Regional Development Agencies in Romania established by Government Decision in 1999. It is a non-governmental and non-profit public institution, responsible for the regional development in the South-East Region of Romania.

The Development Agency's mission is to promote the socio-economic sustainable development of the South-East Development Region through: partnerships (local and international), elaboration of integrated development services, implementation of regional development programmes, promotion of economic cooperation. The Agency has 60 permanent staff, of which 41 serve in the agency's headquarters and 19 are located in the county offices in Galati, Tulcea, Constanta, Buzau and Vrancea counties.

SE RDA is responsible for elaborating the Regional Development Strategy and Plan and for ensuring the implementation of regional development programmes by technical and financial monitoring and control of EU and Government funded projects. Their responsibilities also include supporting interregional, transnational and cross border programmes.

SE RDA participated in the following partnership structures established at the national level: Sectoral steering committee for Phare ESC; Working group for cross border cooperation Romania – Moldova, Romania-Ukraine and Romania-Bulgaria; Inter-institutional Committee for elaborating National Development Plan. The agency is also experienced in international cooperation through participation in a number of twining projects for National Development Plan Implementation at regional level and Institutional construction for Consolidation of the coordination function for elaborating and implementation of the Social and Economical Cohesion Policy at regional level. SE RDA has experience in FP6 through the ARISE project and in projects under INTERREG III B CADES and Life programmes. Of particular relevance to ERNEST is the project on Environmental Policies and Urban Management with partners from Italy, Romania and Bulgaria.

The staff members who will be undertaking work on the ERNEST project will be:

Luminita Mihailov - Director of SE RDA since 1999, responsible for all RDA activities. She holds a PhD in Economics. Her professional experiences relate to the management of regional, national and international projects and preparation of the South-East Region for the EU-accession of Romania in 2007. Ms. Mihailov is well represented in regional, national and international Committees (e.g. member of the Lower Danube EuroRegion Committee, Chairperson of Regional Technical Vocational Education Training Consortium, member in the Task Force for Transnational Cooperation Programme for the South-Eastern Europe).

Adriana Vaida - Director of Foreign Relations/International Projects Department and Expert in regional policies and strategies. She is Chief Project Manger of the Regional Innovation Strategy project. She holds a university degree as a teacher of English and French, certificates in managing customer and client relations and financial management. She had also assignments as a pre-accession advisor's assistant in a regional level twinning project. Her key qualifications are in business counselling, management of international partnership programmes and regional development programmes/ projects.

Luiza Tiganus - Project Manager of Foreign Relations /International Projects Department. She holds a university degree in Economics – Management, Marketing in Economic Affairs. She is the Assistant Coordinator of the Regional Innovation Strategy project. Prior to her present position she was a Procurement and Technical Monitoring Officer in the Programme/Project Management Department.

Nina CHIRIACESCU - Project Manager of Foreign Relations/International Projects Department. She holds a university diploma in Economics – Marketing section. She is the Senior Project Manager/technical issues of the Regional Innovation Strategy project. Prior to her present position, she was a Procurement and Technical Monitoring Officer in the Programme/Project Management Department.

Diana Custura - Economic Director. She holds a university degree in Economics. She is responsible for the accounting management and organisation in accordance with the legislation in force, financial control coordination for the projects financed through the Phare or Romanian Government funds and technical assistance to the beneficiaries related to the Phare Payment Procedures.

Balearic Isles (Spain)

The Balearic Islands will participate in all project WPs.

The Regional administration fosters innovation and research into the sustainable development of tourism. In the Balearic Islands, given the importance of tourism for the economy, environmental degradation is a key concern for the sustainable development of tourism industry as it endangers the sustainability of the main resource that sustains tourism activities (coastal area), and for the quality of life of the islands' citizens.

Since 2005 the Balearic R+D+i policy has taken tourism into account in research and innovation policy through the Science, Technology and Innovation Plan (2005-2008). The general strategic objective of this plan is to reinforce the regional innovation system. One specific objective is to promote scientific and technological research on thematic areas of strategic interest: Tourism; Environment (Marine Science and Technologies); and Health Sciences. Tourism R+D and innovation activities are therefore a high priority area. The research programmes on tourism specifically finance interventions aimed at: boosting human resources; reinforcing scientific basis; promoting the articulation of the innovation system; supporting innovation and creating innovative enterprises; promoting a scientific culture, and social interest in science, technology and innovation. A new a new R+D centre in tourism (CIDTUR) has just been founded with an agreement with the national ministry of Science and Technology.

The DG R+D+I has undertaken projects within the framework of European Programmes and initiatives which are connected to sustainable tourism, such as INTERREG IIIB, NURMEDIT – "Development of small urban centres through tourism" and RPIA, INNOBAL XXI - "Innovation for the Diversification and sustainable Development of the Balearic Islands". Furthermore, it has participated in several European networks, conferences and studies on Sustainable Tourism. One study particularly worth mentioning was carried out on integrated coastal management.

The staff members who will be undertaking work on the ERNEST project will be:

Pedro Antoni Oliver Reus - Mr Antoni Oliver Reus is doctor of Biological Sciences, Researcher for the Public Research Organisation of the Ministry of Education and Science (MEC), Technical Adviser to the General Manager of the Spanish Oceanographic Institute and Coordinator of the Thematic Network on Scientific Infrastructures and Technologies for Marine Science. On behalf of the General Union of workers he is member of the Balearic Islands' Advisory Council of Research and Technological Development and of a Research Group on the Balearic R+D+i Plan. He participates in research projects from the Spanish National R+D+i Plan and European Framework Programmes. He is currently the General Director of the DG Research, Technological Development and Innovation in the Balearic Islands.

Miquel Bibiloni Brotad - Mr Bibiloni Brotad graduated from the University of Barcelona with a Master in Physical Science. Miquel Bibiloni has a wide experience in work related to methodologies and computer codes for evaluating the radiological consequences of liquid and gaseous releases from nuclear power plants to the environment. After years of working in the private sector, he was employed by the Spanish Regional Administration, were he participates in European projects within the framework of the Regional Programme of Innovative Actions, including INNOBAL XXI and SAITUR. Since May 2001 he has held the position of Head of Innovation at the DG Research, Technological Development and Innovation in the Balearic Islands.

Jaume Bagur Mora - Jaume Bagur Mora graduated from the University of Palma de Mallorca with a first class Bachelors of Business Administration. Jaume Bagur has worked in the Hotel sector (financial controller). He currently works as a technician at the DG Research, Technological Development and Innovation in the Balearic Islands. He has worked on European projects financed through INTERREG IIIB/C and RPIA. At a regional level he is working on the creation of a Balearic Islands Tourism Cluster.

Aina Pons Mercadal - Aina Pons Mercadal graduated in business studies and completed a bachelor's degree on Tourism at the University of Palma de Mallorca. She has since completed a Masters in Tourism Destination Management: (policies and strategies) through the Open University of Catalunya. Aina Pons has worked in the travel agent and tour-operator field. For several years she

has been working in the public sector as a technician at the DG Research, Technological Development and Innovation, developing promotional actions for Tourism innovation, such as the International Seminar of Tourism Innovation – "INTO". Furthermore, she participated in European projects within the framework of the Regional Programme of Innovative Actions (INNOBAL XXI).

Sandor Van der Meer - Sandor Van der Meer graduated in business studies at the University of Deventer. He has worked in the private sector in the Hotel and Tour-operator business. He is currently working in the public sector as a technician at the Directorate-general of Research, Technological Development and Innovation. He has participated in European projects, including INTERREG IIIB /C and RPIA. At regional level he is working on the creation of a Balearic Islands Tourism Cluster.

NORDA (Hungary)

NORDA will participate in all project WPs.

The Regional Development Agency of Northern Hungary (NORDA) was founded in 1999 as a result of the Act on Territorial Development which had stipulated that across the country 7 planning-statistical regions be established which comply with NUTS2 standards. Hence it was decided that –with the exception of Central Hungary –3 adjacent counties would form one region, in the case of Northern Hungary Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Heves and Nógrád. The Agency acts as the executive, implementing organisation of the Regional Development Council.

NORDA has its main office in Miskolc and 2 headquarters in Eger and in Salgótarján and has 66 employees about half of which work on the territory of the 28 micro-regions. The mission of the Regional Development Agency, jointly with the Regional Innovation Agency is to encourage rapid social and economic restructuring of the region; to develop economic integration, to enhance cross-border cooperation, to increase direct foreign and domestic investments and to reduce the high unemployment rate.

The RDA of North-Hungary has more than 6 years proven experience in management of international projects as lead partner or coordinator of individual WPs. As a Hungarian regional development agency it has acted as an Intermediary Body in the management of PHARE funds and it has extensive experience in territorial planning. Over the past 3 years within the framework of FP6 and INTERREG, the Agency has taken part in several transnational co-operation actions. Currently the following innovation and tourism related transnational co-operations are under implementation: NORRIS: FP6 Specific Support Action to create a bilateral innovation strategy (lead partner); ProAct: FP6 Knowledge Region 2 project related with innovation benchmarking (partner); CENCE: FP6 Specific Support Action related with energy clusters (partner); DEPURE: Interreg IIIC RFO project, creation of an innovative public administration cluster, including tourism development and research as one of the priority thematic areas (partner and coordinator WP2).

Furthermore, the INTERREG IIIB CADSES, SHINING Mountains project plays another important role in positioning the region on the global tourism market. It aims to encourage the development of lagging behind mountain areas through the promotion of sport, health & wellness activities and defining a common methodology for preparing local actors for the management of tourism related businesses and cooperation (e.g. health & wellness cluster building) in this field. Activities include: defining common methodology and operational toolboxes, pilot actions, e-learning for local operators, virtual incubator for SMEs.

The staff members who will be undertaking work on the ERNEST project will be:

Katalin Borsi - Project Manager of the Programming-Panning Department of the Agency, a team member for the elaboration of the Regional OP and the Action Plan regarding tourism. She holds a University Diploma in Economics.

Tamás Izsók - Project Manager of the Programming-Planning Department of the Agency, a team member for the elaboration of the ROP regarding tourism. Also involved in international projects, such as the ECTN and SHINING Mountains, within the Regional Innovation Agency.

Katalin Hall - Coordinator of international projects for the Regional Innovation Agency, Assistant manager for the NORRIS project, for the elaboration of the Regional Innovation Strategy and for the DEPURE project, related to tourism research. Coordinator for the SHINING Mountains project. She had also assignments as a pre-accession advisor's assistant in a regional level twinning project.

Imre Nagy - President of the Regional Tourism Committee (RTC) and through this position, he represents a broad spectrum of tourism related organisations and works in close cooperation with the decision makers at national and regional level. The main areas of the RTC include the harmonization of the regional and national tourism policies, the elaboration of tourism development concepts, programmes and plans – through negotiations with the regional and local development councils – also takes part in implementation, in partnership with local municipalities and chambers of commerce.

South West Tourism (UK)

South West Tourism will participate in all project WPs.

South West Tourism is the only official tourist board for the South West of England and is the lead body representing the seven counties of the South West region: Bath, Bournemouth and Poole, Bristol, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire.

For 36 years South West Tourism has been the only regional organisation working on and representing, the interests of tourism businesses operating in the South West of England. An independent "not for profit" company, South West Tourism has funding from a mixture of commercial and public sources. As a membership organisation South West Tourism is supported directly by over 5000 commercial members and forms the centre of a three-way partnership between private enterprise, local and central government. South West Tourism's role is to stimulate and manage the development of tourism to bring economic, social and environmental benefits to the people who live and work in the region and to provide a rewarding and enjoyable experience for visitors. This is accomplished through research, sustainability, marketing and promotion, information provision, business advice, training, accommodation standards and tourism policy.

South West Tourism contributes and attends the International Tourism Sustainability Group (TSG), set up by the European Commission in 2004. The Group comprises individuals from international bodies, member state governments, regional and local authorities, the tourism industry, environmental and trade unions, and research and educational bodies, who have expertise and experience in the sustainability of tourism.

The staff members who will be undertaking work on the ERNEST project will be:

Malcolm Bell (Chief Executive) - Since taking up post 7 years ago he has overseen the development of a new regional tourism development and marketing plan "Towards 2015" and been involved in numerous tourism development projects such as the Eden Project. At a national level he chairs the National group of Regional Tourism Delivery Organisations and has advised the UK Government on tourism development issues. At a European level he has been an active member of the European Commission's Tourism Sustainability Group and European Cultural Tourism Network. His previous appointment was as Director of Economic Development with PROSPER (the joint Business Link and Training & Enterprise Council (TEC) for Devon & Cornwall.

Emma Whittlesea (Sustainable Tourism Advisor) - Emma has a degree in Environmental Science and has worked for local, regional and central Government on sustainable development for 9 years. Emma is the Sustainable Tourism Advisor to the 9 sub regional destinations in the South West responsible for advising and integrating sustainability into the structures and functions of the regional Destination Management Organisations. Emma managed the Audit Commission's National Quality of Life Indicator pilot with 90 local authorities in 2001 and was the author of the National Governments ODPM 2005 'Local Quality of Life Indicators – supporting local communities to become sustainable' publication for English Local Authorities.

Neil Warren (Sustainable Tourism Manager) - Neil Warren has a degree in City and Regional Planning and a post-graduate diploma in Town Planning. He is responsible for working regionally and nationally with partners to engage businesses, destinations, visitors and decision-makers in

sustainability. He previously spent 2 years developing community-based tourism in Kazakhstan, has advised development charity, Tearfund, on ethical tourism, and led the East of England Tourist Board's sustainable tourism and policy/ planning work for over 5 years (including developing their 10 year regional tourism strategy).

Jacqueline Hill (Research Manager) - Prior to joining South West Tourism in July 2004, Jacqueline had several years experience in commissioning, managing and directing a variety of research projects in economic development. She has a first class honours degree and further Masters of Science in Research Methods. Her strong background and understanding of regional working, regional organisations and her developing good knowledge of local contexts leave her well placed to quickly appreciate the requirements of research and to help ensure that results are well tailored for key stakeholders.

Diane Goffey (Researcher) - Diane holds a degree in Tourism Studies from Bournemouth University and is an Associate Member of the Market Research Society (MRS). She has over 10 years experience of working on tourism related research projects within the regional tourist board arena, as well as research agency experience. Since taking up her post at South West Tourism in 1999 she has managed and been directly involved in a wide variety of quantitative based tourism research projects.

Danish Forest and Nature Agency, Nord Zealand (Denmark)

The Danish Forest and Nature Agency, Nord Zealand will participate in all project WPs.

The Danish Forest and Nature Agency, Nord Zealand (DFNA, NZ) is part of and reports to the national government (State Forrest district) under the Danish Ministry of Environment. DFNA, NZ operates at regional level covering all of North Zeeland, Greater Copenhagen, Odsherred and Bornholm (Denmark's only Rock-Island in the Baltic Sea, with heavy tourism in the summer period). It oversees 6 local forest districts.

DFNA, NZ's regional centres are very significant regional bodies who, in cooperation with local counties (Denmark consists of around 100 counties) and in dialogue with other organisations, take part in defining the scope for "free air" life in the individual areas. DFNA, NZ has an number of tasks within the area of responsibility of nature and environment. Within the DFNA, NZ's areas of responsibility is the management of forests and the preservation of nature and nature-tourism interests. Tourism is becoming increasingly important for DFNA, NZ, both in terms of its economic important and due to its impact on the territory.

DFNA, NZ's concentrated mass of areas and projects means that is will be able to contribute significantly to the ERNEST project with relevant experiences. DFNA, NZ's activities all closely link environmental sustainability with tourism. DFNA, NZ is in charge of projects carried out in the meadows in Jægersborg Deer Park near Copenhagen that register a large number of visitors. Furthermore, DFNA, NZ interventions carried out in Mølleåsystemet (one of Denmark's 11 action areas) involve a large effort to ensure better water quality and nature conditions. In cooperation with the counties in this area a number of projects are underway aiming at cleaning the water and nursing the surrounding fields and meadows. Under the management of DFNA, NZ, one of the lakes in the Mølleåsystem, Lake Fure has just been resorted with help from EU Life Nature programme.

The staff members who will be undertaking the work on the ERNEST project will be:

Jens Bjerregaard Christensen – Mr Bjerregaard Christensen is Head of DFNA, NZ. He manages DFNA, NZ and Frederiksborg State Forrest District. He was previously vice-director in DFNA, NZ. His priorities in his role include significant involvement of citizens and collaboration partners. Thus, formal user-committees have been established in order to ensure input regarding the management of DFNA, NZ's tasks. Mr Bjerregaard Christensen takes part in international cooperation on forest policies. His working languages are Danish and English.

Ida Dahl-Nielsen – Ms Dahl-Nielsen has an MsC in Biology from University of Copenhagen and an MsC in Communications from Roskilde University. She currently works as project manager for the action area Mølleåsystemet, a project involving a large number of parties, counties, environmental agencies, NGOs, Green organisations and tourism organisations. Ms Dahl-Nielsen was a project

manager on the now completed, EU-LIFE project on restoring Lake Fure (Furesøen). Her working languages are Danish and English.

Anne Johannisson – Ms Johannisson has an MsC in Biology from University of Copenhagen. She works as advisor and guide with oral and written dissemination of information to various target groups and is an adviser on Nature at the Forrest School. Ms Johannisson is in charge of coordination of nature guidance and arranges an extensive amount of public tours and exhibitions. These activities are used by locals, tourists, schools and other groups. Ms Johannisson teaches on new nature guides in Denmark and is co-responsible for SFD's website. Her working languages are Danish and English.

Catalonia (Spain)

Catalonia is one of the most important tourism destination in Europe but there has been a notable lack of research regarding tourism until recent years. Thus, in 2005 the Observatory of Tourism was created by the Regional Government, with the objective of improving knowledge and promoting research, innovation and technology transfer. Some of the main results during this period have been:

- Implementation of a specific Programme on Tourism Research, according to the research framework promoted by the Government of Catalonia through the PRI (Programme of Research and Innovation 2005-2008);

- Elaboration of the first Master Plan for Tourism in Catalonia 2005-2010;

- Promoting Scientific and Technological Parks and Research Centres on tourism research;

- Forthcoming creation of an Institute of Tourism Research.

In Catalonia, the regional authority has recognised that tourism challenges such as the maturation of coastal tourist destinations demand new global policies facing current and future behavioural patterns and changes concerning the decision making process, supplier chains, IT/e-business, more and new destinations and outgoing markets. They also demand the development of a sustainable coastal and marine strategy which enhances synergies and achieves a local equilibrium concerning nature, culture, society and economic activities.

In order to face challenges and to implement this new approach a Master Plan was approved in 2005. While "sun and beach" remains the most important motivation to visit Catalonia the tourism offer is changing into a more diverse and integrated model. The most competitive and performing tourist coastal destinations are and will be those that are capable of adapting into a sustainable and responsible framework, including tourism within a global territorial and sector planning.

Catalonia has participated in a number of international cooperation projects particularly in the INTERREG programme. These projects have included cooperation for the development of cultural products, creation of a social tourism network with the support and coordination of BITS, creation of a cultural tourism network, development of a tourism pilot project linked to immigrations and "Tourlink" (Life programme) to assure the sustainability of the tourism chain in collaboration with Austria.

The staff members who will be undertaking the work on the ERNEST project will be:

Marien Andre – Ms Andre has a PhD in Economics and is Assistant Professor of Applied Economics (University of Barcelona). She has developed research concerning tourism over the last 15 years, focused on the study of the economic and territorial impact of tourism and related statistical analysis. She has also participated in the think tank on "Tourist Destinations Management" organised by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation. Involved in different networks and projects at European level (Social Tourism, Cultural Tourism, Coastal and Maritime Tourism), she is currently the Coordinator of the Observatory of Tourism at the Government of Catalonia. In this frame, she has developed the first Research Programme on Tourism in Catalonia, and promotes the creation of an Institute of Tourism Research in collaboration with Universities and Research Centres. She has also been co-author and co-coordinator of the forthcoming publication on 'Good Practices on Sustainable Tourism in Europe'. She was one of the members of the Director Committee for the elaboration of the Master Plan for the Tourism in Catalonia 2005-2010.

Judith Estol – Ms Estol has BA in Law. She is currently Policy Advisor on European Affairs for Catalonia. She has a long experience in tourism research regarding territorial development and implementation of local projects.

Nuria Caballe – Ms Caballe has a BA in Politics. She is currently a technician at the Observatory of Tourism of Catalonia. She has a long experience in the analysis of tourism indicators and statistics, as well as territorial planning for sustainable tourism.

Conseil Régional D'Aquitaine (France)

The Conseil Régional d'Aquitaine owns a number of strategic research programmes which finance a innovation and research projects on: analysis of environmental impacts, creation of indicators of tourism impacts, creation of certification processes for tourism development projects, measurement of social and environmental impacts of tourism. The CRA is also active in a number of European cooperation projects such as Ecocamps, a Life Project entitled Tourvin and an Interreg project entitled Hotelcert.

CRA finance and will continue to finance research and innovation projects on tourism: development of public-private relations in tourism, increase of innovation for tourism firms, development of innovating technologies for reducing the impact of tourism on environment and quality of life's citizens, protection of environmental and cultural heritage.

The department of "Tourism and natural heritage" of the CRA will be involved in ERNEST project. The department follows the regional policy on tourism, which is divided into 4 main pillars:

- economy (development of competitiveness and financial support for enterprises);

- environment (development of ecotourism, environmental quality of tourist firms);

- social and cultural aspects (development of professional training, social and fair tourism, valorisation of cultural heritage);

- governance (involvement of actors for the definition and evaluation of regional tourist policy, development of public-private relations).

The staff members who will be undertaking the work on the ERNEST project will be:

Jean-Christophe Lebreton – Head of the tourism and natural heritage department of CRA (20 people) since 2002. He previously managed the development of the tourist spot "Mont Saint-Michel" In CRA, he is responsible for the development of regional tourism policy. He has participated in different European projects within Interreg and Life projects. He worked on DOCUP programmes 2000-2006 (ERDF, EARDF) and the definition of regional operative programme ERDF and ERADF for the period 2007-2013.

Florence Cron – In charge of European programmes in the tourism and natural heritage department of CRA since 2005. Graduated from the University of Bordeaux in local development, she worked in Pays de la Loire for a city where she was in charge of European projects (DOCUP, Interreg). She is now in CRA in charge of European programmes and projects (Interreg, Life, Leonardo, regional operative programmes).

Laurent Beaussoubre – Graduated from the university of Bordeaux in communication, he first worked in a communication agency. He has been working for CRA since 1999 and one of his missions is the development of the quality and certification aspects in tourism (accommodation, catering).

Isabelle Prevost – Graduated from the university of Bordeaux in local development, she first worked for an association in charge of studies for regional planning. She now works in CRA with particular responsibility for environmental aspects of tourism.

Regione Emilia Romagna (Italy)

Using the strategy outlined in the Lisbon agenda and with a view to forging a positive relationship between local authorities, industry and the economic fabric, the Regione Emilia Romagna has developed its own tools while at the same time making the best use of the opportunities created by the European Union. The Region has long implemented a Three-year Business Development Plan, which directs resources towards company requirements.

Alongside the three-year plan, a regional programme for industrial research, innovation and technological transfer and a regional telematic plan, aimed at innovation and digitalisation, have been developed. The region also avails of support from European Objective 2 and 3 measures, which provide support for the less developed areas of the region, which are rapidly catching up with their more advanced counterparts.

The framework for the above is established through agreements between institutions and civil society promoted by the regional government, which common goals and strategies in priority areas such as employment and the economy, social policy, the environment and solidarity. The goal is sustainable growth, in social and economic, as well as environmental terms, to be pursued through policies aimed at developing the quality, efficiency and identity of the area. Emilia-Romagna has been declared one of the most innovative regions by the European Commission, and in 2003 at Stockholm was awarded the title of Region of excellence for innovation.

In 1999 the Regione Emilia Romagna produced the strategic guidelines for the development and promotion of sustainable tourism in Emilia Romagna.

In the period 2000-2006 Regione Emilia Romagna participated in a number of programmes and project promoting cooperation between the region and other European countries and regions. These include:

- 1 Regional Programme of Innovative Actions focused on "Health, Life Science and Regional technological Innovation" carried out in the period 2002-2003;

- The ERIK network, a European network promoting regional economies based on knowledge and technological innovation, of which the Regione Emilia Romagna was coordinator together with the Regione Toscana;

- The Sustainable Development Network, coordinated by Wales;

- 2 LIFE projects, 1 CULTURE project and 6 INTERREG projects (5 as lead partner).

The staff members who will be undertaking the work on the ERNEST project will be:

Laura Schiff – since 1992 she has been managing European projects (first LIFE calls) aimed at valorising the territory and promoting its resources, in order to build tourist products which are innovative and respectful of the environment and of the specific culture and characteristics of the territory.

Maura Mingozzi - project manager of the Interreg projects Marimed, Blue, Green Link and RuralTour.

B 2.3 Consortium as a whole

Consortium Composition and Importance of Tourism

It has been clearly shown by the descriptions above that this consortium is made up of regional actors with a wide and extensive range of expertise in the fields of research and innovation in sustainable tourism. The regions of Tuscany, Alpes de Haute Provence (PACA) the Basque country, Ilia (Western Greece), South West of England, North Zeeland Centre, Catalonia; Aquitaine and the Balearic isles are among the most popular European tourist regions and have long been involved in issues related to sustainable research. South East Romania and North Hungary, both representatives of new member states in the European Union, are two regions in which tourism plays an ever growing importance in terms of economic impact.

In terms of participation in project activities, all partners are committed to dedicated participation in activities. However, partners who join the project during the negotiation phase have had less time to plan the allocation of resources (in terms of staff contribution) to the project and their budget (directly connected to staff effort) is therefore lower. Their commitment to the participation in project activities, as described above, is guaranteed.

All partners are eligible for ERA NET participation and have been carefully chosen to bring added value to the project. Below is a recap on the consortium partners, status and a brief description of tourism in the regions showing the importance role it plays in each partner's territory.

- **Partner 1 - Regione Toscana (Italy)**

Regional government.

Full eligible partner as Programme Owner.

Tourism has a crucially important role in the regional economy and is fed by the huge cultural and environmental resources that Tuscany has to offer. Tuscany registers over 10% of arrivals (around 10 million tourists of which around half are foreigners) and just under half of the presences (38 million, of which 18 million foreigners) recorded altogether in Italian hospitality structures. Tuscany has over 10000 SMEs and hospitality structures operating throughout the region. Tourism in Tuscany has acquired a specific identity, closely tied to qualitative cultural and social factors. The tourism offer is varied but is still largely concentrated on costal tourism, hills and vineyards and artistic centres.

- **Partner 2 - Cité de la Culture et du Tourisme Durable - Département des Alpes de Haute-Provence (PACA)**

Government agency.

Full eligible partner as Programme Manager on behalf of the regional government.

The region of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (PACA) has an ancient history of tourism and its tourism offer is well developed. Today tourism in PACA represents an economic activity which generates around 10 billion euro a year (11.4% of the regional GDP). The region welcomes around 34 million tourists a year, first in France for national tourism and second for foreign tourism. !0% of employment is directly linked to tourism (around 156,000 places of work).

- **Partner 3 - Basquetour (Basque Government - Industry, Commerce and Tourism Department)**

Government agency.

Full eligible partner as Programme Manager on behalf of the regional government.

Latest data from the Basque country shows that tourist expenditure accounts for 5.3% of GNP, and 5.1% of total employment in the Basque Country. The statistics reveal 2005 as the top year in Basque history of tourism with over 2 million people being hosted in hotels, rural accommodation and camp sites. Hotel space has increased by 46% between 1997 and 2005. The Basque Country offers a wide and varied proposal for leisure including museums, cultural activities, gastronomy and wine production, costal tourism and nature reserves.

- **Partner 4 - Prefecture of Ilia**

Regional government.

Full eligible partner as Programme Manager.

The Prefecture of Ilia belongs to the region of Western Greece. Its capital is Pyrgos which boasts one of the most significant archaeological sites in Greece, Ancient Olympia. The tourism resources – natural, historical and cultural ones – classify Ilia as one of the most competitive tourist attractions in the greater area of the Mediterranean. More importantly Ilia possesses one of the most powerful cultural elements globally, which is Olympia and the Olympic Games.

- **Partner 5 - South-East Regional Development Agency (SE RDA)**

Regional development agency.

Full eligible partner as Programme Owner which does not have a running or fully fledged research programme at the moment of submitting an ERANET proposal, but which are planning, and have committed, to set up such a programme.

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South East Romania promotes a tourism potential of great diversity, which offers all tourism products and for all seasons. In the development of this sector, the SE Region has competitive advantages that also provide it with unique characteristics: the Danube Delta and its eco tourism; rural areas preserving cultural and heritage traditions; archaeological sites; coastal tourism; spa resorts; mud Volcanoes in Buzau county; Limanu caves and the island of Braila National Park. South East Romania can therefore turn to new tourism products and types, such as rural/agro, adventure tourism, spa/wellness tourism and other niche types of tourism.

- **Partner 6 - Govern de les Illes Balears (DG R+D+I)**

Regional government.

Full eligible partner as Programme Owner.

The Balearic Islands is a region in the Mediterranean Sea characterised by its insularity and a territorial division by islands, it is formed by four islands: Mallorca, Menorca, Ibiza and Formentera. The main economic activities are tourism, services and industry. More than 85% of the Balearic Gross Value Added (GAV) corresponds to the service sector with the highest contribution derived from the tourist sector. Tourism activities in the Balearics generate 26,2% of full-time equivalent jobs and represent 36,3% of total regional intermediate consumes and 23,7% of added value. Therefore, tourism activities are a driving force in the regional economy.

- **Partner 7 - Regional Development Agency of North Hungary (NORDA)**

Regional development agency.

Full eligible partner as Programme Owner which does not have a running or fully fledged research programme at the moment of submitting an ERANET proposal, but which are planning, and have committed, to set up such a programme.

The largest nature conservation area in Hungary is located in the region of North Hungary and the region is also touched by 4 national parks and 5 nature reserves, all offering great potential for eco tourism. Furthermore, the region of North Hungary has a variety of tourism offers from mountainous and hilly areas, to water sports, spas and wellness, castles and fortresses, 3 world heritage sites, vineyards and wine routes and a broad spectrum on cultural events.

- **Partner 8 – South West Tourism**

Official Tourist Board.

Full eligible partner as Programme Owner and Manager.

The South West of England has 2 National Parks, areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which cover approximately 1/5 of the region, the South West Coast Path (national trail) and the Dorset and East Devon coast (World Heritage Site since December 2001). South West is Britain's foremost holiday destination. According to the UK Tourism Survey UK residents alone made 21.25 million trips to the South West in 2005, surpassing all other English regions (and Scotland and Wales). In 2005, the South West had 3 entries in the UK top 20 major paid attractions list and 3 in the top 10 UK attractions. Approximately 1/2 of the regions attractions (48%) are museums/art galleries, historic houses/ castles or other historic sites and at the end of 2005 there were approximately 146,653 serviced accommodation bed spaces, 19,004 self-catering units and 77,963 touring caravan/camping and static pitches.

- **Partner 9 - Danish Forest and Nature Agency, Nord Zealand (DFNA, NZ)**

State government department (regional level).

Full eligible partner as Programme Manager.

The development of sustainable usage of nature-areas has a very high priority in LDC NS. The great number of people (roughly 2 million people within a 50x50km area) and the many tourists to Copenhagen and surroundings make a great potential for using the many nature areas for recreational purposes. Within the area for which DFNA, NZ is responsible there are a great number of different nature-areas, starting with the extremely popular sand beaches, the beautiful "leaf-forests", the great lakes and streams. A significant number of areas within LDC are declared Natura 2000-areas with an international obligation to ensure a favourable level of maintenance for types of nature and species.

- **Partner 10 – Catalonia**

Regional government.

Full eligible partner as Programme Manager.

Catalonia is a region with 6.8 million inhabitants and 32,107 km2, generating a GDP about 157,124 M€. The territory, with 580 km of Mediterranean coast, also includes countryside and high mountains. Catalonia is promoting a global and integrated policy of development, according to sustainability principles under a wide scope. At a local level, 25% of Catalonian councils have already approved or are currently elaborating the Local Agenda 21. Tourism is a fundamental sector as it provides 11% of Catalonia's GDP (more than 13,000 M€ per year, and about 200,000 jobs). Catalonia hosts more than 25 million tourists per year (second residences not included), generating more than 165 million overnights. Almost 80% of the tourism activity is concentrated on the coast.

- **Partner 11 – Conseil Régional D'Aquitaine (France)**

Regional government.

Full eligible partner as Programme Owner.

Aquitaine is one of the French regions with the highest tourism concentration. Tourism accounts for 45000 jobs (4.7% of total employment in the region). Tourism groups many different economic activities such as accommodation, catering, leisure, information and many different tourism enterprises. For several years CRA has turned its attention towards the development of a sustainable tourism which includes respects for of citizens and heritage and which is, at the same time, both competitive and innovative.

- **Partner 12 - Regione Emilia Romagna (Italy)**

Regional government.

Full eligible partner as Programme Owner.

Emilia-Romagna Region has built an extremely profitable tourist industry, which includes seaside resorts, spas, artistic sites, sightseeing, camping, sport facilities and much more. The costal area is the most popular and lucrative tourism sector. Featuring around 4,000 hotel sites spread over 120 km of coastal territory, plus thousands of firms dealing in related activities, the tourist area of Emilia-Romagna is one of the most important ones in Europe and worldwide and it hosts millions of people every year.

To enhance and foster the great tradition of hospitality which has always been the distinguishing feature of this Region, the Tourism and Commerce Department of the Emilia-Romagna's Regional Administration has begun a series of actions to improve street furniture, roads and overall city planning in the tourist areas.

Consortium capable of achieving project objectives, well balanced and committed

All partners have experience of regional and interregional initiatives in this field. They are therefore ready to bring this experience together in order to achieve the overall project objective of developing and strengthening a framework for the coordination of regional research programmes on sustainable tourism. This "bringing together" will not rest at a theoretical level. Instead partners will develop concrete, joint actions. The consortium is more than capable of achieving such an objective as all partners have experience in working together with other regions to develop common interventions. Furthermore, the consortium includes 2 new member state representatives who are currently developing strategies on tourism and therefore the learning possibilities from this project are high.

Partners are also committed to a long term strategy on sustainable tourism as shown by the development plans, strategies and interventions described above. Therefore, the potential long term impact and durability of the ERNEST project actions is strongly supported and each partner subscribes to achieving the objective of defining together long-term and ambitious strategies in line with EU policy of sustainable development that each region could not easily reach on its own.

Partners can also promote the involvement of numerous regional actors with important expertise in this field. A selection of the actors, in addition to those described above in section 1, are listed below:

- Regione Toscana - *Centro Studi Turistici* (a non-profit organisation created in 1975 in order to undertake studies and research on various tourism related issues); ARPAT (Regional Agency for Environmental Protection in Tuscany); University of Firenze, Faculty of Economy (Courses in Management of Tourism Services); University of Siena, Faculty of Economics of Sustainable Tourism; Cross-University Centre ABITA in Florence (sector of the university of Florence undertaking research in the thematic areas of Architecture, Bio-ecology, Technological Innovation and Environment).

- CCTD – Institute of Administration and Enterprise of the University of Nice Sophia Antipolis (active in a programme on economic sustainability of tourism); Regional Pole of Innovation and Fair Economic Development: Tourism. (active in a programme of research and training in local, sustainable development of the tourism sector); National Centre of Civil Service: National Pole of Excellence in Tourism (active in a programme of research on the changing role of public administration in tourism taking into consideration sustainability factors); The Institute of Research and Higher Education in Tourism (IREST) (active in research on sustainable tourism); UMR TELEM University of Provence Aix Marseille 1 (earth and tourism products).

- Prefecture Ilia - Research Centre of West Greece Region (newly founded centre composed of 6 institutes. The following 2 of these institutes are based in the Prefecture of Ilia and aim at becoming active in tourism research: Institute of Sustainable Development (IN.AF.AN); Institute of Tourism Planning and Regional Development (IN.TO.S.PA)); Patras Science Park; University of Patras (Research Development Office which provides a wide variety of services supporting activities and strategic policies in research and development); General Secretariat for Research and Technology, Ministry of Development (G.S.R.T supports research activities, contributes to the reinforcement of the country's research manpower and establishes new institutes and research centres in support of high priority sectors for the development of the Greek economy such as tourism); National Centre for the Environment and Sustainable Development (established in 2000 to contribute to the technical assistance and scientific support to national and EU programmes and activities concerning the environment and sustainable development).

- SE RDA - National Association of Travel Agencies (ANAT) - SE Region branch (professional public organisation established by merger of travel agents and tour-operators to coordinate business activities of travel agents and tour-operators, protect their interests and represent Romanian travel business on a world scale; The Black Sea Coast Association for Tourism Development and Promotion (private-public partnership which elaborates tourism strategies for the development and promotion of a new tourism brand and product for the Romanian Black Sea Coast).

- Govern de les Illes Balears - INESTUR (Institute of Tourist Strategy of the Balearic Islands, part of the Regional Tourism Ministry and operating in: Tourist Quality (IRT), Research and Tourist Technologies (CITTIB), and Investments for the Improvement of the Tourist Environment (IMET); IMEDEA (joint research centre of the University of the Balearic Islands – UIB, and the Spanish Council for Scientific Research - CSIC); UIB (Universidad de las Islas Baleares); Cidtur (recently founded Centre of Investigation and Development focused on reference tourism at regional, national and international level.

- North Hungary - University of Miskolc, Gyöngyös College; Department of Tourism and Hotel Management; Ecological Institute for Sustainable Development; B-A-Z Tourinform Office Institute of Culture and Tourism of Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County; Regional Marketing Directorate.

- South West England – CoaST (Cornwall Sustainable Tourism Project); SW Destination Management Organisations (Bath, Bournemouth & Poole, Bristol, Cornwall, Cotswolds & Forest of Dean, Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Wiltshire); Dorset and New Forest Partnership; Bournemouth University (School of Services Management); University of Plymouth, Devon (Centre for Sustainable Futures and Centre for Sustainable Transport), University of Exeter, Devon (Centre for Tourism Studies); Schumacher College, Devon; South West Climate Change Impacts Programme; South West Protected Landscapes Forum; Sustainability South West (Future Footprints Visitor Campaign); Green Tourism Business Scheme; Our South West – Regional Sustainability; Government South West; South West Regional Development Agency; South West Regional Observatory; Natural England; South West Environment Agency; South West Regional

Assembly; South West Regional Cultural Consortium; Eden Project; Torbay Development Agency; Bristol UWE, City of Bristol (Centre for Environment and Planning and Centre for Leisure, Tourism and Society).

- DFNA, NZ – local councils; Environmental Centre Roskilde (responsible for overall planning in the Nature2000 area); Regional administration of Hovedstaden; Danish Agriculture organisation; Outdoor Council; Society for the Conservation of Nature; Danish Forest Association; VisitDenmark (national tourism organisation); Forestry College.

- CRA - University of Bordeaux (research on tourism and specific training on sustainable tourism and spatial planning - Master 2 Aménagement touristique); University of Pau (specific training on touristi planning - Master Aménagement Touristique).

- RER – Province of Rimini (in charge of projects aimed at an environmentally sustainable tourism); APT Servizi S.r.l. (in charge of creating a Yearly Tourist Promotional Plan, carries out the projects and the strategies for the actors making up the regional tourist system).

The commitment to the project is shown by the willingness of project partners to commit own resources to funding joint calls. The following partners can already guarantee a financial contribution to the calls: Regione Toscana, CCTD, NORDA, Catalonia, CRA. The other partners are committed to investigated the possibility of funding and to participating in funding joint interregional research on sustainable tourism through joint calls. The exact amount of funding available depends in some cases on yearly budgets.

Complementarity of participants

The added value brought by this consortium is determined by a number of factors, among which the exchange of knowledge which is at the heart of the project. Knowing how to affront the theme of sustainable development in the tourism sector within different regions but ones which have similar issues and problems, is of extreme importance for continued development. Knowledge is the basic element which allows us to avoid repeating the errors which may have been committed previously or elsewhere. This consortium offers the chance to gain this knowledge.

Furthermore, in addition to the knowledge and good practices which will be identified and shared, a huge added value of this consortium will be brought by the different levels of technical and political participation which are assured by partner. From the technical level partners will learn from other partners' experiences and thus widen their perspective on research cooperation. This technical input can be use to encourage policy change. The ERNEST project contains key actions to promote such high level change, including the formation of a political policy group and regular reporting to authorities.

ERA NET actions offer technicians, practitioners and politicians the opportunity to collaborate, to confront their working methods and to determine a reciprocal exchange of knowledge. Through the vast experience described above, consortium members are prepared for such a challenge.

Various consortium members have previous experience of collaboration in other European projects (all described in detail above), for example:

- Toscana and CCTD work together on the EVIMED project.

- Toscana and NORDA work together on the DEPURE project.

- Toscana and SE RDA work together on the ARISE project.

- Toscana, Emilia Romagna, Govern de les Illes Balears, NORDA and SE RDA have all participated in the ERIK Network.

- Toscana and Govern de les Illes Balears work together on the NURMEDIT project.

- Toscana and Catalonia are committed to and have begun discussion on bilateral contact and cooperation at technical and political level.

- Representatives from Toscana, Catalonia, South West England and CCTD who will be active in this project both participate in the European Commission's Tourism Sustainability Working Group

Of particular importance is the recently created European Network for Sustainable and Competitive Tourism. This network, launched in Florence in November 2007 with the signed of a Memorandum of Understanding, brings together a number of regions and other organisations active in the field of sustainable tourism. Regione Toscana promoted the creation of this network along with the regions of Catalonia and PACA. Some ERNEST partners have already signed the memorandum of understanding (South West England, NORDA, SE RDA, CRA) while others have been informed of the initiative and will be kept up to date on activities with a view to potential participation. This network shows not only that regions have already created a real understanding on the need for action to promote sustainable tourism, it also proves the firm belief in the benefit of cooperation. Moreover, it promotes the potential sustainability of ERNEST project actions.

Furthermore, contact has been made among the Brussels offices of a number of partners and potential future collaborators. Therefore, the ERNEST project begins with a level of trust already established through productive prior initiatives.

i) Sub-contracting:

In accordance with the (draft) Guide to Financial Issues relating to FP7 Indirect Actions, subcontracting in the ERNEST project only certain parts of the project, as the implementation of the project lies with the project participants. Therefore, the subcontracted activities proposed are not "core" or central parts of project work but are tasks or activities which support the implementation of the main object of the project.

All sub-contracted contracts will be awarded given according to regional, national and Commission regulations. Therefore, they will follow the necessary public procurement requirements and will ensure conditions of best value for money (best price-quality ratio), transparency and equal treatment.

Subcontracting appears in the ERNEST project where one of the beneficiaries appeals to its services to carry out part of the work, for specialised jobs that it can not carry out itself or because it is more efficient to use the services of a specialised organisation.

Below are the details for each partner availing of subcontracting:

- **All partners** have a small sub contracting budget for external financial auditing at project conclusion (4000 euro, 7000 euro for project coordinator). This audit will be external in order to guarantee a correct and independent service.

- **Regione Toscana** has a sub contracting budget for organisation of the Final Conference, particularly concerning preparation of material and dissemination. The Regione Toscana also has a subcontracting budget for the technological development of the project web site. The budget proposed for the overall costs is 57000 euro. The chosen sub contractor(s) will have both technical and organisational capacities and experience and will have a wide experience in European projects.

- **SE RDA** will require external support in its role as coordinator of WP5 (Outreach and Communication). This support includes production of leaflets/brochures/wall posters, other publications or material (design, graphics, content by thematic issues etc) and translation/interpretation for joint events (seminars, workshops, conferences and other meetings) in at least three languages (Italian, English, French). The budget proposed for these activities is 15000 euro.

- **DG R+D+I** foresees the sub contracting costs for a regional research and development actor which will support a number of actions including: organising training activities and local meetings,

social dialogue through information dissemination and exchange, external expert advice on project development, and publicity. The budget proposed for these activities is 16250,63 euro.

- CRCtourGUNE (Association for Cooperative Research in Tourism -research centre in tourism) shall provide side support in all work packages in which **Basquetour** participates. In particular, the CRC shall actively support Basquetour on the definition and preparation of research activities on sustainable tourism research and in the implementation of joint activities, will participate in promoting productive cooperation and collaboration in research both in terms of interregional cooperation and cooperation at regional level, including public and private partnerships and in general outreach and communication. The wide expertise and experience of this association will have huge added value to coordinated regional level activities. CRCtourGUNE is currently developing the Research Agenda for the Basque Government for the next 3 years. In order to carry out this work, CRCtourGUNE has joined a number of international and national networks and initiatives within the field of eTourism (IFITT, TTRA, INES, eNEM) in order to be at the forefront of national and international trend within the sector of tourism. CRCtourGUNE also participates in R&D projects in contact with national and international partners, which will help the benchmark of different markets with the Basque tourism market. The budget proposed for these activities is 32500 euro.

- **NORDA** will involve the joint Tourism Research Centre of North-Hungary and North Great Plain in the project once it is established. The calls for the creation of this research centre will be published this year. NORDA sees the participation of this research centre as of high added value to the project as it will promote coordinated research actions on sustainable tourism for two regions, for North-Hungary and North-Great Plain. The staff of the research centre and linked destination management offices will be involved with a supporting role in: organising and moderating local meetings and training activities, facilitating social dialogue through information dissemination and exchange, supporting promotion actions and social dialogue by organising awareness meetings/campaign on sustainable tourism. NORDA will also see the participation of a number of regional experts (from the regional council, the university and the regional marketing directorate) who will participate through providing external expert advice, particularly in WP2 bringing in as wide as possible a picture of the region, its characteristics and its needs. The budget proposed for these activities is 22500 euro.

- **South West Tourism** has been undertaking in depth research using REAP (Resources and Energy Analysis Programme) to investigate and develop a tool for resource accounting for sustainable consumption and production related to tourism in the South West, investigating tourism's Ecological and Carbon Footprint at both a regional and sub regional level. This research, carried out with the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) would be of significant interest to all ERNEST partners and connected regions. Therefore, the SEI would be involved as sub-contractors in training sessions on ERNEST topic playing an important role in supporting partners on technical aspects related to the monitoring and quantification of environmental impacts. SEI is an independent, international research institute specialising in sustainable development and environment issues. SEI's mission is to support decision-making and induce change towards sustainable development by providing integrative knowledge that bridges science and policy. The expertise of SEI in this field is employed by a considerable number of government departments across the UK and abroad. SEI brings a unique set of skills to the project and can help embed sound quantitative measures through training, support, advice and capacity buildings within the partners. A total of 22250 euro has been allocated for this service.

- The **Prefecture of Ilia** will avail of the support of Patra Science Park which develops activities and provides special consultancy services to connect the productive and social field with research and technology, innovation and business promotion. Patras Science Park works with partners all over western Greece on: Culture, Environment, Tourism, Energy and Entrepreneurial Benchmarking. Patras Science Park offers its consultancy services to promote the highest quality in all forms of tourism, culture and all the other disciplines that can guarantee the durable growth and development of the region. The prefecture of Ilia will avail of Patra Science Park as a subcontractor for support in the following type of activities: organisation of meetings and training courses, publicity and dissemination, external expert advice on project development. A total of 15000 euro has been allocated for this service.

- **Catalonia** will widen the regional impact of the project by involving a number of companies who are active in the field of tourism activities. These companies will support Catalonia in their project

activities with expert advice and contributions. Actions to which they will offer support include: organisation of meetings and training courses, publicity and dissemination, external expert advice on project development. A total of 30000 euro has been allocated for this service.

- **Aquitaine** will require sub contracting costs for actions related to communication and dissemination of ERNEST activities among different regional actors. Aquitaine intends to promote the project activities in an integrated manner with regional mainstream activities already underway. Sub contracting will be used for the production and distribution of dissemination and informative material. For example, the region would like to target enterprises for increased attention to sustainable tourism strategies, with a direct connection to regional research activities in this field. Subcontracting will also be used for the definition and preparation of research activities (external expert advice) and the organisation of meetings and training courses. The budget proposed for the organisation of dissemination activities and the preparation and diffusion of material is 12600 euro.

- **Regione Emilia Romagna** will require sub contracting costs for technical and scientific support which will come from a public entity with long term expertise in the field of sustainable tourism: the Province of Rimini. Regione Emilia Romagna will avail of the Province of Rimini as a subcontractor for support in the following type of activities: organisation of meetings and training courses, publicity and dissemination, external expert advice on project development. RER will also avail of support from APT servizi srl: for the production of dissemination material and for translation/interpretation service at joint events. A total of 20000 euro has been allocated for this service.

Third party

- In coordinating WP2 **Basquetour** will avail of the expert support of Innobasque as third party due to its wide experience in this kind of project (described above) which will had huge added value to Basquetour's own significant expertise. The Internationalisation Area of Innobasque, the new agency launched from the presidency of the Basque Government set up to coordinate and promote innovation in all fields in the Basque Country, is in charge of the internationalisation strategy of the RDI programmes for the Basque Government. Innobasque will support Basquetour in the activities described in WP2 related to the mapping, coordination and analysis of the regional policies, strategies, programmes and technological capabilities of each region participating in ERNEST project.

Additional beneficiaries / Joint Competitive Call

The ERNEST project foresees the preparation and implementation of at least one joint call. The resources to be committed to joint calls will be provided by the partners themselves based on a concept of variable geography. These resources will compliment the European contribution and will be integrated perfectly into project activities as the joint calls follow on from previous work in defining and implementing joint activities. A number of partners (Regione Toscana; CCTD; NORDA, Catalonia and CRA) have already confirmed their availability to provide funding for at least one call. The remaining partners will use the first project period to analyse the potential for funding joint calls.

Work on the first joint call with commence in month 25 of the project. The call will be published according to regional regulations. Project proposals will be evaluated both at regional and interregional level (2 stage procedure) by a team of experts (internal project staff and external experts depending on regional decisions).

B 2.4 Resources to be committed

The ERNEST project does not involve any other major costs (such as equipment) other that those indicated in part A3 or the proposal and the staff effort shown in section 1.3. Each partner will request 100% EC contribution for the overall costs related to the project. The financial project resources will be distributed according to their particular task within the project (person-days, travel, subcontracting, etc.) of each ERNEST partner.

The overall financial plan is adequate for a four year project which intends to successful develop networking activities but also to develop concrete joint actions. The following is a description of the allocated budget and calculations:

Personnel and sub-contracting

For those partners who have subcontracting costs, the budget for staff costs has been calculated according to the following formula: average monthly cost/person X number of person months – sub contracting.

Given the diversity of the different actions that must been completed and in an attempt to involve the key players in this field, some partners will need the support of external experts and subcontractors in certain tasks (these tasks are described in detail above). Subcontracting is, therefore, an important cost category for some ERNEST partners but is limited to **15,65%** of the overall budget as ERNEST partners will carryout most of their activities internally.

Where currencies are not euro (South West England and Denmark) the average monthly cost of staff in euros was calculated according to the rate of exchange on Friday the 27th of July 2007:

- 1 British Pound = 1.49412 Euro / 1 Euro (EUR) = 0.66929 British Pound (GBP)

- 1 Danish Krone = 0.13440 Euro / 1 Euro (EUR) = 7.44066 Danish Krone (DKK)

Travel (other direct costs)

International travel (in direct costs category) has been calculated at a cost of 800 euro per person/pre journey, allowing for 2 people per partner and 14 international meetings.

Regional travel (in direct costs category) has been calculated at a cost of 200 euro per person/pre journey, allowing for 9 regional meetings / events.

8 meetings have been foreseen between the Commission and the project / WP coordinators at a cost of 800 euro per person.

Events (other direct costs)

Organisation of regional meetings has been calculated at 2000€ (venue and buffet for half day meeting) allowing for 5 meetings.

1 final regional workshop is foreseen for each region (presenting results of sub projects etc) at project end at a cost of 13,000 euro for all partners except NORDA and SE RDA who have a cost of 20,000 euro to organise a more extended workshop with the two fold aim of promoting their newly instated research programmes and of encouraging the inclusion of other regions from new member states in the project and future activities on sustainable tourism research.

Regione Toscana will be in charge of organising and paying for the final conference (including hiring the room, technical equipment and staff, catering and catering staff). The Regione Toscana has 40,000 euro for practical costs of the final conference (venue, catering, translation etc).

New partners (other direct costs)

Three new partners will be added to the consortium during the negotiation phase. Furthermore, the Regione Toscana has 96.635,44 euro to pay for the travel and accommodation costs of potential new partners (identified and contacted) during work package 6.

Project and WP coordinators

Project coordinator Regione Toscana has been provided with budget to cover the extra work that they will undertake. The Regione Toscana will also be in charge of the technological development of the web site.

WP coordinators CCTD, Basquetour and SE RDA have been provided with budget to cover the extra coordination work that they will undertake. This is mainly concerned with personnel costs and some subcontracting costs for services such as interpreting/translation, material preparation, printing costs.

The WP have different durations and different levels of activity. This has been taken into account when allocating the person months to each coordinator.

New partners

The partners who joined the ERNEST project in the negotiation phase have a slightly lower budget in comparison to the others. This is due partly to planning constraints: not having planned for the project before 2008 when the negotiation phase started and they were contacted, they cannot guarantee the same amount of staff commitment as other partners. They will still participate actively in the core project activities but they will be supported (both by the lead partner and other partners) in other time consuming additional activities such as translation, organisation of events, WP6 activities, preparation of overall consortium deliverables.

B3. Impact

B 3.1 Strategic impact

Impact and steps to be taken

All regions participating in this project proposal recognise tourism and its related services and production as one of the fundamentals of their economic system. However, they also recognise the need to promote this economic sector without causing irreparable damage to the natural and cultural heritage and environment. The ERNEST project is of great potential impact in these regions as it works towards promoting and rendering more efficient research programmes on this theme, to bringing in elements of success from other areas, and to coordinating joint, concrete actions which increase value and potential impact.

The ERNEST project addresses the ongoing problem of the fragmentation of research activities, programmes and policies across Europe, as highlighted in the European Commission Green Paper "The European Research Area: New Perspectives" (2007). ERNEST will address this problem though increased coordination between national research programmes across the EU Member and Associated States.

The ERNEST project will gradually assess, develop, implement and fund joint activities which will help to overcome the problem of fragmentation in a cross cutting research field of great importance, that of sustainable tourism. The issue of sustainable tourism involves numerous actors in various different thematic fields. The ERNEST project will bring these actors together at a local and regional level as well as at an interregional level and encourage them to exchange ideas and experience in order to coordinate and add value to their individual activities.

The final activity will be the launching joint interregional calls and this action will include a set number of participants from each region involved who will cooperate intensively. However, the scope for inclusion and for cooperation is much wider as the many more stakeholders involved in the project duration particularly through education and vocational training and indeed exchange or equipment and facility sharing between partners.

The advantageous impact of the project will also be promoted by widespread dissemination and local, regional, national and European level. Dissemination activities are described in detail below.

We are talking about concrete activities as requested by the ERA NET work programme: concrete co-operation between research programmes, networking, mutual opening and the development and implementation of joint programmes and activities. The joint activities in this project will lead to a better and more efficient way to organise research funding policy in the concerned regions.

The impact of the ERNEST project is summarised below

Impact in ERA NET work programme	Impact of ERNEST project
To reduce the fragmentation of the European Research Area by increasing coordination between national research programmes across the EU Member and Associated States	The ERNEST project will coordinate regional research programmes on sustainable tourism and will therefore help to reduce the fragmentation of research activities in this area.
To allow Member States and Associated states to avoid overlap between their programmes and to develop expertise from mutual learning.	The ERNEST project dedicates a specific work package to mutual learning and exchange among partners (WP2).
Co-operation between research programmes, such as their networking, their mutual opening and the development and implementation of joint	The ERNEST project dedicates two work packages (WP 3 and 4) to defining, planning and implementing different stages of joint actions,

programmes and activities / Joining forces to provide common answers to common research problems	thus promoting real cooperation between research programmes.
Enable national or regional systems to collectively take on tasks that they would not have been able to tackle independently	Sustainable tourism is a wide ranging issue which individual regions struggle to deal with alone. The ERNEST project offers support and tools to take on tasks collectively.
The co-operation developed should provide reliable indications that it could continue beyond the Community funding	The dissemination process, the opening to further partner regions and the creation of a high level political group (WP 5 and 6) demonstrates the commitment of the ERNEST project to spread the activities and go beyond European funding.
Lessons learnt and knowledge gathered disseminated in the European Research Area with a particular focus on new Member States	Work packages 5 and 6 are dedicated to dissemination and increasing involvement at regional, national and European level. The project offers multiple means of disseminating the knowledge and lessons of the project.
Addressing global issues, common to many EU Member or Associated States	Sustainable development in tourism is a global issue. Tourism is a vital economic activity in all the partner regions, and throughout many others in Europe.

Added value of the European Approach

The European approach is fundamental for two main reasons. Firstly, potential and real damage caused by development goes far beyond regional boundaries. It is a global problem and therefore sustainable development practice is a global issue. Tourism is all over, tourists come from all over, and changing the impact of tourism is not something that one region or even one nation can do alone. Research on this issue and subsequent initiatives can only be dealt with successfully through cooperation. Secondly, the European approach allows partners to learn from one another and discover research and initiatives that are perhaps not present in their region. In some cases these activities could be transferred, in others aspects could be integrated into existing programmes. In all cases partners will benefit from the knowledge and may be able to use this common knowledge to come up with common solutions to research problems. Therefore, the project has potential for really improving existing activities, avoiding overlap and ensuring that resources are better directed.

Learning from other partners' experiences is an important way to encourage partner regions to wider their perspective on research cooperation and to implement policy changes. The ERNEST project contains key actions to promote such high level change, including the formation of a political policy group and regular reporting to authorities.

ERA-NET actions are expected to have a lasting impact. The co-operation developed should provide reliable indications that it could continue beyond the Community funding. This project takes into account the limits of relying on European Funding only for long term sustainability. Its potential impact will be increased by in-depth economic feasibility analyses including all potential stakeholders as to how to ensure sustainability when the European financial contribution comes to an end.

The potential impact of the project is increased further by the fact that the project partner are key actors within their national or regional research systems, all of whom have proven experience in cooperation and some of whom have already been active in joint activities and calls at European level, in addition to experience in management and coordination of European networks.

Other national or international research activities

The ERNEST project will take into consideration the work carried out in the INTERREG IIIB project EVIMED. This project aims to elaborate policies for sustainable tourism development through the

identification and application of environmental, economic and social indicators. The project also contributes to creating a new tourist offer which utilises good practices on sustainable tourism, trains tourist operators and develops common methodologies for informing the local population and tourists and raising their levels of awareness on sustainable tourism. Furthermore, the project is developing common strategies for promoting tourism through a network of sustainable tourism packages based on a common image. Another vital aspect of the project which will be taken into consideration in the ERNEST project is the analysis carried out on how to demonstrate the economic sustainability of tourism based on a cultural and environmental awareness.

The ERNEST project will take into consideration work done at national, European and international level on indicators such as:

- "Indicators for sustainable development in Italy" (CNEL 2005), report elaborated for CNEL which applied the ISSI (*Istituto di Svilippo Sostenibile Italiano*) methodology in an institutional environment, using processes of participation and shared choices.

- "Sustainable Development Indicators to monitor the implementation of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy" SEC(2005) 161, 9.2.2005

- EUROSTAT sustainable development indicators

- European Environment Agency Indicators

- United Nations sustainable development indicators

- UNWTO Guidebook on Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations (2004)

- OECD Key Environmental Indicators 2007

The ERNEST project cites the following European Commission documentation as vital for research on sustainable tourism:

- Sustainable tourism and nature 2000 - Guidelines, initiatives and good practices in Europe (2000)

- La promotion de la protection de l'environnement et du développement durable en matière de tourisme: vers une Agenda 21 européenne du tourisme (2001)

- Renewing European policy on tourism: a stronger partnership for European tourism, Commission Communication (2006)

The ERNEST project cites the following international resources as vital for research on sustainable tourism:

- Agenda 21 for Sustainable Tourism (Tourism and Local Agenda 21: the role of local authorities in sustainable tourism (2003))

- Green Labelling Guide, 2005

- The International Ecotourism Society

- International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) (particularly the publication - Sustainable Development Indicators: Proposals for a Way Forward)

- International Standard for Ecotourism

- International Centre for Responsible Tourism

- Local Governments for Sustainability

- United Nations Division for Sustainable Development

- USAID Sustainable Tourism

- World Tourism Organisation (WTO) – "tourism: principles for sustainable development" (1996), Guide for local authorities on developing sustainable tourism (1999), Sustainable development of tourism: a compilation of good practices (2000-2002), Guide on indicators for sustainable tourism (2003).

Assumptions and External Factors

Impact	Assumptions that may determine whether the impacts will be achieved	External factors that may determine whether the impacts will be achieved
Better and more efficient way to organise research funding policy / research programme on the theme of sustainable tourism in the concerned regions with real European added value	In this activity the project assumes the willingness and capability of partners to open up and coordinate their research programmes. It also assumes the added value of opening up and coordinating research programmes	Eventual changes of government / political representation at regional level could affect regional priorities.
Jointly defining, preparing and implementing joint, concrete actions which increase value and potential impact of existing actions (including joint calls)	The successful achievement of project impacts assumes above all a wide participation from regional stakeholders in collaborative processes and social dialogue. This participation and indeed dedication is necessary for all activities and particularly for the development of joint activities, including projects financed by the joint call. The impact of the project will be greatly widened if the partnership and network of contacts is further developed. This potential impact assumes the participation and interest from regions and actors out with the ERNEST project.	Eventual changes of government / political representation at regional level could affect regional priorities and therefore the provision of funding for joint calls. External factors influencing private stakeholder participation include the economic success of activities and therefore their ability to participate.
A common long-term strategy for cooperation in line with the European Union policy of sustainable development	This activity assumes a willingness, a political commitment and a financial feasibility of all partners to continue after the project ends	Changes in policy priorities at European or regional level could reflect on this action

B 3.2 Spreading excellence, exploiting results, disseminating knowledge

The dissemination plan and the stakeholder involvement plans which will elaborated in WP5 will be the main documents outlining strategies for spreading excellence, exploiting results and disseminating knowledge.

ERNEST will see activities targeted at:

- Direct involvement of regional level stakeholders

- Direct involvement of European level stakeholders

- Information and dissemination at regional and European level

Regional level – direct involvement

At regional level each project partner is responsible for involving their regional stakeholders in project activities and for wider dissemination of and information on project activities. Regional stakeholders include all public and private actors with some connection to tourism and potential for promoting sustainable development, for example tourism associations, private companies working in the field of tourism, citizens, local authorities, chambers of commerce and development agencies.

As described above in WP2 on information exchange and WP3 on planning and implementing joint activities, each partner will be responsible for ensuring that regional stakeholders participate in dialogue and consultation on the actions proposed in the ERNEST project. Each partner will bring the results of interregional discussion back to their territory and further develop it through input from regional actors.

Each partner is responsible for ensuring such contact at least every 6 months.

The final methods to be used will vary according to what each partner judges to be most adapt to their territories. These methods will be shown in the stakeholder involvement plans (deliverable 5.2). Some proposed methods include:

- Interviews – face to face meetings with regional actors to obtain information and / or impressions of the actions being proposed;

- Open-ended group discussions – informal and unstructured encounters in which the project partner guides the content of group discussion and explores some issues in greater depth with specific questions;

- Focus group discussions – more structured discussions with selected groups of stakeholders consisting of no more that 12 people engaged in a common productive activity. These will generate detailed information and allow the project partner to assess the potential project benefits for different groups of people;

- Questionnaires / Surveys (structured or semi-structured) – a set of specific questions presented in a systematic order and used to obtain information from individuals or groups. Structured questionnaires or surveys will produce data which can be easily compared across partners. Semi structured questionnaires will allow stakeholders more freedom to express their opinion.

European level – direct involvement

ERNEST will be an open network in that it will accept new associate members into the consortium through its duration. This level of dissemination and communication is considered vital to the project as the further involvement of different regions can only add to the positive impact of increased knowledge and coordination through collaboration.

WP6 describes in details the means of involving other European and non-European regions in the ERNEST project activities. WP6 is dedicated to identifying, contacting and involving new regions in project activities. This will be done with the contribution of all partners as all ERNEST partners already avail of a huge European network of contacts. Under the coordination of the project leader, partners will contact these regions to explain the opportunities presented by the ERNEST project. These opportunities include: participation of these regions at project events and meetings (funding has been

provided for in the project budget to pay for this participation), receiving updated information on ERNEST activities and related initiatives and potential participation in joint calls.

<u>Information and dissemination at regional and European level</u>

The means used to spread excellence, exploit results and disseminate knowledge at regional and European level include:

- The preparation and diffusion of material such as leaflets, brochures, and short reports to inform citizens on the project themes and actions. Publications will have a similar format for all partners and will be translated into each partner's language. They will be prepared in accordance with European Commission regulation on publicity of European funded project, include the relevant logos and information on the source of funding and the EU programme aims.

- The production of a new project web site which will have a public section presenting the project's aims, consortium and activities along with the ERA-Net scheme itself. The results of joint activities (including the joint calls) will also be published here. The web site will also have a reserved section in which partners and European Commission officers can access work in progress and internal project information.

- Collaboration with other European networks and projects dealing with related issues. In this way ERNEST can widen its added value in terms of reducing research fragmentation by involving an ever greater number of actors. To this end, the role of the Brussels offices of all partners will be vital as their geographical position allows them to be up-to-date on existing projects and to investigate possibilities for collaboration.

- Organisation of events and initiatives (wherever possible events in collaboration with other networks or projects) and participation of the ERNEST partners at related events. One particularly important example of participation in related events is that of the "Euromeeting" held in Tuscany each year. Euromeeting is an international conference and discussion forum aimed at encouraging regions to take on board the European Commission's overall objectives in the field of sustainable tourism and address Agenda 21 at local level.

- A 1 day international conference in Florence at project closure. The conference will give space to both technical and political aspects of research into sustainable tourism.

  The Conference will be organised by the WP5 coordinator and the lead partner with the support of all project partners. Depending on the interest of other networks, this conference could be a collaborative organisation.

  The event will host parallel workshops which will not only present the themes and results of the project but will offer a change for open dialogue among participants. The conference will also include a policy forum on sustainable tourism aimed at stimulating a policy debate among participants at all levels and at discussing good practices and policy recommendations.

  Parallel to the Conference, an interactive Regional Good Practice Exhibition will be organised providing the interested regions with the opportunity of exhibiting the most successful measures developed in the field of sustainable tourism.

  The Conference will see the participation of European local, regional and national representatives, European institutions (most notably, the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Committee of Regions), relevant European regional networks and associations, tourism organisations, associations and entities, and any other relevant actors operating in this field.

  All documents and material (e.g. background paper, reports, presentations and other contributions by participants) prepared for the Conference and the Exhibition will be made available on the ERNEST website.

B4. Ethical issues (if applicable)

Informed consent:
When describing issues relating to informed consent, it will be necessary to illustrate an appropriate level of ethical sensitivity, and consider issues of insurance, incidental findings and the consequences of leaving the study.

The ERNEST project will, however, take into account and respect fundamental human rights and all national and international regulations which exist in this field, such as:

- the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU,

- UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination,

- the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR),

- the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,

- the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women,

- the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child,

- the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families,

In general, the project will adequately consider marginalised and disadvantaged population groups in the analysis and dissemination activities.

If it is necessary, ERNEST project Steering Committee will explicitly negotiate verbally or in writing with the involved persons or agents the consent for defining and carrying out project activities that could have in some extent an undesirable potential negative impact for third individuals or agents. ERNEST Steering Committee will be responsible of that any project action can not legally take place because of a lack of informed consent.

Data protection issues:
Avoid the unnecessary collection and use of personal data. Identify the source of the data, describing whether it is collected as part of the research or is previously collected data being used. Consider issues of informed consent for any data being used. Describe how personal identify of the data is protected.

The activities carried out in the ERNEST project (surveys, questionnaires) will consist in collecting and progressing personal data and individual or confidential information. During these activities and the corresponding analysis of the data, the valid regulations will be taken into account and respected, in particular, the

- National legislations on the protection of individuals and personal data,

- Directive 95/46/EC, on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data.

The compulsory consideration of and compliance with these legislations will be included in the consortium agreement and will also be included in contracts with all project partners and subcontractors.

Use of animals: Where animals are used in research the application of the 3Rs (Replace, Reduce, Refine) must be convincingly addressed. Numbers of animals should be specified. Describe what happens to the animals after the research experiments.

Human embryonic stem cells:

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Research proposals that will involve human embryonic stem cells (hESC) will have to address all the following specific points:

- the necessity to use hESC in order to achieve the scientific objectives set forth in the proposal.
- whether the applicants have taken into account the legislation, regulations, ethical rules and/or codes of conduct in place in the country(ies) where the research using hESC is to take place, including the procedures for obtaining informed consent;
- the source of the hESC
- the measures taken to protect personal data, including genetic data, and privacy;
- the nature of financial inducements, if any.

Identify the countries where research will be undertaken and which ethical committees and regulatory organisations will need to be approached during the life of the project.

The ERNEST project will have the character of a support action, and research in the context of this project will be limited to the field of methodology development and social sciences, especially socio-economic knowledge, innovation and public policies. Therefore, no clinical research or research with any

- medicinal products,

- biotechnological inventions,

- genetically modified micro-organisms,

- human beings, animals or living tissue in general

will be carried out, supported or indirectly caused within the context of the ERNEST project. In the same way, the implementation of the project results will not affect any of these areas, groups or products.

The ERNEST project will be conform to current legislation and regulations in the countries where the particular activities will be carried out.