

Carta di Calvià

Approved by the participants of the International Conference on Tourism and Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean, Calvià (Mallorca), 19th April'97

Introduction

On invitation by the City of Calvià, Mallorca, 490 political leaders, decision-makers and tourism managers from Mediterranean local authorities, representatives from touristical enterprises and organisations, trade unions, representatives from central and regional governments, International, Mediterranean and European Institutions and Organisations, public-private partnership institutions, environmental non-profit organisations, consultants and research institutes from 28 countries convened in Calvià from 17-19 April 1997 to participate in the "International Conference on Tourism and Sustainable development in the Mediterranean Basin".

The participants recognise the efforts and the achievements of several co-operation programmes in the region that address the challenge of new policies and strategies, such as the Mediterranean Action Plans, the Tourism Charter (Casablanca 1993) included in the Barcelona Euromediterranean Declaration (November 1995). The Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro generated a world-wide movement towards sustainable development, reaching out to all sectors of society. Shared responsibility, participation, and dialogue were key concerns laid down in the final document, "Agenda 21".

We recognise the severe social and environmental challenges that the Mediterranean faces up until the year 2025 which will require that existing patterns of development be changed significantly. The reduction of inequalities, peace and stability are essential pre-requisites and also results from sustainable development.

The Calvià Conference should become a milestone for sustainable development in the Mediterranean, considering the following aspects:

I. Tourism as a generator of development in the Mediterranean

The rich natural and cultural heritage of the Mediterranean have made tourism one of the most significant activities in the area. It has led to an enormous increase in investment and employment.

Mediterranean municipalities and regions have developed an attractive tourism product for a growing number of visitors, making it the most popular tourism destination in the world. Tourism is an opportunity but also a threat, if not managed appropriately.

II. Different situations and common objectives

In the last 30 years 80% of the tourism development has been concentrated in the Northwest of the Mediterranean. This creates two different starting points. In the more developed areas there is a need to restrict unlimited economic growth and to rehabilitate the natural and built environment. In the emerging tourism destinations it is essential that sustainable development initiatives are prepared that will prevent the deterioration of their resources and guarantee their continued viability in the future.

In both situations there is the need to switch our current approach in programmes and tourism products to ensure that we pursue the spirit of sustainability.

III. Sustainable development, a challenge for the future

The Mediterranean region, the cradle of great civilisations, has witnessed enormous economic achievements, but has also suffered from the degradation of its natural and cultural heritage.

Mediterranean municipalities, and regions believe that integrating tourism firmly within the context of sustainable development will preserve and help to regenerate our environmental, social, and cultural values.

There is an urgent need to face the social and ecological imbalances that exist in Mediterranean society. We understand that we must achieve sustainability with equality. We also need to recognize the limits of the carrying capacity of our environment. We will only secure sustainable development for our area and further generations if we accept the need for a cultural change related to our patterns of development.

Global sustainability cannot be achieved without creating sustainable local, regional and national communities.

IV. Integration of sustainability in our programmes

Moving towards sustainability requires a change in our way of thinking, behaving, producing, and consuming. Local Authorities, enterprises, and social organisations are key players in this process of change.

The people of the Mediterranean communities are also inhabitants of specific settlements, electors of local decision-makers, employees of public and private sector enterprises, and consumers. Sustainable development requires an integrated approach rather than one that treats issues in isolation. The most appropriate framework for co-operation on local sustainable development is the Local Agenda 21 process, which implies the agents' shared responsibility.

V. Active participation

We recognise that local authorities are closest to the people and that they are key players in the process of problem solving, developing democracy and public participation.

We will promote and support awareness-raising campaigns for cultural and environmentally-sound tourism concepts for the benefits of our communities and regions.

We will call upon the tourism businesses and upon visitors and residents to support our programmes and strategies for achieving sustainability. Tour operators and travel agencies are urged to inform and educate their customers on how they can reduce the environmental, social, and cultural impact of their visits to our destinations.

We call upon the media and their networks to promote these common programmes by disseminating this information at the points of origin and destination for visitors.

VI. Initiating Local Agenda 21 processes.

We should enter into Local Agenda 21 processes to develop long-term comprehensive and sustainable local action plans that take into account all sectors of the community and create a common consensus and vision for the future.

National governments need to be committed to the process.

We will create and promote the use of tools to foster the implementation and management of responsible and environmentally-friendly tourism, such as eco-audits, labels, awards, dissemination of Good Practices, capacity building programmes, indicators and monitoring systems.

We will promote the use of these tools in as many visitor destinations as possible and disseminate the practical benefits as widely as possible.

VII. Stimulating co-operation

We are keen to foster good relations through partnerships and joint programmes

particularly in solidarity with local, regional and national authorities in the South and East of the Mediterranean. In line with the Call for Action for Mediterranean Cities (Rome, November 1995) we are aware of the potential strength of co-operation between local government and other sectors of the community, such as citizens' groups, non governmental organisations, educational institutions, craft and industry, trade unions, and others. We shall seek to establish those partnerships when working towards sustainable plans and the conservation of our limited resources. We support the implementation of the Agenda Med 21 as well as the participation in this Agenda 21 of all the actors involved. The development and management of local co-operation projects and networks requires a strong commitment as well as expertise, technical and political capability and organisational creativity. For this reason, we strongly recommend the European Union to support the work of the local authorities in the Mediterranean through the MEDA programme.

We welcome efforts of the tourism business sector to help promote the active involvement of businesses and transport undertakings in the reduction and prevention of pollution and in their efforts to co-operate with local authorities when implementing their programmes. We call upon the networks and the organisations and institutions of all sectors, especially in Euro- Mediterranean area, to articulate their ideas and co-operate.

Calvià, April 19, 1997