UNWTO
World Tourism Organization

ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN NATURE AREAS
COMPENDIUM OF BEST PRACTICES

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COMPENDIUM OF BEST PRACTICES

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FOREWORD

**BY ZURAB POLOLIKASHVILI
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UNWTO is devoted to the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism geared towards the achievement of the universal 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Furthermore, based on the principles of the 2007 International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, UNWTO works to promote Accessible Tourism for All. We believe that enabling people with disabilities to travel is an essential element of any sustainable and responsible tourism policy.

Both the private and public sectors play a crucial role in guaranteeing Accessible Tourism for All. The UNWTO Affiliate Members Department, which is responsible for strengthening public-private partnerships, fostering synergies among its members and promoting the exchange of knowledge among key stakeholders in the tourism sector, contributes to this goal by providing space to debate and share expertise on accessible tourism.

To this end, the Working Group on Accessible Tourism, launched in 2017 by the Affiliate Members Department, works to increase awareness and knowledge on accessibility in tourism and so contributing to achieve a universally Accessible Tourism for All. This publication on *Accessibility and inclusive tourism development in nature areas – Compendium of Best Practices* is the result of the work carried out by the Working Group in the last months. Led by RedEstable, a UNWTO Affiliate Member, it was coordinated by the UNWTO Affiliate Member Department.

I am very proud of this achievement, as it represents clear evidence that the tourism private and public sectors strongly contribute to advancing towards Accessible Tourism for All. The examples of good practices included in this report are diverse in terms of context and the specific actions implemented. However, they all share the ultimate goal of promoting and supporting the right of people with disabilities to travel.

There is still a lot of work to be done, as we are still far from guaranteeing a universally accessible tourism sector. However, we trust this publication will provide all relevant stakeholders with tools and resources to make their tourism destinations, facilities and services accessible for all. We also hope it will serve as a source of inspiration for them to continue working, so that tourism becomes truly accessible.

I would like to thank all the Affiliate Members and entities involved in this project for their valuable contributions and commitment. I am fully convinced that by working together we will be able to build a more responsible, sustainable and inclusive tourism sector.

FOREWORD

**BY DIEGO J. GONZÁLEZ,
PRESIDENT OF THE
SPANISH NETWORK FOR ACCESSIBLE
TOURISM (REDESTABLE)
AND THE
IBEROAMERICAN NETWORK FOR
ACCESSIBLE TOURISM (RITURACCES)**

Several years have already passed since the Working Group on Accessible Tourism comprising UNWTO affiliate members was set up in early 2017, following a proposal by the Spanish Network for Accessible Tourism (RedEstable) during the 38th UNWTO Affiliate Members Plenary Session, held in Yerevan (Armenia). Ever since, the Group has aimed to share experiences and cases of good practices, as well as tools and data to implement new accessible tourism facilities, resources and services, thereby establishing mechanisms to enhance collaboration between entities and contribute to the debate.

With this publication on "Accessibility and inclusive tourism development in nature areas – Compendium of Best Practices" coordinated by the UNWTO Affiliate Members Department and led by RedEstable, our group has managed to publish a part of its work that we hope will contribute and encourage other affiliate members, as well as further entities in the tourism sector, to take the lead in breaking down barriers and opening their doors to all tourists, including those with some kind of disability or reduced mobility.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations contained in the 2030 Agenda aim to achieve equality among people, protect the planet and ensure prosperity. These goals *per se* constitute a new global social contract in which no one is left behind. In this context, as a result of people confronted with barriers in their environment, *disability* should not limit or discriminate against the free and active participation in tourism. We must therefore promote an accessible and inclusive tourism model for creating the conditions that make tourism possible, as an activity available to everyone. This model must involve users, service providers, public bodies, educational and training entities, and anyone interested in improving Accessible Tourism for All.

Tourism accessibility must not only be understood as a requirement that a specific service or tourist destination has to meet to facilitate access for people with reduced mobility or disabilities. Tourism accessibility has become an intrinsic factor in responsibility, sustainability and tourism quality. It is no longer possible to conceive responsible, sustainable and quality tourism when it is not within everyone's reach and leaves no one behind for any reasons or circumstances.

The tourism sector is experiencing difficult times and the time has now come to reflect and propose strategies that favour our recovery in the shortest possible time – and accessible and inclusive tourism will undoubtedly be crucial for this goal.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim of this publication is to create an accessible pathway in nature, from which to descry a new approach for inclusive tourism development in natural areas, conceiving *nature* as the original space that integrates our full diversity.

The growing demand for nature-based tourism is reshaping people's travel lifestyle, more interested in lower impact trips as a response to the climate emergency context we are living in. The negative impact of tourism peaks on destinations and the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic are added factors that have developed a new sense of freedom, based on a desire to escape from urban environments and find more immersive and sustainable experiences in nature. Tourism based in natural spaces will therefore keep attracting visitors of all kind, reason why they shall be designed considering everyone's needs, placing people and universal design principles at the core of all nature-based tourism products and services.[1]

This compilation of best practices and the conclusive recommendations are a joint effort showcasing case studies that deserve visibility due to the outstanding way they have provided innovative, inclusive and sustainable solutions that provide access to nature for all.

We are still far from seeing a considerable number of projects and accessible destinations offering this type of solutions – a situation that requires action. This publication, therefore, also raises awareness on a fundamental mission for the tourism sector, namely:

making tourism development in nature areas more inclusive and accessible for all, taking into account that nature areas are – by its own characteristics – extra challenging when it comes to making them accessible.

The projects compiled in this publication have made a recognized and challenging effort to break barriers and bring new, exciting opportunities for users and other entities and organizations to follow their examples and replicate them in different destinations. They show that it is possible to make nature spaces accessible without harming natural environments, making accessibility unnoticeable while used by everyone.

In conclusion, three different theoretical frameworks can be resumed that conceptualize the ground for a solid understanding on how to determine accessible tourism products and services in nature areas:

1. Analyse destination competitiveness and sustainability;

2. Identify sources of behaviour change interventions based on implementation science; and

3. Implement ambient intelligence (AmI) towards smart innovations to support inclusion and services to people with disabilities

These can provide better guidance to destination managers, regional and national policymakers, as well as other tourism actors on a more inclusive tourism development in nature areas.

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1   Note that there is no official UNWTO definition on "nature tourism" or "nature-based tourism". Official definitions for "ecotourism" and "rural tourism" that both refer to nature-based tourism activities and other official UNWTO operational tourism definitions and termini such as "competitiveness" or "tourism destination" can be consulted at:
World Tourism Organization (2019), *UNWTO Tourism Definitions*, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284420858.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a
fundamental social
right for all.

When we speak of *accessible* or *inclusive tourism* it is essential to refer to its potential beneficiaries. It is in this aspect where the true meaning of accessible tourism resides. Accessibility to tourist equipment, resources and services not only facilitates access for people with disabilities, but also for older adults and all those with temporary reduced mobility (women in an advanced state of pregnancy, obese people, etc.).

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), more than one billion people around the world live with some form of disability. In future years, the prevalence of disability will increase even more as people live longer and the chronic conditions of some diseases increase (global burden of disease). In fact, one of the most important demographic changes taking place today, particularly in developed countries, is the ageing of the population. The United Nations estimate that by 2050 approximately 1.6 billion people will be over 65 years of age. The same study foresees that by 2050, in those countries where life expectancy is greater than 70 years, an average of around 8 years (or 11.5%) of an individual's life, will be affected by some type of disability.

The concept around accessible tourism shall be based on one universal principle: tourism is a fundamental social right for all, since leisure and tourism activities are fundamental to the quality of life of people with disabilities, same as for the rest of society.

People with disabilities still face difficulties and barriers on their travels: inaccessible transport, accommodation and museums with physical and communication barriers, lack of trained professional in the travel sector, lack of information to provide enough confidence when planning the trip etc. In short, different fractures on the value chain of the tourist experience, that, in many cases, leads to a considerable amount of frustration and unwillingness to travel, or the necessity of turning to friends or family to help overcome all the obstacles that people with disabilities encounter.

Fortunately, in recent years the concept of universal accessibility is gaining greater importance for the tourism sector. This progress shows the acceleration of changes the travel sector is experiencing, especially in those more mature tourist destinations where competitiveness and quality are established as fundamental guidelines of their tourism policies.

The times when destinations were basing their products on the price factor seem to be facing their end. The continuous changing trends of today's travellers, increasingly experienced and hyper-connected, are leading to better developed and equipped travel destinations, making quality, sustainability and accessibility common factors of undoubted importance. Today's travellers with disabilities demand accessibility along the whole supply chain, including their experience in nature areas.

As a natural consequence, we are assisting to a growing adaptation of services in the tourism sector along with a stream of smarter and more inclusive development of technology, that reduces barriers and includes persons with disabilities in a very early phase of conceptualization and design of tourism products. Inclusivity and diversity are inherent to the composition of our future societies, and therefore indispensable while sculpturing the future of the travel industry.

Society is currently experiencing a shift towards promoting and embracing diversity, while it claims a better understanding and inclusion of persons with different abilities. The higher social and economic integration of persons with functional diversity in the society is an achievement that only reinforces the benefits of building smart cities and smart destinations that include everyone.

This publication showcases examples of good practices on accessible tourism in natural areas, and sheds light on critical topics such as the proper diagnosis, design and criteria of accessibility plans, private-public collaboration schemes and funding mechanisms, which are just some of the key factors and barriers that exist today to make nature-based tourism more inclusive for all.[2]

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2   Note that there is no official UNWTO definition on "nature tourism" or "nature-based tourism". Official definitions for "ecotourism" and "rural tourism" that both refer to nature-based tourism activities and other official UNWTO operational tourism definitions and termini such as "competitiveness" or "tourism destination" can be consulted at:
World Tourism Organization (2019), *UNWTO Tourism Definitions*, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284420858.
Useful definitions for this study can be consulted in the Glossary at the end of the publication.

GOOD PRACTICES

GOOD PRACTICES' EVALUATION CRITERIA

PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATION

1. The project has been carried out entirely at a private level
2. The project has been carried out by a public entity
3. The project has been carried out in collaboration with public and private entities
4. The project has been carried out with the collaboration of public entities and representative entities of people with disabilities/experts in accessible tourism
5. The project has been carried out with the collaboration of public and private entities and representative entities of people with disabilities/ experts in accessible tourism

TRAINING RELATED TO ACCESSIBILITY

1. The project has carried out a training program for its employees in accessibility or/and care for people with disabilities
2. The project has carried out a training program for its employees and strategic partners of the project in accessibility or/and care for people with disabilities
3. The project provides a seal that requires its member associates to comply with training in accessibility or/and care for people with disabilities
4. The project offers accessibility training programs and workshops or/and care for people with disabilities to third parties

IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCESSIBILITY

1. The project has carried out a design and pre-diagnosis process based on an accessibility plan carried out by specialized technicians
2. The project has carried out a testing process with users prior to the final implementation of the project
3. The project has reached recognized international or local accessibility standards (e.g., ISO, UNE)
4. The project has established a periodic evaluation system to obtain comments on the user experience and implement improvements.

SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROJECT OVER TIME

1. The project has public funding for its own operations and maintenance.
2. The project has public and private funding for its own operations and maintenance
3. The project includes a user fee to clients that allows its viability during its development
4. The project has a material and economic forecast (public or private) with a fix date for its completion
5. The project is financed with its own funding

POSSIBILITY OF REPLICATING THE PROJECT

1. The project has replicable aspects in other similar initiatives
2. The project is moderately replicable given its own characteristics
3. The project required a large investment and/or technical development and is replicable or expandable within its system/operability
4. The project has characteristics that can be applied internationally

GOOD PRACTICES: OVERVIEW OF EVALUATION RESULTS

	Public-private collaboration					Accessibility training			
Good practice examples	Entirely private	Entirely public	Public and private entities	Public entities and organizations of people with disabilities and experts	Public and private entities and organization of people with disabilities and experts	Training programmes for employees	Training programmes for employees and strategic partners	Associates and partners require complying with training in accessibility (seal)	Training programmes and workshop to third parties
1. Accessibility to the Natural Park Network of the Barcelona Provincial Council					●	●	●		
2. Forest Trail Bliznec at Medvednica Natural Park					●	●	●		
3. Korea Tourism Organization – Accessible Tourist Attraction Development Project				●		●	●		
4. Breaking Barriers at Aigüestortes i Estany of Sant Maurici NP				●		●	●		
5. Donatapa – Beaches for all by re-using plastic					●	●	●		●
6. Blue Flag Programme as a promoter for accessible tourism					●	●		●	
7. Implementation and certification of a Universal Accessibility Management System at Las Canteras Beach					●	●	●		
8. Accessible Way of Saint James					●	●	●		●
9. Can Morei; Accessible Accommodation in Nature	●					●			
10. Accessible Cycling Routes in Wallonia				●		●			
11. Hiking for all – Enjoy your abilities with Handisport!				●		●			●

Accessibility implementation				Financial sustainability over time					Possibility of replication			
Pre-diagnosis based on an accessibility plan carried out by specialized consultants	Accessibility testing with users prior to the final implementation	International or local accessibility standards (e.g., ISO, UNE)	Periodic evaluation system/user feedback	Secured public funding for continuity/sustainability	Secured public and private funding for continuity/sustainability	User fee that allows its viability	Economic forecast with a fix date for its completion	Own funding	Replicable to other similar initiatives	Moderately replicable given its own characteristics	Replicable or expandable only within its system/operability	Characteristics make it internationally replicable
●	●		●	●					●			●
●	●		●	●					●			●
●	●		●	●					●			●
●	●		●	●					●			●
●	●		●		●			●	●			●
●	●		●			●				●		
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	●		●	●				●			●	●
	●		●			●			●			●
●	●		●	●					●			●
	●		●	●		●		●	●			●

WORLD PROJECTS ON ACCESSIBLE TOURISM IN NATURE AREAS
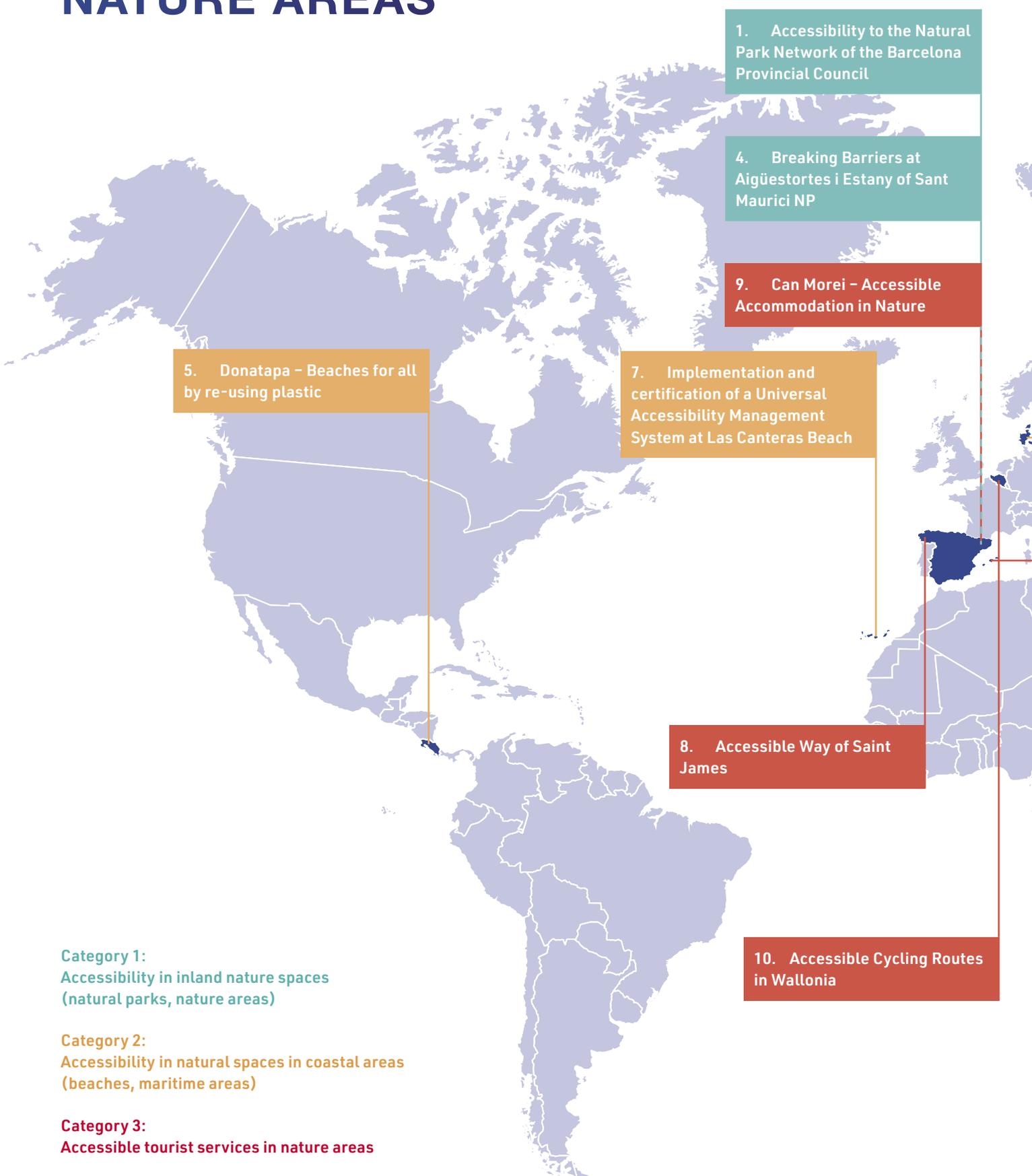
1. **Accessibility to the Natural Park Network of the Barcelona Provincial Council**

4. **Breaking Barriers at Aigüestortes i Estany of Sant Maurici NP**

9. **Can Morei – Accessible Accommodation in Nature**

5. **Donatapa – Beaches for all by re-using plastic**

7. **Implementation and certification of a Universal Accessibility Management System at Las Canteras Beach**

8. **Accessible Way of Saint James**

10. **Accessible Cycling Routes in Wallonia**

Category 1:
Accessibility in inland nature spaces
(natural parks, nature areas)

Category 2:
Accessibility in natural spaces in coastal areas
(beaches, maritime areas)

Category 3:
Accessible tourist services in nature areas

2. Forest Trail Bliznec at Medvednica Natural Park

3. KTO – Accessible Tourist Attraction Development Project

6. Blue Flag Programme as a promoter for accessible tourism

11. Hiking for all – Enjoy your abilities with Handisport!

#1
SPAIN

ACCESSIBILITY TO THE NATURAL PARK NETWORK OF THE BARCELONA PROVINCIAL COUNCIL – "DON'T STAY HOME!"

ACCESSIBILITY IN INLAND NATURE SPACES (NATURAL PARKS, NATURE AREAS)

BACKGROUND

The Department of Infrastructures and Natural Spaces of the Barcelona Provincial Council carries out different actions aimed at guaranteeing access to the natural environment for the population as a whole. Within the scope of the Comprehensive Management Plan for the conservation of the natural systems of the Natural Parks Network of the Barcelona Provincial Council, eight adapted itineraries and pedagogical programmes for people with physical, sensory and cognitive disabilities were developed, located in the natural parks of Garraf, Montseny, Sant Llorenç de Munt, Collserola and Guilleries-Savassona.

PARTNERS

Different stakeholders participated in the design and development of the "Don't stay home!" programme, including members from different key local and national organizations:

- Foundación ONCE
- University of Barcelona
- Teatrosfera
- ComAcces
- CIMA
- Apren

FUNDING MECHANISM

The project was successfully launched in 2005 thanks to the public-private funding partnership established by the Barcelona Provincial Council (public local governmental sector) and "la Caixa" Foundation with a budget of EUR 20.000 per year until 2014. The Barcelona County Council has provided further maintenance support with a budget of EUR 30.000 per year from 2014 until nowadays.

UNWTO AFFILIATE MEMBER:
Catalan Tourist Board

The Catalan Tourist Board (Agència Catalana de Turisme – ACT) works to promote a tourism model based on the criteria of environmental, economic, social and cultural sustainability, in which quality, innovation and accessibility are key factors in the competitiveness of their destination. ACT supported three of the good practices included in this publication by designing their marketing strategies, providing educational training and promoting them through conferences, international events, familiarization trips and workshops.

Project contact:
https://parcs.diba.cat/es/web/accessibilitat

ACCESSIBILITY ACTIONS

Since 2000, different measures have been implemented aimed at making the equipment and services of the Natural Parks Network more accessible. In particular, the following main actions were carried out:

- Adaptation of signposted itineraries;
- Accessibility of equipment in information centres, nature schools, cultural centres and others;
- Accessibility of school programmes managed by Barcelona Provincial Council (Live the Parc; Know Our Parcs!, The Montseny Natural Park at School!);
- Hiring mobility equipment that facilitates access to people with disabilities;
- Creation of accessible services such as inclusive theatrical guided tours for the sensory and physical impaired;
- Adaptation of existing services, such as inclusive guide curses;
- Joëlette trekking chair service; and
- Implementation of an accessible public transport chain between parks.

ADDRESSING PHYSICAL-ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS

Since 2000, different measures have been implemented aimed at making the Natural Parks Network more accessible: through eight itineraries with accessible pathways, adequate inclination, compacted floor and information panels in braille.

These accessible itineraries are prepared with different equipment that allows better access for users:

- 9 handbikes;
- 7 Joëlettes;
- 14 all terrain non motorized third wheels; and
- 20 directional bars.

ADDRESSING ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS

A total of four training courses focussed on the needs of people with disabilities took place between 2007 and 2015 attended by 110 environmental educators, managers of cultural programmes and customer service staff. Between 2018 and 2019, another two training courses for a total of 25 participants took place for training staff on the use of one-wheeled Joëlette trekking chairs.

ADDRESSING INFORMATION AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY BARRIERS

- Implementation of a website informing about the accessible resources available in the Parks;
- Provision of audio-visual promotional materials with subtitles, sign language, audio description and Ableplayer display; and
- Educational programmes for school students through two programmes: "Get to know our Parks" and "Experience the park at school". These programmes include inclusive learning resources such as 50 suitcases containing educational materials about the wildlife and flora of the parks for children with cognitive and sensory disabilities, 50 tactile maps of the parks, 20 inclusive dossiers of signposted itineraries, 60 children's stories in Braille and 100 3D embossed maps.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- A consistent yearly amount of users have requested the loan of equipment at information centres;
- An average of 60 persons per year enjoy the theatrical accessible routes, specifically designed to be inclusive for all; and
- An average of 30 students with different abilities and 50 students from Special Education Centres enjoy yearly the educational school programmes "Get to know our Parks" and "Experience the park at school".

SHORTCOMINGS

- Initial lack of trust by people with disabilities towards the accessibility of nature areas; and
- Difficulties in identifying and reaching the interested social sector.

LESSONS LEARNED

The previous inexistence of similar projects in naturals parks in Spain made the project development more difficult, since adaptations of the natural environment was legally prohibited. However, this did not discourage the Natural Park Network of the Barcelona Provincial Council to work towards making the Natural Park Network more inclusive. People who benefit from the new services showed their satisfaction from the very beginning and soon shared their positive experience.

REPLICATION POTENTIAL

- From a public administration point of view, the implementation of this project can be replicated, based on the capabilities and investment required;
- The Barcelona Provincial Council participates in technical workshops and seminars in Catalonia and other regions in Spain to explain the project in order to be copied; and
- Different natural spaces within different regions showed their interest in this initiative and they are in their way to replicate it.

#2
CROATIA
FOREST TRAIL BLIZNEC

ACCESSIBILITY IN INLAND NATURE SPACES (NATURAL PARKS, NATURE AREAS)

BACKGROUND

The Forest Trail Bliznec is the first educational trail in Croatia which is completely adapted to persons with specific access requirements. The trail follows the Bliznec stream on the Sljeme road to the Bliznec mill and allows individuals with physical disabilities to enjoy the Nature Park Medvednica. Additional accessible spaces on the trail are parking lots, information points and a restaurant.

PARTNERS

Different stakeholders of both public and private sector were involved in the design and development of this project:

- City of Zagreb, public sector;
- Hrvatske šume (Croatian Forests) Ltd., a state-owned company;
- VIP (today A1), a telecommunication company from the private sector; and
- Croatian Alliance of Physically Disabled Persons Associations.

FUNDING MECHANISM

The project was financed by:

- City of Zagreb;
- Hrvatske šume (Croatian Forests) Ltd.; and
- VIP (today A1).

UNWTO AFFILIATE MEMBER:
Croatian National Tourist Board

The Croatian National Tourist Board supports the Forest Trail Bliznec project through a series of campaigns conducted on portals, Google search engines, social network and other primary and communications channels. The Forest Trail Bliznec, located in the protected area of the Nature Park Medvednica, represents an unavoidable motif used by the Croatian National Tourist Board in marketing campaigns, both in the country and in emitting foreign markets.

Project contact:
https://www.pp-medvednica.hr/en/tourist-offer/other-offer/educational-trails/

ACCESSIBILITY ACTIONS

ADDRESSING PHYSICAL-ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS

When it came to addressing the physical and architectural barriers, the first challenge was finding the right location where to develop the trail, since the relief of the Nature Park Medvednica is very slant, characterized by steep ridges. Once such location was identified, a list of requirements was defined in cooperation with the Croatian Alliance of Physically Disabled Persons Associations:

- The length of the path not longer than 1 km;
- The slope on every point less than 6%;
- Starting and ending points easily reachable by car;
- Facility for rest and refreshment with restrooms at the end of the trail;
- Pavement made of concrete panels, in contrast colours, with elevated curb to ensure the safety for wheelchair users and visually impaired people; and
- Wooden fence along the whole length of the trail with special reinforcements along the bridges.

ADDRESSING ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS

The staff of the Nature Park Medvednica collaborated with the Croatian Alliance of Physically Disabled Persons Association to learn about the specific requirements of physically challenged visitors and how to make guided tours more enjoyable for them. The Alliance also provided a Guidebook on how to attend persons with disabilities. Moreover, the Nature Park Medvednica celebrated a Protected Areas Open Day under the theme "Accessibility and inclusion of all visitors", in which several associations working with people with disabilities[3] participated and trained around 300 visitors and the park's staff. Lastly, the Nature Park Medvednica developed an educational programme along the trail for kindergarten and school children (from 30 up to 100 participants each visit), part of it dedicated to raising awareness on people with disabilities.

ADDRESSING INFORMATION AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY BARRIERS

- Panels on the trail are positioned lower to ensure easy reading from the sitting position;
- Along the trail there are wooden books containing texts of educational panels in Braille and resting places with benches; and
- The Bliznec trail purposefully is not equipped with additional technological content because the idea is to enable all persons to walk and enjoy the nature of Medvednica.

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3   Among them, the Rehabilitation Centre Silver; the Association for the promotion of same opportunities (UPIM); the Institution for professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities; the Association of the Blind Zagreb; Mali dom – Zagreb; and the Rehabilitation Center Zagreb.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Eleven educational panels along the trail showcasing the natural, cultural and historical sites of this area;
- Wheelchair users can easily read the panels which are purposefully positioned lower;
- The wooden books contain texts of educational panels in Braille for blind people; and
- In 2002 the Nature Park Medvednica was awarded by the Ministry of Environment Protection, Physical Planning and Construction for this project.

SHORTCOMINGS

- Issues related to the legal ownership of the land on which the trail was constructed;
- Difficulties to finance all stages of the construction and its maintenance once it was finished; and
- Acts of vandalism against the educational infrastructures on the trail.

LESSONS LEARNED

It is important to choose the right location for this type of trails, taking into consideration the very specific needs of people with disabilities and how to address each one of them. In terms of financing, while planning and developing the trail it is fundamental to consider the potential maintenance costs deriving from meteorological conditions and acts of vandalism. Lastly, at the time of designing and implementing this kind of projects it is crucial to involve associations working with persons with disabilities, which can provide their expertise and knowledge.

REPLICATION POTENTIAL

- This trail was the first trail in Croatia adapted to the needs of people with disabilities and it has soon motivated other managing bodies of natural areas in Croatia to do the same.
- This type of trail (construction and educational content) is transferable and adaptable to different areas and can be implemented in a similar way in other natural spaces.

#3
REPUBLIC OF KOREA
ACCESSIBLE TOURIST ATTRACTION
DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

ACCESSIBILITY IN INLAND NATURE SPACES (NATURAL PARKS, NATURE AREAS)

BACKGROUND

In the Republic of Korea, 15.7% of the population is 65 years old or older. Among them, 50% chose to travel as their favourite leisure activity. Regarding people with disabilities, only 6.8% of them decide to travel. To help vulnerable groups get better access to tourism destinations, KTO developed the Accessible Tourist Attraction Development Project by selecting and improving accessibility of natural tourism destinations (e.g., beaches, national parks and eco parks), or cultural heritage sites that are not under the country's barrier-free law.[4]

PARTNERS

These undertakings that fall under the Accessible Tourist Attraction Development Project are made possible by a collaboration between stakeholders at different levels:

- The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MCST), to allocate government's budget;
- The Korea Tourism Organization (KTO), to implement project(s);
- Korea Disabled People's Development Institute, to offer technical advice on the project(s); and
- Local governments, to develop accessible tourism attractions and secure matching budgets.

FUNDING MECHANISM

The funding mechanism adheres to the following scheme:
1. Application
   - Review
   - Project plan submission
   - Funding from The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and local government
2. Project implementation

The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and local government are responsible for 50:50 of the budget for each of the local tourist sites selected as an accessible tourism attraction.

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4   Act on the Guarantee of Convenience Promotion of Persons with Disabilities, Senior Citizens, Pregnant Women and Nursing Mothers.

UNWTO AFFILIATE MEMBER:
Korea Tourism Organization

As part of the Accessible Tourist Attraction Development Project, the Korea Tourism Organization (KTO), Republic of Korea, provides professional consulting services to destinations throughout the duration of a project (e.g., improving the premises, as well as the information and service infrastructure) in addition to budget support to improve their accessibility. Furthermore, five years after the implementation, KTO organizes on-site assessments carried out by people representing persons with disabilities and by facility experts. Accessible tourist sites fully established in 2015 will be monitored starting 2021.
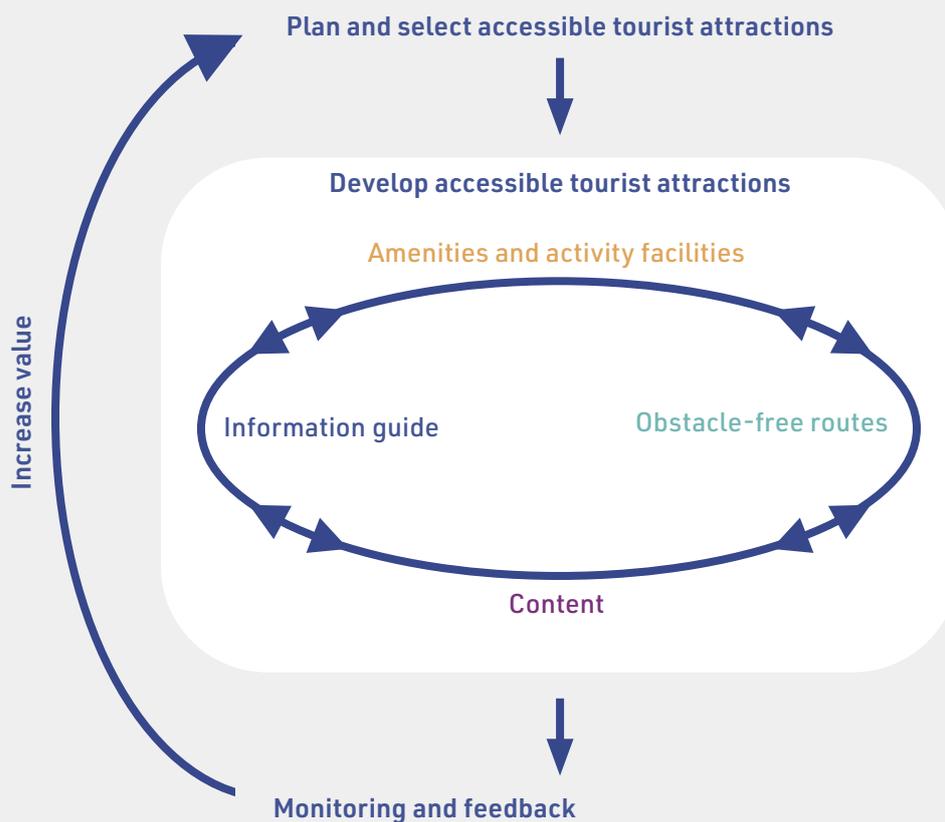

KOREA TOURISM ORGANIZATION

Project contact:
The website is currently being developed. Please consult for general information on KTO projects:
https://kto.visitkorea.or.kr/eng.kto

**ACCESSIBLE
TOURIST
ATTRACTIONS**
Planning

Plan and select accessible tourist attractions

Develop accessible tourist attractions

Amenities and activity facilities

Information guide

Obstacle-free routes

Content

Increase value

Monitoring and feedback

ACCESSIBILITY ACTIONS

ADDRESSING PHYSICAL-ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS

- Installation of a wooden boardwalk along some beaches of the country and roll-out special mats to facilitate the access to the beach for wheelchair users;
- Installation of accessible facilities such as parking lots for people with disabilities and barrier-free toilets;
- Implementation of a wooden boardwalk for wheelchair users in a bamboo forest in a national park;
- Development of wheelchair ramps on the trails surrounding Hwaseong Fortress in Suwon, a UNESCO Cultural World Heritage Site; and
- Introduction of wheelchair accessible canoes.

ADDRESSING ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS

To remove attitudinal barriers and spread awareness, KTO created manuals for service providers and guides at tour locations on how to assist people with disabilities. Moreover, it offers on- and off-line training programmes addressing staff members working in accessible tourist attractions. In 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, three online trainings were organized by KTO.

ADDRESSING INFORMATION AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY BARRIERS

The KTO has a website to provide barrier-free tour information. In addition to this, it has provided tourist attractions with GPS-based audio guide devices (available in several languages) for visually impaired tourists.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Implementation of a monitoring mechanism by KTO and organizations working with people with disabilities to collect feedback and valuable inputs;
- Efficient public-private partnerships involving tourism destinations, local governments and governmental agencies;
- 72 accessible tourist attractions completed or expected to be accessible.
  In 2015: six sites; in 2016: five sites; in2017: six sites; in 2018: 12 sites; in 2019: 20 sites (under development); and 2020: 23 already selected sites; and
- 30 out of 72 tourism destinations (41%) that were either completed or are currently under development as of 2020 improved accessibility to tourism sites.

SHORTCOMINGS

- Insufficient budget: the current budget of KRW 500 million per site is insufficient to create fully accessible tourism destinations;
- Lack of parking spaces, amenities and resting facilities in some accessible tourist attractions; and
- Difficulties to preserve authenticity of natural heritage sites or cultural and historical attractions while improving their accessibility.

LESSONS LEARNED

A survey system to assess the satisfaction of users with accessible tourism attractions enabled to collect useful insights. The overall levels of satisfaction with accessible tourist sites increased each year, with an average satisfaction score of 4.1 out of 5 points. As of 2019, the average score of satisfaction with facilities (e.g., sidewalks, wheelchair ramps, and restrooms) was of 3.9 points out of 5 and with tourism services (e.g., stroller rental, service staff, brochures) it was of 4.0 points.

In addition to this, 78.1% (962 people) of the respondents answered positively when asked whether they would recommend the tourism destinations they visited to others.

However, when respondents were asked whether they were aware that the tourism destination they visited was chosen as an accessible tourism destination, only 217 people (17.8%) answered "Yes." This shows a need to continue promoting accessible tourism destinations.

REPLICATION POTENTIAL

- The strategy of development and improvement of accessible tourist attractions follows a very precise structure and can be easily applied to other cases; and
- A manual on reducing physical barriers, which can be used and adapted by other accessible tourism destinations, has been completed. A manual on lowering "service" barriers is underway (based on the programme used during related training).

#4
SPAIN
TRENCANT BARRERES – BREAKING BARRIERS

ACCESSIBILITY IN INLAND NATURE SPACES (NATURAL PARKS, NATURE AREAS)
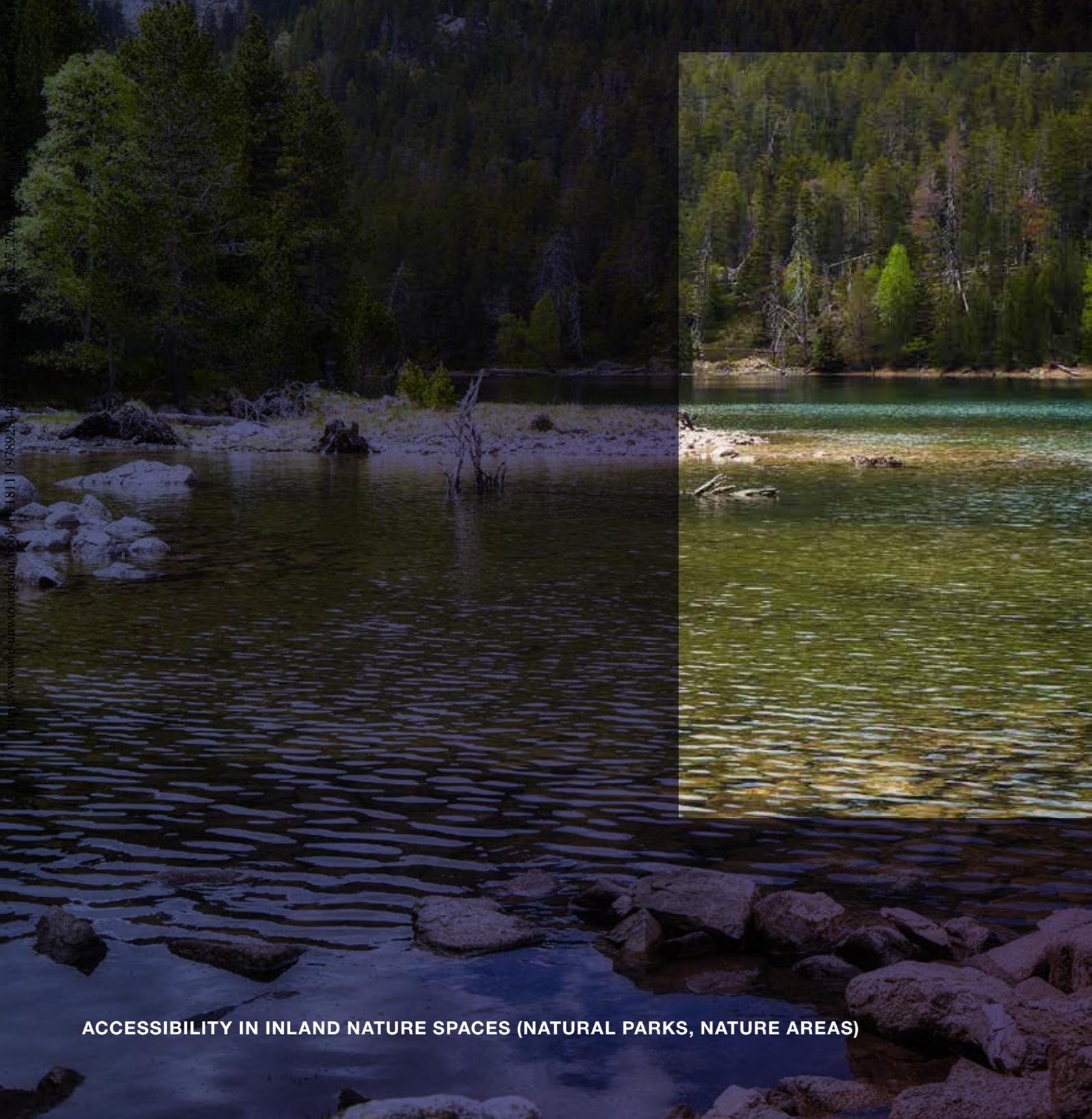
BACKGROUND

The Aigüestortes i Estany of Sant Maurici National Park is a unique spot in Catalonia, with mountain peaks of 3.000 m, a huge variety of flora and fauna, and around 200 high mountain lakes and countless streams. To overcome the obstacles this kind of territory poses for persons with disabilities, the National Park launched the project "Trencant Barreres", aimed at guaranteeing access to the park to all people. This project involves the adaptation of different infrastructures, the creation of new adapted and accessible materials, and the training of the tour guides to provide personalized and high-quality attention services.

PARTNERS

The administration of the national park is responsible for the formulation and implementation of this project. At national level, the network of Spanish National Parks (Organismo Autónomo Parques Nacionales – OAPN) established a collaboration agreement with Fundación ONCE to improve the infrastructures and provide technical and training support to the national park. Locally, the park collaborates with different non-profit organizations promoting the development of people with disabilities.

FUNDING MECHANISM

The main adaptation and renovation actions are financed by the administration of the national park. The park could also count with the support of the non-profit organization Obra Social of la Caixa Foundation by financing some of its measures.

UNWTO AFFILIATE MEMBER:
Catalan Tourist Board

The Catalan Tourist Board (Agència Catalana de Turisme – ACT) works to promote a tourism model based on the criteria of environmental, economic, social and cultural sustainability, in which quality, innovation and accessibility are key factors in the competitiveness of their destination. ACT supported three of the good practices included in this publication by designing their marketing strategies, providing educational training and promoting them through conferences, international events, familiarization trips and workshops

Generalitat de Catalunya
Government of Catalonia
Catalan Tourist Board

**Parc Nacional
d'Aigüestortes
i Estany de Sant Maurici**

Project contact:
http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/ca/xarxa-de-parcs/aiguestortes/inici/

ACCESSIBILITY ACTIONS

The project has different approaches towards improving the accessibility of the national park: Firstly, it aims to guarantee the accessibility of the different equipment and infrastructures, such as information centres, reserved parking spaces, access ramps, accessible toilets or restricted areas for visitors accessible by car. In addition to this, the project focusses on creating adapted materials to develop environmental education. Among them, tactile and braille maps, wildlife models, audio-video subtitles and itineraries with braille signs. Lastly, the training of the staff is another critical aspect of the project enabling them to provide quality information to the visitors and develop adapted itineraries for all.

ADDRESSING PHYSICAL-ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS

- In 2018, the company ILUNION (subsidiary of the ONCE group) commissioned a study to assess the status of adaptation of the equipment and infrastructures and identify physical and architectural barriers;
- Based on the results of the study, since 2019 every year specific adaptation actions have been implemented in different phases;
- Six adapted itineraries were developed in different areas of the park;
- 7 km area covered by adapted paths; and
- 2 km of wood footbridges were installed.

ADDRESSING ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS

The technical staff of the national park in charge of the infrastructures' management and administration attended several training sessions to improve their knowledge about universal accessibility. These courses are organized every year in collaboration with organizations working with people with disabilities and are attended by around 15 among guides and staff, who learn how to use correctly the tools offered by the national park to meet the accessibility standards.

ADDRESSING INFORMATION AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY BARRIERS

- Two out of six itineraries have twelve Braille information panels each;
- The four existing visitor centres have four tactile models of the two principal entrances at the national park and information is provided in Braille;
- The information videos available in the different information centres are translated and subtitled into different languages: Catalan, Spanish, English and French; and
- An accessible website to promote the national park was developed: https://web.gencat.cat/en/menu-ajuda/ajuda/accessibilitat/index.html.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- More than 7 km of adapted paths and 2 km of footbridges allow visitors to discover some of the most emblematic spots of the national park;
- Tactile models in all visitor centres for blind people;
- Creation of brochures with information on adapted infrastructures and accommodations in the area;
- Interpretative itineraries with information in Braille;
- 261 permissions granted to access by private car restricted areas for visitors (2019); and
- Four guided visits to the national park with 58 people with disabilities (2019).

SHORTCOMINGS

Despite all the actions implemented to adapt the infrastructures of the national park, many of them are still not completely accessible.

LESSONS LEARNED

Since 2017, the implementation of a survey system addressing people with disabilities allowed the national park to collect around 200 answers assessing the users' satisfaction with the services and facilities provided and suggesting new proposals for improvement. Each year the results are collected and taken into account to set the objectives in terms of accessibility for the following year.

REPLICATION POTENTIAL

- The project is fully replicable to other protected natural areas, and not limited to high mountains zones; and
- A correct planning and budget estimation of the actions allows to act every year in line with the corresponding economic reality of each place.
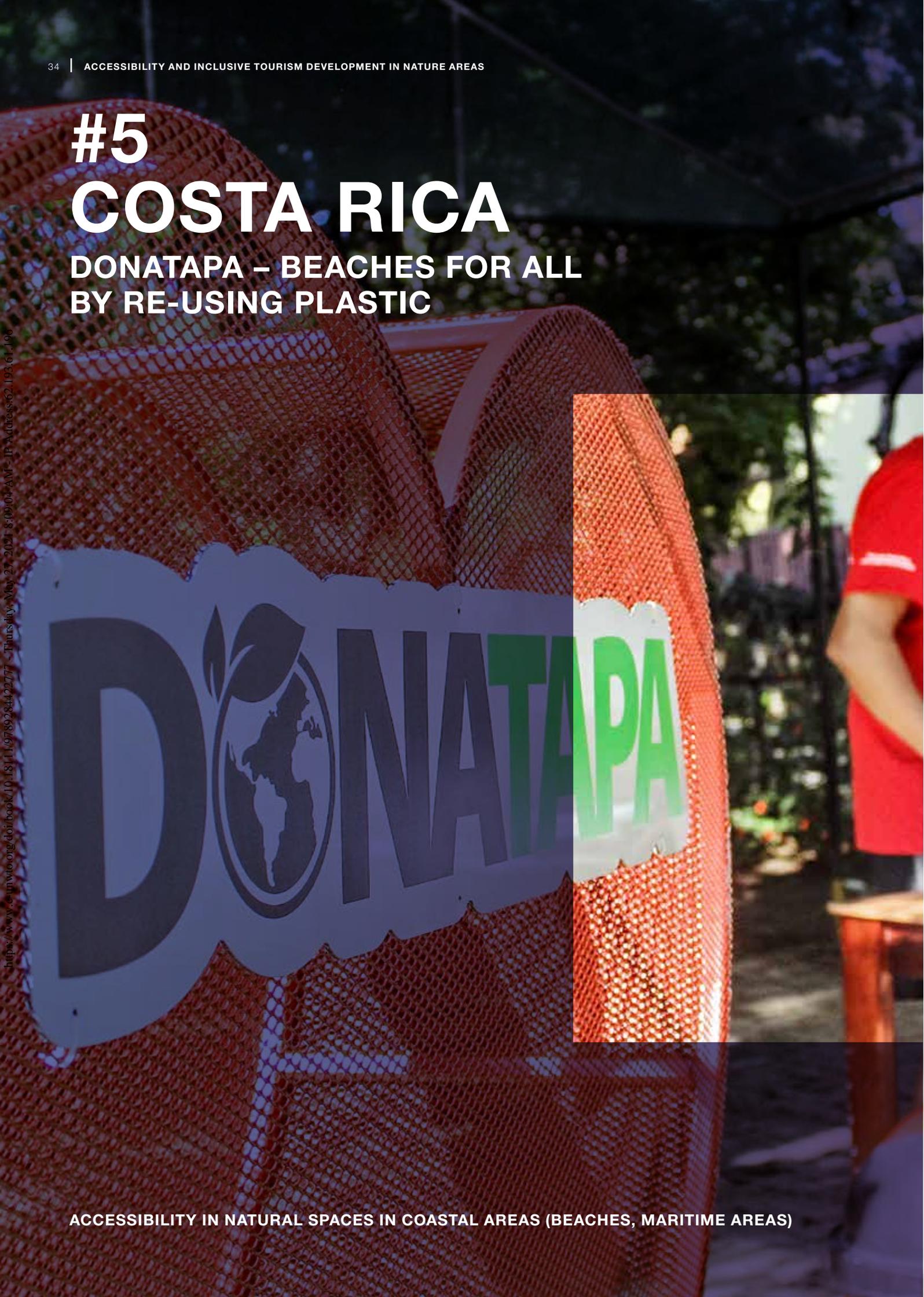
#5
COSTA RICA
DONATAPA – BEACHES FOR ALL
BY RE-USING PLASTIC

ACCESSIBILITY IN NATURAL SPACES IN COASTAL AREAS (BEACHES, MARITIME AREAS)

BACKGROUND

The Red Costarricense de Turismo Accesible is a non-profit association promoting the right for everyone to leisure activities within the tourism sector (both for locals and foreign visitors) in Costa Rica. The association launched the project Donatapa in 2018 with the goal of promoting universal access to the beaches in Costa Rica by recycling plastics 2 , 4 and 5 and transforming it into plastic wood to manufacture innovative accessible infrastructures and equipment.

PARTNERS

- 311 local companies (plastic donors) who signed an agreement and committed to collect and bring the plastic to dedicated facilities, and 38 plastic collector centres who opened their doors to store the plastic and then bring it to the transformation plant;
- Volunteers that separate the real usable plastic 2, 4 and 5 from the trash;
- Yo Hago el Cambio, the project's environmental manager that certifies the correct management and process of the plastics;
- IPP Plastic, the transformation plant involved in the project; and
- Il Viaggio Travel.

FUNDING MECHANISM

- 25% of the profits generated from the accessible trips sold through Il Viaggio Travel are donated to the non-profit project Donatapa;
- 5% to 25% of donation is made by IPP Plastic when plastic products are sold from its catalog; and
- Each project related to accessibility of the beaches is financed by local governments, donors or a combination of public-private funds.

UNWTO AFFILIATE MEMBER:
International Social Tourism Organization (ISTO)

ISTO supports indirectly the "Beaches for all by re-using plastic" project implemented by the Red Costarricense de Turismo Accesible (Costa Rica Accessible Tourism Network) by communicating its best practices to its members, inviting those involved to participate in worldwide events, and promoting and disseminating its results.

Project contact:
https://costaricaturismoaccesible.com/donatapa/

ACCESSIBILITY ACTIONS

ADDRESSING PHYSICAL-ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS

- From the creation of the project in 2018 until February 2021 a total of 412 m of accessible plastic ramps and pathways made with plastic wood were installed, together with ten amphibian chairs, all of them divided in four different beaches of Costa Rica; and
- In January 2021 the first changing rooms and bathroom were officially launched in Playa Hermosa in Guanacaste

ADDRESSING ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS

The project envisaged a training programme for its employees in accessibility and/or care for persons with disabilities, designed by local entities of people with disabilities. The trainings are focussed on proper communication and customer service for persons with sensory, physical and cognitive impairments. The Donatapa project has trained to date more than 1,650 people in the tourism sector.

ADDRESSING INFORMATION AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY BARRIERS

- Pictograms and signs used throughout the beach points installed are accessible and easy to understand; and
- The webpage of the project is W3C accessible.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- In March 2019, Jaco beach became the first beach of the project offering an accessible retractile pathway, amphibian chairs and a lifeguard tower. In Februrary 2020, in Samara beach a pier with pathways and a lifeguard tower was launched. In January 2021, the first totally accessible bathroom with a changing room in Guanacuaste opened;
- Data collected until March 2020 showed that a total of 134 people with disabilities accessed the accessible beach points created by the Donatapa project;
- The project was awarded with the first prize at the local Circular Economy contest "Yo emprendedor";
- After being selected within a group of innovative projects from around the world, in July 2019, the Donatapa project was awarded with a grant from the Booking Care Fund to help bring their vision to life; and
- The project received the Social Tourism Seal given by the ICT (Costa Rican Tourism Institute) which is created under the guidelines of ISTO.
- In March 2021 the Red Costarricense de Turismo Accesible won the Plastic Evolution Award, organized by the Chilean Plastic Pact Network in collaboration with Chile Foundation

SHORTCOMINGS

- Lack of awareness and difficulties to convince local authorities and companies to support an accessible tourism project;
- The project faced a general lack of education and awareness about the importance of recycling and the circular economy; and
- The Donatapa project encountered financial obstacles while finding financial support due to bureaucracy and lack of investments on accessibility projects

REPLICATION POTENTIAL

- The Donatapa project is encouraged to be replicated due to the global need to recycle plastic and improve the accessibility at beach points;
- A proof of this is that Booking Care Fund selected the project from a handful of initiatives because of its unique and holistic combination of social and environmental impact; and
- The initiative is already being replicated in Chile by Wheel the World and the local government of Rapa Nui. It will be implemented in Pichilemu beach and in 5 more beaches throughout the year.

LESSONS LEARNED

- The three prototypes of retractile pathways and amphibian chairs were constantly improved thanks to the users' feedback;
- The implementation of accessibility at the beaches enabled to identify when pathways are more useful and when the amphibian chairs are mandatory;
- A learning online platform was created to reduce the existing gap of training and awareness; and
- The implementation of protocols for user testing contributed to a deeper understanding of different accessibility needs..

#6
WORLDWIDE
BLUE FLAG
AS A PROMOTER FOR ACCESSIBLE TOURISM

ACCESSIBILITY IN NATURAL SPACES IN COASTAL AREAS (BEACHES, MARITIME AREAS)

BACKGROUND

Blue Flag is a world-renowned award for beaches, marinas and tourism boats trusted by millions around the globe. To qualify a Blue Flag, a series of stringent environmental, educational, safety- and access-related criteria must be met and maintained. The Blue Flag programme is eagerly working on promoting accessible tourism worldwide; thereby, it has introduced accessibility as one of the mandatory criteria for its sites, encouraging infrastructure modernization and technological development.

PARTNERS

All Blue Flag sites are reviewed annually and awarded for an operating season by an international jury which ensures that all awarded sites worldwide show the same level of excellence. This jury includes members from different key international organizations:

- European Environment Agency (EEA)
- European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT)
- Coastal & Marine Union (EUCC)
- International Council of Marine Industry Associations (ICOMIA)
- International Life Saving Federation (ILS)
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)
- World Cetacean Alliance (WCA).

FUNDING MECHANISM

Blue Flag is a non-governmental organization funded by the levies paid by its national member organizations. At national level, Blue Flag is funded by the administration levy paid by the applicants (municipality, private business, regional or national body), who are responsible for the funding needed to fulfil Blue Flag's criteria.

UNWTO AFFILIATE MEMBER:
Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE)

The Foundation of Environmental Education (FEE) is the founder of the Blue Flag programme and it, therefore, leads and coordinates the programme on an international level. Specifically, FEE develops the sets of criteria, designs the strict processes of evaluation and control visits, along with leading the international stakeholders' network that every year awards the Blue Flag applicants.

Project contact: http://www.blueflag.global
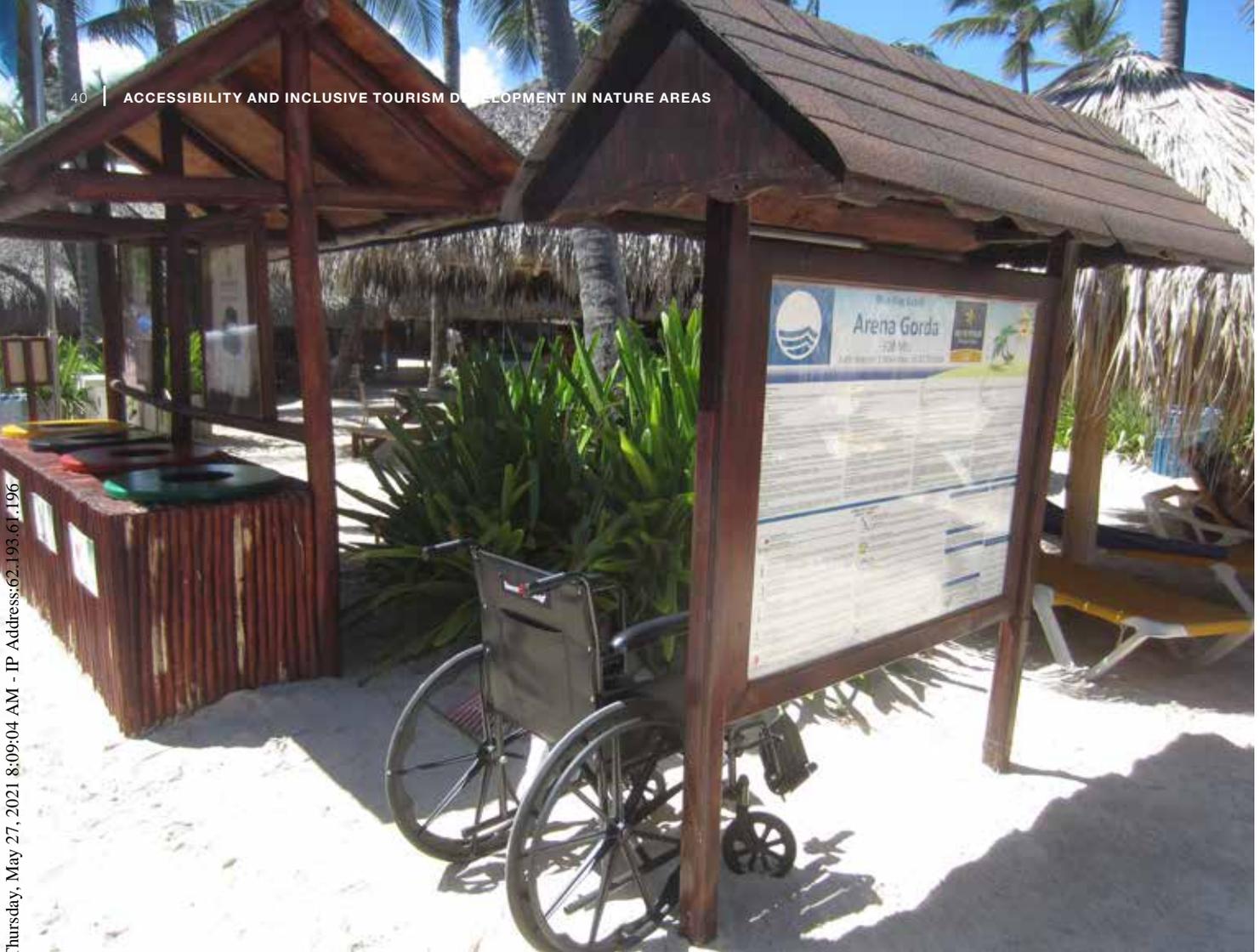
ACCESSIBILITY ACTIONS

ADDRESSING PHYSICAL-ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS

Blue Flag introduced imperative criteria to tackle physical and architectural barriers, by ensuring that "at least one Blue Flag beach in each municipality must have access and facilities provided for the persons with physical disabilities". Some examples are the municipality of Ferreries in Spain, which provides Amphibian Crutches allowing people with disabilities to enjoy the water; the Malvarrosa beach in Valencia, Spain, where special pedestrian lanes from the bus stops were installed to allow visually impaired people to access the beach and bracelets with sound signals are provided; the municipality of Fredericia in Østerstrand, Denmark, which installed "Mermaid Whistles" consisting of poles connected by a rope which assist in safe access to the water.

ADDRESSING ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS

Blue Flag has developed an internal beach management system for the adequate training of present and new staff about the programme, its criteria and the national law and regulations on accessibility. If the applying site does not have this specific knowledge, then local associations or experts provide their expertise about the right implementation of accessible infrastructure and equipment.

ADDRESSING INFORMATION AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY BARRIERS

In regard to information and assistive technology barriers, currently, no specific criteria exist. However, some Blue Flag awarded sites already provide, for instance, Braille information boards and audio information speakers on their site.

ACHIEVEMENTS

In total, there are currently 4,570 Blue Flag awarded sites, including beaches, marinas and tourism boats, in 46 countries.

- In 2017, 2,867 out of 3,669 Blue Flag awarded beaches have had access to the beach for people with disabilities. This equals up to 78.1%;
- In comparison to that, in the year 2020, 3.068 out of 3.853 beaches offered access to the beach for people with disabilities, which equals up to a total of 79.6%;
- Hence, the percentage of Blue Flag awarded beaches having access to the beach for people with disabilities increased by 1.5% from 2017 to 2020; and
- A similar picture appears for access to the water. From 2017 until 2020, the percentage of Blue Flag awarded beaches having access to the water for people with disabilities has increased by 2% relative to the overall increase of awarded beaches.
- Blue Flag additionally supports the sites before, during and after the awarding process and gives access to a network of renowned experts that bring their knowledge and expertise.

LESSONS LEARNED

Blue Flag's innovation lies in the fact that it is the only award working on beach accessibility at an international level and a successful example of an award keeping up its high standards with a growing number of sites joining the programme every year. However, to be able to do so, it is essential to be surrounded by local, national and international experts, as regulations differ nationally and internationally, and constantly change. In addition to this, it is crucial to stay up-to-date with the new technologies and accessibility standards and quickly adapt to the needs of the target groups.

SHORTCOMINGS

- The main obstacles for Blue Flag sites implementing accessibility initiatives are defining the actual needs of its visitors and finding the right expertise to respond to these needs; and
- Funding the different projects focussed on tackling accessibility can be an issue.

REPLICATION POTENTIAL

Norms and standards regarding accessibility vary tremendously across the world. With its set of mandatory criteria for each awarded site, Blue Flag brings a mainstream standardisation, lowers the existing disparities in terms of accessibility, and can therefore be implemented and replicated worldwide.

#7
SPAIN

IMPLEMENTATION AND CERTIFICATION OF A UNIVERSAL ACCESSIBILITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR THE CREATION OF AN ASSISTED BATHING POINT AT LAS CANTERAS BEACH (LAS PALMAS)

ACCESSIBILITY IN NATURAL SPACES IN COASTAL AREAS (BEACHES, MARITIME AREAS)
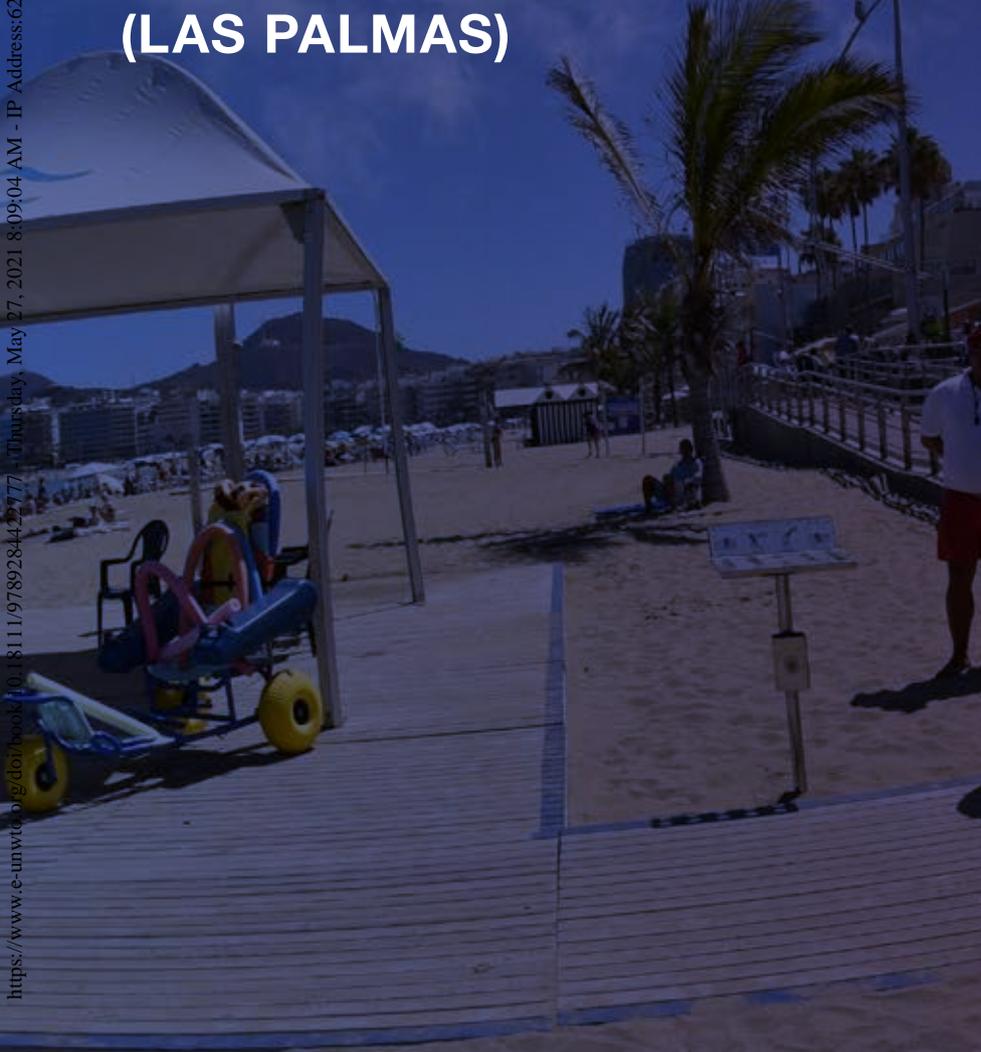
BACKGROUND

Las Canteras beach, located in the city of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain, was easily accessible for people with disabilities thanks to the implementation of a set of measures that facilitate their arrival from the city, their mobility on the near area and their access to the beach. However, accessibility to the shore area was limited and needed to be improved, as well as an assisted access for bathing for persons with disabilities.

PARTNERS

- Ciudad de Mar Department;
- Red Cross;
- Consulting and certification company;
- Mobility equipment suppliers; and
- Local representative entities of people with disabilities.

FUNDING MECHANISM

The project has been financed entirely with public funds from the municipal budget of the Las Palmas de Gran Canaria City Council. A total budged of EUR 49.000 covered three main aspects: a technical consultancy contract for the achievement of the ISO 170.001 certification, an assistance service in the certification audit, and a supply service for the equipment of the Assisted Bathing Point. All contracts were public and selected after a contest in accordance with the current Public Accountancy Law.

UNWTO AFFILIATE MEMBER:
Promoción de la
Ciudad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, S.A.

The Economic Development and Mobility Council of Ciudad de Mar led the full project cycle by devising and planning it, hiring specialized providers (consulting, certification, technical aids, service providers), and inviting local representative entities of people with disabilities to contribute with their feedback. Moreover, it financed it and provided training to the staff that was involved directly in the project. The Council was responsible for its implementation and monitorization by measuring its results and continuously improving it over time.

Project contact: www.lpamar.com

ACCESSIBILITY ACTIONS

The project began with the preparation of a DALCO diagnosis, an in-depth analysis of what was the existing situation in terms of circulation, location and communication needs. This exercise focussed on identifying all the architectural barriers, along with determining the right location for the Assisted Swimming Area and the right installation of easy-to-read information panels (including Braille).

Additionally, a continuous exercise of monitoring and measurement is carried out to record all the processes and the services provided and, in the event of deviations detected, establish corrective actions. Finally, user satisfaction is measured through personal user surveys, and an evaluation of the entire system is carried out by an internal audit and an external certification audit.

ADDRESSING PHYSICAL-ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS

The location chosen for the Assisted Bathing Point was determined by the prior existence of an accessible itinerary to reach the sand area with an existing ramp and handrails. It is also located near the existing changing rooms and toilets for beach users that were complemented with extra adaptations.

The current success of the project has led to a future investment of EUR 1.2 million to be carried out in 2021 with public funds, aimed at improving the changing rooms and toilets, signage and accessible routes to the Assisted Bathing Point.

ADDRESSING ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS

The project involved local representative entities of people with disabilities in workshops, training and consultancy services, with the objective to assure their needs and recommendations were addressed correctly. The results obtained were used during different phases of the project.

ADDRESSING INFORMATION AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY BARRIERS

The area nearby Las Canteras Beach already offered proper access to information and communication through different channels such as the tourist information point and the official webpage. However, the project took actions to adapt and update the information regarding the new services provided and the new accessibility elements within all its communication channels.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Las Canteras beach allows people with different disabilities to bath under equal conditions; and
- Users with different accessibility needs were involved from the initial phase of the project, making continued use of it and showing high satisfaction with the result.

SHORTCOMINGS

- The existence of many previous infrastructures that did not comply with the accessibility regulations. Specifically, there were many technical elements that had to be improved, related to the degrees of slopes, widths and lengths or number and dimension of steps; and
- Lack of adequate equipment (amphibious chairs, floats, vests), as well as a certain inexperience in providing such specific services.

LESSONS LEARNED

- The main lesson learned is that this type of actions must be planned very well in advance, and an in-depth prior diagnosis is essential;
- The project found that it is very important to make use of a management system which allows, among other things, a good monitoring and the implementation of improvements; and
- The involvement of all the interested parties must be assured so that positive synergies are established from the first phases of the project

REPLICATION POTENTIAL

Considering the high levels of satisfaction shown by users, the project can be taken as an example to follow by other destinations with similar characteristics. It has high replication potential on sheltered or low-wave beaches, providing sufficient access and mobility conditions to the designated swimming area.

#8
SPAIN
ACCESSIBLE WAY OF SAINT JAMES
(CAMINO DE SANTIAGO ACCESIBLE)

ACCESSIBLE TOURIST SERVICES IN NATURE AREAS
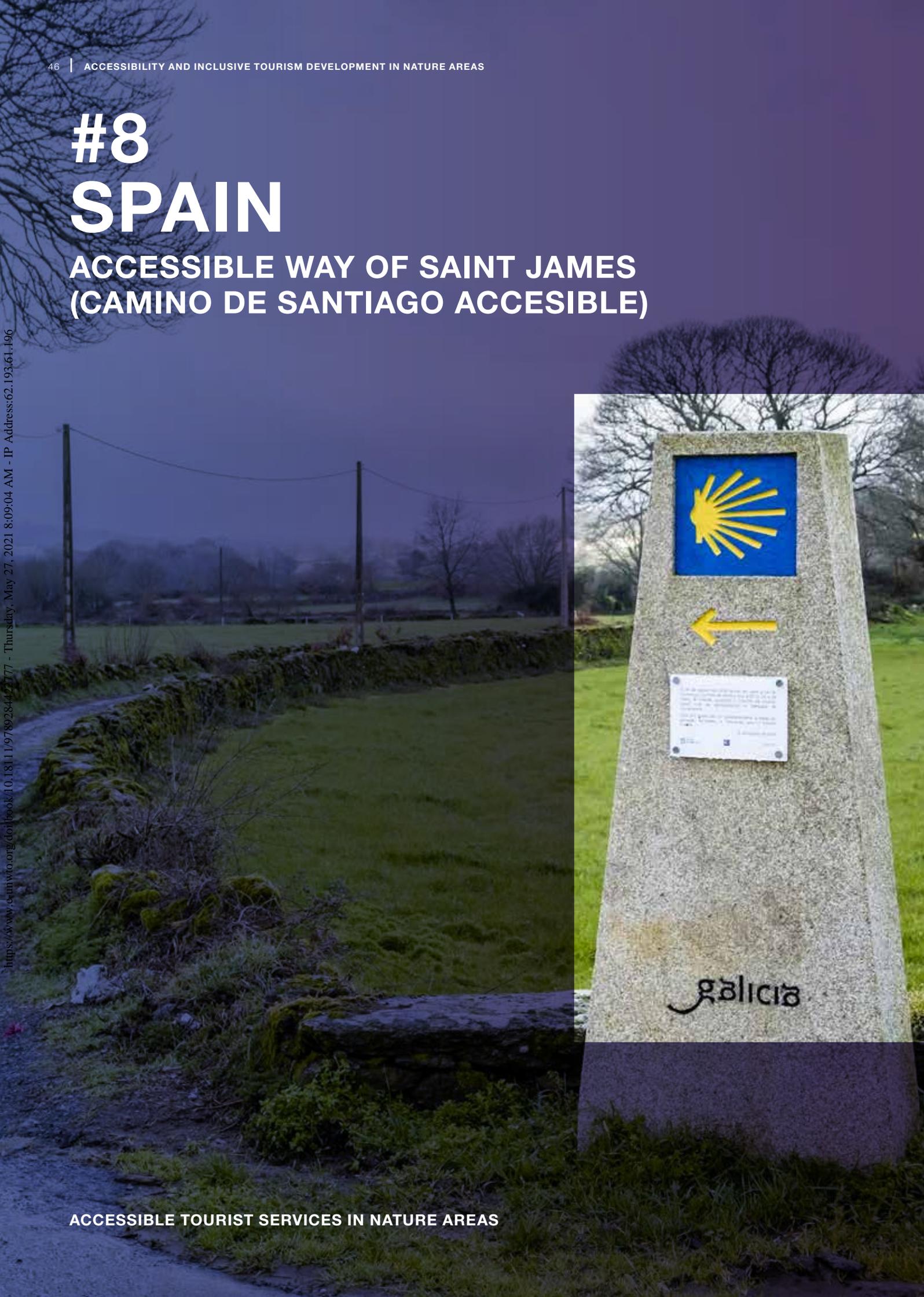
BACKGROUND

The project was intended to be launched at the beginning of the Xacobean year in 2021 but it experienced a delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the Xacobean celebration has been postponed to 2022, the project is expected to be officially launched at that time. The Accessible Way of Saint James was born as a specialized solution for individuals with visual and intellectual disabilities who find several barriers while undertaking the walks and hikes that this pilgrimage offers.

PARTNERS

- Royal Board on Disability (Real Patronato sobre Discapacidad de España)
- Ministry of Health, Consumer Affairs and Social Welfare (Ministerio de Sanidad, Consumo y Bienestar Social);
- Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda (Ministerio de Fomento);
- Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Ministerio de Industria, Comercio y Turismo);
- Ministry of Culture and Sport (Ministerio de Cultura y Deporte);
- Regional Governments of Galicia, Castile and Leon; La Rioja, Navarre and Aragon (Xunta de Galicia, Junta de Castilla y León, Gobierno de La Rioja, Gobierno de Navarra, Gobierno de Aragón);
- Xacobeo 2021;
- Association of Municipalities of the St. James' Way (Asociación de Municipios del Camino de Santiago);
- Spanish Federation of Association of Friends of the St. James' Way (Federación Española de Asociaciones de Amigos del Camino de Santiago); and
- Microsoft.

FUNDING MECHANISM

The project is financed by Fundación ONCE's own funds and by funds from some of the entities participating in the project, who provided economic resources or different required development resources for the project.

UNWTO AFFILIATE MEMBER:
Fundación ONCE

The objective of Fundación ONCE is the inclusion of people with disabilities in all areas of society, reason why it has promoted accessible tourism for all since its founding. The Camino de Santiago Accesible (Accessible Way of Saint James) is the most innovative recent project from Fundación ONCE, giving persons with visual and intellectual disabilities the opportunity to travel autonomously the Way of Saint James.

Project contact:
https://caminodesantiago.fundaciononce.es/

ACCESSIBILITY ACTIONS

The project tackles all the stages of an itinerary, informing about the accessibility of rural and urban environments on the go, places to visit or the accessible accommodations available along the Way of Saint James. The technologies offered in the website and the specific Accessible Way of Saint James application allow the following services:

- Accessibility application IGN for iOS;
- App Blind Explore informs of alerts and points of interest;
- Soundscape for iOS;
- Digital Compostela via application;
- The placement of beepcons and vumarks; and
- Landing page and website.

ADDRESSING PHYSICAL-ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS

The aim of the project is not to directly tackle architectural barriers, but instead providing guidance on how to overcome them, offering alternative routes along the Way of Saint James. The guides included on the application and Internet platforms of the Accessible Way of Saint James are the Ibermutua guide (https://ibermutua.es/camino_santiago/inicio/inicial.htm) and the Predif guide (www.discapnet.es/sites/default/files/caminodesantiagoconsejeraweb_2.pdf).

ADDRESSING ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS

The mission of Fundación ONCE is to contribute to the social inclusion of persons with disabilities and promote the principle of equal opportunities and non-discrimination in society. Since 1990, Fundación ONCE has carried out different institutional social awareness campaigns in Spain that have had major impact in society, helping to break down attitudinal barriers for people with disabilities. The most impactful campaigns have been those dedicated to the promotion of employment and social integration of people with disabilities..

ADDRESSING INFORMATION AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY BARRIERS

The Beepcons technology installed along the route will allow pilgrims to detect certain information points through their application. This system allows them to map beacons along the Way of Saint James, used to mark key points on the path, such as entrances to municipalities, crossroads or intersections.

The application also provides access to information offered at panels along the Way of Saint James thanks to the Vumark codes system, which allows the pilgrim to access alerts, notifications or information on accessibility related to their current location, such as portable water fountains, public transport stops, rest areas, accommodation, shops, restaurants, monuments, tourist offices, pharmacies and aid or health centres.

ACHIEVEMENTS

▪ The greatest achievement has been the development of a system composed of different technologies that now offers persons with visual or cognitive impairments to walk independently the Way of Saint James;

▪ Digitization of the selected itineraries, accessible for persons with visual or cognitive impairments; and

▪ Creation of accessible digital contents associated to points of interest, as well as alerts, and their integration in an application for sensorial guidance, accessed through binaural sound (3D sound) with bone conduction headphones.

SHORTCOMINGS

It was hard to guarantee the proper involvement of all the partners, due to their heterogeneity, which meant setbacks at the time to implement the project because it required proper communication between all partners. The fact of having many partners with different internal procedures was also a challenge.

LESSONS LEARNED

The testing process carried out with visually impaired people and people with intellectual disabilities have been fundamental to collect their feedback, identify problems and apply solutions to the applications.

REPLICATION POTENTIAL

▪ This project is replicable for any rural environment making it accessible for people with disabilities. A technology-based project of this kind requires content for each area in order for users to create their itineraries; and

▪ The technology used to guide the Way of Saint James could be replicated on any other destination with the same fundamental objectives.

#9
SPAIN
CAN MOREI

ACCESSIBLE TOURIST SERVICES IN NATURE AREAS
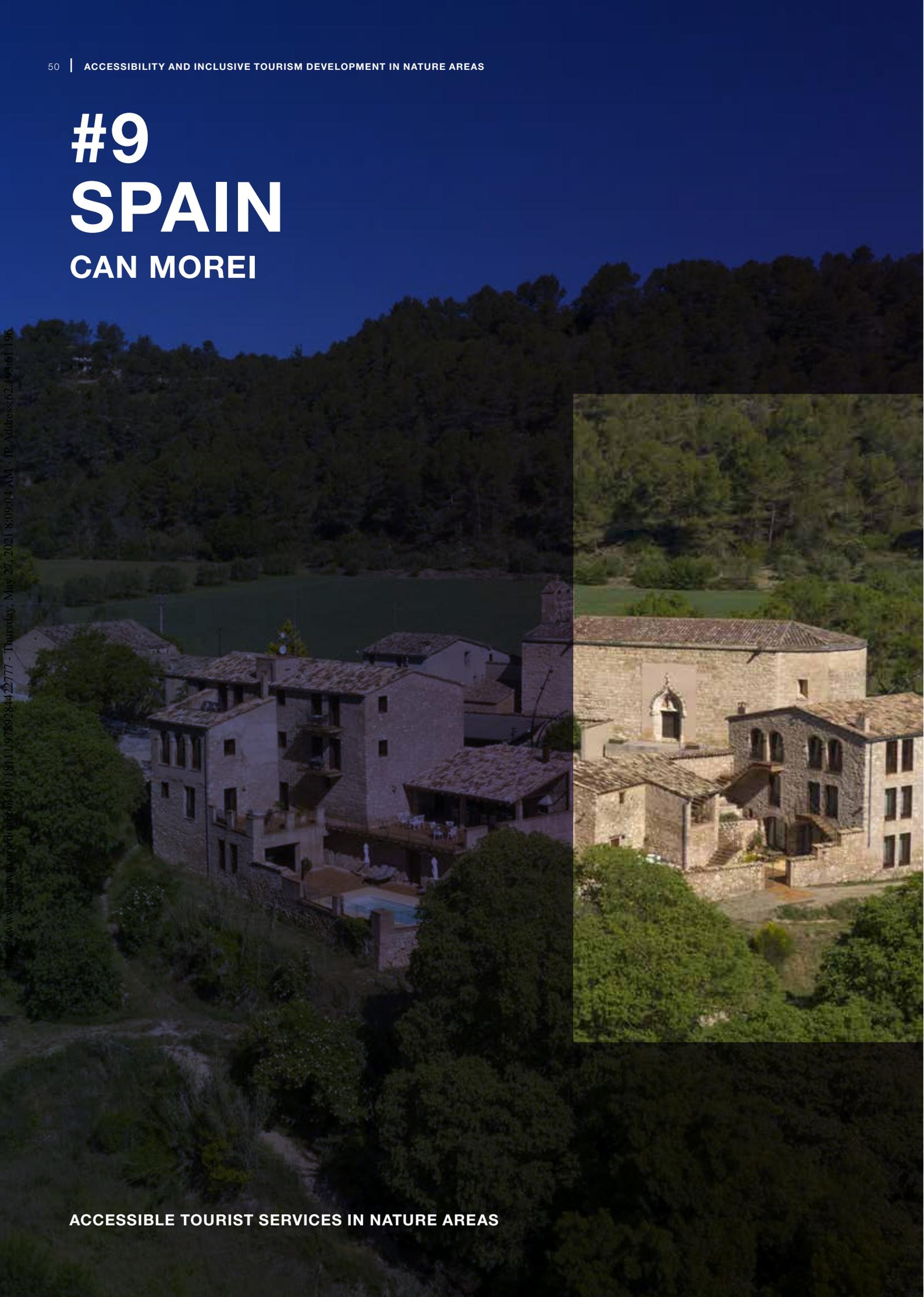
BACKGROUND

Can Morei is a centennial house, located in the rural environment of the small nucleus of Santa Càndia (Orpí, Spain), 60 km from Barcelona. The two buildings and spaces that form Can Morei had some serious structural damages. The main building, structured into four floors, posed difficult challenges to overcome in terms of accessibility, since there were narrow and very vertical stairs and the electrical, water and bathroom facilities were non-existent.

PARTNERS

Can Morei's reformation is a family project. In 2006, three families joined forces and acquired the farm, which included the two buildings in a state of ruin, apart from 50 ha of forest and fields. In 2010, due to the structural damages of the buildings, which had suffered roof collapses, Can Morei started developing different rehabilitation ideas to transform the house into an accessible lodging for travellers. The final design concluded in building apartments with large open spaces full of light, that let enjoy the quietness of the environment.

FUNDING MECHANISM

The three families created a joint limited society called Turisme and Natura Orpi SL, allowing each partner to contribute with private funds. During the different phases of the reform, which lasted six years, three grants for a total value of EUR 180,000 were agreed. Also, bank loans were used to complete the investment.

UNWTO AFFILIATE MEMBER:
Catalan Tourist Board

The Catalan Tourist Board (Agència Catalana de Turisme – ACT) works to promote a tourism model based on the criteria of environmental, economic, social and cultural sustainability, in which quality, innovation and accessibility are key factors in the competitiveness of their destination. ACT supported three of the good practices included in this publication by designing their marketing strategies, providing educational training and promoting them through conferences, international events, familiarization trips and workshops.

Generalitat de Catalunya
Government of Catalonia
Catalan Tourist Board

Can Morei
Apartments & Resort
www.canmorei.com

Project contact:
http://www.canmorei.com/en/x

ACCESSIBILITY ACTIONS

The construction of the project put universal design at its core, providing full accessibility to the highest number of spaces. The house rehabilitation involved major structural changes, including the redesign of most spaces, while fully respecting the most characteristic elements of the building, such as the arc, porches and construction materials. The only major change was the installation of ceiling-high windows. This renovation from scratch facilitated the implementation of universal design principles from the very beginning, without implying significant increases in cost.

ADDRESSING PHYSICAL-ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS

- Step-free access to seven apartments and terraces without door frames;
- Elevator access to all the four levels of the building;
- Wide doors of +90 cm with sliding system;
- Contrasting colours on doors, walls and floors;
- Extendable kitchen work tray;
- All sofas at a reduced height of 50 cm;
- Accessible wardrobe and accessible hangers;
- Bathroom feature roll-in showers and toilet grab bars;
- Identifying signs of the apartment in Braille;
- Autonomous access to the pool through a hydraulic chair; and
- 40 m² magnetic induction loop in the multipurpose room.

ADDRESSING ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS

The staff at Can Morei took several trainings and courses on accessibility (organized by the Catalan Tourism Board and Rovira-Beleta, a company specialized in accessibility training), gaining a better knowledge and understanding of the needs of persons with disabilities.

Moreover, throughout the project experiences were exchanged with some associations and foundations of people with disabilities, such as Itinerarium Foundation, Agils (installers of the magnetic loop) and Batec (manufacturers of hand bikes).

Lastly, the experiences of customers with disabilities (wheelchair users account for 10% of the reservations) have also been an important source of knowledge and advice.

ADDRESSING INFORMATION AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY BARRIERS

Design of a specific section on the website with accessibility information.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Implementation of "invisible" accessibility, in a natural way;
- Access to all apartments and spaces without distinction, so all people can exercise their self-sufficiency to the maximum extent of their possibilities;
- In 2019 and 2020, 17 bookings (10% of the total) were made by families with at least one person with disabilities (mostly wheelchair users) from eight different countries;
- The satisfaction level of customers with disabilities with the accessibility of the facilities was very high; and
- The project was promoted by different mass media (La Vanguardia newspaper, local televisions such as Canal Taronja and Conecticat programme) and selected by AirBnb USA to promote accessible accommodations.

SHORTCOMINGS

- The reform was very complex and lasted six years in three phases, requiring the continuous coordination among all the partners;
- Financial problems and budget increases throughout the project cycle; and
- Difficulties in transmitting to the municipal architect the universal design principles.

LESSONS LEARNED

Following the concept of universal design principles, the final implementation addressed not only the physical barriers but also involved an understanding of the user experience in a broader way. Customers were positively surprised by the high level of accessibility achieved, and this is a critical aspect considering that the demand for rural tourism is increasing, and accessibility measures are required not only by people with specific disabilities but also by a whole generation of seniors who need them.

REPLICATION POTENTIAL

- Implementing major reforms of old houses, by rethinking spaces, levels and accesses, does not necessarily translate into increased costs;
- Rural tourism is often linked to large and spacious buildings and spaces, making this easier to implement accessibility reforms if the needs of people with disabilities are recognized; and
- This project shows that it is more convenient to adopt easy solutions avoiding projects with high costs which tend to be abandoned due to unaffordable maintenance costs.

#10
BELGIUM
ACCESSIBLE CYCLING ROUTES IN WALLONIA

ACCESSIBLE TOURIST SERVICES IN NATURE AREAS

BACKGROUND

In 2014, the Walloon Government placed accessibility among the priority issues of its Declaration of Regional Policy. This derives from the fact that close to 40% of the population was affected by mobility reduction and this figure was expected to grow in the following years due to the ageing of the population. Wallonia, the French-speaking southern region of Belgium, has much to offer in terms of outdoor activities, with more than 1,400 km of RAVeL routes[5], greenways developed on former canal towpaths and railway lines where motorized traffic is prohibited.

Combining these two aspects, the Commissariat général au Tourisme entrusted the non-profit association Access-i with the task of identifying accessible cycling routes and developing a methodology to certify the best of them.

PARTNERS

The Certification of accessible cycling routes in Wallonia is an institutional project carried out by the administration of Walloon tourism (Commissariat général au Tourisme) in collaboration with:
- Access-I, a non-profit association of experts in accessibility (www.access-i.be); and
- Tourisme HandBike, a non-profit association of experts in accessible cycling tours (www.thb4fun. org/accueil.php).

FUNDING MECHANISM

In 2014, the Commissariat général au Tourisme (CGT), in partnership with and the Ministry for Health and Social Affairs, decided to partner and provide strategic and financial support to develop the project. Since 2016, part of the financial support granted every year is dedicated to the identification and certification of accessible cycling routes.

UNWTO AFFILIATE MEMBER:
International Social Tourism Organization (ISTO)

ISTO supported the Commissariat général au Tourisme (CGT), Belgium, which has been one of its members for many years, by sharing good practices and providing it with the opportunities to connect with other organizations specialized in the field of accessible tourism through its European and international network. These have been important aspects which enabled CGT to design and implement this project.

Project contact:
https://www.access-i.be/actualites/des-circuits-velo-access-ible-en-walloniel

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5   For more details about the Ravel (Réseau Autonome des Voies Lentes) routes, managed by the Walloon region, please consult:
    https://ravel.wallonie.be/

ACCESSIBILITY ACTIONS

The project's approach is based on three elements:

1. Experience in the accessibility sector and knowledge of the needs of people with disabilities;

2. The collaboration of self-representatives who are regular users of cycle routes; and

3. An experiential and constructive approach.

For the identification and implementation of accessible cycling routes three major principles were established:

1. Never select the routes based on the cyclists' impairments or physical ability but on their potential accessibility;

2. Offer inclusive routes on which all users can be accompanied by anyone, regardless of whether or not they have a disability; and

3. All itineraries must include at least one adapted rest room close by and one accessible site for food and drink.

ADDRESSING PHYSICAL-ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS

- Development of a grid and analysis criteria based on recommendations of cycle routes such as RaVel or Eurovélo;
- The criteria are largely based on the identification of users' needs such as parking spots, access to the circuit, circuit layout, adapted toilets, crossings, barriers and rest areas;
- The grid and analysis criteria were field-tested on several routes; and
- The field assessment enabled to adapt the criteria to the different realities on the field and find the best solutions for each of them.

ADDRESSING ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS

This dimension has not been addressed in the present work because the use of circuits is envisaged as an individual or collective activity without dedicated support.

ADDRESSING INFORMATION AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY BARRIERS

One of the aspects of this project is the use of on-site signage on the routes with detailed information on the accessibility measures. A further measure that could be implemented in the future to significantly advance access to information for people with disabilities is the development of a FALC version.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Since 2014, this certification Access-i has been used to determine the level of accessibility not only of cycling routes but also nature parks, public buildings and tourist attractions;
- This certification uses a simple colour code to inform different groups of persons with specific requirements[6] about an attraction, venue or accommodation's level of accessibility;
- Until now, more than 160 tourism infrastructures or sites are certified; and
- Eight cycling routes along the RAVeL are certified and can be used by people with intellectual, hearing, visual, sensory or physical impairments.
- The project was promoted by the Belgian newspaper L'Avenir which published an article about the Access-i certification.

SHORTCOMINGS

- In some occasions (i.e., paths were too steep, routes too thin), it was not possible for the auditors to figure out alternative cycling options. In those cases, the routes which were being analysed for the readaptation had to be abandoned; and
- The communication and promotion strategy of this project needs to be improved.

LESSONS LEARNED

A team of professionals designed a repository with information on the accessibility of the cycling routes. This, along with the users' feedback, helps to adapt and improve the reality on the ground in terms of accessibility of the routes.

REPLICATION POTENTIAL

- The results are tangible and replicable for all tourism destinations with the same specific accessibility objectives and criteria; and
- To guarantee that people with specific requirements are aware of these routes, all the necessary information is available online.

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6   This certification works based on seven groups of people with different disabilities: 1. people in wheelchair; 2. people with walking difficulties; 3. blind people; 4. visually impaired people; 5. deaf people; 6. hearing impaired people; and 7. people with learning and comprehension difficulties.

#11
SPAIN

HIKING FOR ALL: ENJOY YOUR ABILITIES WITH HANDISPORT MALLORCA!

ACCESSIBLE TOURIST SERVICES IN NATURE AREAS

BACKGROUND

Fundación Handisport is a non-profit organization offering since 2007 adapted sport activities for persons with disabilities in Mallorca, Spain. The Hiking for All experience takes place at the mountain range of Tramuntana, an UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most iconic natural spots in Mallorca. This outdoor activity allows persons with reduced mobility and blind persons to hike autonomously with an adapted Superfour. This innovative vehicle features 4×4 traction and enables to climb slopes with up to 40% of inclination, while providing guaranteed safety conditions. In addition to this, these vehicles are electric and therefore benefit the environment by reducing carbon emissions.

PARTNERS

Fundación Handisport first purchased their Superfour vehicles in 2009, thanks to the institutional support of the Council of Tourism and the Town Council of Calviá and other local associations and foundations. Nowadays, the main partner is the Calvià Town Council, who also provides a space to store the vehicles and permits its use on routes at the Galatzò Public Estate, an emblematic place of the mountain range of Tramuntana with an important natural and cultural heritage.

FUNDING MECHANISM

- 50% from revenue coming from the services offered by Fundación Handisport Mallorca;
- 25% from donations of the private sector; and
- 25% from public sector subsidies.

UNWTO AFFILIATE MEMBER:
RedEstable (Spanish Network for Accessible Tourism)

RedEstable provides national and international support to the projects implemented by Fundación Handisport Mallorca, such as the Hiking for All experience, by communicating its best practices to its members, inviting those involved to participate in worldwide events, and promoting and disseminating its results.

Project contact:
https://handitur.org/activities/hiking-for-all/

ACCESSIBILITY ACTIONS

ADDRESSING PHYSICAL-ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS

The Calviá City Council authorized the Handisport Foundation to use four widened natural pathways of the Galatzó Public Estate and make them accessible. Furthermore, the project aimed at guaranteeing the autonomy and safety of persons with disabilities while overcoming the physical barriers of the paths. In order to do that, four Superfour 100% electrical accessible vehicles were bought.

ADDRESSING ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS

Since 2012, the Fundación Handisport has carried out several trainings for professionals of the public and private sector, benefiting more than 2,000 persons in 62 workshops. The trainings provided theoretical and practical tools for teaching how to address the needs of people with disabilities. Another training project called "Educating on Disabilities" was launched in 2014 with the aim of raising awareness among students with diversity and the importance of promoting the skills of people with disabilities. Trainings were delivered in 27 public and private schools addressing more than 1,500 students between 7 and 14 years old.

ADDRESSING INFORMATION AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY BARRIERS

In 2018, the project created more than 30 promotional videos showcasing the Hiking for All initiative and other sport activities, such as accessible sailing, blokart, diving, kayaking, water skiing and adapted golf. Moreover, it promotes information about accessibility in Mallorca through its website, in a map in Braille and auto relief, and with audio descriptions in four languages.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Development of the Alcudia For All (Best initiative in Corporate Social Responsibility at the Nit de Turisme 2018);
- International awards such as: The best Social Responsibility initiative by the Tourism Agency of the Balearic Islands (2016); Hyatt Community Grant 2015; FITUR 2012 Award for the Best Adventure Product;
- +200 people from organized group tours participated in the Hiking for All activity during 2019, coming from three schools and seven associations of people with disabilities; and
- 78 people with disability and companions participated in the Hiking for All activity in 2019 booking the activity directly through the Handisport website.

SHORTCOMINGS

- The main challenge was convincing local institutions and companies about the importance of accessibility in tourism, but Fundación Handisport insisted on the need to promote it among the sector in order to create more synergies and strategies to foster inclusive Tourism for All in Mallorca; and
- Competing with other big companies was also a challenge for the project at the time to position and visualize the service offered.

REPLICATION POTENTIAL

- The Hiking for All (Enjoy your abilities with Handisport Mallorca!) project has a high replication potential, due to the possibility for any destination to invest on accessible mobility solutions such as the adapted Superfour for physically and visually impaired individuals; and
- The proper knowledge about the tourism industry, sports and universal accessibility is also a key aspect to be replicated for other destinations.

LESSONS LEARNED

This and other projects implemented by Fundación Handisport Mallorca clearly showed that it is possible to achieve a greater integration of people with disabilities into the society by providing accessible services, promoting Tourism for All and encouraging both the public and the private sectors to invest in accessibility.

CONCLUSIONS

BY SIMON DARCY AND DIMITRIOS BUHALIS

This compilation of good practices on accessible tourism in nature areas is a welcome addition to the relatively little industry and academic attention to this ambit.[7] Nature areas in all their forms are important for the ecological well-being of the world and an underlying component to address the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.[8] Nature areas are also important to the well-being of humanity, and research has shown the positive effect it has for people. Yet, people with disabilities, who constitute 10% to 15% or some 1.5 billion of the global population, have not had the same access to nature areas compared to other members of society. When the complexities of accessibility to nature areas are analysed in terms of the type of disability, we see that different groups of people with disabilities are disadvantaged because of their access needs dependent on whether they have: mobility including power or manual wheelchairs, and other types of sensory and cognitive aid: hearing/deaf; vision/blind; cognitive or learning; mental health and others. Furthermore, we know that social participation generally is affected by the level of a person's support needs, with those people having higher levels of support having the lowest levels of social participation.[9] The good practices on accessible tourism included in this publication show not only what is possible, but *how* these examples have come into being requires consideration in this conclusion.

This good practice publication provides tremendous inspiration and aspiration for destination managers to bring about a behaviour change to the provision of accessible tourism infrastructures in nature areas. The case studies suggest that the organizations involved have a number of factors in play that brought good intentions into reality, and they seek to provide a systematic understanding of how other destination managers can conceptualize and implement the understandings of accessible tourism within their strategic planning.

Three frameworks provide direction to understanding *how* to go about operationalizing accessible tourism products and services in natural areas: The first framework supports destination competitiveness and sustainability. The second framework provides an implementation framework that addresses a change in attitude. The third framework explains how ambient intelligence (AmI) in tourism brings smart innovations and disruptive technologies to provide personalized, individualized and contextualized solutions to support inclusion and services to people with disabilities.

The destination competitiveness and sustainability framework is built upon a hierarchy of interdependent components across the socioecological understanding of micro, macro, national and global levels of develop-

7   Buhalis, D.; Darcy, S. and Ambrose, I. (eds., 2012), *Best Practice in Accessible Tourism: Inclusion, Disability, Ageing Population and Tourism,* Channel View Publications, Bristol.

Lovelock, B. A. (2010), 'Planes, trains and wheelchairs in the bush: Attitudes of people with mobility-disabilities to enhanced motorised access in remote natural settings', *Tourism Management,* 31(3), pp. 357–366, DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2009.03.014.

Chikuta, O.; du Plessis, E. and Saayman, M. (2019), 'Accessibility Expectations of Tourists with Disabilities in National Parks', *Tourism Planning & Development,* 16(1), pp. 75–92, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/21568316.2018.1447509.

Dippenaar, S. and Kotze, N. (2005), 'People with disabilities and nature tourism: A South Africa case study', *Social Work Maatskaplike Werk,* 41(1), pp. 96–108.

Pouya, S. and Demirel, Ö. (2018), 'Positive health effects of the natural environment on children with disability', *KSÜ Tarim ve Doğa Derg,* 21(3), pp. 786–799, DOI: 10.18016/ksudobil.368952

Bianchi, P. et al. (2020), 'Accessible Tourism in Natural Park Areas: A Social Network Analysis to Discard Barriers and Provide Information for People with Disabilities', *Sustainability,* 12(23), 9915, DOI: https://doi.org/10.3390/su12239915.

Brown, T. J.; Kaplan, R. and Quaderer, G. (1999), 'Beyond accessibility: preference for natural areas', *Therapeutic Recreation Journal,* 33(3), pp. 209–221.

Lakhani, A. et al. (2019), 'Using the natural environment to address the psychosocial impact of neurological disability: A systematic review', *Health Place,* 55, pp. 188–201, DOI: DOI: 10.1016/j.healthplace.2018.12.002.

8   United Nations (n.d.), 'Sustainable Development Goals' (online), available at: https://sdgs.un.org/goals (14-03-2021).

9   Buhalis, D. and Darcy, S. (eds., 2011), *Accessible Tourism: Concepts and Issues,* Channel View Publications, Bristol.

studies shown in this publication have been developed. The foundations of implementation science present an understanding that the behaviour of those involved in the case studies requires capability, opportunity and motivation to get the job done.[11]

These interdependent and sometimes overlapping areas of consideration require an understanding of the sources of behaviour previously identified as capability (physical and psychological), motivation (automatic and reflective) and opportunity (social and physical). These three wheels can provide a multitude of combinations to achieve the objective, therefore each organization or consortia of organizations must take stock of their circumstance and choose the appropriate combination for their product or service.

Smart innovations are also required to provide individualized and contextualized solutions to support inclusion and services to people with disabilities.[12] The AmI tourism framework presented in figure C.1 takes advantage of disruptive technologies that create a smart infrastructure and the smart digital grid that support the seamless interoperability of all stakeholders and enables fluidity between physical and digital interactions. AmI brings intelligence to tourism ecosystems by bringing all up-to-date information and making suitable personalized recommendations and adjustments in real time and context.[13] AmI supports value cocreation through dynamic personalization based on time and individual sensitive environments' needs. High tech drives high touch solutions, where all users are prosumers and consumers, producing information dynamically while enhancing the agility and smartness of the entire system. This is particularly relevant to people with accessibility needs that can be addressed with accessible solutions that are enhanced through architectural interventions and supported by information richness. Smart environments make industry structures, processes and practices accessible, providing disruptive service innovations through dynamic and collective agility, offering inclusive services, opening markets and supporting destinations and organizations to improve their competitive advantage through inclusion.[14]

To conclude this publication, we challenge those reading it and who are in a position to move from having a curiosity about people with disability and tourism, to commit and move forward on developing a strategy for bringing accessible tourism in natural areas to a reality. UNWTO's priorities include providing leadership for sustainable inclusive development that incorporates all Sustainable Development Goals. Disability is central to these goals and UNWTO has provided a blueprint for implementation through their publications on accessible tourism.[15] As the world emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic, UNWTO has highlighted the importance of bringing people with disabilities into all considerations for resetting tourism to be inclusive as a core value of the future "new normal" of tourism.[16]

11 Michie, S.; van Stralen, M.M. and West, R. (2011), 'The behaviour change wheel: A new method for characterising and designing behaviour change interventions', *Implementation Science*, 6, article 42, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1186/1748-5908-6-42.

12 Buhalis, D. (2019), 'Technology in tourism-from information communication technologies to eTourism and smart tourism towards ambient intelligence tourism: a perspective article', *Tourism Review*, 75(1), pp. 267–272, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1108/TR-06-2019-0258.

13 Buhalis, D. and Sinarta, Y. (2019), 'Real-time co-creation and nowness service: lessons from tourism and hospitality', *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 36(5), pp. 563–582, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2019.1592059.

14 Buhalis, D. (2019).

15 Please consult, among others, the following publications and websites:
World Tourism Organization (2016), *World Tourism Day 2016 "Tourism for All – promoting universal accessibility" Good Practices in the Accessible Tourism Supply Chain*, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284418138.
World Tourism Organization and Fundación ACS (2015), *Manual on Accessible Tourism for All – Public-Private Partnerships and Good Practices*, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284416585.
World Tourism Organization (2014–2016), *Manual on Accessible Tourism for All – Principles, Tools and Good Practices*, manuals I to V, available in Spanish and/or English through the UNWTO Elibrary at: www.e-unwto.org.
World Tourism Organization (2014), 'San Marino Declaration on Accessible Tourism', *UNWTO Declarations*, volume 23, number 7, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: https://doi.org/10.18111/unwtodeclarations.2014.23.07.
World Tourism Organization and Fundación ONCE, 'Accessible Tourism Destination' Distinction 2019 (online), available at: www.unwto.org.

16 World Tourism Organization (2020), *UNWTO Inclusive Recovery Guide – Sociocultural Impacts of Covid-19, Issue I: Persons with Disabilities*, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284422296.

ANNEXES

QUESTIONNAIRE

The overall objective of this publication is to compile good practices of implementing universal accessibility across the tourism value chain, with a specific focus on natural areas and environments. In order to do so, the Affiliate Members Working Group on Accessible Tourism launched a call for submission in July 2020 addressed to its affiliate members network of more than 500 entities within the tourism sector. Specifically, the following set of questions has been designed, allowing for a comprehensive evaluation taking into account the main elements of the projects' design and implementation:

1. Background information
What element(s) of the value chain does it cover?
What was the situation before the intervention?
Which accessibility issues have been identified and needed improvements?

2. Partners
Who are the main partners and stakeholders of the initiative?

3. Funding mechanism
Who is funding the project, private/public sector, government support fund?

4. Accessibility actions
What kind of barriers are addressed?
Which are the main steps/phases of the project?
How have they been carried out?
Which links of the value chain do they cover?

5. Achievements
What are the main results and outcomes?
Which data illustrate the project's success?

6. Shortcomings
What were the main obstacles and problems in implementing the project?

7. Lessons learned
What is the end-users' feedback?
Why is this project innovative and why does is set an example in the tourism sector for others to follow?

8. Replication potential
Why can this project be easily implemented in other establishments/environments/ destinations?

Upon receiving all the proposals, the following criteria were applied to shortlist the cases presented in this publication:

- Problem-solving: the accessibility project should resolve a clear identified accessibility issue;
- Innovation: the initiative should be innovative and propose creative forms of intervention in the sphere of disability;
- Transferable models: the actions should be easily replicable in similar contexts;
- Enhanced tourism experience for persons with disabilities: the action has to improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities, their well-being and autonomy;
- Long-lasting framework: it should be an ongoing project or part of a major long-term project to improve accessibility;
- Planning: the planning of the different intervention phases must make it possible to identify the different specific actions carried out in the process;
- Positive impacts: the action should contribute to job creation, an increase in income and visitor numbers, and provide data and figures; and
- Active engagement of persons with disabilities: the project should involve end-users

GLOSSARY

The following selection of UNWTO definitions and descriptions of common tourism terms is taken from *UNWTO Tourism Definitions*[17] and *Glossary* of tourism terms [18].

Central product classification: The *central product classification* (CPC) constitutes a complete product classification covering goods and services. It is intended to serve as an international standard for assembling and tabulating all kinds of data requiring product detail, including industrial production, national accounts, service industries, domestic and foreign commodity trade, international trade in services, balance of payments, consumption and price statistics. Other basic aims are to provide a framework for international comparison and promote harmonization of various types of statistics dealing with goods and services.

Coastal, maritime and inland water tourism: *Coastal tourism* refers to land-based tourism activities such as swimming, surfing, sunbathing and other coastal leisure, recreation and sports activities which take place on the shore of a sea, lake or river. Proximity to the coast is also a condition for services and facilities that support coastal tourism.

Maritime tourism refers to sea-based activities such as cruising, yachting, boating and nautical sports and includes their respective land-based services and infrastructure.

Inland water tourism refers to tourism activities such as cruising, yachting, boating and nautical sports which take place in aquatic-influenced environments located within land boundaries and include lakes, rivers, ponds, streams, groundwater, springs, cave waters and others traditionally grouped as inland wetlands.

Competitiveness of a tourism destination: The *competitiveness of a tourism destination* is the ability of the destination to use its natural, cultural, human, man-made and capital resources efficiently to develop and deliver quality, innovative, ethical and attractive tourism products and services in order to achieve a sustainable growth within its overall vision and strategic goals, increase the added value of the tourism sector, improve and diversify its market components and optimize its attractiveness and benefits both for visitors and the local community in a sustainable perspective.

Ecotourism: *Ecotourism* is a type of nature-based tourism activity in which the visitor's essential motivation is to observe, learn, discover, experience and appreciate biological and cultural diversity with a responsible attitude to protect the integrity of the ecosystem and enhance the well-being of the local community

Ecotourism increases awareness towards the conservation of biodiversity, natural environment and cultural assets both among locals and the visitors and requires special management processes to minimize the negative impact on the ecosystem.

Establishment: An *establishment* is an enterprise, or part of an enterprise, that is situated in a single location and in which only a single productive activity is carried out or in which the principal productive activity accounts for most of the value added.

Mountain tourism: *Mountain tourism* is a type of tourism activity which takes place in a defined and limited geographical space such as hills or mountains with distinctive characteristics and attributes that are inherent to a specific landscape, topography, climate, biodiversity (flora and fauna) and local community. It encompasses a broad range of outdoor leisure and sports activities.

Quality of a tourism destination: *Quality of a tourism destination* is the result of a process which implies the satisfaction of all tourism product and service needs, requirements and expectations of the consumer at an acceptable price, in conformity with mutually accepted contractual conditions and the implicit underlying factors such as safety and security, hygiene, accessibility, communication, infrastructure and public amenities and services. It also involves aspects of ethics, transparency and respect towards the human, natural and cultural environment.

Quality, as one of the key drivers of tourism competitiveness, is also a professional tool for organizational, operational and perception purposes for tourism suppliers.

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17 World Tourism Organization (2019), UNWTO Tourism Definitions, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284420858

18 World Tourism Organization (n.d.), 'Glossary of tourism terms', UNWTO, Madrid (online), available at: www.unwto.org.

Rural tourism: *Rural tourism* is a type of tourism activity in which the visitor's experience is related to a wide range of products generally linked to nature-based activities, agriculture, rural lifestyle/culture, angling and sightseeing.

Rural tourism activities take place in non-urban (rural) areas with the following characteristics:
1. Low population density;
2. Landscape and land-use dominated by agriculture and forestry; and
3. Traditional social structure and lifestyle.

Same-day visitor (or excursionist): A *visitor* (domestic, inbound or outbound) is classified as a *tourist* (or overnight visitor), if his/her trip includes an overnight stay, or as a *same-day visitor (or excursionist)* otherwise.

Services: *Services* are the result of a production activity that changes the conditions of the consuming units, or facilitates the exchange of products or financial assets. They cannot be traded separately from their production. By the time their production is completed, they must have been provided to the consumers.

Tourism destination: A *tourism destination* is a physical space with or without administrative and/or analytical boundaries in which a visitor can spend an overnight. It is the cluster (co-location) of products and services, and of activities and experiences along the tourism value chain and a basic unit of analysis of tourism. A destination incorporates various stakeholders and can network to form larger destinations. It is also intangible with its image and identity which may influence its market competitiveness.

Tourism industries: The *tourism industries* comprise all establishments for which the principal activity is a tourism characteristic activity. Tourism industries (also referred to as tourism activities) are the activities that typically produce tourism characteristic products. The term *tourism industries* is equivalent to *tourism characteristic activities* and the two terms are sometimes used synonymously.

Tourism product: A *tourism product* is a combination of tangible and intangible elements, such as natural, cultural and man-made resources, attractions, facilities, services and activities around a specific center of interest which represents the core of the destination marketing mix and creates an overall visitor experience including emotional aspects for the potential customers. A tourism product is priced and sold through distribution channels and it has a life-cycle.

Tourism sector: The *tourism sector,* as contemplated in the Tourism Satellite Account, is the cluster of production units in different *industries* that provide consumption goods and services demanded by visitors. Such industries are called *tourism industries* because visitor acquisition represents such a significant share of their supply that, in the absence of visitors, their production of these would cease to exist in meaningful quantity.

Tourism trip: Trips taken by visitors are *tourism trips*.

Tourist (or overnight visitor): A *visitor* (domestic, inbound or outbound) is classified as a *tourist* (or overnight visitor), if his/her trip includes an overnight stay, or as a same-day visitor (or excursionist) otherwise.

Travel/traveller: *Travel* refers to the activity of travellers. A *traveller* is someone who moves between different geographic locations, for any purpose and any duration. The *visitor* is a particular type of traveller and consequently tourism is a subset of travel.

Visit: A trip is made up of *visits* to different places. The term *tourism visit* refers to a stay in a place visited during a tourism trip.

Visitor: A *visitor* is a traveller taking a trip to a main destination outside his/her usual environment, for less than a year, for any main purpose (business, leisure or other personal purpose) other than to be employed by a resident entity in the country or place visited. A visitor (domestic, inbound or outbound) is classified as a tourist (or overnight visitor), if his/her trip includes an overnight stay, or as a same-day visitor (or excursionist) otherwise.

FURTHER READING ON ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVE TOURISM

TOURISM RECOVERY AND COVID-19

World Tourism Organization information and guidelines on COVID-19 are constantly updated at:
https://www.unwto.org/tourism-covid-19

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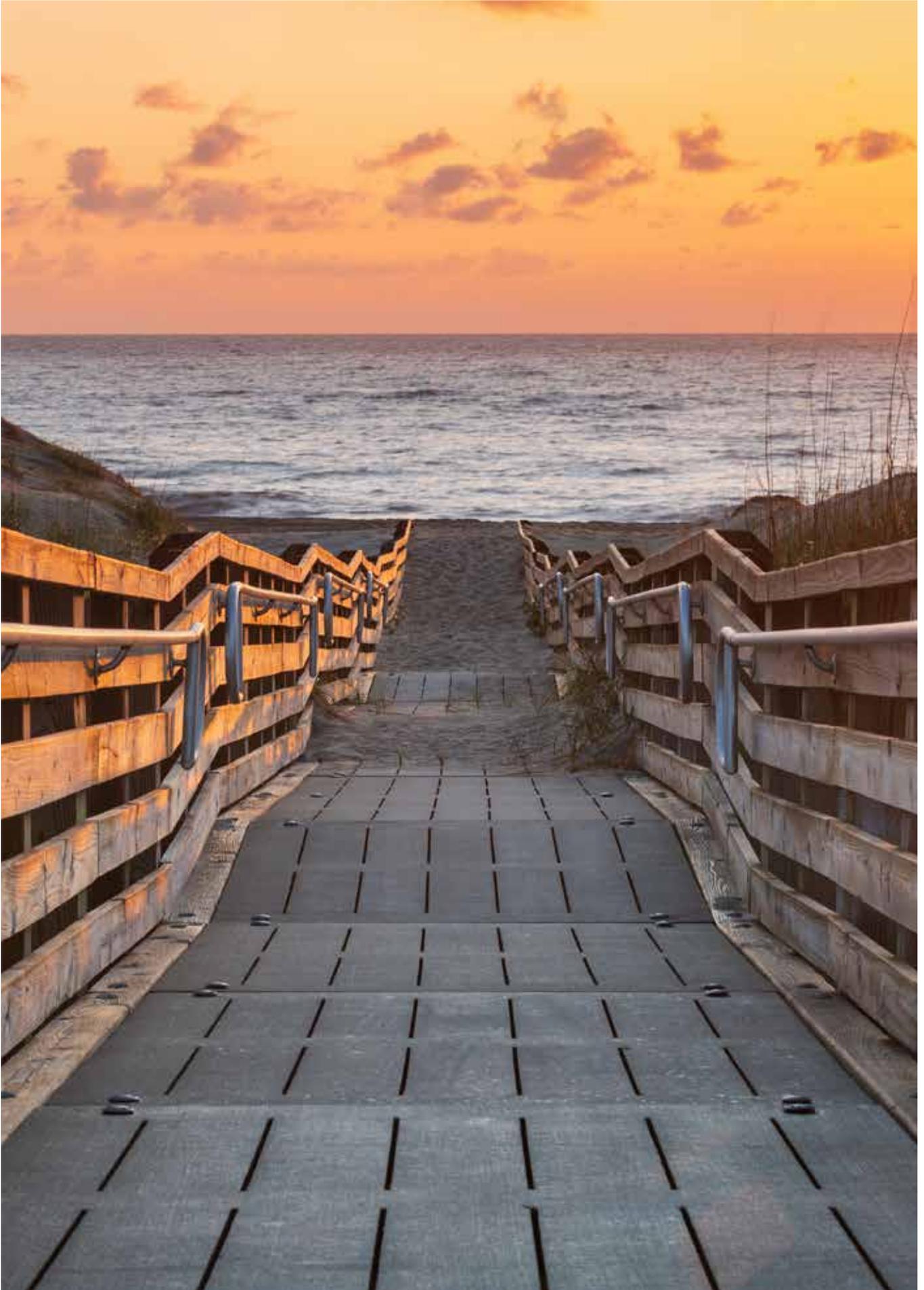
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This publication addresses the relative lack of research carried out into the topic of accessibility in nature areas to date. Through multiple cases studies and examples of best practices drawn from UNWTO Affiliate Members and other organizations, it illustrates different ways of designing and implementing projects aimed at improving accessibility in nature and so enabling persons with disabilities to travel to these areas.

Aimed at all tourism stakeholders from both the public and private sectors, including destination management organizations, tourism businesses, NGOs and other tourism entities, this publication also provides relevant conclusions on how to identify accessible tourism products and services in natural areas. The compiled examples can inspire others to launch similar initiatives aimed at achieving a greater inclusivity and making nature accessible to all.

The **World Tourism Organization (UNWTO),** a United Nations specialized agency, is the leading international organization with the decisive and central role in promoting the development of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism. It serves as a global forum for tourism policy issues and a practical source of tourism know-how. Its membership includes 159 countries, 6 territories, 2 permanent observers and over 500 Affiliate Members.

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