Discover Tarnava Mare: linking biodiversity to local benefits in Romania
Setting the scene
Tarnava Mare, a lowland area of high biodiversity, 85,000ha farmed by 5000 families in small-scale farming communities
.... one of Romania's largest farmland SCI/Natura 2000 sites
The mosaic farmed landscape is a European treasure.

Tens of thousands of hectares of Habitats Directive grassland and forests
Some of the most important wildflower-rich lowland haymeadows in Europe ...
...with associated wildlife of European importance
.... this High Nature Value landscape is also a living economic landscape
In farmed, semi-natural landscapes, survival of biodiversity depends on continued management by local people.

But traditional land management in Transylvania no longer offers a livelihood to small-scale farmers:

- breakdown in markets – especially milk
- competition from imports
- additional burden of EU hygiene regulations

→ Collapse of cow numbers
→ Abandonment of mowing on 50% of hay meadows
→ Intensification/fertilisation of accessible grasslands

→ LOSS OF SMALL-SCALE FARMING COMMUNITIES, LOSS OF BIODIVERSITY
How to promote economic development that sustains and does not undermine HNV farmed landscape?
ADEPT’s integrated programme

- Study habitats/species, and design management measures to conserve biodiversity
- Get local support by involving local people in design of practical management measures, and linking this management to:
  1. agri-environment grants and other targeted EU and national support
  2. adding value to local products with biodiversity brand, and improving marketing
  3. diversifying, including eco- or agro-tourism linked to sales of local products
1. Biodiversity-friendly measures under Romania’s National Rural Development Programme

- Agri-environment payments for grassland management are specifically designed to protect HNV farmland biodiversity
- Restrictions: fertilizers, cutting dates, stocking rates
2. Sustainable commercial incentives – markets for local and traditional products

Linking assistance with PRODUCTION to assistance with MARKETING
We are helping small producers to achieve consistent quality, good packaging
ADEPT is working with Innovation Norway to improve Milk Collection Points and milk hygiene in villages ....

without which market for milk will be lost
… to develop small-scale processing units in villages …
...and to promote organic conversion linked to marketing

by farm visits and workshops ...
including clear guidance to help small producers to understand regulations

• Clear information for farmers, producers and for food inspectors

• Leaflets for small-scale producers explaining the simpler hygiene regulations for small producers
We are promoting local products such as cheese ...
pastrama, smoked bacon, traditional sausages
... fruits and nuts ...
...traditional bread ...
... jams and honey.
3. Diversification … linking tourism to local food

Discover Târnava Mare

Many tourists already come to the area because of some 30 churches of which 10 are fortified and four are UNESCO World Heritage Sites (Brașov, Sâmbăta, Sighișoara and Vâlna). There are many more activities in Târnava Mare to experience:

- In most of the thirty villages in summer you can see the evening procession of cows returning to their owner’s homes for milking, generally about an hour before sunrise.
- Traditional bread making. Contribute this with a village walk and church visit while the bread is baking so you can return to see the bread taken out of the oven.
- Organic farming training scheme for young people. Taste their organic milk, cheese, bread and vegetables.
- Barrel making, blacksmith, charcoal burning, weaving and embroidery demonstrations.
- Meet the Bees! Wear a fully protective bee suit and discover how honey is produced. Taste and buy different types of honey.
- Horse and carriages through wildflower meadows to see sheep being hand milked and cheese being made. Picnic lunch can be arranged.
- Visit the goats/cheese making and sample traditional cakes, jams and pickles.
- Fresh produce markets at the local daily in Sighișoara, with a wide range of local produce on offer. Wednesday and Saturday are the busiest days. Râșa has a market every Friday.

For the more active, a series of meadow and forest walks has been developed that will eventually be linked into a long distance hiking footpath across the Târnava Mare area. Guides can be hired by

In Sâmbăta, walk to the eastern or around the village following marked trails. More rugged and county walks can be arranged.

In Vâlna, stroll on a series of short walks on marked trails around the village (map available).

Traditional herbal teas, cakes and lunches can be arranged in some courtyards or as picnics.

Please respect the privacy of the people offering these activities and only visit by pre-booking or arrangement.
Visits to producers incorporated into tourism programmes – and paid for of course

bread-bakers

... charcoal-burners

... hill sheepfolds

... beekeepers
Sales linked to tourism in hotels, shops, village festivals, national and international markets

Sales are good - currently demand is greater than supply!
The tourist information centre at Saschiz also sells local products

…… visited by thousands of Romanian and foreign visitors in 2008.
Branded interpretation signs in villages
Walking guides including detailed walking routes incorporating GPS points
Discover Tarnava Mare

Bringing this together with a brand, marketing organisation

.... and a website www.discovertarnavamare.org
A Taste of Transylvania

"Prince Charles is probably unaware that he has provided me with perhaps the tastiest reminder of one of the most unforgettable trips of my life. I plucked several bunches of his succulent, jumbo carrots from the vegetable patch of his latest farmstead, more of which shortly.

I have just returned from a tour of the Saxon villages of Transylvania, a mesmerising little corner of eastern Europe. The region provides a rare opportunity to experience rural equanimity, where people, land and homes haven’t changed for 800 years.

Without a time machine, this is the closest you’ll come to witnessing what life must have been like in medieval Europe....."

Says Lucy Mayhew in her Travelmail article "Transfixed by Transylvania"

A Unique Sense of Place

The Tarnava Mare area of South-eastern Transylvania is one of the forgotten jewels in Romania’s crown. It is one of the Europe’s most important natural and cultural landscapes, including some of the finest pristine wildflower rich grasslands – the result of centuries of good husbandry by local farming
Website is successfully promoting links between biodiversity conservation, continued traditional land management, and local incomes.
Objective: economic development that is really integrated in the broad village community, supporting not replacing traditional activities

Thank you!

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