



**EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
FUND INTERREG IIIB**
Community Initiative concerning Transnational
Co-operation on Spatial Development 2000 – 2006



Interreg North Sea Region

North Sea Programme Application Form

0.1 Project number: (filled in by the Secretariat)	0.2 Registration date: (filled in by the Secretariat)
--	---

1 Title of Project

1.1 Title: Business and Environment linked through Small-Scale Tourism
1.2 Acronym (short title or abbreviation): BESST

2 Organisations Submitting Application and Undertaking Project

2.1

Lead Partner

Organisation	: Peak District National Park Authority	Director	: Ken Parker
Legal Status	: National Park Authority	Project Manager	: Ken Parker
Address	: Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell, Derbys.	Telephone	: +44 1629 816331
	:	Fax	: +44 1629 816310
Post Code	: DE45 1AE	E-mail	: kjp@peakdistrict-npa.gov.uk
Country	: England	Homepage	: www.peakdistrict.org

<p>Partner 2</p> <p>Organisation : Hylte Kommun</p> <p>Legal Status : Municipality</p> <p>Address : Storgaten 8, Hyltebruk</p> <p>Post Code : 314 80</p> <p>Country : Sweden</p> <p>Contact Name : Susanne Svensson</p> <p>Telephone : 0345 18000</p> <p>Fax : 0345 18190</p> <p>E-mail : susanne.svensson@hylte.se</p>	<p>Partner 3</p> <p>Organisation : Fyresdal Kommune</p> <p>Legal Status : Municipality</p> <p>Address : Fyresdal Kommune</p> <p>Post Code : 3870</p> <p>Country : Norway</p> <p>Contact Name : Olav A Veum</p> <p>Telephone : 35 06 71 00</p> <p>Fax : 35 04 12 03</p> <p>E-mail : olav.a.veum@fyresdal.kommune.no</p>
---	--

Partner 4 Organisation : University of Derby Legal Status : Charitable Limited Company Address : Regional Enterprise and Development Unit, School of Tourism, University of Derby, Buxton, Derbyshire Post Code : SK17 9JZ Country : England Contact Name : Jill De Nardo Telephone : 01298 28394 Fax : 01298 28306 E-mail : J.DeNardo@derby.ac.uk	Partner 5 Organisation : Legal Status : Address : Post Code : Country : Contact Name : Telephone : Fax : E-mail :
---	---

Partner 6 Organisation : Legal Status : Address : Post Code : Country : Contact Name : Telephone : Fax : E-mail :	Partner 7 Organisation : Legal Status : Address : Post Code : Country : Contact Name : Telephone : Fax : E-mail :
---	---

2.2 Amount of grant applied for: [E1,050,000](#)

2.3 Other partners or funds providers involved:

[Implementation will involve collaboration with many other local organisations in the different partner areas. Private business participation is integral to the BESST project but there will be no allocation of Interreg funds to private sector owned projects. These private sector owned projects may be funded through programmes other than Interreg \(eg in the case of the Peak District the ERDF Objective 2 Programme\). This 'Interreg - ineligible' funding is shown at line 13 of table 7.1.](#)

2.4 Have other EU or national sources of funding been sought? If yes, which:

[Office of Deputy Prime Minister \(letter dated 12 August 2003\), High Peak Borough Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council and East Midlands Development Agency \(England\). Their contributions are included in the budgets for Partners 1 and 4.](#)

[Telemark County Administration \(Norway\) – included in the budget for partner 3.](#)

2.5 Links to other projects:

[Possible links with approved Interreg IIIB 'Mopark' and 'Nave Nortrail' projects. Potential links to proposed 'Urbal' project being developed by Overijssel \(Netherlands\) and to a proposed 'North Sea Rural' project being developed by Viborg Amt \(Denmark\).](#)

[Links to other projects operating in the three partner areas. In the Peak District an ERDF funded Objective 2 Project –'New Environmental Economy' and a Peak District Leader+ project. In Fyresdal the Telemark Region's Loft Project and an Interreg IIIC project 'Euromontagne'. In Hylte the Halland Region's 'Regional Growth Programme'.](#)

[Links to rural tourism projects under development in Laanemann County \(Estonia\) and Mragowo County, Wnaminsko-Mazuriake Region \(Poland\). Also links to Panzhuhua in China – a twin town to Hylte](#)

3 Project Description

3.1 State the measure of the North Sea programme, that fits this project application best:

Priority 1: Transnational spatial development strategies and actions for urban, rural and maritime systems in the North Sea Region

- Measure 1.1: Elaboration and implementation of transnational polycentric spatial development strategies and polycentrism
- Measure 1.2: Development and implementation of urban complementarity, co-operation and networking
- Measure 1.3: Development and implementation of new urban-rural and inter-rural relationships including maritime areas
- Measure 1.4: Development and implementation of strategies using water as a spatial element in rural, urban and maritime design
- Measure 1.5: Co-operation on research and development matters and access to innovation support

Priority 2: Efficient and sustainable transport and communication and improved access to the information society

- Measure 2.1: Effective and sustainable transport in rural and urban areas, including maritime areas, and in new rural-urban connections
- Measure 2.2: Improve the integration of rural and maritime areas in national and international transport networks
- Measure 2.3: Development of spatial, integrated strategies on transportation networks and the promotion of intermodal transport systems
- Measure 2.4: Improve the access of SMEs and society in general to information and communication technologies
- Measure 2.5: Improve the application of information and communication technologies, with particular reference to public services

Priority 3: Sustainable management and development of the environment, natural resources and cultural heritage

- Measure 3.1 Creative rehabilitation, protection and development of cultural and natural landscapes and townscapes
- Measure 3.2 Innovative promotion of natural assets and cultural heritage
- Measure 3.3 Development and promotion of sustainable management of natural resources and renewable energies
- Measure 3.4 Integrated and concerted sustainable management and planning of coastal zones and the North Sea itself

Priority 4: Water management

- Measure 4.1 Spatial planning strategies and action plans for water catchment areas
- Measure 4.2 Integrated fresh water resource management
- Measure 4.3 Risk management strategies for coastal areas prone to disasters and natural threats and for the North Sea

3.2 State what other measures, if any, the project will influence:

Relevant other Measures include...

[Measure 1.1 : Polycentric Development](#). The cross-sectoral area based approach to rural development is integral to the BESST project.

[Measure 3.1 : Protection and Development of Cultural and Natural Landscapes](#). Creating a 'Virtuous Spiral' (see 3.7) linking economic development and environmental conservation will be a new means of securing the protection and enhancement of natural and cultural resources – through the actions of the local people who own these resources.

[Measure 3.2 : Innovative Promotion of Natural Assets and Cultural Heritage](#). The 'Virtuous Spiral' (see 3.7) is an innovative approach to promoting the conservation of natural assets and cultural heritage. Involving the owners of these environmental assets to create new business ventures based on the creative use of these environmental assets will regenerate the rural economy, providing a unifying theme to rural development programmes. It will therefore also provide the motivation to conserve and enhance the environment.

3.3 Aim of the project:

Spatial development, economic development and environmental conservation are all objectives of public policy. In rural areas the achievement of these objectives depends on the actions of the owners of property and businesses. The BESST project will develop and test a new approach. We will link together the achievement of several public policy objectives (which are often currently pursued separately by different authorities). We will go on to secure their implementation through a partnership approach involving a wide variety of private sector businesses and local organisations.

The BESST project will be based on a single unifying concept – the 'Virtuous Spiral' - which will create the motivation for this linkage of objectives and the subsequent engagement of many different business sectors. The 'Virtuous Spiral' concept uses the local environmental qualities (landscape quality, distinctive wildlife, cultural heritage) as the basic resource for economic development. This also creates the motivation to sustain and enhance the environmental assets because they are the basic economic assets as well. Thus economic development and environmental conservation are linked through the action of local people, working in collaboration with each other and with the relevant public authorities. Public sector leadership will be essential to start the spiral moving and to inspire and co-ordinate private sector activity. This 'Virtuous Spiral' concept is explained in more detail below under '3.7 Rationale'.

We have chosen tourism as a key linking theme because that enables us to engage a wide variety of rural businesses in developing new, distinctive 'tourism offers'. For example a key element of the tourism offer could be local foods from local farms. Tourists and visitors from nearby towns and cities will come to identify with the special qualities of rural areas through leisure activities but this will engage their involvement with environmental issues when they return home (see 4.7A) and create new markets for rural products (see 3.7f)

The three partner areas have similar characteristics –

- A high quality distinctive local environment.
- A strong 'sense of place' among local people and pride in their heritage and environment.
- Decline in the traditional economic base (especially farming) in the face of growing competition.
- An increasing interest in developing tourism based on Sustainable Development principles.
- A predominance of small family based businesses.

However the three areas also have substantial differences too (eg in their geographical character, their population density, their proximity to urban areas). They are also at different stages in developing the elements underlying the BESST approach. Many other rural areas throughout the North Sea Region (indeed throughout the EU) share these characteristics. The BESST project will be a demonstration project testing new approaches to linking economic development and environmental management in different circumstances and the results will therefore have the potential for widespread application

3.4 Objectives:

The objectives of the BESST project are to test out new approaches in the three partner areas simultaneously by..

- a. Developing a coherent approach to tourism development between the public sector and private sector based on the creative use of environmental assets and following the principles of Sustainable Development.
- b. Creating new marketing and sales techniques appropriate to the small business character of the local economy.
- c. Encouraging local businesses to see new possibilities of using the environmental qualities of their area as the means to generate new activities, new customers and therefore new sources of income.
- d. Developing new products and services of a variety of different kinds, by both the public sector and the private sector, based on creative use of environmental assets (NB private sector owned projects will not use Interreg funding).
- e. Forming new linkages between different sectors of the local economy based on pride in the distinctive environment in which they all live. This will have economic and social advantages as well as a long term environmental benefit through the 'Virtuous Spiral' effect (see 3.3 and 3.7).

Public Authorities will be involved in coordinating and encouraging a wide variety of activities and will also be providing their own input to the BESST programme (eg promotional events, project implementation). A key objective of BESST will be the creation of a wide variety of public sector / private sector partnerships to encourage involvement and action by the private sector, focusing particularly on small and micro businesses.

3.5 Activities:

A Project Team drawn from the four partner organisations will manage the BESST programme of activities. This Project Team will draw up the detailed programme of work based on an intersectoral, interdisciplinary approach. This is explained in Appendix 2. By working collaboratively in ways that cross conventional professional and sectoral boundaries we will develop innovative solutions to common issues. BESST will be integrated with existing tourism and business development forums that already operate in each partner area - which will be the 'Local Stakeholder Groups'. Applying the ideas in three different localities simultaneously in partnership with the private sector will enable us to learn together what works and what doesn't - and why. Regular reporting of BESST Project progress will be a feature of our activity. As BESST will be a demonstration project this experience will be linked to regional and national networks in the three partner countries. The progress reports will also be posted on a website which will be developed as a means of interchange between people from the three areas. This website will also be accessible to anyone interested in the BESST concept and how it is working out in practice.

There will be four main types of activity (in addition to overall project management and reporting) and four technical components of the BESST project. Appendix 4 gives further details and explains the linkage between 'components' and 'activities'.

The four components of the project are summarised below.

1. Developing and Promoting New Tourism Offers based on the environmental qualities of the area. Examples would include Learning Tourism (eg 'Learn to be a Botanist' or 'Learn to be a Water-colour Painter') and Activity Tourism (eg Cycle Touring, Canoe Camping).
2. Developing and Testing New Marketing and Sales Techniques (eg events, promotional materials and booking systems) appropriate to the small business character of the areas. The use of ICT as a promotion and sales medium will be particularly explored as it lends itself to small business needs and budgets and fosters collaboration between areas and businesses (eg through web links)
3. Maximising 'What is Special' in the individual areas. This will focus particularly on local foods, local crafts and other local specialities that will, individually and collectively, create a special holiday experience for the visitor. It will also maximise the benefits to the different sectors of the local economy and create a 'unifying theme' for rural development policy and project work in the partner areas.
4. Creating links between environmental conservation and economic development. Specific business projects would be expected to create these links (eg restoration of traditional buildings for tourism projects). Other activity will include the development of a family of 'ecolabels' to common standards using experience such as the 'Norwegian Heritage' scheme for historic buildings and the Peak District Environmental Quality Mark (currently at pilot development stage).

The four types of activity will be

- A. Exchanges of experience and inventories of activities in the partner areas. Exchanges of experience will have a training benefit to the participants who will be from both the public and private sectors. The exchanges will inspire follow-up action
- B. New activities in each of the three areas – working to common principles and a common framework and timescale but with detailed variation to suit local circumstances. This will include tourism marketing; the development of new products or services by local businesses (following 'business-to-business' exchanges) and projects carried out by public authorities. A special 'BESST Development Fund' will be set up to implement public sector projects that apply the BESST philosophy in practice (examples could be new cycle trails, village museums, local products displays). Private sector owned projects will not be financed through Interreg – instead other relevant support programmes will be used as appropriate.
- C. Joint activities, carried out for the benefit of all three areas simultaneously. This could include joint training events involving both public sector and private sector participants from all three partner areas. Another obvious activity is joint promotions of tourism offers from all three areas at Tourist Fairs.
- D. BESST Practice Guides recording successes and failures based on our experience. The aim will be to make these BESST Practice guides widely available to rural areas interested in following a BESST style programme of activity as well as to policy makers in EU and national institutions. Progress reports posted on our proposed website will allow interim conclusions and progress to be reported as our project develops. It will also facilitate linkages to other Interreg projects (see 2.5 above)

3.6A Location of activities:

- The focus of the project will be the three partner areas
- The administrative area of the Peak District National Park (England)
 - The administrative area of Hylte Kommun (Sweden)
 - The administrative area of Fyresdal Kommune (Norway)

Some activities may take place in neighbouring areas where this is the most efficient way of achieving project objectives - eg organising training events at the University of Derby's Buxton campus (outside but close to the Peak District National Park). Organising Markets and Fairs in nearby towns and cities and attendance at Tourism Fairs in tourism markets are other examples.

3.6B Please, indicate which of the following classifications applies to the location of the activities of the project:

Urban	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rural	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not geographically delimited
-------	-------------------------------------	-------	--------------------------	------------------------------

3.7 Rationale:

The BESST project will link together environmental management and economic development by creating a 'Virtuous Spiral'. This is not simply the already established idea of a 'virtuous circle' (whereby synergy between economic, environmental and social interests is created). It goes further by progressively reinforcing this synergy over time. As in a spiral, as time passes, each rotation goes 'wider and deeper'. Appendix 1 illustrates the concept diagrammatically. By actively involving the business sector we will identify techniques that can translate the concept into a practical reality through the people who own the land and who create the economic activity. The BESST 'Virtuous Spiral' will work in the following way...

- Environmental values will form the base of promoting tourism activities and creating a new identity and pride in the locality (eg 'Hylte - Sweden's most southerly wilderness'). This leads to...
- New products and services are developed to produce a distinctive tourism package – eg 'Stay in a traditional wooden cabin in Fyresdal, eat food from the environment - like fish and moose - which are managed using sustainable techniques. Learn about the environment in which you are staying from guided walks'. This leads to...
- New partnerships between different economic sectors – eg farming and tourism - and new efforts to create new products and services on the environmental theme. This leads to...
- Clear business benefits and an impetus to build on what has been achieved. This leads to...
- New effort in sustainable environmental management to protect and enhance the environmental values that have become the basic economic resource too. This leads to...
- The development of new and more sophisticated tourism packages – eg 'Learn to catch and cook your own dinner', 'Learn cheese-making on an organic dairy farm'. It also leads to the development of new markets for local products – eg tourists returning home will want to seek out 'Peak District Environmental Quality Organic Cheese' from their local city shops...
- So the spiral keeps getting wider and deeper over time, generating an ever-improved environment and an ever-improved local economy simultaneously, through the actions of local people. The local people's pride in their locality ('Pride in Place') spreads ever wider to more and more people and the strength of that motivation in individual people deepens. 'Pride in Place' becomes an integral part of the new generation's developing experience and the concept gains long-term continuity in the community as an integral part of 'the way we do things'.

From the professional and public sector perspective the Virtuous Spiral has another dimension. It will show that integrated patterns of activity that cross conventional professional and economic sector boundaries can be highly effective. The more it can be seen to work, the more the idea will gain momentum. Collaborative activity with the private sector and local communities will release talent and ideas that can create a new future for rural areas. Again success can build on success, enabling ever more ambitious ideas to be put into practice in a rural interpretation of the public sector / private sector partnership approach. This style of working can have wider application outside the BESST rural tourism context..

3.8 Phases:

The Project will be carried out in four phases

I. Formation of the Project Team and creation of an administrative framework and communication system. To be completed in early 2004

II. Promotion of the project in the partner areas and forming an inventory of businesses and activities to involve in detailed work. To commence in early 2004.

III. Practical action will commence 2004 and run through to 2007. Appendix 4 gives more details of the anticipated work. This will be based on the four components of the project and the four types of activity as explained at 3.5. The practical action will include:

Tourism Marketing Techniques– development and implementation – eg 'Learn to be' packages in the three areas

Business-to-business exchanges

Project implementation- including projects supported through the BESST Development Fund.

Training events.

'Ecolabels' – development of common standards

IV. Evaluation and Dissemination of Results including production of a series of BESST Practice Guides. To commence 2007 and conclude early 2008

3.9 Please, list any other important details that are relevant to your application:

This project has been developed following two three-day meetings - one in Hylte in September 2002, the other in Fyresdal in January 2003. The key people from each partner organisation have therefore got to know each other well and have already developed an effective mutual understanding of the issues and ideas from all three partner areas.

The set-back caused by the rejection of our February application because of the then proposed funding of private sector projects has been overcome by quick agreement on the necessary amendments between the partners following advice from the Secretariat. The partners have reconfirmed their earlier financial commitments and it is expected that this loss of momentum will soon be overcome.

The quick agreement on the components of the BESST project, the methods by which it will operate and the necessary adjustments in producing this August 2003 application is clear evidence of the formation, already, of an effective Project Team.

Presentations on the BESST concept have already been made to the leading politicians in all three partner areas, resulting in the necessary budget approvals.

Presentations have also been made to representatives of the different business sectors in all three partner areas, with an enthusiastic response.

We are therefore confident that the challenging and innovative nature of the BESST concept can be translated into a wide range of practical action in the three areas as a true transnational project (see 4.5 below)

4 Contribution to the Transnational Strategy of the Programme

4.1 Cross sectoral integration:

There are three ingredients to this.

- a. The Project Team members are from different professional backgrounds – tourism, land management, economic development, training, environmental conservation. They are also from different types of organisation.
- b. The 'Virtuous Spiral' concept aims at creating synergy between economic sectors – agriculture, tourism, forestry, crafts etc.
- c. The public sector and private sector will collaborate through a variety of activity guided by local 'Stakeholder Groups' (see 3.5).

4.2 Sustainable development:

The BESST 'Virtuous Spiral' concept is a practical application of Sustainable Development principles. It aims to link environmental management and economic development together through the actions of local people. It therefore benefits social, economic and environmental interests simultaneously and, importantly, aims to intensify this mutual benefit on a progressive basis over time. It is a virtuous spiral, not just a virtuous circle.

All BESST activities will have an environmental dimension. It is expected that several BESST supported or BESST inspired projects will create direct environmental improvements as an integral part of their work (see 6.4 line 5).

4.3 Economic and social cohesion:

Strengthening the link between environmental issues and economic prosperity builds on the natural 'Pride in Place' of the local people. This is an approach that develops common working practices between three different areas but also recognises the special nature of different localities and creates the motivation to do more to keep them special. It is a common 'transnational' philosophy but capable of 'bottom up' interpretation according to local circumstances.

This 'Pride in Place' is a powerful part of local identity and forms a common bond between different elements of the community – rich and poor, young and old, newcomer and local family. Again the philosophy is potentially of universal applicability but needs to respond creatively to local circumstances, needs and opportunities.

4.4 Spatial development of the North Sea Region:

The BESST project is especially relevant to the following extracts from Vision Statements and Strategies in 'Norvision' : VS2 – 'Cross-sectoral collaboration' across different economic sectors, VS3 – 'Bottom up participation' in developing and testing new concepts, VS4 – 'Controlled protection and use of valuable natural and cultural heritage landscapes', VS9 - Human Activities are harmonised with strategies for protecting the environment', VS10 – 'Diversified development strategies sensitive to the indigenous potential of rural areas'... 'training and creation of non-agricultural jobs'... 'increase the importance of locally produced food', also 'enhance media (ICT) competence in rural areas'.

The BESST project directly fits the objectives, targets and activities in the Programme Complement - Measure 1.3 (see 6.5 below)

4.5 Interregional and transnational co-operation:

The BESST project will be managed by a Joint Project Team with each of the four partner organisations taking responsibility for one of the four project components (see 3.5 and Appendix 1). The BESST project will... a) Develop mutual understanding of the BESST 'Virtuous Spiral' concept by working collaboratively in three different areas simultaneously. b) Exchange experience and ideas to develop the BESST concept into a new shared working philosophy and new activities. c) Implement new activities simultaneously in three areas working to a common framework but varied in detail to respect and reinforce local needs and opportunities. d) Carry out certain activities on a joint basis - eg training initiatives and 'business-to-business' exchanges. e) Create a website reporting system to give regular updates on progress (see 3.5) and a video conferencing network to facilitate face-to-face contact on an ad hoc basis, complementing actual meetings. f) Produce joint periodic progress reports and, at the end of the project, a series of BESST Practice Guides drawing from practical experience from all three areas. This activity will all be shared at regional, national and international levels.

4.6A Equal opportunities:

The project focuses on active involvement of families in diversifying their economic activities and creating links to other businesses. It will therefore create new employment opportunities for family members. The experience in all three partner areas has been that the types of activities envisaged in the BESST project creates new opportunities for women and a variety of work experience for young people.

4.6B Please, indicate which of the following classifications applies to the project:

	The project has equal opportunities as its main focus.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The project is positive in terms of equal opportunities.
	The project is neutral in terms of equal opportunities.

4.7A The environment:

The 'Virtuous Spiral' concept (see 3.7 and Appendix 1) puts environmental conservation at the heart of this project. Its focus is to link together environmental management and economic development as mutually beneficial activities with each increasingly depending on the other.

By focusing on tourism as the principal market for goods and services the BESST project will spread environmental awareness on a far wider basis as tourists will take the ideas and projects they have seen back home to apply in their home environments.

Environmental awareness and environmental conservation will be integral to every BESST activity. Environmental improvement will be a specific output of several of the BESST projects.

4.7B Please, indicate which of the following classifications applies to the project:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The project has the environment as its main focus.
	The project is environment-friendly.
	The project is neutral in terms of the environment.

5 Follow-up Actions

5.1 Follow-up actions (if relevant at this stage):

The production of the BESST Practice Guides and the concluding conference on the project will be the opportunity to decide on follow-up action (see 9.1). At the very least we expect to encourage regional, national and international organisations to apply the conclusions of the BESST project in their work. By promoting the results of the BESST project widely we would expect to generate interest in the concept from other rural areas. They may want to apply the BESST approach in their own circumstances. It may be that a wider partnership of areas engaged in BESST style activities could be set up with newcomers to the concept working alongside the existing partners in a follow-up BESST2 project.

6 Project Indicators

6.1 Project activities indicators:			
	Baseline	Target	Unit
1. Number of organisations directly involved in the project	4	15	No.
2. Number of people directly involved in the project	10	200	No.
3. Number of different businesses actively contributing to BESST activities	0	60	No.
4. Number of project team meetings with linked to business to business exchanges and associated progress reports	0	8	No.
5. Number and nature of publications and press coverage (general)	3	30	No.
6. Number of reports of conclusions and BESST Practice Guides	0	5	No.
7. Other activities as described at 3.5 above and in Appendix 4 with outputs, results and impacts as below			

6.2 Output indicators:			
	Baseline	Target	Unit
1. Number of Tourists participating in BESST tourism offers (Learn to be...etc)	0	3000 (by 2007)	No.
2. Value of BESST Development Fund supported projects.	E 0	E 270,000	Euro
3. Number of Ecolabel accredited businesses	?	40	No.
4. Number of businesses involved in business-to- business exchanges	0	50	No.
5. Number of non-business specific tourism promotional materials.	0	15	No.
6. Number of events attended / organised (eg Trade Fairs, Produce Markets, Village Fairs).	0	15	No.
7. Number of BESST training events	0	8	No.
8. Proportion of participating businesses enhancing their ICT provision	0	60%	No. %

6.3 Result indicators:			
	Baseline	Target	Unit
1. Number of businesses reporting increased income as a result of BESST	0	100	No.
2. Number of BESST tourism offers established on a long-term basis	0	15	No.
3. Ecolabel Schemes in operation	0	3	No.
4. Number of new products or services developed as result of BESST project	0	25	No.

6.4 Impact indicators:			
	Baseline	Target	Unit
1. Additional annual turnover to businesses participating in BESST	0	E 500,000	Euro
2. Jobs safeguarded in BESST related businesses	0	150	No.
3. New jobs created (fulltime equivalent) from BESST activities	0	15	No.
4. 2002 to 2007 comparison figure for growth in number of tourist bednights in BESST related businesses.	0	6,000	No.
5. Projects linked to BESST demonstrating clear additional environmental benefit	0	15	No.

6.5 Explanation for the choice of indicators:

The prime intended impact is the number and variety of local businesses participating in BESST related activities and the consequent benefits to those businesses – eg improved business turnover, new and safeguarded jobs etc. These actual achievements will demonstrate the validity of the BESST concept for economic development and the relevance of environmental values as a new focus for developing high quality products and services.

The numbers of tourists benefiting from a BESST experience is also an important indicator of the market for this kind of tourism. The enhanced visitor experience of environmental issues will have an effect when they return home (see 4.7A).

The link to environmental management will be implicit in all BESST activities. Impact measure 5 relates to significant environmental improvements as a result of public sector projects supported through the BESST Development Fund together with private sector 'BESST inspired but not Interreg funded' projects.

Because all three areas are already tourism destinations with a wide variety of businesses linked directly or indirectly to tourism it is important to record only the outputs, results and impacts that relate directly to the BESST activity. There will in addition be other wider 'spin-off' benefits to businesses not directly participating in BESST as a result of BESST activity (eg additional meals in restaurants, additional spend in local shops). It is impossible to accurately measure such spin-off benefits.

By concentrating on measuring hard facts of actual outputs and impacts of the BESST approach through our monitoring programme we will be able to demonstrate clearly the validity of the BESST concept. This will help to demonstrate through real achievements a practical approach to securing many of the objectives, targets and activities identified in the Programme Complement for Measure 1.3 (pages 34 and 35). In particular, if the BESST approach is successful, we will have:

- Established 'new functions for rural areas and new urban-rural and inter-rural relationships' in three different localities.
- Created an improved 'quality of life/social and economic conditions' in three different rural areas.
- 'Strengthened the role of smaller towns' in the three partner areas.
- 'Promoted new services and facilities in small towns and villages' throughout the three partner areas.
- Created the stimulus for 'social and economic regeneration'.
- 'Developed shared business services' across several business sectors.
- 'Created new training facilities' and learning opportunities, particularly through the business-to-business exchanges.
- 'Improved services and attracted activities off season'.
- Increased 'co-operation between SMEs and business support organisations'.
- 'Promoted sustainable agriculture' through the creation of new market outlets for local, environmentally friendly farm produce.
- Developed a new concept 'to ensure the viability and attractiveness of living and working in rural areas'.

7 Project Finances

7.1 Apportionment of Estimated Expenditure

Expenditure in Euro	Lead - PDNPA	Hylte	Fyresdal	University of Derby	Total
1. External experts and consultants (App 2 & App 3 p14)	0	122,000	28,000	0	150,000
2. Temporary staff (Appendix 3 p14)	Included in 3	Included in 3	Included in 3	Included in 3	-
3. Permanent staff (Appendices 2&3)	254,000	262,000	210,000	50,000	776,000
4. Travel and accommodation	90,000	85,000	85,000	6,000	266,000
5. Meetings, conferences, seminars	Included in 4	Included in 4	Included in 4	Included in 4	-
6. General costs – (Staff overheads – App3 p15)	30,000	31,000	25,000	26,000	112,000
7. Promotion and publications – include fairs & markets	302,000	100,000	80,000	Included in	482,000
8. Material investments, including all expenditure on infrastructure – ICT equipment (App 3 p16)	1,000	0	4,000	0	5,000
9. Audit	11,000	11,000	11,000	6,000	39,000
10. Other – BESST Development Fund (App 3 p10)	150,000	59,000	61,000	0	270,000
11. Irrecoverable VAT	0	0	0	0	0
12. Total eligible expenditure	838,000	670,000	504,000	88,000	2,100,000
13. Ineligible expenditure – Private input to Business Development ('Interreg-ineligible' – see App 3 p11)	240,000	120,000	120,000	0	480,000
14. Total expenditure	1,078,000	790,000	624,000	88,000	2,580,000
Funding					
ERDF	419,000	335,000	252,000	44,000	1,050,000
Own contribution	419,000	335,000	252,000	44,000	1,050,000
Total funding	838,000	670,000	504,000	88,000	2,100,000

7.2 Timing and Estimated Expenditure

Euro			2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Total per partner
Lead Partner -PDNPA			8,000	200,00 0	200,00 0	200,00 0	200,00 0	30,000	838,000
Partner 2 - Hylte			8,000	157,00 0	157,00 0	157,00 0	157,00 0	34,000	670,000
Partner 3 -Fyresdal			6,000	117,00 0	117,00 0	117,00 0	117,00 0	30,000	504,000
Partner 4 –Univ of Derby			4,000	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000	8,000	88,000
Partner 5									
Partner 6									
Partner 7									
Total per year			26,000	493,00 0	493,00 0	493,00 0	493,00 0	102,00 0	2,100,00 0

The figures above only include public expenditure incurred. It does not include the contribution of the private sector in time or in private expenditure as their contribution to the various BESST activities.

8 Timetable for Project

8.1 Estimated starting date:	Sept 2003		
8.2 Estimated completion date:	March 2008		
8.3 Phases (list starting/completion dates)	Phase	Start	Completion
	I. Formation of Project Team. Includes setting up administration and communication systems	September 2003	February 2004
	II. Promotion of the Project. Focusing on engaging local business sector organisations and individual businesses. Creation of inventory of likely business participants and potential projects.	February 2004	June 2004
	III. Practical Action /Implementation. The four components and four activity types – see 3.5	June 2004	December 2007
	IV. Evaluation and Dissemination of results. Production of BESST Practice Guides.	June 2007	March 2008

9 Publicity

9.1 What will the publicity, marketing and dissemination strategy be of the project and its final result?

- a. Initial publicity will be through business sector organisations, local newspapers and promotional leaflets distributed through the four partners' information distribution network (including posting an entry on the websites of the partner organisations).
- b. The activities in Phase III will generate promotional and marketing materials to attract tourists to the three areas. These will be both paper based and electronic, including collaborative marketing of the three partner areas.
- c. Attendance at Trade Fairs and displays at local marketing events will be used both to attract tourists and to encourage local business participation in the BESST project. Some special events will also be organised to test new marketing concepts, eg reviving, in a modern context, traditional Village Fairs.
- d. Throughout the project regular reports will be produced explaining activities underway and summarising results achieved. These reports will also be published on a website (see 3.5)
- e. The conclusion of the project in 2008 will be marked by the production of a Project Report and a series of BESST Practice Guides recording the experiences in the four components of the BESST project (see 3.6). A concluding conference will also be organised inviting both participants in BESST and others who may be interested in applying the BESST approach.

9.2 What will the target groups be of the activities listed in question 9.1?

- a. Local Media (Newspapers, Radio etc)
- b. Local Businesses
- c. Potential Tourists
- d. Professional organisations and their specialist publications.
- e. Other areas interested in pursuing BESST-style activities.
- f. Organisations, Government Agencies and EU Institutions with responsibilities for rural development and environmental conservation.

10 Bank Information

1 Name and address of Lead partner's bank:

Co-op Bank, 31 East Street, Derby DE1 2AL, England

2 Lead partner's bank account number: 61062142

3 Bank code: 08-90-05

4 SWIFT code (if used) CPBKGB22

5 Internal reference (if required): Financial Services, Peak District National Park Authority

6 Name of account holder(s):

Peak District No.2

11 Certification and Submission

The application should be checked and signed below by a person in authority of the lead partner organisation as indicated.

I certify that information in this joint application is to the best of my knowledge accurate and true, the funding package is in place and the carrying out of the project will be in accordance with relevant national and Community regulations.

Signature:

Stamp:

Name (CAPITALS):

KENNETH JOHN PARKER

Position: Director of National Projects

Date: 20 August 2003

List of Appendices

Appendix 1:

The BESST Virtuous Spiral – A diagrammatic representation

Appendix 2:

Organisational Framework

Appendix 3:

The Logic of the Financial Allocations

Appendix 4:

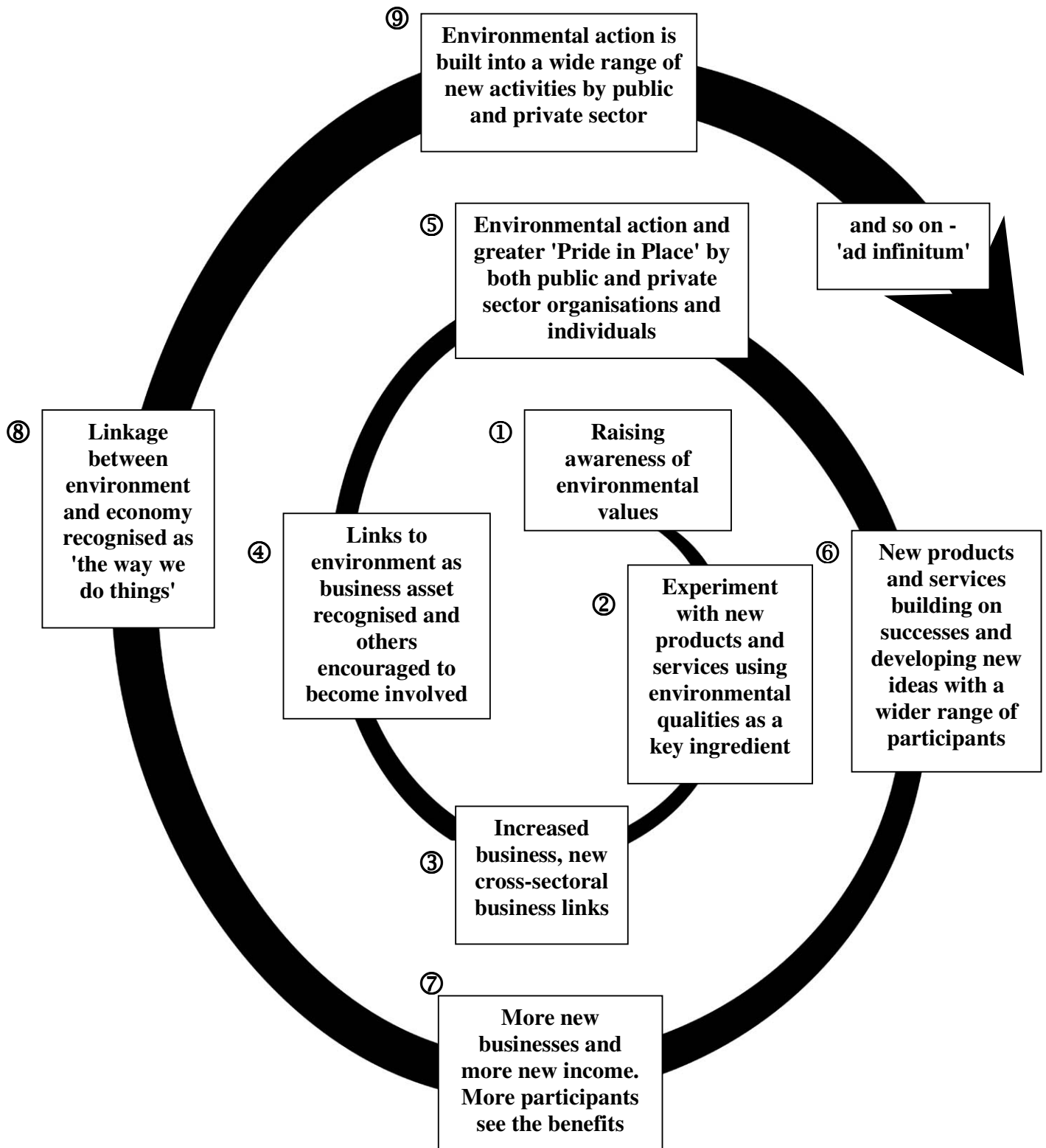
The Proposed Project Activities

Appendix 5:

Appendix 6:

Appendix 7:

APPENDIX 1



The BESST Virtuous Spiral: A diagrammatic representation

APPENDIX 2 to Interreg North Sea Basin Application August 2003

PROJECT 28: Business and Environment linked through Small Scale Tourism (BESST): Organisational Framework

Introduction

1. This Organisational Framework should be read in conjunction with the application form dated August 2003. The Work Programme will be organised around the four components and four activities within each component as described at Section 3.5 of the application and developed in greater detail in Appendix 4. The budget breakdown is given at Section 7 of the application. This Appendix explains the organisational structure of the BESST project. The logic of the financial allocations is described in Appendix 3.

Organisational Framework

2. The lead partner will be the Peak District National Park Authority who will appoint a Project Leader to take responsibility for all aspects of the Project. The BESST Project will be closely linked to the New Environmental Economy Programme - an ERDF Objective 2 funded project with very similar objectives already operational in the Peak District. The budgets will however be kept quite distinct.
3. The work on the four components specified in the Interreg application (3.5) will each be led by one of the partner organisations, who will appoint a 'Component Co-ordinator'.
 - (a) New Tourism Offers: Hylte Kommun
 - (b) Marketing and Sales Techniques: University of Derby
 - (c) Maximising 'What is Special': Fyresdal Kommune
 - (d) Creating links between environmental conservation and economic development: Peak District National Park Authority.
4. Within each of the three partner areas (Peak District, Hylte and Fyresdal) a 'partnership contact' will take responsibility for co-ordinating all work in that partner area. The 'component co-ordinator' (see 3 above) will liaise with the 'Partnership Contact' to ensure work progresses effectively. The responsibility for ensuring action in each area will rest with the identified 'Partnership Contact'. One person may have both roles in some cases.
5. The 'Partnership Contacts' are identified at Section 2 of the application form. They will also be responsible for co-ordinating all reports and claims to the lead partner at appropriate intervals (probably six monthly).
6. The Project Team will consist of:
 - (a) The Project Leader (see 2)
 - (b) The Component Co-ordinators (see 3)
 - (c) The Partnership Contacts in each partner area (see 4)

In addition, others may be invited to attend Project Team meetings depending on the nature of the business to be conducted. Project Team meetings will be organised at six monthly intervals to finalise project reports and financial claims. These are likely to coincide with the business to business exchange events which will be integral to the project (see Appendix 3).

Conduct of Business

7. Routine co-ordination between the different people involved will be by e-mail in most cases. This has worked very effectively in organising the meetings in Hylte (September 2002) and Fyresdal (January 2003) and for the necessary follow-up action agreed at these meetings.
8. In addition a video conferencing facility will be set up for use both by the Project Team and to facilitate business to business exchange follow up activities. This will require a new video conferencing facility in Fyresdal (see Appendix 3).

Linkages

9. In each partner area there is already an existing collaborative forum involving relevant organisations and the business sector. These will become the 'Local Stakeholder Group' in each area to guide the development and management of the BESST project.
10. Each partner area is also involved in regional development programmes as described at Section 2.5 of the application form. The BESST project will become a demonstration project within these regional frameworks.

The Four Partners

11. The Peak District National Park Authority is a special purpose organisation within the local government system. Its role is to conserve and enhance the special environmental qualities of the 140,000 hectare National Park and to provide and promote opportunities for the public to enjoy those special qualities. The Park is not a 'National Park' in the internationally accepted sense. Most of the Peak District is privately owned and there is a resident population of 38,000. Most of the land is farmed with over 2000 individual landowners. Nonetheless over 35% of the Park is recognised as a European significance for wildlife conservation and there are over 100 village conservation areas. The National Park Authority is the lead partner in a variety of projects working with local people to involve them in achieving National Park purposes.

12. Fyresdal and Hylte are both municipalities with a wide range of local government functions. Both are developing tourism as a key ingredient in economic development and both are keen to emphasise the importance of environmental values in creating a distinctive tourism offers. Like the Peak District, Fyresdal and Hylte are addressing issues of economic change, including issues related to the decline in agricultural employment.
13. The University of Derby has recently established a School of Tourism and Hospitality at Buxton in the centre of the Peak District. It is more than just a conventional university as it also includes functions which were carried out by the former High Peak College in providing business skills and technical skills through both academic and non-academic courses. The University has an outstanding reputation for catering training and has long provided a business development training function. The University is heavily involved in working on rural issues and has established training centres in local towns and remote learning facilities using e-learning and video conferencing. The University hosts and chairs the Peak District Sustainable Tourism Forum involving all the relevant public authorities and private sector representatives.

Conclusion

14. This method of organising the project has been mutually agreed by the four partner organisations. The friendly working relationships already established should ensure that it works effectively, with any necessary refinements in the light of working experience.

APPENDIX 3 to Interreg North Sea Basin Application August 2003

PROJECT 28: Business and Environment linked through Small Scale Tourism (BESST): The Logic of the Financial Allocations

Introduction

1. This Appendix supports the application for the BESST project submitted in February 2003. It explains the logic of the financial allocations made in the budget proposals (Section 7 of the application). It follows advice from the Interreg Secretariat at a meeting in Viborg on 12 June 2003.

The Size of the budget and the length of the project

2. A key element of the project is to work with local businesses to develop new tourism offers to be promoted on a collaborative basis between the public sector and private sector in each partner area. The process of engaging with the private sector has already begun in all three partner areas. However, experience suggests that turning that engagement into practical action by the businesses concerned can take time. The impact of implemented projects can also take time to assess
3. Funding projects which are owned by the private sector will be a matter for the businesses concerned. The Interreg budget will not be used to fund these private sector owned projects. However, the BESST project will be a source of inspiration for these private sector owned projects (eg through the 'business-to-business' exchanges). In some cases other funding programmes will be available to assist private sector projects (eg in the Peak District the ERDF Objective 2 programme).
4. Most businesses in the three partner areas are small family based enterprises with limited spare time and limited capital to invest in new ventures. The BESST project must work at a pace that businesses feel comfortable with. Thus a four-year period is proposed for project implementation work with local businesses to create the wide variety of activities envisaged at Section 3.5 of the application. This will enable businesses to take action, assess the results and make any necessary adjustments. Only then will we be in a position to learn what works and what doesn't and then go on to produce the BESST Practice Guides which are a key output of the project.
5. To have a meaningful impact and to persuade the businesses that this is a project worth joining, the budget available in each partner area must be large enough. If it is too small then businesses will conclude its impact will be limited and participation will not be secured because 'it's not worth it'. On the other hand, the budget must be proportionate to the resources available to the four partner organisations. A total budget of euro 493,000 per year for the four main years of project implementation is felt to strike the right balance - large enough to make an impact and generate a wide range of high quality activity capable of being match funded and staffed by the partners and inspiring enough to engage the private sector businesses to devise and implement their own projects. The logic for the balance of work between the partner areas is explained below.

Conclusions and the Production of BESST Practice Guides

6. The conclusion of the project is intended to be an evaluation of the application of the BESST concept and the results it has achieved. We will learn from projects and activities that have proved to be successful and those which have not. The lessons will therefore be drawn together in 2007 and the final report and the series of BESST Practice Guides will be produced in 2008.

The Balance of Work and Budgets within the Three Partner Areas

7. The allocation of component coordinators (see Appendix 2 Paragraph 3) has been based on the particular interests and skills in each of the four partner organisations. The activities in Phase III will tend to reflect these interests. For example, Hylte will have a particular focus on developing 'Learning Tourism' and the associated promotional and marketing activity for a range of Learning Tourism products. This will use Hylte staff resources and consultants (therefore shown in the Hylte element of the budget). However, the activity will be in all three areas (so promotional budgets are shown for all three areas).
8. The scale of BESST funding in the three areas is a reflection of their population size (Peak District - 38,000; Hylte - 10,000 and Fyresdal - 1,400). Thus the BESST budget is highest in the Peak District and lowest in Fyresdal.
9. The budgets also reflect some existing work programmes that are already underway. The ERDF Interreg funding will enable these activities to be expanded and to be developed in a transnational context. For example, Hylte are intending to have a presence at Tourism Fairs. With Interreg ERDF funding they can make a bigger impact at these Fairs and can be promoting a range of tourism opportunity in all three partner areas. Similarly the Peak District is already committed to develop Produce Markets and town and village fairs. Interreg ERDF funding will enable the scale of this activity to be expanded and to provide a sales and promotional service for businesses from all three partner areas.

Business to Business Exchanges and the BESST Development Fund

10. A key element of the project is to translate ideas into practical action by developing new products or services applying BESST principles. However, to qualify for BESST funding the particular project proposal must be shown to have been developed following BESST activities and will have to be public sector owned. The BESST Development Fund will be used to finance such projects (see Appendix 4 para 21 for examples).
11. In other cases it will be a local business developing the new product or service. The idea of the Business to Business exchanges is to provide subsidised travel to enable business people from each area to spend some time with their equivalents in other partner areas - to pick up ideas and inspiration for new projects. The BESST Development Fund will not be used to finance such private sector projects. However, there may be other non-Interreg sources of public funding that could be used to help BESST inspired ideas become reality.
12. The businesses participating in Business-to-Business exchanges will have their travel and accommodation costs largely met from within the Travel budget (line 4 in Section 7.1 of the application). This travel budget will also meet Project Team travel costs. The BESST Development Fund budget is at line 10 of the budget shown in Section 7.1 of the application. The private sector projects are 'ineligible' for Interreg purposes, but an indication of the anticipated scale of 'private sector owned but BESST inspired' activity forms line 13 of Section 7.1 of the application. This private sector activity is also included in Tables 6.1 - 6.4 of the application.

Central Costs

13. The role of the Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA) as Lead Partner will mean that additional time will need to be allocated by PDNPA staff in this role. The partners have agreed to contribute to those costs. These central costs are divided between the partners and included at line 3 of Section 7.1 of the application.

Staff and Consultants

14. The four different partner organisations have a slightly different approach to providing the people to manage and implement the BESST project. For PDNPA and University of Derby normal practice is to allocate employees to projects and, when additional staff time is needed, extra staff are recruited (sometimes on short term contracts). However, it is difficult at this stage to pre-determine what proportion of staff time will be permanent staff allocated to BESST as opposed to temporary staff specifically recruited for BESST work. All staff costs are shown at Line 3 in Table 7.1. Hylte and to a lesser extent, Fyresdal, place greater reliance on consultants to help deliver project activity. These are shown at Line 1 in Table 7.1.
15. Overhead costs (eg office accommodation, typing, telephones) are shown at line 6 of the application form. This is based on 12% of staff costs (except for the University of Derby which uses a figure of 35%). These overhead rates have been independently audited for previous projects.

Material Investments

16. The only 'material investments' clearly identified by the partners to help implement the project are:

- (a) Computer provision by PDNPA as Lead Partner.
- (b) Provision of video conferencing facilities at Fyresdal Kommune.

These costs are shown at line 8 of Section 7.1 of the application.

17. Hylte Kommun and the University of Derby already have video conferencing facilities which will be used to complete the three way video conferencing link. This will be used both by project team members but also by businesses and others involved in the various aspects of the BESST project.
18. The costs of the BESST Development Fund are shown at line 10 (see also 10 above). In addition the development of fairs and markets (line 7) may involve some capital expenditure.

Meetings, Conferences and Seminars

19. These will be an integral part of the project and are likely to be held on a six monthly basis rotating between the three partner areas. The major expense will be travel to the event and accommodation at the event. The invoices from the hosts of seminars will include the costs of accommodation, food and conference facilities. Separating out the conference facilities costs is therefore impractical and these costs have been incorporated into 'Travel and Accommodation' (Line 4 in Table 7.1).

Conclusion

20. The BESST budget has been produced based on the comparative sizes of the partner areas, the roles of the partner organisations and working experience in managing previous projects. The transnational nature of the BESST project means that it is very likely that whatever budget is fixed in 2003, the actual nature of work done over the 4½ years will be unlikely to fit absolutely into the prediction. It is hoped that flexibility will be allowed between budget years and between budget headings to allow the BESST project to respond quickly to new opportunities and changes of circumstances while keeping within the overall budget figure. If the BESST project truly captures the imagination of people in the three partner areas then it must have some flexibility to respond to project ideas that could never have been predicted at the outset.

APPENDIX 4 to Interreg North Sea Basin Application August 2003

PROJECT 28: Business and Environment linked through Small Scale Tourism (BESST)

The Proposed Project Activities

Introduction

1. Section 3.5 of the application form explains the four components of the BESST Project. Appendix 1 is a diagram of the 'Virtuous Spiral concept' explained at 3.7 of the application form. Appendix 2 explained the organisational framework which will guide and direct the BESST project and Appendix 3 explained the budget allocation. This Appendix 4 gives more detail on the type of work that will be undertaken using the four 'Components' of the project and the four types of activity that will be undertaken under each Component.
2. The activities will not be undertaken in rigidly defined boxes. For example a key type of activity will be to enable project managers and businesses in each partner area to meet with their counterparts in other partner areas. This will inevitably cover all four Components of the project because participants in such exchanges will want to learn:
 - what holiday offers are popular
 - how to market them and take bookings
 - how to link between different businesses to maximise the 'What is Special' nature of a particular tourism package
 - how environmental assets can be turned into business assets.

These are all different Components of the BESST project.

3. The Project Team framework will ensure maximum linkage between the 'Components' of the BESST project. For example the development of new products and services (Component 3) will need to feature in updates of the Tourism Offer (Component 1) and feature in Marketing Materials (Component 2).

The four Components of the BESST Project

Component 1: New Tourism Offers

4. We want to offer new positive experiences to visitors from urban areas (whether close by or tourists). By sharing our high quality environment with visitors we will share our pride in our environment, our concerns at the potential decline in our heritage and wildlife, and our ambition to reverse negative trends and create a new future for cherished places. The new tourism offers will celebrate 'What is Special' in the three partner areas. They will give visitors a special experience, based on using, understanding and appreciating our environment and the products of our environment. An experience of staying in a traditional wooden cabin, restored by the owner in traditional style with a spectacular landscape viewed through the window and local food on the plate is quite different from a conventional hotel experience.
5. We want to develop two particular new types of tourism offer. 'Learning Tourism' would involve some form of semi-systematic learning. 'Learn to be a botanist' would involve visits to different environments to study the plants that grow there and understand the reasons different plants grow in different places. Concepts of habitat change and conservation management could be introduced as could the linkage between farming practice and habitat management. This will create the link to the local high quality food on the menu at the guesthouse. Other more leisurely activities could be developed in a similar way. 'Learn to be a water colour painter' would involve a mix of environmental appreciation and technical instruction but it too could include an element of explanation of the geology and land management and human history that has created the spectacular view.
6. Activity Tourism would focus on developing walking, cycling or canoeing which have outstanding possibilities in the partner areas. The focus will be on the physical activity but the environmental quality is part of the reason it is so enjoyable. This can be explained in a more low key way through promotional material and explanations by the host businesses. Again accommodation in traditional buildings and local foods add to the special experience and most visitors are interested in understanding more about the place they are staying in.

Component 2: Marketing and Sales Techniques

7. In all three partner areas the local economy is dominated by small, often family based enterprises. Many are involved in multiple occupations – eg farming and tourism. These businesses cannot individually afford major marketing campaigns to generate new business. Conventionally public authorities have helped in this process and most areas have a Tourist Brochure explaining something about the area, what to do and where to stay. Major tourism destinations can afford major promotional activities but small rural areas cannot do this. New ICT technology provides an opportunity to develop marketing techniques that can be used by any size of business. However, small businesses may not have the skills to apply them or may lack opportunities to learn new skills.
8. From the customer's point of view the requirement is easily accessible information and a simple way to book accommodation and activities.

9. This component of the project will explore ways in which:
 - (a) Small businesses can collaborate to generate a consistent high quality tourism offer based on 'What is Special' about a particular locality.
 - (b) Marketing techniques can be developed which are of optimum use for small businesses to apply either individually or collectively or in partnership with public authorities (or some combination of these).
 - (c) Booking systems can be linked to marketing so that customers inspired by the 'What is Special' material can organise accommodation and activities quickly and with confidence.

Component 3: Maximising What is Special

10. Very often the different small businesses in rural areas operate in a very sectoral way. Already from our initial visits to the partner areas we have discovered food producing businesses that have a high quality product but do not sell it locally. We have also discovered tourist accommodation that would like to develop special local food menus but do not know how to do it (and may not even be aware that there is a food producer 10 kilometres away).
11. We have also discovered that businesses based on high quality (though often very simple) accommodation in traditional buildings generate a lot of business and a lot of repeat business.
12. This component of the BESST project therefore aims to maximise 'What is Special' about each area, taking ideas from each other and applying them in local circumstances. For example the traditional buildings in Fyresdal are from local wood while in the Peak District they are built from local stone.
13. A special experience would be to stay in a traditional building, furnished by local craftsmen decorated in traditional style with food from the local farm. This involves linkage between several different business sectors and development of a mutual understanding that they can all benefit from such a linkage.

Component 4: Creating links between Economic Development and Environmental Management

14. This component of the BESST project is a development of Component 3 and seeks to provide the momentum to drive local development along the 'Virtuous Spiral' route. It thus aims to show the linkage between not just what is 'special' and what is 'local' but what is 'special and local' will frequently be a product or service that uses environmental resources to create something distinctive and clearly 'of the place'. By applying this approach using a Sustainable Development philosophy environmental assets can become business assets.
15. Therefore applying the example at 13 above, an even more special experience would be if the building restoration was done in local traditional materials using local traditional methods, the furniture from local craftsmen was made from local wood harvested according to Forestry Stewardship Council regulations and the local food came from a local farm managed according to biological rather than semi-industrial methods and sustaining the distinctive local habitats as a result.
16. Component 4 will examine the scope to develop products and services that creatively use and sustain the special environmental qualities of each Partner area. It will explore the concept of 'ecolabels' to give a method of certifying when products or services meet appropriate standards and can be truly classed as 'environmentally beneficial'.

Activity A

17. Exchanges of experience are a fundamental part of the BESST project. They will involve both professionals from different specialisms, local businesses and project managers. Sometimes the exchanges will be only at professional level initially (eg to develop new approaches applying ideas picked up during exchange visits). Other exchanges will be 'business to business' with a business from one area staying with an equivalent business in another area to learn from each other. These exchanges are likely to be organised on a six monthly cycle to coincide with Project Team meetings and to simplify travel and accommodation arrangements.
18. The focus of these exchanges will always be to drive forward action in one or more of the four Components above. Thus each exchange visit will have to conclude with a 'what we did, what we learned, what we will do now' progress report.
19. The video conference facility built into the BESST project is to enable closer working relationships to be established and for ad hoc discussions which need to take place between six monthly meetings. It is also hoped individual businesses will use the facility to build up collaborative effort between them.

Activity B: New Activities in each of the Partner Areas

20. This is likely to fall into three basic types of activity:
- (a) Development of tourism offers, marketing techniques and booking systems (Components 1 and 2).
 - (b) Development of new products and services, by public sector organisations using the BESST Development Fund. The idea is to create a quick process for ideas developed during exchanges to be converted into practical action.
 - (c) Assisting local businesses to develop their own projects inspired by the business to business exchanges and other BESST activity. These may be financially assisted through non-Interreg funds.
21. Typical public sector Interreg funded projects might be:
- (a) The development of a new display featuring local wildlife in a Village Museum.
 - (b) The development of a self-guided trail (walking or cycling route with a guide book for visitors).
 - (c) New sales display materials promoting locally produced foods.

Activity C: Joint Activities

22. The activities carried out in the individual partner areas (see 20 and 21 above) will be focused on the application of BESST ideas to that area. There will also be activities carried out for the benefit of all three areas in joint activities. By pooling resources from the four partners using Interreg funds a higher quality activity can be undertaken that is likely to be transferable to other rural areas.
23. Examples of this joint activity could be:
- (a) Joint marketing of tourism offers from all three areas under a themed promotion (eg 'Learning Tourism') at tourist fairs.
 - (b) Development of a common format for business websites with built-in links between participating businesses.
 - (c) Provision of sales outlets for local produce from all partner areas in Produce Markets organised by each of the partners.
 - (d) Development of common standards for Ecolabels (see 13 above).
24. Training events will be needed in each partner area to encourage businesses to develop new offers, new products and services and in appropriate techniques to apply. However, it is also likely that some training needs will be common to all three partner areas and in this case joint training events could be organised. If formal facilities are needed then the University of Derby's High Peak Campus (School of Tourism) and the Peak District National Park Authority's Losehill Hall Training Centre would be obvious venues. Both are easily accessible from the Manchester airport for participants from Fyresdal and Hylte. Such training events could be linked to Project Team meetings for ease of organising travel (see 17 above).

Activity D: BESST Practice Guides

25. A major final outcome of the BESST project will be a series of BESST Practice Guides recording our experiences in developing each of the four components of the project. They will focus on specific aspects of the project – eg 'Learning Tourism' or 'New products and Services using the Environment'. They will record our experiences with 'what worked, what didn't and why' and will identify the key 'ingredients of success'.
26. During the project there will be periodic progress reports on activity (to coincide with the six monthly Project Team meetings) and these will also identify provisional findings. These will be published both as paper documents and also posted on a BESST Project Website (see application section 3.5).

Conclusions

27. The BESST project will be an integrated series of activities focused on the key components of the BESST concept. It will aim to create effective partnerships of several different kinds:
- (a) Between people in different partner areas.
 - (b) Between different sectors of the rural economy.
 - (c) Between different professional disciplines.
 - (d) Between the public and private sector.

28. The aim will be to focus these partnerships on generating new ways of working and then testing out ideas in real life practical applications, always focusing on how best to create 'Business and Environment linked through Small Scale Tourism'. By working in three areas simultaneously the results are likely to be of widespread applicability to rural Europe.