



European Conference “Getting There – Naturefriends Point the Way to Soft Mobility”

22/5/2009, Salzburg

Naturefriends Position Paper on Mobility and Tourism in Times of Climate Change

The European Conference held under the heading of “Getting There – Naturefriends Point the Way to Soft Mobility” in Salzburg on 22 May 2009, was organised by Naturefriends International, by Naturefriends Austria and the national Naturefriends Federations with the support of the EU Commission, Directorate General Environment, and of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Environment and Water Management.

The high degree of mobility we have come to take for granted has many positive aspects, such as access to education and jobs also for peripheral regions. On the other hand it involves quite a number of negative consequences for the environment, caused by traffic and transport.

These consequences have to be borne by both the resident population and visiting guests. Holiday resorts that are hard hit by traffic may experience a decline in tourism with potential secondary effects on their economic situation.

In 2006, Europe first registered over 460.8 million international arrivals, raising its market share in world tourism to 54.4%. For 2010, UNWTO – the World Tourism Organisation – has forecast an increase of international arrivals to 527 million and the figure forecast for 2020 is as high as 717 million. The Alpine region currently boasts approximately 5 million tourist beds and about 450 million overnight stays per year. The share of road-bound tourist traffic in Europe amounts to 75%. A Europe-wide study commissioned by the Directorate General Enterprise of the European Commission has evidenced that 50-75% of the environmental consequences of tourism are caused by tourist traffic.¹

Transsectoral measures designed to calm traffic, to upgrade access trips to holiday regions as well as on-the-spot mobility by resorting to public and soft-mobility means of transport, to introduce innovative transport technologies, to raise awareness and to manage mobility have even now been launched by a number of local and regional initiatives in Europe.

From the experience gained with these projects and from the outcome of the Conference, Naturefriends have derived the following 5 priority demands (for the complete version see www.nfi.at/softmobility):

Five priority demands raised by Naturefriends

The principles of sustainable mobility and of sustainable tourism are to be applied to all forms of tourism, taking account of each of the three pillars of sustainability – i.e. of economic, ecological and social aspects.

Translating the ensuing demands into practice calls for the combined efforts of all stakeholders in the environment, transport and tourism sectors as well as of regional policy makers at destinations across structural levels and political boundaries.

¹ Multi- Stakeholder European Targeted Action for Sustainable **Tourism** & Transport. Mustt report, DG enterprise, 2004

A. Focus on soft-mobility tourism formats

- Develop and give marketing priority to tourism formats that include carfree access trips and sojourns at destinations.
- Set up mobility management systems in destinations (e.g. traffic calming and car-free zones, local, demand-responsive public transport systems as well as muscle-driven locomotion).
- Incorporate the criterion of environmentally benign mobility into existing product labels as well as into the energy and emission balances of package offers.

B. Broaden the appeal of public transport

- Design consumer-friendly services and integrated tariff systems covering all modes of public transport, with a view to upgrading access to a comprehensive, environmentally sound transport system – i.e. by introducing affordable all-year passes for all modes of transport..
- Raise awareness of sustainable tourism and sustainable mobility among providers and consumers alike.

C. Guarantee funding

- Guarantee the availability and funding of public transport within the regions for residents and tourists alike, and in particular that tourism destinations can be conveniently reached by public transport (rail, bus and boat) throughout the year.

D. Encourage innovation

- Step up the use of new transport technologies, such as efficient alternative drive systems, environmentally benign fuels and transport mode technologies, and to encourage the development of entirely new mobility systems (e.g. airships).

E. Provide a regulatory framework designed to advance soft mobility

- Fully integrate air transport into the European emission trading system and the post-Kyoto negotiations and introduce an earmarked tax on aviation fuel.
- Integrate binding criteria for soft mobility and sustainable tourism schemes in national and Community funding instruments that are tapped for the development of tourism.

Salzburg, May 2009