

THE CARPATHIAN MODEL OF REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

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Abstract: *The topicality of this paper is determined by the cardinal shift in the global economical paradigm towards "green" economy, when the sustainable development concept has to be integrated in development strategies of countries for their reorientation towards the creation of efficient partnerships to increase people's wealth, provide social justice, and significantly decrease the risks of environment pollution and natural resources' exhaustion. The main aim of the paper is to identify theoretical-methodological approaches to the formation of the regional cross-sector partnerships as an effective tool for sustainable development of unique areas of the world. It is the international partnership, the author believes, that can consistently implement the principles of sustainability and openness in the practice of corporate social responsibility, using the combined innovative management strategies. A comparative assessment of the socio-economic development conditions, the characteristics of the environment, tourism resources and complexes, the infrastructure of the Carpathian region of Ukraine, Romania and Poland can substantiate the conclusion of the international perspective of the strategies for sustainable development of the Carpathian tourist brand is presented. The model of the named brand and the strategic plan of its realization, which will improve the ecological environmental situation and socio-economic development of the region through the controlled usage and conservation of natural, historical, economic, and cultural heritage of the region is developed.*

Keywords: *"green" economy, corporate social responsibility, international and regional partnership, strategy of sustainable development, tourist brand, the Carpathian region.*

Short Abstract: *International regional partnerships are described in this paper as an efficient instrument of sustainable development. The Carpathian model is tailored sampling how to save the unique regional ecosystem.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Currently, the actual global challenges are: fast exhaustion of natural resources; accelerating environmental change: from pollution to catastrophic climate changes and global scope of environmental, natural and economic disasters; the increasing demand for food and fuel; the threat to world's security creates a strong need of searching for effective approaches to sustainable development of the world.

The sustainable development concept has been defined for the first time in the World Strategy of Preservation of the Nature (1980) developed at the initiative of UNEP (United Nations Environment Program), the International Conjunction of Wildlife Management (MCOII) and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and specified during global political debate, starting from the report on limits to the economic growth, Brundtland Commission (1980), Rio Earth Summit (1992), Conventions of the United Nations on the biological diversity (1993), the World Summit of the United Nations on the sustainable development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, 2002), the strategic plan "Aims-

2010” (2002), climate conference of the United Nations in Copenhagen (2009), and finishing with significant data from the reports Global Biodiversity Outlook, The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB), (2010). The basic maintenance of the concept of a sustainable development of the world is defined by the thesis that the demands satisfaction of mankind in the present should not undermine ability of the future generations to satisfy its own demands. It means that the concept of the sustainable development is treated as the process of changes in which operation of natural resources, the direction of investments, orientation of scientific and technological development, personal development and institutional changes are coordinated with each other and strengthen present and future potential for satisfaction of human needs for preservation of life-support systems of mother Earth.

Green Economy UNEP is an innovative solution to overcome poverty and the possibility of transition from the "brown" (resource-oriented) economy to a sustainable. It's a reasoned response to the question of how to keep humanity's environmental footprint in a single world. Its goal is to link the need for the environmental change in the course of economic and social consequences, in particular, economic growth, labour and capital markets. UNEP defines a "green economy" as an economy that improves the welfare of the people, ensures social justice, while significantly reducing the risks to the environment and natural resources' depletion.

Radical changes in the world economic paradigm towards "green economy" should bring the agreement reached at the 10th Conference of the participants of the UN Convention on Biodiversity (COP 10) in Nagoya, Japan (18-29th October, 2010), which adopted a new strategic plan for the convention on biodiversity and ecosystems in the years 2011-2020, "Goals 2020" (2020 TARGET, STRATEGIC PLAN), the Protocol on Genetic Resources (Protocol on genetic resources) and announced the development of accounting treatment of "natural wealth" in the national accounts of the countries (World Bank, UNEP) as well as the Mission 2020 (to take immediate action to stop biodiversity loss for the prosperity of mankind.) In the report "Towards a Green Economy: Pathways to Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication, submitted on 21st February, 2011 at the session of the 2011 UNEP Forum (UNEP Governing Council / Global Ministerial Environment Forum), which brought together environment ministers from 100 countries, it is noted that the transition of the global economy to a "green economy" will cost about 2% of GDP, or \$ 1.3 trillion per year. The growth of "green" economy, according to UNEP, in the period from 5 to 10 years will be higher than forecast by "brown" scenarios, this will exclude many of the risks and systemic weaknesses of the latter. The proposed scenario assumes a growth in per capita income with a decrease of almost 50% of the "ecological footprint" of a person in 2050. [6]

The globalization of business activity leads to the increased access to natural resources, labour markets, customers and suppliers. Any successful business requires a stable work environment. In other words, globalization has created a situation where companies can no longer allow themselves to ignore the environmental and social development of regional business location. Thus, the overall trend of business globalization in the area of corporate social responsibility is clearly identified.

The environmental conditions of the companies require constraints in production and lowering of the levels of income, both on domestic and international markets. Because of this, they contribute to the evolutionary transition to full integration of the principles of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the strategic orientation of companies. Strategic corporate responsibility is defined as the activity of the company, which includes a choice of how the company is voluntarily using its own resources for social purposes. An important argument of the new approach to corporate social responsibility suggests that,

ultimately, economic and social objectives of business organizations do not clash, but unite: economic investments are publicly useful and social investments are economically advantageous.

The financial crisis of 2008 - 2010 became an ordeal, as of the financial stability of the international companies, as well as an indicator of the viability of the concepts, policies, models and tools of their corporate social responsibility. It significantly transformed the meaning and importance of CSR of the companies. During the restructuring, the inevitability of significant personnel cuts, financial difficulties, many international companies have reduced or abandoned their social projects. This is evidenced by the results of the study, "Philanthropy in Crisis", held in the spring of 2009 by the research group "Zircon", by PricewaterhouseCoopers, the Donors Forum and the SAF Russia. According to the data of this research, 65% of 440 respondents (companies) claimed to reduce funding for social projects. [8] This is one of the most important changes to the meaning of CSR, which had previously prevailed and formed the trend aspect of the business realities. The main recommendations for the CSR for companies in the post-crisis conditions are the following: the formation of a strategic approach to CSR planning; filtering and development of clear criteria for the selection of social projects; consistent, regular, high quality and open communication with stakeholders; the introduction of the new formats of the less expensive social projects; the use of innovative management tools. [10]

The scale of current economic and environmental problems proves it to be impossible to match them with the forces and resources of a single state. Solving these problems has to be through the formation of the regional systems of governance that will ensure the stability of social and cultural systems, reduction of the negative environmental impact, ease of the number of ethnic and interstate conflicts, rational use and conservation of nature - the unique resources of the territories and regions. The international partnership is the one who unite all the interested parties in the region: state-owned and business financial institutes, socio-economic partners and non-governmental organizations; these make them possible to gradually implement the principles of stable and open practice of the corporate social responsibility, with the use of united innovative management technologies.

The main aim of the paper is to determine the theoretical and methodological approaches to the formation of regional cross-sector partnerships as an effective tool for sustainable development of the unique areas of the world, the argumentation of the conclusion of the international term strategy for sustainable development of the Carpathian region and development of a model of the Carpathian tourist brand, which will help preserve the ecological environment and improve the socio-economic development of the region with the use of control and conservation of natural, historical, economic, and cultural heritage of the region, the use of low-cost, energy-efficient technologies and innovative management tools.

2. THE REGIONAL CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS - AN EFFECTIVE TOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Regional sector partnerships in the sphere of corporate social responsibility - is a complex process, which requires time and expertise of its members. The concept of a regional cross-sector partnership should be defined as the process of building mutual understanding and mutual respect of different sectors (business, state, civil society) of the states of a regional presence for the common problems of the region. This is a voluntary cooperation, which aims at the sustainable regional development based on combining the

efforts of corporate business, civil society and state structures of territorial presence. Depending on the nature of regional cross-sector partnerships they can be classified as follows: program partnership, political and strategic partnerships, lobbying partnerships, multidimensional partnership. The analysis of recent studies and publications [2,3,4,7,14] for the creation and development of international partnerships in the field of corporate social responsibility, aid in determining the theoretical and methodological approaches to the formation of regional cross-sector partnerships for the successful implementation of "green" standards for regional economic development.

3. THE PROCESS OF BUILDING CROSS-SECTOR REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

1. Determination of needs
 - Problems and priorities
 - Successful examples of the respective practices
 - Alternative solutions
 - Required resources
2. Potential partners search
 - States of the region
 - Consulting
 - Partnership agreement
3. Partnership program formation
 - Aims and objectives
 - Results
 - Restrictions (legal, political, social, time limitations, territorial)
 - Activities and performers
 - Resources allocation
 - Budgeting
4. Program realization
 - Partners' motivation
 - Administration: authority delegation and support for upward initiatives
5. Technical support of the partnership
 - Interim evaluation
 - Continuous communication support
6. Monitoring
 - Program execution analysis (result achievements)
 - Problems identification
 - Problems solutions development
7. Ending the partnership
8. Partnership program reengineering
 - Evaluation of progress
 - Evaluation of unplanned results
 - Main lessons
 - Best practices
 - Opportunities for program improvement.

The main structural elements of the partnership agreement are the partnership objectives, action plan, performance indicators, resources and their distribution between the partners, the duties of partners, funding mechanisms, the principles of decision-making system of communication, conflict resolution mechanism, the system of anti-risk

measures, procedures for monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of partnership strategy completion or exit of the partnership.

The combination of the core competences and strategic goals of participants' partnership ensures its success and effectiveness. Building partnerships around the core competencies of each participant brings new professional skills: resources, roles, behavioural models, and unique opportunities for achieving social and environmental objectives of the partnership.

4. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN THE CARPATHIAN REGION: THE CREATION OF PREREQUISITES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP RELATIONS

The rapid development of international Carpathian region actualizes the need to harmonize definitions and common rules for the regulation of various processes to a balanced solution of its main issues, from environmental protection to strengthen the infrastructure system. For example, according to the analytical report on the mass population survey of forest areas in the Carpathian region of Ukraine, catastrophic problem of deforestation is determined by 75 - 95% of respondents. [13] The international dimensions of environmental problems require effective cooperation of all countries of the Carpathian region.

The intercultural perspective of sustainable development of the Carpathian region, including Ukraine, Poland and Romania, is aimed at improving the ecological environment and raising the socio - economic development of the region controlled by the use and enrichment of natural, historical and cultural heritage. The basic strategy for sustainable development of the Carpathian region, defined by international initiatives is the development of the Carpathian tourism industry.

The list of 10 key sectors of the "green economy", dedicated «Towards a Green Economy: Pathways to Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication» includes tourism too. In the mentioned report it is proposed to invest in the amount of approximately \$ 135 billion into the "green tourism".

Principles of the World Trade Organization (WTO) define sustainable tourism as a strategy that directs management to meet the economic, social and aesthetic needs while maintaining cultural integrity, the basic ecological processes, biological diversity and the preservation of life. The strategy of sustainable development of tourism in the Carpathian region is based on international experience of cooperation between Ukraine, Poland, Romania and the developed in the framework of international initiatives that have found their coverage in a number of conventions, declarations of the EU and national programs for sustainable development of the Carpathian region. [1,5,9,11,12,15,16]

The illustration of the presence of conditions and prerequisites for the establishment of effective international partnerships in the tourism industry is represented by the example of the Transcarpathian region of Ukraine. Today, in the Carpathian region in the Transcarpathian region of Ukraine more than ten regional public organizations and unions of tourist destination are successfully working. The most active are: Association of tourism enterprises, the regional centre to promote rural tourism, the Federation of sports tourism, public organization "Fund of the regional tourism initiatives" (Toureurocenter), Union of private growers and winemakers of the Carpathians, the public organization "Union of tourism for people with physical disabilities "(Revival), NGO "Forza" and others. In collaboration with the community organizations and associations such issues as presentation of new tourism products, festivals and celebrations, organization of special exhibitions and the informative tours are solved. One of the important partnership

directions is the cooperation in writing to participate in European grants. In 2010, these were prepared and sent to the contest: a project of the Ukrainian-Hungarian Regional Development Centre - "Management of destinations cross-border cooperation in the border territory of Transcarpathia - Szabolcs-Satmar-Bereg", a project of social organization "Carpathian Foundation" - "Carpathian region as an attractive tourist destination point ", a project of the Transcarpathian Regional Centre to promote rural tourism - "Creating a multinational ethno villages" and "The International School of rural green tourism". In the region there are 16 tourist information centres that provide assistance to domestic and foreign tourists. There is an increasing interest in the Carpathian region, tourist routes for citizens of European states. In order to inform more thoroughly the population of border areas of states with which the Transcarpathian region has a common border, negotiations on the establishment on the basis of Ukrainian consular posts abroad tourist information points were held. The tourism and recreational infrastructure of Transcarpathia is comprehensively developing. The network of health, recreational and tourist facilities count 356 objects, 28 of which were put into operation in 2010. Total number of beds exceeds twenty thousand, 30 % more than in 2004. [17]

On the territory of the Carpathian region the tourist festivals "Euro Carpathians" and "Hutsul turnips" became traditional. At these fiestas the tourist brand "Carpathians" and the brand of rural tourism "Europe in every village" were born. At the level of the Carpathian Euroregion Council the idea of creating an international tourist walking route "Carpathian Tourist Way", which will be held in four regions of the Carpathian region (Transcarpathian, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv and Chernivtsi region) and in four neighbouring countries: Slovakia, Romania, Poland and Hungary (the concept of eco-tourist walking routes totalling approximately 380 km) was supported. In the framework of international walking route in the territory of Transcarpathia the Transcarpathian tourist way was laid. This is the theme that has been the subject of training, writing and submission to the competition of European technical assistance of the two projects: "Improving the competitiveness of the border area", "The development of tourism".

With the support of the international institutions the study of three Carpathian regions has been completed: Ukraine -Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Transcarpathian, Chernivtsi region; Romania Faharash Mountains; Poland-Subcarpathian region to compare their commonalities and differences of socio-economic conditions of the characteristics of natural environment, tourism resources, facilities, infrastructure, and identify common future tourism prospects. Key results of the analysis are:

presence of natural and historical - cultural historical assets attractive for tourists

- lack of common sense of Carpathian identity
- lack of adequate tourism and transport infrastructure
- urgent need to protect the environment in the Carpathian region at the practical implementation of international conventions
- lack of capital and unskilled management of tourism companies.

5. CARPATHIAN TOURIST BRAND MODEL

The policy of the coordination of spatial planning of the border ethnic territory should determine:

- regional and business clusters of mini-networks of travel services
- standards for tourism activity
- creation of cross-border infrastructure in transport services, energy, telecommunications
- efficient use and conservation of natural resources

- strategic planning of urban and rural border areas
- integrated land use planning
- assessing the impact of tourism on the environment

The objective of international cooperation in the sphere of sustainable development in the Carpathian region should be an effective joint structured tourism industry model based on its reorientation in terms of spreading the positive image of the region, coordination of government, business, infrastructure provision, improvement of management (implementation of international standards) and provide "green standards" development.

6. CARPATHIAN TOURIST BRAND MODEL

1. Values: the cultural heritage and traditions, sustainable development, natural and cultural values
2. Organisational structure: Management Coordination Committee of the Carpathian Tourism, Regional Representative Committee, professional tour operators.
3. Infrastructural support:
 - a. transport
 - b. communications
 - c. health
 - d. sports
 - e. cultural
 - f. auxiliary
4. Tourist programs and products
5. Tourist route types:
 - a. Horizontal national tourism products
 - b. Vertical national tourism products.
6. International and national route types:
 - a. Green routes (country tourism)
 - b. Health routes (treatments and relaxation)
 - c. Sport routes (pedestrian, car, bike, kayak, climbing, horseback riding, skiing, swimming, fishing, hunting photos)
 - d. Cultural heritage routes (castles, memorials, churches, museums, cities and villages)
 - e. Gastronomic routes
7. Route maps
8. Tourism service standards
9. "Green" standards of liability of businesses of the environment, territory, community, population
10. Monitoring of the quality of tourism services
11. Business liability standards social audit

7. CONCLUSIONS

The international community has formulated the basic principle of resource and environmental security of the world - the principle of sustainable development. The imperatives of sustainable development are based on the idea of harmonizing the interests of states, transnational corporations, national and international businesses through compliance with economic, social, environmental and legal liability. An important trend in the development of CSR is the progressive realization of the business structures that CSR is not only and not so much social and environmental projects and programs, but also one of the most important components of corporate governance, which provides competitive advantages.

Sustainable development of regions towards "green" economy should be achieved through an integrated approach to solving the specific problems of certain regions of the stakeholders within the region (institutions as governance of cities and towns, international organizations, government agencies, public and private financial institutions, socio - economic partners and community organizations, businesses).

The experience of international cross-sector partnerships suggests that the use of the mentioned tool allows you to implement the principles of sustainable development to achieve goals that would be impossible if every interested party is working on its own and forms a distinct competitive business goal. Namely, the formation of a new network of communication channels to extend the levelling of social conflicts and risks, improving relations with the community, region, introduction of new tools of management, harmonization of partners' interests in social responsibility, increasing the social capital of participants partnerships, raising awareness groups stakeholders, mitigate the negative impact on the environment, preservation of unique ecosystems, etc. Cross-sector partnership approach allows its participants to increase their own social impact which contributes to sustainable regional development, strengthening of socially responsible image of the country and enhances its international competitiveness.

The implementation of recommendations for the formation of regional cross-sector partnerships in the tourism sector of the Carpathian region will harmonize the social and business goals of territorial presence. Given the active participation and support of the states, following the experience of successful practices of responsible leadership, a regional cross-sector partnership will become a powerful source of corporate social responsibility to the environment, communities and vulnerable populations, and hence of resource sustainability unique regions of the world.

Of course, in the current economic conditions the process of creating a model of international tourism brand of the Carpathian region is complex and time consuming. The existence of the strategy for sustainable regional development, methodological approaches to the formation of model of the Carpathian tourist brand will help to conserve natural and cultural identity of the region and improve the socio-economic conditions of the population identified areas.

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