



Päijänne-Leader transnational project, preliminary plan

and

December 29, 2009/SGS

LETTER OF INTENT

EUROPEAN TRANS-NATIONAL PARK

Project name:

Contact information of the applicant organization and Lead partner

Juotavan Hyvä Etelä-Päijänne ry, "Clear and Drinkable Lake Päijänne South", registered association and Päijänne-Leader LAG ry., registered association, which is the official body of rural development in the area of Asikkala, Hartola, Heinola, Padasjoki, Pertunmaa and Sysmä municipalities in Päijät-Häme province, situated in the middle of Southern Finland.

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Background, idea and qualifications of the project

Following the preliminary research project during 2009, administered by Juotavan Hyvä Etelä-Päijänne ry, "Clear and Drinkable Lake Päijänne South", one of the purposes and aims of the project is to enhance the possibilities of rural development of Southern Lake Päijänne region exploiting transnational cooperation working methods.

The main goal of the project is to enhance national park tourism and increase the international fame of nature tourism in general **exploiting the status of European National Parks**, in order to create a frame that **enables the local operators to develop local tourism** events, products and services and to effectively and collectively **market these under the "national park brand"**.

Regarding transnational cooperation, each partner will add its own issues into this project plan, according to mutually agreed decisions.

Project timetable

The project would be up and running during 1.2.2010 – 31.1.2013 regarding the plan effective in Finland. The timetable of the international partners could be partly different, due to their national stipulations.

Project operators

The project is administrated by Juotavan Hyvä Etelä-Päijänne ry, "Clear and Drinkable Lake Päijänne South" and Päijänne-Leader LAG, in cooperation with international Leader action groups and national parks in chosen EU nations, such as Italy, Poland, Estonia, Sweden, Germany, Great Britain, France or Spain, as per later to be decided.

Cooperation with transnational partners; working methods and action plan

The project will organize visits, meetings, discussions, workshops and seminars, in which new, internationally suitable, tourism service products are to be developed and tested.

During the project, the parties involved will get acquainted with the marketing concepts and the services offered by other European national parks. The project partners will test and compare each others' products and services and **learn the good practices in the nature tourism trade**. Through international networking a cooperation method will be formed, in order to link the service choice of each national park involved by exploiting the tourist flow of each partner. In the development of the services available in Päijänne National Park and in its surrounding area, the expertise of the local and regional education organizations and the international student exchange is used as a working tool. At the same

time, the project will promote local and regional enterprising and **follow the principles of sustainable development** and internationalization education on grass-root level.

The international Leader action groups, national parks and tourism operators form a cooperation network with which a separate international project plan and budget is to be written, in each country separately. The Lead Partner, Päijänne-Leader will be overall responsible for the international administration of the transnational project, but **each country participating will cover its internal administration, operational and travel costs. The international administration costs will be equally shared by the number of partners.** A mutual steering committee, with members of each participating country, will control the activities of the international project.

Each partner will visit in each participating country during the 3 years of project period as per detailed project visit programme, schedule and budget, as per separately and mutually decided.

The international partners will work as a tourist test group to sample and analyze the service products of Päijänne region and other transnational partners' regions for giving valuable response for further development.

Suggestion for project steering committee

The project will have two steering committees: one national and the other international. The national steering committee will comprise of 5-10 members, e.g. the representatives of the organizations financially funding the project, the cooperation partners and experts, as well as the representative of the administrator, the local Leader Action Group. The meetings of the steering committee will be organized and participated by the project manager as well, being responsible for preparations of practical matters and project documentation. The international steering committee is responsible for the activities of the cooperation project as per the final international plan to be written in cooperation with the final, international project parties. It will hold its meetings 2-3 times a year, in connection with project visits. The members of the international steering committee will be named, when all the cooperation partners have been chosen and documented.

Costs and financial project plan

The total costs of the project managed in Finland with 93,75 % EU –funding is **160 000 euros.**

incl. international administration & joint documents, covered by Päijänne-Leader,

of which to be equally shared by the Leader partners

40 850 €

We, the undersigned, are committed to work in cooperation regarding the above-described transnational Leader project.

Place and date:

Päijänne-Leader LAG

Other European LAGS

CO-SIGNATORIES: Juotavan Hyvä Etelä-Päijänne ry, "Clear and Drinkable Lake Päijänne South"

European National Parks and local operators