



RuralGrowth
Interreg Europe

**TOGETHER WE BOOST
RURAL GROWTH AND
INNOVATIVENESS OF SME'S**

**An interregional cooperation project for
improving SME competitiveness policies**

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ACTION PLAN

Delta 2000- Po Delta Area

Part I – General information

Partner organisation: DELTA 2000

Other partner organisations involved (if relevant):

- NUTS2 region: EMILIA-ROMAGNA (IT)

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Part II – Policy context

The Action Plan aims to impact:

- Investment for Growth and Jobs program
- European Territorial Cooperation program
- Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument addressed: REGIONAL OPERATIONAL PLAN (ERDF) and the LEADER Rural Development Program

Part III – General overview of the current situation and the desired state

1. Status quo situation

Po Delta is a reclaimed area, with a socio-economic system historically based on the primary sector (Fishery, Fish culture and Aquaculture; Agricultural production mainly focused on cereals such as corn and rice) while Industry still shows some opportunities but only in specific locations and activities.

In Agriculture there is the historical prevalence of *latifondo* model (vast land estates, formed by the attraction of huge capital involved in the reclamation process which took places during the XIXth century) but, apart from the primary sector, local economy is extremely fragmented and composed nowadays by micro and family-based firms (3 jobs per company on average).

The small size of companies is a real constraint towards firms' competitiveness, market competence and investment capacity.

The sector which has recorded a significant increase in the number of jobs and firms has been the Visitor Economy (restaurants and accommodations – specifically rural B&B, guesthouses, farmhouses), and traditional services both to families and to enterprises.

Tourism in the area has a long tradition in the segment of sun&beach, historically dominated by a huge share of apartments and secondary homes, a supply model which has slowed down the growth of a modern tourism service economy. From the politics and the public, the beachfront belt has been the only one recognized as relevant from the tourism perspective.

In the last 10 years, tourism vision – especially the one developed by Delta 2000 - has turned the direction towards the natural inland area, able to add image and experiential value to the mature Sun&Beach product. Therefore the development strategy has incorporated and has been mainly focused on the natural area, a wetland of international importance, one of the most important Italian area for birding recently recognized in the MAB UNESCO list.

Moreover, it can be added the proximity to world renown cultural attractors as Ravenna, Ferrara, Venice, Verona, Mantua, Modena, Padua, all cities included in UNESCO World Heritage list and all easily reachable within 90 minutes trip.

This unique mix of Nature tourism, Slow tourism, Culture tourism, Sun&Beach and Special Interest tourism (agriculture processes, reclamation plants, etc.) represent very high potentials of the area able, if well structured, to give rise to a new Tourist Destination and open new opportunities for rural enterprises.

2. Vision

A rural area with a strong supply for natural, slow, sustainable tourism. These segments contribute to create new employment and entrepreneurial opportunities, for tourism and tourism-related services, for new technologies and innovative services, for agricultural enterprises oriented towards visitor economy.

A destination where Nature, Landscape, Culture, Food, Advanced Agriculture and Qualified Hospitality can be combined in a successful and sustainable mix.

A milieu where new information technologies make the visitor experience **smart** and easy through the integration of information, transport, booking, ticketing, site interpretation and sharing of users' personal contents.

A powerful recognized brand for Nature observation, didactic and Birding, among the top ones in Europe.

3. Policy frame and financial resources

From the administrative and organizational perspective, the new tourism law of Emilia Romagna Region (2016) foresees 3 regional Destinations: Emilia, Romagna, Great Bologna. Po Delta area lies inside Romagna Destination and within this area, the goal is to claim for a specific visibility and focus in the marketing action, thanks to its unique features. This is one of the main goals of local tourism policy.

From financial resources' perspective, Regional financial resources for tourism are distributed on annual basis to the 3 regional Destinations of Emilia Romagna region and Po Delta could claim for some budget (or for using part of Romagna Destination's budget for

actions aimed at making this area more known and visible). Funds to be added to the ones that Delta 2000 as a local development agency has dedicated to strategy, development and marketing of tourism in the frame of different projects and programs (Regional Operation Plan, Agriculture, Fishery).

Part IV – Lessons learnt from inter-regional exchange

Main lesson and good practices learnt during the project, that have inspired our Action Plan and that are potentially relevant to our region are the following.

Brief description (What, where)	Features that are of interest and possibly relevant for our region
1. DE DRENTSE KOE (from PP 2 Drenthe) http://drentsekoe.nl	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transformation of a traditional farm into a service company (rural entertainment-didactical park for children) - Capacity to play farmer’s competence in lateral segments
2. LANDHOTEL DIEVER (from PP 2 Drenthe) www.landhoteldiever.nl	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local community as primary target of a positioning strategy - Networking and cooperation between operators of the same area with a joint objective of preservation and development of local identity
3. VISIT SAVONLINNA open online platform (from PP 3 Savonlinna) visitsavonlinna.fi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Destination website designed to boost local operators’ business - Contents provided by private business/institutions. Coordination and optimization for increasing the traffic to the platform (fast search, online marketing campaigns, etc) performed by a centralized management team
4. SAIMAALIFE, entrepreneur Mari Pennanen, (from PP 3 Savonlinna) www.saimaalive.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involving far potential travellers through new technologies (visual storytelling)

<p>5. SAIMAA START UP COACHING, (from PP 3 Savonlinna) www.facebook.com/SaimaaStartUp</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase technical assistance (advisory, peer-to-peer review, tools, etc.) to local startups and micro firms so to help them keep goals, targets and timeline. - Tools for presentation of the business idea to potential investors - Increase market visibility to new businesses
<p>6. RUEDA WINE ROUTE + Enotourism experiences (from PP 5 Medina del Campo) www.rutadelvinoderueda.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of a certified thematic route (based on product other than wine in our case) for creating synergies and joint promotion of the participating businesses. - Planning and development of guided tours and experiences based on the theme and combined with other attracting features of the area
<p>7. RENAISSANCE WEEK (from PP 5 Medina del Campo) imperialesycomuneros.com/renaissance-week</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotion of local heritage - Concentration of different activities and attractions in a limited-time event so to boost tourists' participation
<p>8. MURALAND PROJECT (from PP 1 Nagykanizsa)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A project trying to build a territorial comprehensive strategy (not only tourism)
<p>9. BIKE TOURS NETWORK (FROM PP 1 NAGYKANIZSA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A small network of small companies providing experiences to a specialized segment (bikers) - Precise requirements to be adopted by the participating service companies to guarantee client satisfaction and coming from the analysis of the target segment's needs

Apart from the ones listed above, inspirations and hints for our AP came from inter-regional exchange process performed with the other partners during the project and particularly the international meetings. These occasions have not only been useful to check and deepen local good practice (most of them of private nature), but also to get information and ideas on how the partner organizations have been working, to discuss about their experience in regional/local policies supporting SMEs, pros and cons of the process followed and the results achieved (both successful and not).

The latter – more than the good practices coming from SMSE - provided us very useful insider knowledge elements to design the structuration of actions for our AP.

Part V – Details of the actions envisaged

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

Policy objective 1 (broad goal): Creating a branding process of the tourist destination Po Delta so to make it well known and reputed by the market and therefore boost the creation of supporting activities and services to visitors.

Contribution to SME competitiveness of the whole axis:

It is evident that excellent Food&Wine districts are exceptional attractors for tourists. Thousands of people visit each year Chianti in Italy or Champagne in France or La Rioja in Spain because their famous wine brands. The same happens for famous food brands in different valleys of Switzerland: Appenzellerland (Appenzeller), Emmental (Emmentaler), Gruyère (Le Gruyère), Parma (Parma ham, Parmesan cheese), as well as other regions worldwide renown as culinary excellences (e.g. Valencia for rice dishes, Bologna for pasta, etc.).

People go visit these destinations attracted by top Food/Wine brands but spending time there, tourists spend money not only in wine cellars or in food shops/labs but also on hotels, B&Bs, restaurants, guided visits, cooking lessons, tasting sessions, handicraft shops, etc.

In these areas the competitiveness of tourism SMEs is strongly related (directly connected) to the power of Food/Wine brands.

But the opposite works as well. A strong (known, reputed) branded tourist destination is an area visited by many tourists for motivations related to its attracting resources (culture, nature, sun&sea, urban milieu, etc.). One of the basic principles of sustainable tourism is to provide quality employment to community residents and a strong linkage with the local businesses: using local tourist services (accommodation, guide, interpretation, private transports, etc.); using local materials and goods in the production function (milk, dairy products, food, beverages, salt, wood, etc), enabling tourists to visit and experience local producers, etc. Just to mention one: Rural farms, perfume producers, and handcrafters in Provence (France) strongly benefit from high tourist flows in the same region and in the nearby Cote d’Azur, coming for leisure, culture, outdoor activities, sun&beach.

Therefore in terms of policies, the competitiveness of rural SMEs is strongly affected by the capacity of creating a destination area well known and appealing, perceived by demand as suited for satisfying specific needs, where bunches of local companies (both tourism and non-tourism sector) following a shared vision on the values/products to deliver (the tourism strategy of specialization/differentiation) cooperate for providing the guests satisfactory experiences. It is the development process called “Destination Branding” which deals with market strategy, identity-image, promotion and marketing to increase awareness of the destination and its appeal.

A policy process which we plan to activate as the first axes of our AP, also because Rural Growth is a project whose aim is to increase competitiveness of rural SMEs by means of **the visitor economy sector**. And the impact on the competitiveness of local rural SMEs would be even higher in a nature-sustainable destination, as we conceived Po Delta.

This process needs to incorporate in the policy also the creation of an entity able to permanently direct, coordinate, support stakeholders. This is why we insist on the need for a DMO i.e. a body governing the tourist area which should develop and maximize the conditions for long

term sustainability of local SMEs (knowledge, partnerships, people, resources, positive impacts, etc.).

Moreover, in terms of competitiveness, it must be not forgotten that:

- Direct sales to tourists are at market price (no intermediation/distribution costs and higher margins for the local companies);
- Tourism has one of the highest multiplier among economic sectors (around 3.2 for direct and indirect effects – i.e. 3.2 euros generated in the economy every euro spent on tourist services, a great spillover of economic impact over the local economy “...outperforming the majority of the key sectors we analysed in terms of generating GDP across the entire economy”, WTTC, The Comparative Economic Impact of Travel & Tourism);
- Sales to international tourists for enterprises are accounted as exports (that could not be made otherwise).

Without the “push” tourism can provide, the majority of local SMEs in Po Delta are too small to survive in global markets, even in consortia/partnerships.

Interregional character of the whole axis:

We have investigated the destination branding process in the RG partner areas and 3 of them has provided useful insights and inspirations to our AP: Medina del Campo (E), Savonlinna (F) and Nagykanizsa (HU). They represent different situations/models.

Medina di Campo has the goal of positioning a new tourism destination based on a growing wine brand (Rueda). The peculiarity of this model is that main stakeholders are on one side powerful and big private operators (the wine producers) supporting the marketing of the area to boost the awareness of their product and direct sales of wines inside local production plants and modern tasting/expo areas. Private sector is therefore very proactive and autonomous/independent from the public a institutions. The latter, on the other side, try to enlarge tourism opportunities (and not to be “squeezed” on wine tourism) working on cultural/historical attractions rooted in the “golden age” of Spanish history which took place in those lands. Main lessons learned have been a) how strong/big private companies can be influential for the rise of small ancillary services and b) the combination of different tourism products to create a range of “attractors” able to extend the tourist season.

Savonlinna and all Saaima lake region shows a situation like Po Delta in terms of (small) private sector company size. We appreciated the effort put in action by efficient technical bodies (mainly public) to support local SMEs both with actions aimed at supporting the enterprises through coaching and with promotional actions aimed at attracting visitors through connections and operative programs with institutions.

In Nagykanizsa we deepened Muraland project, a territorial multisectoral comprehensive strategy and, despite tourism here is not a key sector – at least at present – our attention was mainly focused on the relationships inside the strategy between visitor economy and the other economic sectors (agriculture, handicraft, culture, environment). An important aspect is that the strategy has been approved as regional “law” so to mitigate possible interferences of political changes.

None of these reference areas seems to have either a written, agreed, tourism strategy or a dedicated coordination/management body specifically addressed to tourism development, which have been foreseen in Po Delta, as a result both of the local conditions (strategic role of tourism in the area) and of the recognition done.

Concreteness of the foreseen actions:

In order to “force” a higher degree of concreteness we have foreseen that the tourism strategy and plans of Po Delta area should be agreed by local stakeholders through written commitment (see 1.3 in the AP). This should at least guarantee that local operators already involved in tourism services or looking for growing through visitor economy, understand and agree on which values, products, segments and originating countries the area will focus on and will adapt their entrepreneurial/marketing actions accordingly (at least to have the chance to access the co-financing funds the policy instruments will make available through public calls.

Link with the Policy Instruments:

The Local Action Plan of Delta 2000 financed by Measure 19 LEADER Support to Rural Regional Development has an action for the definition a Tourism Marketing Strategy and some pilot actions aimed at promoting Po Delta starting from 2018. However, Delta 2000 can finance some actions, but surely it cannot permanently support this Objective. Before making any action and for the sake of continuity, it must then be clearly understood how this macro-action will be permanently financed (in fact, this goal has been inserted as the first action 1.1), considering both funds coming from regional laws, municipalities’ funds (e.g. visitor tax) and private contribution

The present Regional Tourist law (4/2016) recognizes Romagna Destination (the wide area including Po Delta) and each year regional funds are addressed to its development and branding strategy. Po Delta is included in the strategy and can benefit from the regional policies.

Also the Regional Policy supporting the process of rooting and diffusion of MAB (Man and Biosphere) UNESCO values (Po Delta has been included in the list in 2015) must be included.

SMART objectives

The specific outcome that we want:	Destination Po Delta positioned in the mind of the prospects as a primary natural tourist area. A must destination for slow tourism, not to be missed by international and national visitors
How we will measure this:	Demand side: Bednights, Arrivals and Expenses of Visitors. Knowledge and perception of the area by the market (visitors and trade). Supply side: Number of enterprises and staff involved in the provision of services to visitors. Number of experiences/excursions sold and number of visitors involved.
How much change we expect:	Increase of 5% per year of tourist flow and same increase on supply side
When this change will occur:	First crucial step next 3 years. Then a “permanent” change process in the following 5-7 yrs.

Is this possible under existing policy instruments or projects? **YES** See above

Interim steps (=actions)

1. Identification of the funds able to support the execution of the Marketing Plan
2. Definition of the Market Strategy (MS) and of the initiatives involved (marketing plan MP).

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| 3. Empowerment of Governments and Stakeholders: Collection of Agreement and of written commitment upon the MS and MP |
| 4. Execution of operational activities |

Policy objective 2 (broad goal): Enhance the knowledge of SMEs about segments and markets, best practices, market trends, innovation, use of new technologies

Contribution to SME competitiveness of the whole axis:

Po Delta “vision” is about a nature-oriented destination that attracts specific target segments with specific needs and located mainly in specific countries and that caters to specific distribution agents (tourist agencies/tour operators specialized in nature and outdoor activities).

Tourism in Po Delta area has always been based on a different demand (traditional sun&beach) and supply (secondary homes), therefore the transition towards the new business model and a more competitive sector must be supported with specific training because it is a “world” mostly unknown to local SMEs and institutions. It deals with aspects such: profiles and needs of the “new” demand; forms of accommodations; channels to be used to reach the target segments; products and experiences to offer; other sectors/activities to integrate in the offer; new technologies for increasing the value of experience; innovative solutions developed in similar areas; ecotourism approach, etc.

There are also more general fields/tools of company management (such as language skills, Office® tools, digital marketing tools, KPIs and check-up indicators for the enterprise, environmental approach in service SMEs, etc.) that should be included in the training activity because it clearly emerged as weak points from Phase 1 recognition (stakeholders’ meeting), expressed by different participants, both private companies, public and mixed bodies.

Progressively filling these gaps - through training and coaching/technical assistance - means increasing the ability of local system (SMEs and public bodies) to better compete on the market.

Operationally, we plan to start with a representative field research on local SMEs’ needs (see Action 2.1), which must become the basis for setting up the training program. The schedule of this action in the AP has several reasons: the need expressed during Phase 1 by stakeholders during LSG must be confirmed by a wider basis of operators. Secondly, to set up a program of intervention we must set priorities to the different subjects/fields considered interesting by SMEs and public operators. Third, the transition towards the new visitor economy model (new demand segments, new services and supply offer) can take place only after the Strategy/ Marketing Plan has been approved and the commitment upon this from SMEs has been recorded (Action 1.3).

Interregional character of the whole axis:

The lessons learned from the project do not refer to the program itself but to many good practices visited which will provide examples and suggestions to local SMEs during the training sessions and the coaching phase.

The coaching activity takes inspiration from Saimaa Start Up Coaching, (advisory, peer-to-peer review, tools, etc. to local startups and micro firms so to help them keep goals, increase effectiveness and market penetration.

Concreteness of the foreseen actions:

Once approved, the action can be immediately implemented. Beside the training activities, the setup of a Contact Point for local SMEs providing coaching/technical assistance (see Action 2.3), may be operative also before the training program and it will be able to help local stakeholders' improvement in the short run.

Link with the Policy Instruments:

The first part of the Axis (Actions 2.1-2.2 part of 2.3) will be realized with a project financed by LEADER with a provisional budget of € 100.000. The training sessions are foreseen to start in October 2019 up to April 2020. The same or early kick-off period for the coaching/technical assistance activity.

The OP ERDF for Emilia-Romagna Region has actions aiming at improving innovation in SMEs and in tourism sectors and training supported by ESF – European Social Fund.

Participation and effects of this program could work as pilot training approach to be included in next regional structural program and LEADER program 2021-2027.

SMART objectives

The specific outcome that we want:	SMEs decision makers and staff more aware of features and requests of different market segments, especially those linked to a Nature/Slow destination. This augmented capacity should give rise to new services and/or increase the quality of existing ones. It deals also on the capacity of SMEs of using new IT (Internet, the Website, Social media, Digital tools, etc.) for increasing marketing effectiveness and the quality of the proposed services.
How we will measure this:	Number of local companies participating to training courses and technical assistance (coaching, supports, tools, etc.) programs
How much change we expect:	25% per year of local visitor service providers participating to training courses
When this change will occur:	3-4 years for having a supply system more prepared and aware of market potentials and able to deal with the target segments through modern tools and technologies

Is this possible under existing policy instruments or projects? **YES** see above

Interim steps (=actions)

1. Understanding basic needs and gaps of enterprises and institutions
2. Preparation of a mid-term training program considering both needs and gaps and targets/goals set by the Market Strategy
3. Training and coaching activities delivered

Policy objective 3 (broad goal): Development and promotion of an IT platform for integrating quality visitors' services and experiences

Contribution to SME competitiveness of the whole axis:

Most of Destinations rely on the official (public) tourist website to enhance knowledge and perception of the area and to show to visitors the existing services. These websites are a non-dynamic showcase of local SMEs active in tourism and ancillary services. In these cases, the interested consumer must contact the company, check for availability and price and close the purchase (usually off-line) for every required service.

On the contrary, we are planning a real on time e-commerce site for the area, where the customer can have a presentation of each service and – with the support of a shopping basket - can check availability and purchase the desired services/goods composing online his “bundle of experience”. The idea at present is not to include accommodation and restaurants as they are services well covered by existing platforms (Booking, Expedia, Tripadvisor, The Fork, etc.). The innovative part of this project is that most of the other elements of the visitors' experience can be included: train/bus for reaching the area, parking for the car, guided visits, ticket for events and museums, bike rent, typical food, handicraft, etc.). It is a sort of dynamic and personalized visitor card where the visitor can charge anything he likes (among the services members of the tool, of course) to better enjoy his experience in the area.

Sales of local SMEs producing goods and services connected to visitors, could therefore be boosted through online commerce.

Interregional character of the whole axis:

PP3 Savonlinna and their experience in the field, has provided the major suggestions for this project. Apparently, the other partners do not have such a strong orientation to digital instruments. Apart from existing tools (e.g. visitsavonlinna.fi) which was analysed, we discussed with the partner different possible digital implementations supporting competitiveness of SMEs. The development of tools for market-driven online commercialization was a field identified by both, while other fields (e.g. digital tools supporting networking and business coaching), were inserted in the AP of PP3 but considered not yet viable to represent a specific sub-action in Po Delta area because of the existing conditions (nevertheless, it has been considered in the action 4.3 support to innovative startups).

Concreteness of the foreseen actions:

Technology for such digital platforms is innovative but already does exist (a part of the job of the RG working team was dedicated to check its technical feasibility).

Much efforts and time for a concrete action must be dedicated to the organizational phase, i.e. involve SMEs as members; make them equipped with software for management; make SMEs allow the interface of the platform to check prices and availability online and on time; train hem on the use of the software; etc.

Just to reduce the launching times, in a first phase the organizational constraints could be solved centralizing the commercialization and allowing member SMEs to give to the platform small amounts of units to sell at specific price and to recreate the availability once the

previous amount has been sold.

Link with the Policy Instruments:

The launch of the platform will be realized under LEADER program by DELTA 2000 during end 2019-2020.

The Regional Tourism Law (4/2016) supports each year projects which facilitate visitors in the purchase and enjoyment of attractors and services.

Also OP ERDF for Emilia-Romagna Region (Axis 1 – Research and Innovation) can support this macro-action

SMART objectives

The specific outcome that we want:	<p>Creation of a platform and diffusion among stakeholders of digital tools that facilitate visitors in the purchase and enjoyment of experiences and services (natural areas, museums, excursions, transports, etc.). It deals with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information about: contents, services offered, conditions of access, integration with public and private transport (bike rental, car, parking, etc.), complementary tourist services - Booking and payment of services: Possibility to book and buy online different services so to self-package in an integrated way the whole travel - Presentations and Guided visit of the attractors through new technologies to help the construction of custom experiences and reinforce the storytelling - Sharing experience in the area with other visitors and helping the dialogue between operators and governments - Quality control of services and experiences offered
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How we will measure this:	Number of attractors and services permanent members the IT platform
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How much change we expect:	40% of the attractors and tourist service providers of the area
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When this change will occur:	2-3 yrs for implementation
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Is this possible under existing policy instruments or projects? **YES** see above

Interim steps (=actions)

1. Study of existing tools and choice of the solution
2. Definition of rules and contents development
3. Promotion of the platform
4. Quality control of services and experiences
5. Technical assistance to SMEs for quality improvement

Policy objective 4 (broad goal): Support to SMEs' networking/cooperation and to innovative startups

Contribution to SME competitiveness of the whole axis:

The theme of networking and cooperation among local stakeholders (among SMEs, among public bodies, private-public) has emerged in the discussions both during LSG meetings and among partners as the most relevant for competitiveness. Even in tourism sector, local SMEs cannot often make the most of their full potential because of a demand – visitors' side - for a comprehensive experience that only “bundles” of SMEs sharing vision and values and collaborating in the productions can offer.

Moreover, in Po Delta have been brought to attention cases where even SMEs networks do find limits in their offer ought to services/properties managed by a public sector not always sensitive to tourism needs (transport routes/times, opening hours, availability of public spaces for events, etc.). It clearly emerges the need of involving public sector and of a PPP approach in general, in the development of a competitive tourism sector, able to fully maximize positive economic effects on the local economy directly and indirectly connected to visitor economy.

Last – but not least - issue of this axis refers to product/process innovation. It mainly deals with startups able to innovate the way visitor products in the area have always been designed, assembled, promoted, commercialized, offered. Innovation can here refers to e.g. new products able to attract visitors offseason, innovative actions towards new market segments (especially millennials), new tools for digital marketing of SMEs and for supporting networking, remote training and technical assistance to SMEs).

Interregional character of the whole axis:

All of the partner areas have focused on this goal as the most important for directly boosting competitiveness. All of them have included actions devoted to enhancing networking/cooperation in their AP.

During inter-partnership discussions we have focused mainly on the cases of Medina del Campo and Savonlinna. The Spanish case is interesting because networking is not generic but specifically addressed to foster partnerships among SMEs around the wine tourism routes (Rueda). It is therefore a good example of creating “product clubs”, i.e. specialized networks focusing on the same theme and complementing core service with ancillaries.

The Finnish case is interesting because networking and training/technical assistance to networks is supported mainly by ICT tools – also because of territorial dispersion of SMEs in that area -, which can be inspirational for spreading innovation in remote parts of Po Delta and rural areas in general, allowing SMEs located there to participate to tourism development.

Anyway, when designing the public call to support this action, we have inserted some details/conditions coming from suggestions provided also by other good practices analysed during RG project (e.g. De Drentse Koe from PP2, Bike Tours Network from PP1). More specifically:

- qualification of existing services and activities offered by companies in the craft, tourism, trade, services sectors;
- encourage the creation of new business activities interested in jointly promoting (at least 2 micro-enterprises in the network): forms of

- accommodation, targeted services to specific tourist segments, sale of typical local products, local crafts and artistic and other products that recall traditions and specificity of the territory;
- stimulate interventions carried out by non-agricultural companies aimed at transformation and processing agricultural products so to expand the range of typical products of the territories
 - integrated projects involving the sale of typical products of the territory through agreements with local farmers: a marketing agreement must be presented between non-agricultural companies and one or more agricultural operators demonstrating the willingness of the beneficiary to buy products from local producers

Concreteness of the foreseen actions:

The action acts directly on stakeholders, it can be immediately implemented and – by means of public calls - support concrete actions, not generic willingness to work together.

Link with the Policy Instruments:

LEADER program for Delta 2000 has funds to support this goal. A public call will be issued to specifically support the goals of this axis.

Regional tourism Law (4/2016) for promo-commercialization supports specifically networks/joint projects making resources available only to groupings reaching a minimum threshold of beds available.

OP ERDF for Emilia-Romagna Region (Axis 1 – Research and Innovation) can also support this macro-action through public calls.

Other funds (Destinazione Romagna Marketing projects, Municipality funds coming from the visitor tax, Chamber of commerce) can support networks and joint projects among SMEs, especially if different sectors are involved.

SMART objectives

The specific outcome that we want:	Strengthen the creation of networks among SMEs working in different sectors (mainly Agriculture, Tourist services, Handicraft), possibly including also public bodies/agencies. This should help the creation of experiences and services with more value for the customer.
How we will measure this:	Number of SMEs participating to networks. Number of networks
How much change we expect:	75% of stakeholders participating in networks, bundles, shared marketing projects
When this change will occur:	2-3 years

Is this possible under existing policy instruments or projects? **YES** see above

Interim steps (=actions)

1. Support to networking and cooperative projects among tourism SMEs
2. Support to cross sector partnerships and actions
3. Support to innovative startups

Policy objective 5 (broad goal): Enhancement of transport co-modality and sustainable mobility.

Contribution to SME competitiveness of the whole axis:

The Axis refers to the design of the development plan of co-modality/sustainable mobility in Po Delta area. It deals with roads/paths for slow movement of practisers (hiking, biking, trekking, boating, horseback riding, etc.); services to be offered to practisers along the paths; quality standards and certification labels the service SMEs must provide; structuration of multi-service points where it is possible to exchange mean/way of transport (co-modality hubs), etc.

Output of the foreseen actions is a clear map about the best location of new service or re-location of existing ones in order to cater to this demand and thus increase their market performance.

Therefore, whole axis aims at creating, explicating and supporting the opportunities for SMEs along a network of identified signature routes where co-modality/ sustainable mobility can be practiced. In our vision it fully deals with competitiveness of SMEs (new and existing ones) in the area, trying to provide certified quality services along the paths and generate sort of localization economies in the hubs.

Interregional character of the whole axis:

Main lessons learned in this field come from Netherland (Drenthe), the partner area more concerned and focused on this aspect, despite no good practice were presented in this field. Here slow mobility and particularly the integration/exchange of different transport modes is a part of the local “way of life” and it has been efficiently developed.

When inspecting PP2 area, we checked and discussed with the partner the philosophy underlying: the construction of roads to allow a safe slow movement along it; the design of paths in the nature; how public transport is conceived and organized for supporting the slow movement.

Concreteness of the foreseen actions:

The output of this action provides a blueprint for developing new services along the path and in the co-modality hubs, so after its approval by the Region and the involved municipalities will start immediately reverberate effects on the location of new service SMEs.

Link with the Policy Instruments:

National funds are available with the the goal of improving slow mobility mainly though the creation of cycling routes and the connection between main Eurovelo corridors.

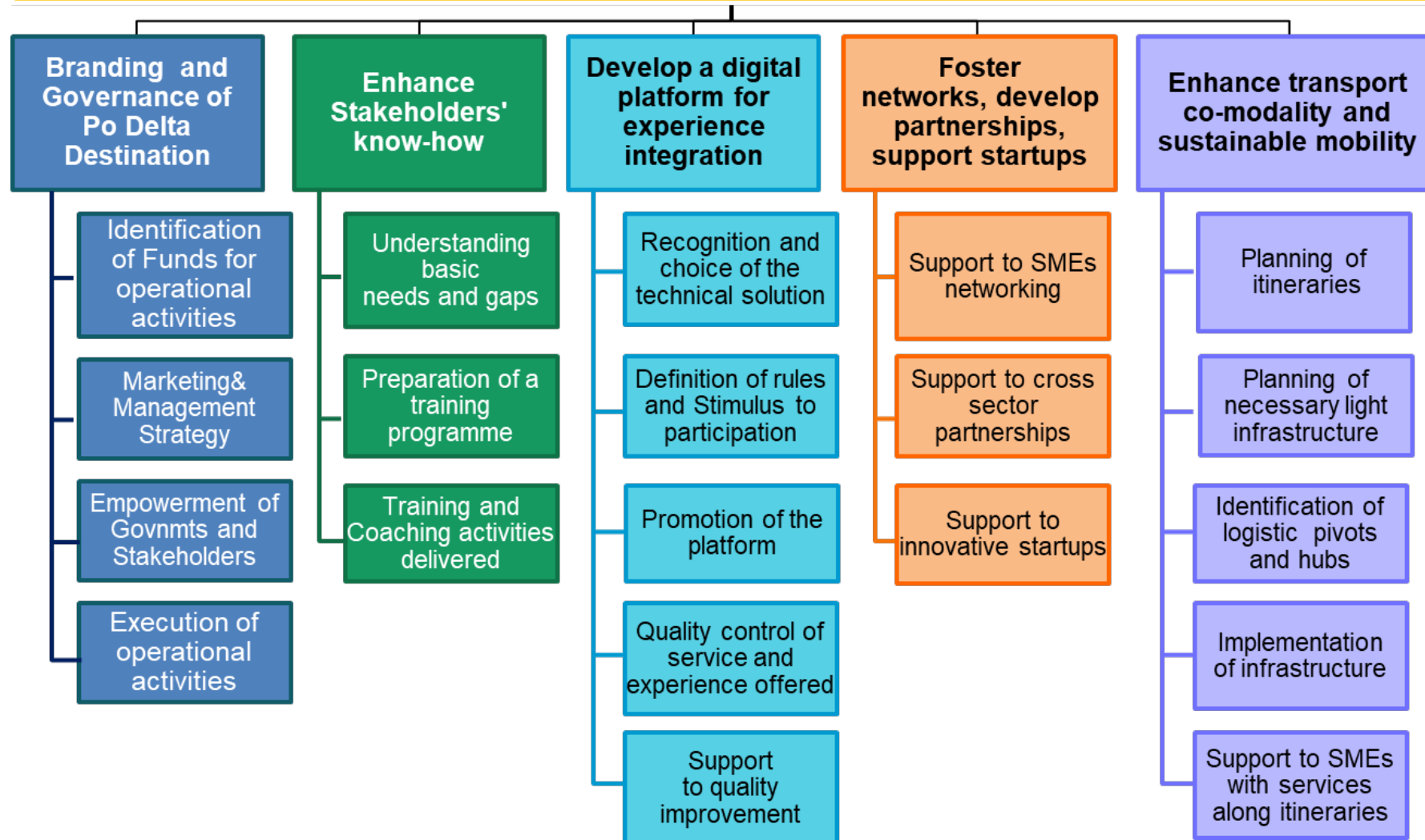
The inter-modality master plan to connect cultural, natural and sea sites by slow mobility will be mainly supported by Leader program, DELTA 2000. This master plan will be realized in 2018 and some cycling routes could possibly be realized with national or European funds. Also interested municipalities do have funds for completing the natural path network and its maintenance,

Some pilot action, as towers, huts, etc. will be realized by OP ERDF and Leader program during 2018-2020, this pilot project could represent

pilot actions for attracting other regional or national funds to help achieving the goals.	
SMART objectives	
The specific outcome that we want:	<p>Increase the number and distribution of infrastructures and services (renting, maintenance, transport, etc) related to transport co-modality and sustainable mobility with different means (bikes, boats, horses, carriages, canoes, etc.).</p> <p>Increase in quantity and quality of the small infrastructures linked to naturalistic observation and birdwatching (observation towers, huts, etc.) along the trails.</p> <p>General infrastructure (even immaterial) for a better enjoyment/experience of the area.</p>
How we will measure this:	Increase in quality, quantity and territorial distribution of supporting infrastructure and services linked to slow tourism
How much change we expect:	+30%
When this change will occur:	3-4 years
Is this possible under existing policy instruments or projects? PARTLY , with the exception of implementation of infrastructure (1.4) which is not directly linked with the goals of this project. See above	
Interim steps (=actions)	
1. Planning of itineraries in the area	
2. Planning of infrastructure necessary for experience the area (observation towers, huts, etc.) considering the already existing ones	
3. Identification of pivotal points and hubs for exchange means, information, renting, etc.	
4. Implementation of infrastructure (refurbishment, new construction)	
5. Support to SMEs delivering services along the itineraries and using the hubs	

Sinopsys of Action Plan

A recognized European destination for Nature and Slow tourism
based on Smart and Sustainable principles



PO 1. Branding and Governance of Po Delta Destination

Action 1.1 Identification of funds able to support the execution of the operational activities

1. Rough identification of financial needs (external expert support)
2. Identification of possible fund sources
3. First contacts to check the availability of funds and the access conditions

Action 1.2 Definition of the Market Strategy (MS) and the operational activities (Marketing Plan MP)

1. Definition of the methodological approach
2. Collection of necessary desk data and information
3. Participatory approach on stage (meetings with many local stakeholders)
4. Draft of Marketing Strategy and of Marketing Plan

Action 1.3 Empowerment of Governments and Stakeholders: Collection of Agreement and commitment upon the MS and MP

1. Preparation of agreement draft
2. Presentation(s) of MS and MP to local stakeholders and collection of amendments
3. Validation and written agreements by stakeholders

Action 1.4 Execution of operational activities

1. Some actions undertaken directly by Delta 2000
2. Official setup of the DMO (Destination Management Company) or assignment to an external company
3. Calibration of the schedule to be aligned with actions developed by other promotional bodies and avoid overlapping
4. Execution of the operational activities according to schedule

PO 2. Enhance the knowledge of Stakeholders (both firms and institutions) about market features, best practices, innovation, use of new technologies

Action 2.1 Understanding basic needs and gaps

1. Creation of a small workgroup
2. Definition of the methodology for identifying training needs (expressed by stakeholders, considering also goals set by the Marketing Strategy)
3. Realization of the research
4. Analysis of the outcomes

Action 2.2 Preparation of a mid-term training programme

1. Definition of contents+delivery mode of the training programme for private operators/SMEs and Structuration of the Coaching activity
2. Definition of contents+delivery mode of the training programme for public operators/institutions/no profit bodies
3. Definition of contents+delivery mode of the training programme for trainers

Action 2.3 Training and Coaching activities delivered

1. Deliver of the training program and of Coaching activity for private operators/SMEs
2. Deliver of the training program for public operators/institutions/no profit bodies
3. Deliver of the training program for trainers
4. Post-training activities (verification, assessment, priorities for next training courses, etc)

PO 3. Develop and promotion of a digital platform for integrating visitors' services and experiences

Action 3.1 Analysis of existing platforms integrating visitors' experience, ticketing, booking, transport, etc. Choice of the preferred solution

1. Benchmarking of existing platform about: contents, services offered, condition of access, integration with public and private services, etc.
2. Choice of the preferred solution and Contract signing with the IT provider

Action 3.2 Definition of rules and content development

1. Preparation of the regulation (rules of conduct) and of the contract for joining services
2. Communication campaign aimed at stimulating service providers to join the platform and include their offer
3. Filling of contents/services by service providers
4. Filling of general contents and harmonization by the centralized team

Action 3.3 Promotion of the platform

1. Promo-communication activities addressed to target segments
2. Promo-Communication activities addressed to incoming agencies and other distribution agents

Action 3.4 Quality control of services and experiences

1. Definition of the methodology for quality control (e.g. Analysis of reviews; analysis of complaints; direct inspection, etc.)
2. Implementation of quality control and identification of weak points

Action 3.5 Technical assistance for quality improvement

1. Advisory and coaching to providers for improving the quality of services and experiences offered on the platform

PO 4. Foster networks, develop partnerships, support startups

Action 4.1 Support to tourism SMEs' joint projects

1. Monetary incentives (co-funding) for projects related to joint marketing actions presented by groups of tourism SMEs
2. Consultancy and technical assistance (coaching) to tourism SMEs with joint marketing projects

Action 4.2 Support to cross sector partnerships

1. Monetary incentives (co-funding) and technical assistance for projects among private SMEs - enterprises, associations and public sectors
2. Monetary incentives (co-funding) and technical assistance for projects combining tourism activities with typical products (handicrafts, farmers, food&wine, etc.)

Action 4.3 Support to innovative startups

1. Monetary incentives (co-funding) and technical assistance for tourism companies developing new/innovative products potentially able to bring tourists off-season or from new markets/segments
2. Monetary incentives (co-funding) and technical assistance for companies in specific innovative sectors, (linked to digital tourism, research and development)

PO 5. Enhance transport co-modality and sustainable mobility

Action 5.1 Planning of the network of pathways (greenways, cycle trails, walkways, waterways, etc.)

1. Identification of reference areas, mapping and analysis
2. Identification of main needs, points of interest, barriers, etc
3. Draft planning of paths for different modes of transport

Action 5.2 Planning of necessary light infrastructure for experiencing the area

1. Identification of main needs of different segments/activities
2. Assessment of present situation with reference to structure and infrastructure linked to the path network
3. Plan of structure&infrastructure interventions

Action 5.3 Identification of logistic pivots and hubs for co-modality

1. Creation of a working group with stakeholders involved in co-modality (trains, buses, car rentals, bike rentals, parkings, etc.)
2. State of the art, perspectives, feasibility
3. Masterplan for inter-modality in Po Delta area

Action 5.4 Implementation of infrastructure (refurbishment, new construction)

1. Executive planning
2. Identification of parts possibly realizable through already planned interventions
3. Realization of necessary structure&infrastructure

Action 5.5 Support to SMEs delivering services along the tourist routes

1. Support both monetary (co-funding) and non-monetary (consultancy, coaching) to businesses providing services to tourists along the designed routes (food, accommodation, information, rental, repair, transfer, etc.)
2. Creation of the network of tourist services along the routes and promotional activities

Part VI – Actions

ACTION 1.1

Policy Objective Title: Branding and Governance of Po Delta Destination		Policy Objective Number: 1
Action Title: Identification of funds able to support the implementation of the strategy and the execution of operational activities		Action Number 1.1
<p>Background: The necessity of sufficient funds for realizing the operational marketing actions has been well underlined by LSG participants, very much concerned about the continuity of the action. Also in the study visit in Medina del Campo it has been clearly expressed that the realization of the wine route has required the convergence of funds from different sources (public and also private) addressed towards the same goal. Present situation is that not being Po Delta a “key” destination promoted by regional marketing, in order to have its peculiarities broadcasted and to become visible to target segments/markets needs marketing actions. Therefore, the funds involved in this policy are those related to tourism marketing (strategy and actions) and tourism governance (decision making and organization of the system), which are not provided by the regional government. Delta 2000, as a local development agency, has resources coming from the different projects and programs implemented and coherent with PO1, and Delta 2000 can therefore finance some actions, but surely it cannot permanently support this Objective. Before making any action, it must then be clearly understood how PO1 will be financed through the years, one of the main expected source is tourist tax from the main municipalities of the area. The agreement of spending a part of that resources in favour of marketing Po Delta (as a “new” attracting local destination) is an interim but crucial goal of this Policy Objective.</p>		
<p>a. From which partner/presenter/expert/LSG member(s) have you learnt the good practice which feeds this thematic action?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LSG members’ discussion - Medina di Campo is the partner which has the same goal of positioning as a new tourism destination (wine destination in particular) that involves working together of public institution and private companies. 	

b. What have you learnt?	<p>Even if a strong public-private collaboration does not exist, is not clearly planned or not efficiently managed (as it seems it happened in Medina), the destination development process can be boosted by a powerful private sector (i.e. made by financially robust enterprises, like the wine companies). But when the private sector is made only by small and micro companies (like in Po Delta) a strong relationship between local governments and private companies is crucial for the success, especially for having sufficient financial resources to develop the marketing actions.</p>			
c. How have you learnt?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LSG discussion - Site visit - Discussion during the International Stakeholder meeting 			
Action Steps (What will be done)	Responsibility (Who will do it)	Resources (Information, money, materials)	Timeline Start and end dates*	1) Name of the PI to be influenced/ already influenced 2)Change needed (e.g. new project, new call).
1.1.1. Recruitment of a tourism expert for advising and keeping a unified vision for the whole Policy Objective 1 (Branding and Governance of Po Delta destination)	Local Action Group DELTA 2000	Internal funds (Local Action Program LEADER 2014-2021)	Sept 2017-Apr 2019 Completed	
1.1.2. Identification of possible funding sources for supporting this specific Policy Objective	Local Action Group DELTA 2000 + External Expert	Internal staff and external expert	Sept 2017-Dec 2017 Completed	<p>1) PI influenced: Local Action Program LEADER 2014-2020 approved with Determination of Managing Authority leader of Emilia Romagna Region. No. 8058 of 10/05/2019.</p> <p>2) New project: Strategy and marketing plan</p>
1.1.3. Preliminary discussion with Regional and Local Governments	Local Action Group DELTA 2000+ External	Informative material, Internal staff, contracted expert	Oct 2017- March 2018 Completed	1) PI influenced: Local Action Program LEADER 2014-2020 approved with Determination of

and local stakeholders (workshop, bilateral meeting, etc.)	Expert			Managing Authority leader of Emilia Romagna Region. No. 8058 of 10/05/2019. 2) New project: Strategy and marketing plan
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Implications for other sectors of rural economy?	Finding resources for supporting the destination’s marketing and governance will have important fallouts not only for tourism related sectors (restaurants, accommodation, retail trade, etc.) but also for local food production/transformation, craftsmanship, culture, environment, which could be strongly affected by the increased attractiveness of the area	
Implications for other actions or policy objectives	Action/Policy objective number:	Description of implications:
	2	Addressing the enhancement of operators’ know-how
	3	Addressing the production of quality offers to promote on the platform
	4	Addressing the development of networks and partnerships among SMEs
	5	Addressing the creation of pathways and activities

ACTION 1.2

Policy Objective Title: Branding and Governance of Po Delta Destination		Policy Objective Number: 1
Action Title: Definition of the Marketing Strategy (MS) and the operational activities (Marketing Plan MP)		Action Number: 1.2
<p>Background: We wish to have a Market Strategy (MS) and a Marketing Plan (MP) for Po Delta. Make this territory well known and reputed by the market and therefore boost the creation of supporting activities is the main goal. This could be reached by making Po Delta a "branded" destination (that does not mean to have a logo but to be deeply rooted in the mind of prospects) . Together with MS and MP, an office responsible for Developing and Marketing the area in the tourism market is needed (Po Delta has not such a reference/steering body for tourism). Usually this <i>super partes</i> body – called DMO or Destination Management Organization – is part of the destination's Governance system, that should be consistent with local conditions and agreed by stakeholders.</p>		
<p>a. From which partner/presenter/expert/LSG member(s) have you learnt the good practice which feeds this thematic action?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LSG discussion - Partners in RG projects are not (yet) major tourist destinations, so no one seems to have an organization focused on tourism as the one foreseen in Po Delta. Inspirations here come mainly from Nagykanizsa with Muraland project, a territorial multisectoral comprehensive strategy. Some partners (Savonlinna) do have development agencies with a plan that includes tourism among other sectors. Others (like Medina del Campo) are trying to follow and rationalize a tourism development created by the private sector (the wine route), which must be combined and homogenised with other product lines supported by the public (cultural tourism, historical reenactments, craftsmanship, food, etc). For the other RG partners (except Medina), we do not see a comprehensive tourism strategy, but merely the effort to accompany private rural entrepreneurs in developing small tourism services, able to increase their revenue. - No one seems to have a specific, clear, written, agreed, tourism strategy and governance system for tourism development and neither a dedicated body, which are both the real goals of Po Delta. The difference is probably given by the priority of tourism in the local economy. 	

b. What have you learnt?	The need for a strong relationship between local government and private companies involved in a specific (wine) production so to organize an efficient offer for the tourism destination (in Medina this strong relationship seems lacking or missing)			
c. How have you learnt?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LSG discussion - Site visit, presentations and discussion during the Interregional Exchange meeting in Medina del Campo 			
Action Steps (What will be done)	Responsibility (Who will do it)	Resources (Information, money, materials)	Timeline Start and end dates*	1) Name of the PI to be influenced/ already influenced 2)Change needed (e.g. new project, new call).
1.2.1. Agreement on the methodology for developing the marketing and management strategy	Delta 2000	External Experts and internal staff Budget already available to Delta 2000 from Leader program	Completed	<p>1) PI influenced: Local Action Program LEADER 2014-2020 approved with Determination of Managing Authority leader of Emilia Romagna Region. No. 8058 of 10/05/2019.</p> <p>2) New project: Strategy and marketing plan</p>
1.2.2.Participatory approach involving public and private local stakeholders to define main products, demand target segments/markets, and discussing about the efficient management system suitable for the area	Delta 2000	External Experts and internal staff, meetings, materials Budget already available to Delta 2000 from Leader program	Completed	<p>1) PI influenced: Local Action Program LEADER 2014-2020 approved with Determination of Managing Authority leader of Emilia Romagna Region. No. 8058 of 10/05/2019.</p> <p>2) New project: Strategy and marketing plan</p>
1.2.3. Collecting information by Local	Delta 2000	Experts and staff	Nov 2017 Completed	

Tourist operator and municipalities, to know the main promotional activities undertaken and desired		Budget already available to Delta 2000 from Leader program		
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1.2.4. 1 st Draft Strategic Mktg Plan and 1 st year Promotional plan	Delta 2000	Experts and Staff Budget already available to Delta 2000 from Leader program	Dec. 2017 –Jan 2018 Completed
Implications for other sectors of rural economy?	Increased quality and quantity of tourist activities and experiences; increased knowledge, perception and demand for hotel, tourism services and restaurants		
Implications for other actions or policy objectives	Action/Policy objective number:	Description of implications:	
	2	Addressing the enhancement of operators' know-how	
	3	Addressing the production of quality offers to promote on the platform	
	4	Addressing the development of networks and partnerships among SMEs	
	5	Addressing the creation of pathways and activities	

ACTION 1.3

Policy Objective Title: Branding and Governance of Po Delta Destination		Policy Objective Number: 1
Action Title: Empowerment of Governments and Stakeholders: Collection of Agreement and possibly of written commitment to the Marketing Strategy (MS) and the Marketing Plan (MP)		Action Number: 1.3
<p>Background: To have a Market strategy, Plan of actions and a local organization of the tourist system not “imposed” (top-down) but shared with stakeholders, this task deals with the awareness of the foreseen strategies and interventions. This approach should decrease the risks of failure (goals of the strategy not reached; local operators not participating to the actions, etc) and increase the involvement of private sector (as well as other public bodies) in the foreseen actions (workshops, missions, participation to fairs, etc.). The knowledge of direction and priorities the territory wishes to follow in the midterm, is crucial for the multiplication of the actions by all stakeholders working in the same direction and for their participation to the system. The goal here is to have a strong commitment - even in writing - by a larger number of stakeholder.</p>		
a. From which partner/presenter/expert/LSG member(s) have you learnt the good practice which feeds this thematic action?	LSG meeting Ambition setting visit Nagykanizsa with Muraland project	
b. What have you learnt?	Commitment of stakeholders about the designed strategy should be publicly formalized	
c. How have you learnt?	Discussion	

Action Steps (What will be done)	Responsibility (Who will do it)	Resources (Information, money, materials)	Timeline Start and end dates*	1) Name of the PI to be influenced/ already influenced 2) Change needed (e.g. new project, new call).
1.3.1. Preparing a draft agreement	Local Action Group DELTA 2000	Desk work Budget already available to Delta 2000 from Leader program	Jun 2018 Completed	
1.3.2. Validation of draft agreement by local municipalities and main local tourist service companies	Local Action Group DELTA 2000	Desk work and meetings Budget already available to Delta 2000 from Leader program	Jul- Nov 2018	
1.3.3. Signing of the agreement by stakeholders	Local Action Group DELTA 2000	Desk work and meetings Budget already available to Delta 2000 from Leader program	Sep-Nov 2018	
Implications for other sectors of rural economy?	Improve the local governance on Po Delta Destination management goals			
Implications for other actions or policy objectives	Action/Policy objective number:	Description of implications:		
	2	Addressing the enhancement of operators' know-how		
	3	Addressing the production of quality offers to promote on the platform		

	4	Addressing the development of networks and partnerships among SMEs	
	5	Addressing the creation of pathways and activities	

ACTION 1.4

Policy Objective Title: Branding and Governance of Po Delta Destination	Policy Objective Number: 1
Action Title: Execution of operational activities	Action Number: 1.4
<p>Background:</p> <p>The Market Strategy and the Marketing Plan are tools which identify guidelines and specific marketing actions to be realized to reach the fixed goals.</p> <p>The prevailing “model” worldwide for managing and marketing tourism in successful destinations is the one based on so called DMOs (Destination Management Organizations). It deals with technical agencies, mostly public-private, acting for conceiving and implementing all the actions aimed at make the most, develop the local tourism sector in a balanced way, make the destination known, understood in its key concepts and desired by visitors and tourism intermediaries (tourist agencies, tour operators, etc.).</p> <p>If a body of this kind could be set-up in the Po Delta area is questionable, mainly because the new regional law foresees coordination and a technical agency at a higher territorial level (Destinazione Romagna, entire Emilia Romagna region).</p> <p>However the designed strategy must be implemented and the foreseen actions put in operation. All in all: the process foresees meetings with regional bodies, municipalities, chamber of commerce, associations representative of private operators, etc to check if a DMO can be established for Po Delta Destination and financed through the years, in charge of marketing and management operations related to tourism development included in the plans.</p> <p>If the conditions will not be there, Delta 2000 (who has already financed the Strategic and Operational Plans) will start carrying out directly some of the foreseen action for which it has budget available and the rest of the Plan will then be given as a desired roadmap to the body who will be in charge of tourism marketing of that territory.</p>	

a. From which partner/presenter/expert/LSG member(s) have you learnt the good practice which feeds this thematic action?	LSG meetings Ambition setting visit Discussions and presentation with Savonlinna and Medina del Campo about effectiveness of different promotional/marketing actions in tourism Experience of our expert concerning destination marketing in different European region			
b. What have you learnt?	Effectiveness of different promotional/marketing activities dealing with different visitors' segments			
c. How have you learnt?	Discussions and presentations			
Action Steps (What will be done)	Responsibility (Who will do it)	Resources (Information, money, materials)	Timeline Start and end dates*	1) Name of the PI to be influenced/ already influenced 2)Change needed (e.g. new project, new call).
1.4.1. Some actions of the Plan carried out directly by Delta 2000 (e.g. financial support to joint marketing actions)	Delta 2000	Budget already available to Delta 2000 from Leader program	Sep-Dec 2018	
1.4.2.a. The DMO identified or an external company assigned of specific marketing actions (e.g. graphics, website, editorial staff, communication campaign, etc.)	Public decision makers of the area in agreement with Regional department and Destinazione Romagna	Information	Sep-Dec 2018	
1.4.2.b. If a Destination Manager for PO Delta will be appointed: Organization chart prepared; Staff hired; Staff	The organization in charge to be the DMO of Po Delta	Money from public funds and private members of DMO	Sep-Dec 2018	

trained				
1.4.3. Alignment of the schedule of actions with other promotional bodies to avoid overlapping	DMO or External service companies appointed of specific actions	Meetings and agreements	Sep-Dec 2018	
1.4.4. Start-up promotional activities	DMO or External service companies appointed of specific actions	Budget already available to Delta 2000 from Leader program + Budget from Destinazione Romagna	From Jan 2019 on	
Implications for other sectors of rural economy?	Increase demand			
Implications for other actions or policy objectives	Action/Policy objective number:	Description of implications:		
	2	Addressing the enhancement of operators' know-how		
	3	Addressing the production of quality offers to promote on the platform		
	4	Addressing the development of networks and partnerships among SMEs		
	5	Addressing the creation of pathways and activities		

ACTION 2.1

Policy Objective Title: Enhance local stakeholders' knowledge		Policy Objective Number: 2
Action Title: Understanding basic needs and gaps of SMEs and public authorities on the issues of tourism development & marketing		Action Number: 2.1
<p>Background:</p> <p>The competitive capacity of the local tourism system is deeply influenced by the size of companies and the lack of knowledge/understanding – by both enterprises and public bodies – about demand and the requirements that supply should have to be suitably responsive towards those needs.</p> <p>It deals with knowledge about the profiles of the “new” demand (especially the one related to nature and outdoor), its needs, the channels to be used to reach it (which involve today a high recourse to digital tools), new technologies for increasing the value of experience, innovative solutions and products developed in similar areas, etc. But small firms do also have lacks in more traditional fields of company management as language, Office tools, check-up indicators, knowledge about supports – both monetary and non-monetary – available for SMEs, etc.</p> <p>Operationally, we plan to start with a representative research on local SMEs’ needs, which must become the basis for setting training and coaching programs. This for several reasons: Phase 1 recognition detected a general lack of knowledge/competence, but specific topics/areas of improvement must be found so to prioritize and better adapt the training program to the needs of local SMEs. Moreover, the transition towards the new visitor economy model (new demand segments, new services and supply offer) can take place only after the Strategy/ Marketing Plan has been approved and the commitment upon this from SMEs has been recorded (Action 1.3). In other word, following our approach, the training program is mainly a consequence of (or is highly influenced by) outputs of Axis 1 (the Tourism Development Strategy).</p>		
a. From which partner/presenter/expert/LSG member(s) have you learnt the good practice which feeds this thematic action?	<p>LSG meetings Ambition setting visit and discussions with CRE Presentation of PP2 in Drenthe showed a strategy designed on a research on local stakeholders, that is to say: effective plans must be designed analysing (bottom up) the real needs of beneficiaries more than “imposing” (top-down) the perceptions/assessments of experts</p>	
b. What have you learnt?	<p>A permanent listening of the operators’ needs (in terms of a robust research about gaps and expected directions of development) is crucial to effectively support the growth of local economy in rural areas through the increasing in competence and expertise of SMEs and public operators</p>	
c. How have you learnt?	<p>Presentations, Discussions</p>	

Action Steps (What will be done)	Responsibility (Who will do it)	Resources (Information, money, materials)	Timeline Start and end dates*	1) Name of the PI to be influenced/ already influenced 2) Change needed (e.g. new project, new call).
2.1.1. Creation of a small working group consisting of stakeholders operating in training and educational centers / SMEs associations to define the organization of activities (It will be also involved for the Action 2.2 and 2.3)	Delta 2000/ DMO	Room for workshops Money from European Social Funds and from Trade associations	Oct-Dec 2018	
2.1.2. Definition of method and related tools for data collection, analysis and diagnosis of training needs of private and public stakeholders	Delta 2000/ DMO with the support of training and educational centres	Desk work Meetings Funds as above	Oct-Nov 2018	
2.1.3. Conduct data collection through a field research characterized by qualitative and quantitative analysis based on questionnaires, interviews, listening groups, etc.	Delta 2000/ DMO with the support of training and educational centres	Deak and field work Rooms for small groups / interviews. Funds as above	Nov 2018-Jan 2019	
2.1.4. Analisis of the outcomes. Production of a report of training needs and tentative solutions	Delta 2000/ DMO with the support of training and educational centres	Funds as above	Feb 2019	

Implications for other sectors of rural economy?

More knowledge about the needs of sectors involved and the possibility to involve operators from rural economy in tourist production

Implications for other actions or policy objectives	Action/Policy objective number:	Description of implications:
	3	Supporting the production of quality offers to promote on the platform
	4	Supporting the development of networks and partnerships among SMEs
	5	Supporting the creation of activities and services along the routes

ACTION 2.2

<p>Policy Objective Title: Enhance local stakeholders' knowledge</p>	<p>Policy Objective Number: 2</p>
<p>Action Title: Preparation of a mid-term training program considering both needs and gaps of stakeholders and targets/goals set by Strategy and Plans</p>	<p>Action Number: 2.2</p>
<p>Background:</p> <p>The analysis of the previous point should have recognized the main weaknesses to be improved and reinforced because they affect know-how, skills and competence of the enterprises.</p> <p>Some of them emerged already in the discussions during LSG meetings. While some general needs (language, Office tools, digital marketing tools, etc.) can be covered by traditional training supply, others – as the knowledge of profile and behaviour of specific demand segments or check-up indicators, environmental approach in tourism sector, etc. – are not usually met by any training course and must be set-up ad hoc by specialized experts. Training or professional updating must also be foreseen for public sector staff so they can better understand the fundamentals of visitor economy development and provide a better support to businesses.</p> <p>Study visits to benchmark areas (i.e. areas which successfully developed tourism products/services consistent with the ones of Po Delta as birdwatching, nature tourism, outdoor tourism) are foreseen as a part of the training.</p> <p>A third field of action – underlined during LSG meetings – is the general knowledge of what the territory has to offer (cultural and natural attractions, history, heritage, traditional jobs, etc.). Following some stakeholders, such program of “local territorial lessons” should not only addressed to operators who are in contact with visitors but a part of the general knowledge that should be included in schools’ program so to have local community better aware of local resources and sensitized towards tourists, visitor service and economy and its benefits so to become a resource for SMEs active in the sector too (under the form of volunteers, storytellers, etc.).</p> <p>The forth line of intervention deals with coaching/technical assistance to local operators. The basic idea is to setup a Contact Point for local SMEs – physical but accessible also via conference call – open some days per month to discuss and find solutions to issues related to product construction, marketing, company management, etc.</p> <p>All in all, in our approach, the training program can be set-up only after a) the commitment of local SMEs on the Strategy/ Marketing Plan clearly identifying development goals and priority demand segments and b) after a representative research on local SMEs identifying enterprises lacks and needs facing the foreseen development path (see 2.1).</p> <p>Designing a training program as a quasi top-down process without SMEs commitment on goals and clear comprehension of their needs, we do</p>	

believe could highly increase the risk of ineffectiveness.				
a. From which partner/presenter/expert/LSG member(s) have you learnt the good practice which feeds this thematic action?	<p>LSG meetings</p> <p>The good practices visited during the execution of RG project provide examples and suggestions, materials to be used during the training sessions and the coaching phase to local SMEs.</p> <p>The coaching activity takes inspiration from Saimaa Start Up Coaching, (advisory, peer-to-peer review, tools, etc. to local startups and micro firms)</p>			
b. What have you learnt?	<p>This action is made by different approaches which needs to be balanced: some interventions are already offered by traditional training programs addressed to entrepreneurs by e.g. business association. Others require specific experts both for training and coaching enterprises and also missions in benchmarking areas for deepening practices able to give direct, practical and tangible hints and inspirations for the change.</p> <p>When tourism is the reference sector of action it must not be forgotten that the knowledge of the surrounding area in terms of resource, attractions, services, etc., is important to be able to give guests reliable informations and suggestions, which are a part of the local experience.</p>			
c. How have you learnt?	Discussions with partners during international meetings (e.g. in Nagykanizsa IE meeting a thematic session was dedicated to discussing the experiences of partners about trainings addressed to SMEs).			
Action Steps (What will be done)	Responsibility (Who will do it)	Resources (Information, money, materials)	Timeline Start and end dates*	1) Name of the PI to be influenced/ already influenced 2)Change needed (e.g. new project, new call).
2.2.1. Definition of contents+delivery mode of the training program for private operators/SMEs	DELTA 2000/ with the active involvement of training centers and experts on the themes	<p>Desk work Meetings</p> <p>Money from European Social Funds and from Trade</p>	Feb 2019	

		associations		
2.2.2. Definition of contents+delivery mode of the training program for public operators/institutions/no profit bodies	DELTA 2000/ with the active involvement of training centers and experts on the themes	Desk work Meetings Money from European Social Funds and from Trade associations	Feb 2019	
2.2.3. Definition of contents+delivery mode of the training program for trainers and school teachers (specific issues)	DELTA 2000/ with the active involvement of training centers, experts on the themes, school teachers	Desk work Meetings Money from European Social Funds and from Trade associations	Feb 2019	
Implications for other sectors of rural economy?	Other sectors of rural economy will not be potential beneficiaries of these training course, so the method could be evaluated first in the tourism sector and then applied also in other sectors.			
Implications for other actions or policy objectives	Action/Policy objective number:	Description of implications:		
	3	Supporting the production of quality offers to promote on the platform		
	4	Supporting the development of networks and partnerships among SMEs		
	5	Supporting the creation of activities and services along the routes		

ACTION 2.3

Policy Objective Title: Enhance local stakeholders' knowledge	Policy Objective Number: 2
Action Title: Training/Coaching of stakeholders	Action Number: 2.3
<p>Background: Delivering of the training/coaching programs conceived in the previous points. Participants' satisfaction survey, lessons learned and setting priorities for next training activities</p> <p>A first training program will be carried out between 2019-2020 with the following goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presenting the potentials of the area, developing Po Delta as a nature-outdoor destination (according to the vision developed in this project) and the opportunities for local SMEs - Increasing – through study visits inside the area - local SMEs knowledge about what the whole Delta area offers now and can offer in the near future - Increasing local SMEs skills on coping with target segments and markets of the strategy, mainly international (profilation, needs&expectations, behaviors, how to catch them, etc.) - Stimulating networking among SMEs to improve and qualify their offers <p>The training program will foresee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Traditional training sessions b) 8 Local study visit in Po Delta area that will involve SMEs and public officers c) At least 2 Study visits in European destination (e.g. Extremadura, Spain for birdwatching, Holland for slow/bike tourism, France for river tourism, etc.) d) Set up of a Contact Point for local SMEs providing coaching/technical assistance to better finalize their offers and to improve their competitiveness (1 full day/month of an expert for 15 months). This action takes inspiration from Saimaa Start Up Coaching, (advisory, peer-to-peer review, tools, etc. to local startups and micro firms so to help them keep goals, increase effectiveness and market penetration. <p>Actions 2.1-2.2 and the first training program will be realized with a project financed by Leader program. The provisional budget is € 100.000 for actions and the training/coaching program will start in September 2019 up to April 2020. Participation and effects of this program could work as pilot training approach to be included in next regional structural program and LEADER program 2021-2027.</p>	

<p>a. From which partner/presenter/expert/LSG member(s) have you learnt the good practice which feeds this thematic action?</p>	<p>LSG meetings</p> <p>Site visits – as carried out in RG project - are an effective tool for learning new/successful practices to be adapted/suggested to local area, provided that the visit has been carefully planned and the benchmark enterprise prepared to effectively present its successful case (i.e. features and strategies of the area, situation when the benchmark enterprise started its business idea, major obstacles and threats, key success factors, outcomes, etc.)</p> <p>PP3 Savonlinna has provided interesting suggestions for future developments (training and coaching delivered through digital platforms)</p>			
<p>b. What have you learnt?</p>	<p>The practice of “study visits” are effective and immediate. We plan to adopt it in the realisation of training activities, both for private operators, for trainers and also for public stakeholders (such as administrator, mayors, municipalities etc)</p> <p>Traditional training and coaching are still effective but participation is decreasing and participants must be stimulated/encouraged. Assistance delivered through digital platforms could work especially in rural areas (with enterprises quite dispersed)</p>			
<p>c. How have you learnt?</p>	<p>Site visit and discussions with partners</p>			
<p>Action Steps (What will be done)</p>	<p>Responsibility (Who will do it)</p>	<p>Resources (Information, money, materials)</p>	<p>Timeline Start and end dates*</p>	<p>1) Name of the PI to be influenced/ already influenced 2)Change needed (e.g. new project, new call).</p>
<p>2.3.1. Deliver of the training program for private operators/SMEs with frontal lessons and study visits</p>	<p>Training centers and experts on specific themes/issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rooms for training, AV tech, blackboard / flip chart paper - Organisation of study visits to know cases of best practises - Budget from regional vocational training programs 	<p>May 2019 - Onwards</p> <p>wait for approval</p>	<p>1, PI: LEADER. The project proposal called “Action 19.2.02.13 Study visits, information initiative” has been submitted to LEADER managing authority for Emilia Romagna Region on 1st April 2019 and it is wait for approval.</p> <p>2.New project: training and study visit activities</p>
<p>2.3.2. Deliver of the</p>	<p>Training centers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rooms for training, AV tech, 	<p>Feb 2019-May</p>	

training program for public operators/institutions/no profit bodies with frontal lessons and study visits	and experts on specific themes/issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - blackboard / flip chart paper - Organisation of study visits to know cases of best practises - Budget from regional vocational training programs 	2019 Onwards	
2.3.3. Deliver of the training program for trainers and school teachers	Training centers and experts on specific themes/issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rooms for training, AV tech, blackboard / flip chart paper - Organisation of study visits to know cases of best practises - Budget from regional vocational training programs 	Feb 2019-May 2019 onwards	
2.3.4. Post-training activities (verification, assessment, priorities for next training courses, etc)	DELTA 2000/ with the active involvement of training centers, experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Field research and desk assessment 	Jun-Jul 2019 onwards wait for approval	<p>1, PI: LEADER. The project proposal called “Action 19.2.02.13 Study visits, information initiative” has been submitted to LEADER managing authority for Emilia Romagna Region on 1st April 2019 and it is wait for approval.</p> <p>2.New project: training and study visit activities</p>
Implications for other sectors of rural economy?	Others sectors of rural economy could potentially be involved in training course, so the method could be evaluated in the tourism sector and then applied also in other sectors.			
Implications for other actions or policy objectives	Action/Policy objective number:	Description of implications:		
	3	Supporting the production of quality offers to promote on the platform		
	4	Supporting the development of networks and partnerships among SMEs		
	5	Supporting the creation of activities and services along the routes		

ACTION 3.1

<p>Policy Objective Title: Develop and promote an IT platform for integrating quality visitors' services and experiences</p>		<p>Policy Objective Number: 3</p>
<p>Action Title: Study of existing IT tools integrating visitors' experience, booking, purchase, transport and choice of the preferred solution</p>		<p>Action Number: 3.1</p>
<p>Background: The goal of this Policy is to make available to potential visitors a digital platform able to allow every potential visitor to self-build his own experience in the territory, by integrating different services: public means of transport, rentals, parking, entrance tickets, excursions, guided visits, etc. Different startups are already working in this regard and it is not convenient to build for Po Delta its own property platform. Much better to choose an already operative solution – even in beta version – having the desirable features and able to become the technological partner of the destination after a period of experimentation at the local level.</p>		
<p>a. From which partner/presenter/expert/LSG member(s) have you learnt the good practice which feeds this thematic action?</p>	<p>LSG meetings IE meeting (mainly Harghita where this issue has been discussed) PP3 Savonlinna has provided the major suggestions for this project. Apparently, the other partners do not have such a strong orientation to digital instruments. Apart from existing tools (e.g. visitsavonlinna.fi) which was analysed, we discussed with the partner different possible digital implementations supporting SMEs. The development of the platform for centralized market-driven online commercialization was the digital tools identified and inserted in both APs. Saimaalive, the project of entrepreneur M. Pennanen gave also some suggestions about the possibility of "capturing" potential travellers through new technologies (visual storytelling).</p>	
<p>b. What have you learnt?</p>	<p>Increasing use of digital tools both for promotion and purchase Traditional tourism destination portals, aimed at information and promotion of the territory, must become distribution channels where to sell local services and where the visitor can build in autonomy his own personal experience. This transformation is not simple because it is not simply a technological challenge but mainly an organizational one. Convincing and organizing service SMEs for e-commerce will be a major issue which needs time and efforts to be implemented.</p>	

c. How have you learnt?

Discussion during LSG meetings and IE meetings
Good practice presentation

Action Steps (What will be done)	Responsibility (Who will do it)	Resources (Information, money, materials)	Timeline Start and end dates*	1) Name of the PI to be influenced/ already influenced 2) Change needed (e.g. new project, new call).
3.1.1 Benchmarking of existing platform about: contents, services offered, condition of access, integration with public and private services, etc.	Destination Management Organization (DMO)	This action will be supported Leader program by DELTA 2000 during 2019-2020	Summer- Autumn 2019	
3.1.2 Choice of the preferred solution and Contract signing with the IT provider	Destination Management Organization (DMO)	Entry costs from the ordinary marketing budget of the destination (however digital platform work usually on a variable cost based on sales commissions)	Autumn 2019 Approval date: 10/05/2019	1) PI influenced: Local Action Program LEADER 2014-2020 approved with Determination of Managing Authority leader of Emilia Romagna Region. No.8058 of 10/05/2019. 2) New project: new platform
Implications for other sectors of rural economy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The digital platform could also include the sale of rural/typical products - Makes the area more attractive to potential visitors by making it easier for them to become aware everything that is on offer. 			
Implications for other actions or policy objectives	Action/Policy objective number:	Description of implications:		
	2	Needs of operators skilled through focused training activities		
	4	Addressing the development of networks and partnerships among SMEs		
	5	Supporting the creation of activities and services along the routes		

ACTION 3.2

<p>Policy Objective Title: Develop and promote an IT platform for integrating quality visitors' services and experiences</p>		<p>Policy Objective Number: 3</p>
<p>Action Title: Definition of rules and content development (stimulating tourism SMEs to join the platform and promote their offer)</p>		<p>Action Number: 3.2</p>
<p>Background: A digital platform is successful only if it is full of quality and updated contents. The aims of this action are multiple: to set quality criteria for publishing services on the platform; to make local enterprises aware of the project and maximize the number of them joining the platform; to make them start filling the platform with contents and services ready to be purchased.</p>		
<p>a. From which partner/presenter/expert/LSG member(s) have you learnt the good practice which feeds this thematic action?</p>	<p>LSG meetings IE meeting (mainly Harghita where this issue has been discussed) PP3 Savonlinna Saaimalife</p>	
<p>b. What have you learnt?</p>	<p>Updated contents and availability of services to purchase on the platform are the key for success. This means enterprises must join the project and must learn how to use the platform. A centralized management/editorial team must coordinate the whole project and create the necessary attractive environment (the use of video-stories can boost the attention).</p> <p>In a first phase the organizational constraints could be solved centralizing the commercialization and allowing member SMEs to give to the platform small amounts of units to sell at specific price and to recreate the availability once the previous amount has been sold.</p>	
<p>c. How have you learnt?</p>	<p>Presentation during Savonlinna IE meeting Good Practice description (Saaimalife) Discussions during IE meetings (especially Harghita)</p>	

Action Steps (What will be done)	Responsibility (Who will do it)	Resources (Information, money, materials)	Timeline Start and end dates*	1) Name of the PI to be influenced/ already influenced 2)Change needed (e.g. new project, new call).
3.2.1 Preparation of the regulation (rules of conduct) and of the contract for joining services	Destination Management Organization (DMO) together with the platform' s provider	Desk job	Autumn 2019 Approval date: 10/05/2019 /	1) PI influenced: Local Action Program LEADER 2014-2020 approved with Determination of Managing Authority leader of Emilia Romagna Region. No..8058 of 10/05/2019. 2) New project: new platform
3.2.2. Communication campaign aimed at stimulating service suppliers to join the platform and include their offer	Destination Management Organization (DMO) together with the platform' s provider	Materials Budget made available also by LEADER program Delta 2000	Autumn 2019 Winter 2019-2020 Approval date: 10/05/2019 /	1) PI influenced: Local Action Program LEADER 2014-2020 approved with Determination of Managing Authority leader of Emilia Romagna Region. No..8058 of 10/05/2019. 2) New project: new platform
3.2.3. Filling of contents/services by service providers	SMEs and service/product providers of the area	Information	Winter 2019-2020 Spring 2020 Approval date : 10/05/2019 /	1) PI influenced: Local Action Program LEADER 2014-2020 approved with Determination of Managing Authority leader of Emilia Romagna Region. No..8058 of 10/05/2019. 2) New project: new platform
3.2.4 Filling of general contents and harmonization by the centralized editorial team	Destination Management Organization (DMO) together with the platform' s provider	Desk job Budget for the editorial team	Winter 2019-2020 Spring 2020 Approval date:	1) PI influenced: Local Action Program LEADER 2014-2020 approved with Determination of Managing Authority leader of Emilia Romagna Region. No..8058 of 10/05/2019. 2) New project: new platform

			10/05/2019	Romagna Region. No..8058 of 10/05/2019. 2) New project: new platform
Implications for other sectors of rural economy?	Enhancement of cooperation among enterprises (different sectors) of the area to enrich the products/services offered Possibility to promote and sell products/services different from tourists' ones (agriculture, handicraft, culture, etc.)			
Implications for other actions or policy objectives	Action/Policy objective number:	Description of implications:		
	2	Needs of operators skilled through focused training activities		
	4	Addressing the development of networks and partnerships among SMEs		
	5	Supporting the creation of activities and services along the routes		

ACTION 3.3

<p>Policy Objective Title: Develop and promote an IT platform for integrating quality visitors' services and experiences</p>	<p>Policy Objective Number: 3</p>
<p>Action Title: Raise awareness of the platform to present and potential visitors</p>	<p>Action Number: 3.3</p>
<p>Background: Once the platform is operative and filled with contents (product and services ready to be sold), a marketing activity is needed to make the potential visitors aware of the existence of such a tool, so to start purchasing. The platform should be promoted also towards tourism intermediaries and incoming/outgoing operators – e.g. those who make packages and bundles – because them too could benefit from such a tool. Sales prices to the different segments (final customers and trade operators) could diverge according to commission policy.</p>	
<p>a. From which partner/presenter/expert/LSG member(s) have you learnt the good practice which feeds this thematic action?</p>	<p>LSG meetings PP3 Savonlinna PP5 Medina del Campo</p>
<p>b. What have you learnt?</p>	<p>The necessity of attracting potential customer to the destination website is a clear goal of each destination marketing project, proved also by the fact that the number of unique visitors/visits to the website is a main KPI for measuring marketing effectiveness, just after the number of arrivals/bednights.</p> <p>Here, after having filled the platform with quality products/services and attractive presentation, the promotion of the tool must be carried out so to pull a great number of potential visitor to enter and buy their experience. At the end the only marker of SMEs satisfaction – i.e. the key for continuity -, will be how much additional business they have made thanks to this channel.</p>
<p>c. How have you learnt?</p>	<p>Good Practice description (visitsavonlinna, Saaimalife) Discussions during IE meetings (Savonlinna, Medina and especially Harghita)</p>

Action Steps (What will be done)	Responsibility (Who will do it)	Resources (Information, money, materials)	Timeline Start and end dates*	1) Name of the PI to be influenced/ already influenced 2) Change needed (e.g. new project, new call).
3.3.1. Promo-communication activities addressed to target segments	Destination Management Organization (DMO)	Press office, advertising, social network Budget made available by LEADER program Delta 2000 Budget for promo-communication actions available in Destinazione Romagna	Spring 2020- Early summer 2020 Approval date : 10/05/2019 /	1) PI influenced: Local Action Program LEADER 2014-2020 approved with Determination of Managing Authority leader of Emilia Romagna Region. No..8058 of 10/05/2019. 2) New project: new platform
3.3.2 Promo-Communication activities addressed to incoming agencies and other distribution agents	Destination Management Organization (DMO)	Press office, advertising, social network Budget made available by LEADER program Delta 2000 Budget for promo-communication actions available in Destinazione Romagna	Spring 2020- Early summer 2020 Approval date : 10/05/2019 /	1) PI influenced: Local Action Program LEADER 2014-2020 approved with Determination of Managing Authority leader of Emilia Romagna Region. No..8058 of 10/05/2019. 2) New project: new platform
Implications for other sectors of rural economy?	Enhancing cooperation between tourist company in the area			
Implications for other actions or policy objectives	Action/Policy objective number:	Description of implications:		
	2	Needs of operators skilled through focused training activities		
	4	Addressing the development of networks and partnerships among SMEs		
	5	Supporting the creation of activities and services along the routes		

ACTION 3.4

Policy Objective Title: Develop and promote an IT platform for integrating quality visitors' services and experiences		Policy Objective Number: 3
Action Title: Quality control of service and experience providers through reviews of the guests and analysis of social media -		Action Number: 3.4
<p>Background: For maintaining the territorial platform competitive and consistent, the quality of services and experiences included should be constantly monitored.</p> <p>The quality check can be done in several ways, both direct and indirect: inspections, customer satisfaction surveys, analysis of the reviews, certification rules, application of a quality label, etc.</p> <p>In this case our plan is to use analysis of the reviews and complaints and to open an inspection to SMEs receiving a predefined amount of complaints/bad reviews.</p>		
a. From which partner/presenter/expert/LSG member(s) have you learnt the good practice which feeds this thematic action?	<p>LSG meetings IE meetings All good practice site visits demonstrate that successful businesses raise from a well-conceived entrepreneurial idea and an implementation with quality and attention to details.</p>	
b. What have you learnt?	<p>Guarantee quality to customer experience is crucial for the survival of the whole system. Even a single point with low quality can have a detrimental impact for all the value-chain of the customer experience</p>	
c. How have you learnt?	<p>Discussions Analysis of good practice</p>	

Action Steps (What will be done)	Responsibility (Who will do it)	Resources (Information, money, materials)	Timeline Start and end dates*	1) Name of the PI to be influenced/ already influenced 2) Change needed (e.g. new project, new call).
3.4.1. Definition of the methodology for quality control	Destination Management Organization (DMO)	Experts - money	Autumn 2020	
3.4.2. Implementation of quality control and identification of weak points	Destination Management Organization (DMO)	Meetings Budget for promotional communication actions available in Destinazione Romagna	Autumn 2020 onwards	
Implications for other sectors of rural economy?	“Philosophy” of Quality spreading out in different sectors of the local economic system			
Implications for other actions or policy objectives	Action/Policy objective number:	Description of implications:		
	2	Needs of operators skilled through focused training activities		
	4	Addressing the development of networks and partnerships among SMEs		
	5	Supporting the creation of activities and services along the routes		

ACTION 3.5

Policy Objective Title: Develop and promote an IT platform for integrating quality visitors' services and experiences		Policy Objective Number: 3
Action Title: Technical assistance to SMEs for quality improvement		Action Number: 3.5
<p>Background: After discovering the weak elements of the system, an advisory action must be foreseen.</p> <p>Sometimes faults may arise within the SMEs members of the platform: bad service, noncompliance with the delivery rules defined (e.g. a tour which does not start until a certain number of client has been reached); some others may arise in the defined procedures or in the logistic (a service provider not informed of the sale; a wrong information about the meeting point or the location of a service, etc.).</p> <p>A coaching program is foreseen to support enterprises and the whole platform to improve the quality of services/experiences offered and to comply with possible quality rules (where appropriate).</p>		
<p>a. From which partner/presenter/expert/LSG member(s) have you learnt the good practice which feeds this thematic action?</p>	<p>LSG meetings PP3 Savonlinna for the great effort and different tools used and planned for coaching SMEs (e.g. Saaima startup, Digital coaching, etc.)</p>	
<p>b. What have you learnt?</p>	<p>A permanent maintenance of the whole system is required for assuring quality. As already seen in Axis 2, coaching SMEs (and the organizational sphere) is a concrete approach, able to improve competitiveness in short time</p>	
<p>c. How have you learnt?</p>	<p>Discussions during IE meetings</p>	

.Action Steps (What will be done)	Responsibility (Who will do it)	Resources (Information, money, materials)	Timeline Start and end dates*	1) Name of the PI to be influenced/ already influenced 2)Change needed (e.g. new project, new call).
3.5.1 Advisory and coaching to providers for improving the quality of services and experiences offered on the platform	DMO/permanent technical service/expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meetings door to door - Funds from Regional programs supporting quality improvement and innovation 	Winter 2020-2021 onwards	
Implications for other sectors of rural economy?	Enhancing cooperation between companies in the area			
Implications for other actions or policy objectives	Action/Policy objective number:	Description of implications:		
	2	Needs of operators skilled through focused training activities		
	4	Addressing the development of networks and partnerships among SMEs		
	5	Supporting the creation of activities and services along the routes		

ACTION 4.1

Policy Objective Title: Foster networks, develop partnerships, support startups		Policy Objective Number: 4
Action Title: Support to tourism SMEs' joint projects		Action Number: 4.1
<p>Background: Cooperation among enterprises of the same sector - tourist services, e.g accommodation, restaurants, excursions, activities, etc – are crucial both to reach scale economy and a critical mass vs the trade and to improve the perception of the area as well as the value of the offer to visitors. Cooperation can take different forms, from joint actions for promo-communication (co-opetition for attacking new segments or markets or distribution channels, pilot marketing initiatives, etc.) to the construction of more complex tourist products (e.g. accommodation + bike rentals + guided excursions)</p>		
<p>a. From which partner/presenter/expert/LSG member(s) have you learnt the good practice which feeds this thematic action?</p>	<p>During LSG meetings, it emerged that several cases of success in the territory of Po Delta area are connected with the creation of cooperation agreements between operators of the same sectors (e.g. COGETOUR / PO DELTA TOURISM, etc.) so a form of co-opetition</p> <p>CRE, during the ambition setting visits, suggested to focus network creation on farm business diversification, agro-tourism, local foods and crafts</p> <p>In IE meeting in Medina too the cooperation among operators in Rueda as well as in the Renaissance Week has been inspiring</p> <p>De Drentse Koe (in PP2) and Bike Tours Network (in PP 1) are practices which have suggested us some criteria to insert in the public call for supporting the creation of networks/joint projects among SMEs (see PART V description of the Axis).</p>	

b. What have you learnt?	<p>Competitive co-operation (co-opetition) may generate important advantages. Participating companies are aware that each of them is too small facing the market and that they can compete only after having collaborated to attract customers and buyers.</p> <p>Information circulates to all operators within the net and each one uses each other's strength to thrive together.,</p> <p>Rueda Wine Route gives far greater visibility to wine and associated businesses. (Critical mass)</p> <p>Renaissance week – synchronising all activities to be concentrated into a single week for maximum impact and visitor numbers.</p> <p>Some criteria of the public call to be launched by Delta 2000 will be inspired by good practices visited during RG.</p>			
c. How have you learnt?	Discussions and site visits			
Action Steps (What will be done)	Responsibility (Who will do it)	Resources (Information, money, materials)	Timeline Start and end dates*	1) Name of the PI to be influenced/ already influenced 2)Change needed (e.g. new project, new call).
4.1. 1. Monetary incentives (co-funding) for projects related to joint marketing actions presented by groups of tourism SMEs	Delta 2000 / DMO in cooperation with local SMEs associations, Tourist experts	<p>A first action in this context is a public call under Leader program finalized to enhance the cooperation between SMEs and to improve service quality.</p> <p>Funds from the regional tourism law co-financing tourism projects presented by a group of enterprises.</p>	Autumn 2018-2021	

4.1.2. Consultancy and technical assistance (coaching) to tourism SMEs with joint marketing projects	Delta 2000 / DMO in cooperation with local SMEs associations, Tourist experts	A public call under Delta 2000 LEADER program Funds from the regional tourism law co-financing tourism projects presented by a group of enterprises.	Autumn 2018-2021
Implications for other sectors of rural economy?	Indirect increase demand for restaurants /locally grown food, culture/heritage operators and handicraft		
Implications for other actions or policy objectives	Action/Policy objective number:	Description of implications:	
	1	Implementation of tourism strategy of Po Delta	
	2	Increase of know-how of operators belonging to networks through information exchange	
	3	Production of quality offers to promote on the platform	

ACTION 4.2

Policy Objective Title: Foster networks, develop partnerships, support startups		Policy Objective Number: 4
Action Title: Support to cross sector partnerships		Action Number: 4.2
<p>Background:</p> <p>Cooperation and partnerships should also be developed also among operators of different sectors e.g. among tourist services and producers of typical products (agriculture, handicraft) or creative industries (design, fashion, technology); among private tourist services and public bodies who manage public spaces and attractions (Unesco sites, other historical sites).</p> <p>The goal in this case is both to realize co-marketing initiatives with a greater impact on the target public (thanks to the visibility of the partner's brand) and to give rise to innovative tourist products/bundles combining elements with high experiential value (e.g. farmer/fisherman for a day, school of mosaics, etc).</p>		
a. From which partner/presenter/expert/LSG member(s) have you learnt the good practice which feeds this thematic action?	<p>During LSG meetings some operators presented innovations introduced in their activities through cooperation with businesses outside the (tourism) sector.</p> <p>An example is the co-marketing project called Binorent, that combines birdwatching tourism with a rental system for binoculars provided by Swarovski, a manufacturer leader in optical products for nature observation.</p> <p>The case of biking network in Nagykanizsa is a good example of collaboration of enterprises from different sectors (accommodation, washing, storage, food, etc) working to meet the needs of a specific segment (cyclists)</p>	
b. What have you learnt?	<p>These kinds of agreements/collaborations are able to innovate the traditional offer to a great extent and are at the base of the creation of added value for customers and the business.</p>	
c. How have you learnt?	<p>Discussion and visits</p>	

Action Steps (What will be done)	Responsibility (Who will do it)	Resources (Information, money, materials)	Timeline Start and end dates*	1) Name of the PI to be influenced/ already influenced 2) Change needed (e.g. new project, new call).
4.2.1. Monetary incentives (co-funding) and technical assistance for projects among private SMEs, associations and public sectors	Delta 2000 / DMO in cooperation with local SMEs associations, Tourist experts	A public call under Delta 2000 LEADER program Other funds from Destinazione Romagna's special projects, Chamber of commerce) etc.	Autumn 2018-2021	
4.2.2. Monetary incentives (co-funding) and technical assistance for projects combining tourism activities with typical products (handicrafts, farmers, food&wine, etc.)	Delta 2000 / DMO in cooperation with local SMEs associations, Tourist experts	A public call under Delta 2000 LEADER program Other funds from Destinazione Romagna's special projects, Chamber of commerce) etc.	Autumn 2018-2021	
Implications for other sectors of rural economy?	Direct and indirect increase demand for restaurants /locally grown food, culture/heritage operators and handicraft			
Implications for other actions or policy objectives	Action/Policy objective number:	Description of implications:		
	1	Implementation of tourism strategy of Po Delta		
	2	Increase of know-how of operators belonging to networks through information exchange		

	3	Production of quality offers to promote on the platform	
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ACTION 4.3

Policy Objective Title: Foster networks, develop partnerships, support startups		Policy Objective Number: 4		
Action Title: Support to innovative startups		Action Number: 4.3		
Background: In this action the emphasis is on innovativeness, considered both as non-yet existing tourist products (i.e. new products potentially able to bring tourists off-season or from new markets/segments e.g. winter ashore horsebackriding excursions) and as products/enterprises active in specific innovative sectors, (linked to technology, digital tourism, environment, R&D). Both these situations must be supported to help the modernization of the hospitality sector locally and for supporting enterprises started by young people with potentially successful project ideas.				
a. From which partner/presenter/expert/LSG member(s) have you learnt the good practice which feeds this thematic action?	<p>The issue of startups – especially innovative ones - was identified and deeply discussed during our LSG meetings. In particular were pointed out startups in the field of digitalization and ICT for tourist promotion and guiding of visitors in museums, natural areas, etc.</p> <p>A good example of innovative startup has been Saaimalife (presented in IE in Savonlinna), a project developed by a single entrepreneur, able to create a huge community of online visitors on her website through storytelling (a daily diary from Saaima) and making a large use of images and video. This successful initiative convinced an Asian producer of visual technologies to invest for selling relaxational tools (virtual immersion in the pristine natural environment of Saaima lake) addressed to stressed people living in large polluted megalopolis</p>			
b. What have you learnt?	The potential success and the vast market of a micro-company with an inspiring idea, a good skill in digital tools/communication and a deep love with the local territory			
c. How have you learnt?	LSG Meetings IE meetings (especially in Savonlinna) Presentation of best practices (Saaimalife, others)			
Action Steps (What will be done)	Responsibility (Who will do it)	Resources (Information, money, materials)	Timeline Start and end dates*	1) Name of the PI to be influenced/ already influenced 2)Change needed (e.g. new project, new call).

4.3.1. Monetary incentives (co-funding) and technical assistance for tourism companies developing new/innovative products potentially able to bring tourists off-season or from new markets/segments	LAG DELTA	A public call under Delta 2000 LEADER program OP ERDF for Emilia-Romagna Region (Axis 1 – Research and Innovation) can also support this macro-action through public calls	Autumn 2018-2021	
4.3.2. Monetary incentives (co-funding) and technical assistance for companies in specific innovative sectors , (linked to technology, digital tourism, environment, R&D)	LAG DELTA	A public call under Delta 2000 LEADER program OP ERDF for Emilia-Romagna Region (Axis 1 – Research and Innovation) can also support this macro-action through public calls	Autumn 2018-2021	
Implications for other sectors of rural economy?	Indirect increase demand for restaurants /locally grown food, culture/heritage operators and handicraft			
Implications for other actions or policy objectives	Action/Policy objective number:	Description of implications:		
	1	Implementation of tourism strategy of Po Delta		
	2	Increase of know-how of operators through information exchange		
	3	Production of quality offers to promote on the platform		

ACTION 5.1

Policy Objective Title: Enhance transport co-modality and sustainable mobility		Policy Objective Number: 5
Action Title: Planning of the network of pathways (greenways, cycle trails, walkways, waterways, etc.)		Action Number: 5.1
<p>Background: The lack of the transport system has been deeply emphasized during LSG meetings. The lack refers both to internal transport and people movement as well as the transport to reach the area. The outcome of this lack is that car is by far the main mean used to get there and to move inside the area.</p> <p>Po Delta needs the systematization of the vast network of pathways for enjoying the natural areas, dedicated to different activities and means of transport (walking, cycling, boating, horse riding, electric cart, eco-bus, etc), also with the aim of connecting the main natural and cultural resources.</p> <p>With this action, existing trails will be mapped and analysed, service gaps and barriers identified, existing routes' improvement and connections designed, new paths planned with the aim of building an inter-connected, multi-use path's network dedicated to sustainable, slow mobility for all.</p> <p>Infrastructure does not enter in the goals of this project but – as explained in PART V - this Policy Objective focus on the chance of creating new services or the relocation of existing ones thanks to the design of a plan of slow mobility for Po Delta, which can take life thanks also to SMEs proving services along the paths/roads and in the exchange hubs.</p> <p>The output of the foreseen actions is a clear map of sustainable mobility in Po Delta showing also the locational opportunities for service SMEs along the network of paths and in the hubs.</p>		
a. From which partner/presenter/expert/LSG member(s) have you learnt the good practice which feeds this thematic action?	<p>LSG meeting</p> <p>Drenthe (as well as whole Netherland) can be considered a best practice in this respect, biking in particular (every road has a dedicated lane for bikers/hikers)</p>	
b. What have you learnt?	<p>Green/rural areas must offer different ways of discovering the destination through slow sustainable transport, consistent with the general image of clean, unpolluted spot.</p>	
c. How have you learnt?	<p>Discussion during LSG meeting</p> <p>Site visit</p>	

Action Steps (What will be done)	Responsibility (Who will do it)	Resources (Information, money, materials)	Timeline Start and end dates*	1) Name of the PI to be influenced/ already influenced 2)Change needed (e.g. new project, new call).
5.1.1. Identification of referenced areas, analysis of state (signs, maintenance, services) and mapping of existing trails	External experts identified by Delta 2000	Desk study and field analysis Budget already available to Delta 2000 from Leader program	Dec 2017-Feb 2018	
5.1.2. Identification of main needs, points of interest, barriers (e.g. land ownership, lack of connection between near stretches, etc)	External experts identified by Delta 2000	Desk work and qualitative field surveys with stakeholders Budget already available to Delta 2000 from Leader program	Gen 2018-Feb 2018	
5.1.3. Draft planning of paths for different modes of transport including: completion/ improvement of existing routes and definition of new ones	External experts identified by Delta 2000	Desk work Budget already available to Delta 2000 from Leader program	Feb 2018-Apr 2018	
Implications for other sectors of rural economy?	Increase tourist demand in particular forms of slow and green tourism Wider distribution of tourists and tourist spending in the Po Delta.			
Implications for other actions or policy objectives	Action/Policy objective number:	Description of implications:		
	2	Training operators about profile and specific needs of		

		practitioners along the pathways	
	3	Development of tourist services, Guided visits and activities along the itineraries	
	4	Development of services and partnerships for the activities foreseen along the pathways	

ACTION 5.2

Policy Objective Title: Enhance transport co-modality and sustainable mobility		Policy Objective Number: 5		
Action Title: Planning of necessary light infrastructure for experiencing the area		Action Number: 5.2		
<p>Background: A tourist path is not simply the ground or water where to travel. Visitors' enjoyment, activities and experiences come from "dressing" the paths with suitable spaces and infrastructure (e.g. observation towers and huts, information panels, wooden steps/piers, parking, rest/picnic areas, storage of means, etc.) as well services (e.g. explanation, guiding, refreshment, etc.).</p> <p>These light infrastructure deal often with the spaces were SMEs provide their services: meeting points and information rooms for guided visits; wooden huts and towers were to observe nature; wooden piers for boat rentals; rest areas for shuttle services, etc. This is the way how this action support and gives additional chances to local SMEs providing tourist services.</p>				
a. From which partner/presenter/expert/LSG member(s) have you learnt the good practice which feeds this thematic action?	LSG meetings Specialized tourist agents Our expertise Internet for additional best practices			
b. What have you learnt?	The realisation of such infrastructure is crucial to increase the perceived value of the experience in the area.			
c. How have you learnt?	Interview and discussions Web analysis of solutions undertaken by best practices			
Action Steps (What will be done)	Responsibility (Who will do it)	Resources (Information, money, materials)	Timeline Start and end dates*	1) Name of the PI to be influenced/ already influenced 2)Change needed (e.g. new project, new call).

5.2.1. Identification of main needs related to enjoyment of path network by different segments/activities (birding, cycling, canoeing, etc.)	External experts identify by DELTA 2000	Desk research Interviews with specialized press and agents Budget already available to Delta 2000 from Leader program PO ERDF Emilia Romagna Region	Dec 2017-Feb 2018	
5.2.2. Assessment of present situation with reference to structure and infrastructure linked to the path network	External experts identify by DELTA 2000	Field inspections Collection of documentary information and maps Interviews with stakeholders Budget already available to Delta 2000 from Leader program PO ERDF Emilia Romagna Region	Gen 2018-Feb 2018	
5.2.3. Plan of structure & infrastructures interventions for improving natural & slow experiences in the Po Delta area	External experts identify by DELTA 2000	Field inspections Collection of documentary information and maps Interviews with stakeholders Budget already available to Delta 2000 from Leader program PO ERDF Emilia Romagna Region	Feb 2018-Apr 2018	
Implications for other sectors of rural economy?	Increase tourist demand in particular forms of slow and green tourism Wider distribution of tourists and tourist spending in the Po Delta.			
Implications for other actions or policy objectives	Action/Policy objective	Description of implications:		

	number:		
	2	Training operators about profile and specific needs of practitioners along the pathways	
	3	Development of tourist services, Guided visits and activities along the itineraries	
	4	Development of services and partnerships for the activities foreseen along the pathways	

ACTION 5.3

<p>Policy Objective Title: Enhance transport co-modality and sustainable mobility</p>	<p>Policy Objective Number: 5</p>
<p>Action Title: Identification of logistic pivots and hubs for co-modality</p>	<p>Action Number: 5.3</p>
<p>Background: The problems of weak transportation system in the Po Delta area could be overcome by co-modality (switch-connection to different sustainable means of transport). This action deals with the identification of the main spots for co-modality, i.e. where to exchange means of transport. The issue has two sides: the spots dedicated to deal with visitors arriving in the area by road (car and public bus) and the spot dedicated to switch from a slow mean of transport to another along the natural paths (e.g. leave the bike and take the boat). Spots of the first type (hubs) have the main task to reduce pollution and traffic near the natural areas and introduce visitors to a sustainable experience of Po Delta. These spots should provide a good availability of car parkings, information, rental opportunities, refreshment, sanitary facilities, purchase of typical products, etc. Candidates for these spots could be existing structure (e.g. dismissed/secondary train stations) as well as new ones where to promote the setting up of service companies (see 5.5). Again, the co-modality issue open opportunities for SMEs because it deals of exchanging the mean of transport used for reaching the area (private car or public train/bus) and change it with local sustainable means of transports: rented bicycles, canoes, electric boats, horses, carriages, etc., i.e. means provided by local SMEs.</p>	
<p>a. From which partner/presenter/expert/LSG member(s) have you learnt the good practice which feeds this thematic action?</p>	<p>LSG meetings PP2 Drenthe (and Netherland in general) is the partner much involved in this theme. The IE in Drenthe has given us the chance to check how the slow movement is supported since the road construction. With PP5 Medina we have discussed and taken suggestions from the practice of Vias Verdes in Spain, i.e. the transformation of decommissioned railroads into pathways and greenways for walks, bike excursions, etc.</p>

b. What have you learnt?	<p>A natural sensitive area should “force” a sustainable way of visit and learn visitors to switch to slow ways of moving. Transport co-modality is not always easy to organize and require a strong logistic approach which must be tackled with partnerships between private operators and public bodies/companies. But it is also a huge opportunity for new services.</p>			
c. How have you learnt?	<p>Interview and discussions with partners Web analysis of solutions undertaken by best practices (not visited during RG but signalled by partners)</p>			
Action Steps (What will be done)	Responsibility (Who will do it)	Resources (Information, money, materials)	Timeline Start and end dates*	1) Name of the PI to be influenced/ already influenced 2)Change needed (e.g. new project, new call).
5.3.1. Creation of a working group of all possible stakeholders involved in the intermodality project for the PO Delta area	External experts identify by Delta 2000	Meetings and meeting facilities Budget already available to Delta 2000 from Leader program	March 2018	
5.3.2. Analysis of current state concerning existing structures (e.g. stations) and new settlements	External experts identify by Delta 2000	Site inspections Budget already available to Delta 2000 from Leader program	March-April 2018	
5.3.3. Considering also previous outcomes of actions 5.1 and 5.2 elaboration of the Masterplan for Intermodality in Po Delta area	External experts identify by Delta 2000	Desk work Meeting with stakeholder Budget already available to Delta 2000 from Leader program	Feb-May 2018	
Implications for other sectors of rural economy?	Increase tourist demand in particular forms of slow and green tourism Wider distribution of tourists and tourist spending in the Po Delta.			

Implications for other actions or policy objectives	Action/Policy objective number:	Description of implications:	
	2	Training operators about profile and specific needs of practitioners along the pathways	
	3	Development of tourist services, Guided visits and activities along the itineraries	
	4	Development of services and partnerships for the activities foreseen along the pathways	

ACTION 5.4

Policy Objective Title: Enhance transport co-modality and sustainable mobility		Policy Objective Number: 5
Action Title: Implementation of infrastructure (refurbishment, new construction)		Action Number: 5.4
<p>Background: It deals with the detailed planning and realization of the structures/infrastructure and land operations interventions foreseen in the Masterplan for Inter-modality in Po Delta (5.3). Being an intervention on infrastructure it does not refer directly with local SMEs (apart those directly involved in the construction).</p> <p>The different interventions will be realized according to a priority time schedule which should cover 3-4 years. Budget should come from different sources: National/European funds for the creation of cycling routes and the connection between main Eurovelo corridors; interested Municipalities, OP ERDF Emilia Romagna, special projects on EU structural funds.</p>		
a. From which partner/presenter/expert/LSG member(s) have you learnt the good practice which feeds this thematic action?	LSG Meetings were the topic of expanding the natural roads's network was deeply discussed	

b. What have you learnt?	Major threats perceived by stakeholders are the timing, the rising costs and the risk of interruption in the midstream, which can highly reduce the opportunities for tourism
c. How have you learnt?	Discussion with stakeholders

Action Steps (What will be done)	Responsibility (Who will do it)	Resources (Information, money, materials)	Timeline Start and end dates*	1) Name of the PI to be influenced/ already influenced 2) Change needed (e.g. new project, new call).
5.4.1. Executive planning of infrastructure foreseen in the Masterplan	Public bodies/ municipalities involved with the support of Delta 2000	National/Regional funds for Eurovelo Interested Municipalities, OP ERDF Emilia Romagna special projects	2018-2020	
5.4.2. Analysis of interventions already programmed for the area and identification of those possibly realizable through already planned interventions	Public bodies/ municipalities involved with the support of Delta 2000	National/Regional funds for Eurovelo Interested Municipalities, OP ERDF Emilia Romagna special projects	2018-2020	
5.4.3. Realisation of foreseen interventions	Public bodies/ municipalities involved with the support of Delta 2000	National/Regional funds for Eurovelo Interested Municipalities, OP ERDF Emilia Romagna special projects	2019 -2021 Duration connected with the type of intervention, from some months to 1 – 1,5 year	
Implications for other sectors of rural economy?	Increase tourist demand in particular forms of slow and green tourism Wider distribution of tourists and tourist spending in the Po Delta.			
Implications for other actions or policy objectives	Action/Policy objective number:	Description of implications:		
	2	Training operators about profile and specific needs of		

		practitioners along the pathways	
	3	Development of tourist services, Guided visits and activities along the itineraries	
	4	Development of services and partnerships for the activities foreseen along the pathways	

ACTION 5.5

Policy Objective Title: Enhance transport co-modality and sustainable mobility		Policy Objective Number: 5
Action Title: Support to SMEs delivering services along the routes		Action Number: 5.5
<p>Background: Goal of this action is to sensitize and involve SMEs about the network of paths and their role in attracting and satisfying visitors of Po Delta. Support (financial, non-financial) is foreseen in the starting phase and it should help the localization of enterprises providing services along the routes and in the hubs. The creation of a labelled network of enterprises “serving” the pathways of Po Delta is foreseen to make them recognizable and chosen by visitors.</p>		
a. From which partner/presenter/expert/LSG member(s) have you learnt the good practice which feeds this thematic action?	LSG meetings Good practice inspection Bike tour - Nagykanizsa (PP1) Also the IE meeting in Medina (PP5) with focus on the wine route	
b. What have you learnt?	The case of Medina has demonstrated that once created, the wine route started acting as a pulling factor for many SMEs wishing to take benefits providing services to visitors: food labs, cooking lessons, farms providing local products, guided tours, etc, The expansion of these services must be “controlled” in quality more than in quantity. A sort of “quality label” assigned to SMEs can help customers identify those working in coherence with specific quality criteria setup by the local tourism management.	

c. How have you learnt?	Discussions Presentation of best practice
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Action Steps (What will be done)	Responsibility (Who will do it)	Resources (Information, money, materials)	Timeline Start and end dates*	1) Name of the PI to be influenced/ already influenced 2) Change needed (e.g. new project, new call).
5.4.1. Identification of services; both financial and non-financial (consultancy, coaching) support to SMEs providing services connected with the intermodality masterplan	Delta 2000 involving external experts	Budget already available to Delta 2000 from Leader program Funds from Destinazione Romagna's special projects, Chamber of commerce	2019 -2021	
5.4.2. Creation of the labelled network of tourist services along the routes and promotional activities for the network	SMEs with the support of Delta 2000	Budget already available to Delta 2000 from Leader program Funds from Destinazione Romagna's special projects, Chamber of commerce	2020 -2021	
Implications for other sectors of rural economy?	Increase tourist demand in particular forms of slow and green tourism Wider distribution of tourists and tourist spending in the Po Delta.			
Implications for other actions or policy objectives	Action/Policy objective number:	Description of implications:		
	2	Training operators about profile and specific needs of practitioners along the pathways		
	3	Development of tourist services, Guided visits and		

		activities along the itineraries	
	4	Development of services and partnerships for the activities foreseen along the pathways	

PRE-DEFINED IN THE APPLICATION FORM: please fill in accordingly!	
Policy addressed: 2014/2020 ERDF ROP Emilia-Romagna Region	Body responsible for the addressed policy: Emilia-Romagna Region , General Directorate for Industry, Trade, Tourism
Self-defined performance indicator: Number of enterprises benefiting from the projects generated by getting supported from ERDF	Target value of the indicator: 10

Part VII – Policy context (Continuation of 1st Draft of Action Plan)

Please evaluate the current operation of the addressed policy in the box below by answering the following guiding questions:

1. Is the policy currently functioning well so only minor extra details are needed? Or is significant change necessary to achieve the policy objectives defined in the Action Plan?

The OP ERDF from Emilia-Romagna region has actions to improve innovation in SMEs and in tourism sectors. The ERDF ROP Emilia-Romagna Region is currently in operation but at the moment the possibility to achieve policy objectives defined in the Action Plan are only in part connected with the Policy addressed specify in the Application Form.

On one side, the calls for proposal are actually closed and there are no assurance about the next calls, in any case if there will be a new call connected with the ERDF ROP Emilia Romagna region, an extra criterion will be included in the new calls of ERDF fund for the SMEs from Delta Po regions.

- I. On the other side, the new Tourism Regional Law (L.R. 4/2016) reformed the organizational structure of tourism and foresees new organisms called Destinations. In Emilia Romagna region 3 Destinations are foreseen (Emilia, Bologna, Romagna). Po Delta is embedded in the one called Romagna, but historically a minor relevance has been given to Po Delta territory, due to a sort of marginality of that area and also because not consistent with the dominant “model” of tourism supply (Sun, Beach, Fun mass tourism). The policy goal is therefore multiple:

- a) to “force” Emilia Romagna regional law to allow for recognizing sub-destinations (territories wishing to develop a peculiar strategy and governance system, subject to coordination and evaluation of the Destination they belong to);
- b) Act in order that Romagna Destination includes in its marketing program Po Delta sub-destination (at least the part lying within the regional borders) and give space and visibility to this land in its promotional activities
- c) The present tourist law of Emilia Romagna is strictly regionally-based, allowing for joint projects with near regions in case of common products (e.g. a trekking path, a cycling route, a tourist railway, etc.).

Furthermore, the new Tourism Regional Law finances the promo commercialization joint projects presented by group of SMEs. In this respect, some operators located in Po Delta area have already presented promo-commercialization projects finalized to offer hospitality and tourist services (6 groups of SMEs in consortium or other similar networks).

Each year the projects realized in the framework of Romagna Destination will be monitored, in order to evaluate how many are in line with the strategy of Action Plan designed in the RG project.

- II. New interesting developments have just emerged through the new Tourism Regional Law, considering that the Municipalities of Cervia, Ravenna and Comacchio together with other of the same area have joined the Romagna Destination. In a recent agreement between these municipalities, they decided to cooperate to better reach the goals. The municipalities agreed on increasing the collaboration in tourism sector on a wider territorial level, able to enrich the offer mixing e.g. culture, nature, sun&beach resources as a unique tourism product.

It is necessary to assess intermediate bodies - between the lower level (municipalities) and the tourist Destination - to strengthen professional skills of local operators and to implement events and promotional activities aimed at reinforcing the identity of the territory. Institutional and informal relations and collaborations must be set up integrating the various components and the different stakeholders.

In the meantime the Action Plan presented by DELTA 2000 in the framework of RG project – and in particular the action 1.2 which deals with a strategy and a marketing plan for Po Delta tourism - is considered the pillar to develop environmental and rural tourism. In this respect, the group of municipalities decided to:

involve in decision-making other subjects operating in the territory, depending on the actions to be implemented (Delta 2000 has been involved for environmental and sustainable tourism projects, etc.).

During the 6th institutional meeting (held September 17th 2018), the representatives of the municipalities of Comacchio, Cervia and Ravenna, decided to join and support the strategy and Action Plan defined in RG project (see 1.2, 1.3) to promote the new brand “Slow Tourism in Po Delta destination” with an economic support of 20,000 Euros for each municipalities involved, for a total of 60,000 Euros.

III. LEADER PROGRAM – FEARS : Thanks to the participative approach followed by the LEADER program in Po Delta area, DELTA 2000 - who manages the program – co-finances enterprises with project with aim and actions aligned with the action plan. In fact, thanks to the followed approach with active involvement of local operators, the awareness of local operators about local resources, have considerably increased. The projects presented for co-financement confirmed this important change: in total 15 admissible projects, 11 of which co-financed for a total of 600,000 Euros of contribute and a total investments of about 1.5 million Euro.

IV. Also the Regional Policy supporting the process of rooting and diffusion of MAB (Man and Biosphere) UNESCO values (Po Delta has been included in the list in 2015) must be included.

V. The OP ERDF for Emilia-Romagna Region has actions aiming at improving innovation in SMEs and in tourism sectors and training supported by ESF – European Social Fund.

2. Has the policy been traditionally heavily 'top-down'? Is this the first time a 'bottom-up' aspect has been included?

No, the OP ERDF from Emilia-Romagna region is based in part on a participatory process that involved several stakeholders of different sectors public and private and associations. But the participatory process and planning phase have been realized several years ago, so the needs have changed as well as new strategic line has been defined, as in the case of the Action Plan for PO DELTA area, defined in the last year.

3. Do you currently have ownership of the policy and who are the partners involved in planning and implementing the policy?

No we don't have the ownership of the policy addressed; the ownership is of Emilia – Romagna region, and we involved them in some institutional meeting

4. What influence does your organisation have over the policy? If so, how does it influence it? (e.g. influencing content; decision-making; scheme design/administration)

Our organisation as LAG and Local Development Agency with a more than 30-years operative experience in the territory , composed by the main economic actors public and private of Po Delta area, included among the partners associates also the Emilia Romagna region, Furthermore DELTA 2000 has a wider knowledge, extensive skills and recognition also from the stakeholders of territories involved. So the influence could be in the influencing content and in the decision making.

5. Does the policy currently have a tourist aspect?
Yes, The OP ERDF from Emilia-Romagna region has actions to improve innovation in SMEs and in tourism sectors
6. Does the policy currently have an aspect related to rural SMEs?
Partially, only for the rural SMEs not in the sector of agriculture, so only for rural SMEs that in any case are classify as „tourism SME” . For the rural SMES classified as „agriculture SMEs” the policy are diferente. Among that the Emilia-Romagna Rural Development Program 2014-2020 and the Action Plan of Leader Measure 19 of Emilia Romagna RDP program DELTA 2000 directly manage in the Po Delta area Leader Measure 19.
7. Has the policy run calls for touristic projects in the past? Is it planning another call?
Yes, in the year 2017 the policy runned a first (And for the moment only) call.
The planning of a new call is in phase of evaluation by regional body.
8. Please describe any other barriers or opportunities which your organisation faces with respect to this policy.
The main obstacle relates to the actual opening of a further call for applications in this current program period. On one hand, considering the positive relationships created with the regional responsible officers also during this project, an attempt will be made for including in the award criteria of the call, specific actions foreseen in the PO Delta action plan; on the other hand, considering timing and resources currently available, it is not certain the opening of a new call by 2020 or in any case in this EU program period.

Evaluation of the current operation of the policy:

Actually the 2014 2020 ERDF ROP Emilia Romagna is ongoing so in phase of realization.

The Emilia-Romagna Regional Operational Program is the planning document that defines the strategy and operations of use of Community funds allocated to the Region by the European Regional Development Fund, in the framework of the cohesion policy, in furtherance of the economic growth and attractiveness of the regional territory, being the main investment instrument of the European Union.

At the moment the program financed 2.300 SMEs and the resources used are about the 75% of the all program.

ROP Emilia Romagna is composed by 7 Axis, of which for the SMEs of tourist sector in particular **Axis 5 - Enhancement of artistic, cultural and environmental resources** for public entities and **the Axis 3 - Competitiveness and attractiveness of the production system**, opened a specific call (3.3.2 AND 3.3.4) to financed SMEs operating in the tourist, commercial and cultural creative sector. The 1st call has been opened last year and closed in January 2017.

Those axes and corresponding calls have been aimed at the systemic enhancement and promotion of Emilia-Romagna’s environmental, cultural and artistic assets to improve the competitiveness of its destinations and to attract new flows of tourists. Among strategic areas selected for set up with financial founds there is **Po Delta area**.

Other policies that have proved to be relevant are:

- EAFRD European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development & LEADER MEASURE 19 – PO DELTA AREA

Based on **European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)**, the Rural Development Program for Emilia Romagna Region 2014-2020 invests in knowledge and innovation, stimulates the competitiveness of the agro-industrial sector, guarantees the sustainable management of the environment and climate and promotes a balanced development of the territory and local communities, also through Leader program (Measures 19).

Po Delta area has the possibility to access EAFRD's funds that finance rural development programs. Beside the resources aimed at the agriculture sectors, Po Delta area is interested in a specific initiative – **Leader Measure 19**, aimed at boosting interventions for sustainable tourism and improving landscapes.

New Regional Law in tourism (2016)– L.R. 4/2016 and the connected resources of municipalities finalized to finance promo commercialization projects presented by associated SMES: in this sense some operators of Po Delta area presented joint promo commercialization projects finalized to offer hospitality and tour services in the Po Delta Park area.

Public resources provided by grouping local municipalities finalized to realize joint action in the tourism sector: Tourist municipalities of Comacchio. Cervia and Ravenna defined an agreement with the aim of cooperating to better reach the goals defined in the strategy. In this frame, the Action Plan presented by DELTA 2000 realized in the framework of project RG is considered the pillar to develop environmental and rural tourism. In this respect, the group of municipalities decided to involve in decision-making other subjects operating in the territory, depending on the actions to be implemented (Delta 2000 has been involved for environmental and sustainable tourism projects, etc.). Furthermore, these municipalities decided also to join and support the Strategy and Action Plan defined in RG with an economic support of 20, 000 Euros each, for a total of 60,000 Euros.

- ESF European Social Found Emilia Romagna Region, that foreseen to finance actions connected with education , long life learning & training

Please describe in the box below what kind of change you want to achieve in the addressed policy, and why change is necessary by answering the following guiding questions.

1. Do you propose having new initiatives (e.g. new calls, projects) for the policy?
By one side, we propose new calls and also a specific project for the Po Delta to develop a specific destination for Nature and Slow Tourism.
2. Do you propose modification (e.g. modified priorities/objectives, calls, procedures)?
We propose modified priorities where project proposal of Tourism & connected sector (agriculture, artisan, commerce) of SMEs operating in the Po Delta area could have priorities.
3. Justify why this change is necessary to implement your Actions.
If not enough supported also by public policies, Po Delta will not be supported in the future by sufficient funds and consistent governance system by private and public sectors.

Kind of change and why it is needed:

The type of changes are several:

- New calls for Tourist & connected SMEs of rural areas of the ROP ERDF Emilia Romagna Region that could contain award criteria to SMEs in the Po Delta area , finalized to improve the competitiveness of rural SMEs in the visitor economy sector , particularly connected to protected rural and parks areas by producing integrated offers based on innovative approaches.
- Creating a Tourism destination “Po Delta area” – also as a sub destination of the main destination Destinazione Romagna - is necessary for being included in regional tourism policies , so it is necessary to have a recognition as a territorial & economic force.
- For another regional policies ESF - European Social Fund managed by Emilia-Romagna Region in particular the Thematic Objective 8, Axes 1 Occupation , Priority 8.1, we need also a change in the condisation of beneficiaries of activities training. It is need a new modified priority or objectives connected with a specific focus on training not only for a sector but for a complex project for the development of an area, of specifically Po Delta area, with the focus is on providing a mixed training for several targets as including SMEs, private citizens interesting to start a new activities in the tourism sector, and public stakeholders. SO the focal point is not ONLY the “type of beneficiaries”, but the aim of the training and the territory .

Please explain the linkage between the required policy change and your Actions!

List your Actions and the policy change that is needed (For example, to widen the season/attract more German tourists (=Action Title), we plan a new call for tourism SMEs to support the quality upgrade of accommodation (=Policy change linked to the action).)

Action Number (1.1. etc)	Action Title	What policy change is linked to the Action
1.1	Identification of funds able to support the implementation of the strategy and the execution of operational activities	Institutional and political recognition of the Po Delta destination, not as a product but as a territory / Support to the grouping of three tourist municipalities: agreement between Comacchio, Cervia and Ravenna for joint activities in the framework of tourism: information, promotion, tourist services valorisation of environmental areas
2.3	Training of stakeholders and local community	We need a specific call for tourism SMEs to support the training for a unique territory PO Delta (not only for a sector but for a complex project for the development of an area, more specifically Po Delta area; mixed training for several targets as including SMEs, private citizens interesting to start a new activities in the tourism sector, and public stakeholders.)
2.3	Training of stakeholders and local community	We need a specific call for tourism SMEs to support the training for a unique territory PO Delta (not only for a sector but for a complex project for the development of an area, of specifically Po Delta area; mixed training for several targets as including SMEs, private citizens interesting to start a new activities in the tourism sector, and public stakeholders.)
3.1 – 3.2	Study of existing IT tools integrating visitors' experience, booking, purchase, transport and choice of the preferred solution / Definition of rules and content development	Presence and relevance of PO Delta area in the Destination Romagna platform just created by public Regional Law; Including the platform link within the regional tourist tools / Support to the grouping of three tourist municipalities: agreement between Comacchio, Cervia and Ravenna for joint activities in the framework of tourism: information, promotion, tourist services valorisation of environmental areas
3.3	Promotion of the platform	Presence and relevance of PO Delta area in the Destination Romagna platform just created by public Regional Law; Including the platform link within the regional tourist tools / Support to the grouping of three tourist municipalities: agreement between Comacchio, Cervia and Ravenna for joint activities in the framework of tourism: information, promotion, tourist services valorisation of environmental areas

4.1	Support to tourism SMEs' joint projects	Call for proposals to finance new investments and services qualification, realized also by network of SMEs of differences sectors (Agriculture, artisans, tourism etc.) and incoming activities
4.2	Support to cross partnerships	The OP ERDF from Emilia-Romagna region has actions to improve innovation in SMEs ; stimulate the participation in the next call by the local tourism SMEs & networking
4.4	Support to innovative start ups	Synergies with the PO ERDF and other tools to finance tourism project by a multi-sector approach – it's an innovative action – to stimulate new Call for proposal by Emilia-romagna region
5.1 /5.2./5-3	Planning of the newtorks of pathways / Planning of necessary light infrastructure for experiencing the area / Identification of logistic pivots and hubs co-modality	The itineraries plan and necessary infrastructure identifies, developed using Leader funding, will subsequently be presented to the Regional department to ask for funds from regional or national policies to improve facilities and infrastructure for the co-modality and connections.
5.4	Implemenation of infrastrucuture	Open of the call for proposal of LEADER program
5.5	Support of SMEs with services along the tourist routes	Call for proposal to financed the investiments of tourist SMEs.

Please describe how you will make the necessary changes to the policy described above and how RuralGrowth has contributed to identifying and possibly achieving the proposed change

Policy Influencing Activities (What will be done)	Responsibility (Who will do it)	Resources (Information, money, materials, workshops, meetings)	Timeline Start and end dates*
1. To reach/implement the actions of Objective 1, Meetings with the manager of the Regional Tourism Marketing agency (APT) and the Regional Tourism Department. These will maintain the profile of Po Delta within Romagna Destination.	LAG DELTA 2000	Meetings	Within Summer 2018
2. To reach/ implement the actions of Objectives 2 , To finalize better the action in ESF or other program in line with the need of tourism company and tourism services	DELTA 2000/ BODY RESPONSIBLE FOR DMO	Meeting	During current year 2018
3 To reach/ implement the actions of Objectives 2 , Stimulate and promote at regional level new measures on the ESF considering the results of the analysis of context	DELTA 2000/ BODY RESPOSABLE FOR DMO	Meeting	During current year 2018
4. To reach/implement the actions of Objectives 4 in particular , Including DELTA	Emilia-Romagna Region – Tourism Department Regional Tourism Agency – APT for promotional activities	Meeting Materials	During current year 2018

Po tourism destination as priority the regional operative plan and call for proposal			
5. To reach/implement the actions of Objectives 4 in particular, Meeting with Emilia-Romagna Region Department	DELTA 2000 /DMO	meeting	Within 2018
6 . To reach/implement the actions of Objective 5, Meeting to present the plan in Region	DELTA 2000	Meeting	2018

RuralGrowth as an engine for change:

How has the RuralGrowth project contributed to identifying and possibly achieving the proposed change(s) to the policy?

- As already reported above, thank to RURALGROWTH , DELTA 2000 developed an action plan with specific objectives and actions finalized to developed “A recognized European destination for Nature and Slow Tourism following smart and sustainable principles” . Involving stakeholders operating in the Po Delta area: so the Po Delta destination is not just a slogan, but has jointly and strategic line developed.

In more detail the recognized of a specific destination /territory of Po Delta has several aim:

- a) to “force” Emilia Romagna regional law to allow for recognizing sub-destinations (lands wishing to develop a peculiar strategy and governance system, subject to coordination and evaluation of the Destination they belong to);
- b) Act in order that Romagna Destination includes in its marketing program Emilia Romagna’s Po Delta sub-destination and give space and visibility to this land in its promotional activities
- c) The present tourist law of Emilia Romagna is strictly regionally-based, allowing for joint projects with near regions in case of common products (e.g. a trekking path, a cycling route, a tourist railway, etc.). Po Delta is not a product, but a territory shared by two near regions (Emilia Romagna and Veneto, whose border run just in the middle of the Po river) and a specific status must be recognized for it, allowing for example to financial resources from both regions to converge towards common development/marketing projects.

The latter should but cannot be the first step due to the political distance between the two involved regions so the tactics looks first to create an effective tourism system in the part of Po Delta lying in Emilia Romagna region and then to build a strong partnership or, better, a single

interregional territory together with the Veneto's part, coherently also with the Mab Unesco seal, which has been given to a territory spread in both regions.

- Based on the first draft of action plan for Po Delta area and so starting by this first strategic line defined, some municipalities decided to allocate more financial resources towards the rural areas to increase and to support new SMEs operating in visitor economy sector. This first strategic line has already bring results because the Municipalities of Cervia, Ravenna and Comacchio decided to join Romagna Destination, to take Strategic and Operational Plan developed by Delta 2000 and foreseen in RG Action Plan (see 1.2) as the base for rural/natural slow tourism development and to support with their own budget for a total of 60,000 euros.