



**Leibniz FH**  
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Arbeitspapier Nr. 2  
der Leibniz-Fachhochschule Hannover

## **Eco Tourism Concept for the Region of Murcia (Spain)**



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4. Semester / Vertiefung Handel und Dienstleistung

1. Auflage, 2013

ISSN 2196-6494

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## Project during spring semester 2013



## Ecotourism Concept for the 'Región de Murcia'

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Date of submission:

Summer Session 2013

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## 1 Introduction and project scenario

Traveling and the associated experiences there with are for many people the best moments of their lives.<sup>1</sup> In the course of globalization, tourism has grown to a very dynamic and one of the highest growing industrial sectors worldwide.<sup>2</sup> Through the development of new and more exotic areas, in order to increase their own turnovers, it is almost inevitable that the nature and the environment suffer. The worldwide criticism and the careful handling of tourists with the nature have led to a rethinking. The concept of ecotourism has emerged from these developments.<sup>3</sup>

In 2011 the ecotourism according to estimates of the OECD had a share of the worldwide market of about 7 percent.<sup>4</sup> Due to the growing sensibility for the protection of the environment and a vacation experience which differs from the ordinary, this percentage is likely to grow.

On the background of widespread mass tourism in Spain a differentiation of the region is advisable. Possible target groups for this concept are wealthy, ecological responsible holiday makers. This distinction on ecotourism does not only protect the local environment but also helps to change the image from low-cost tourism to high-carat vacation. The aim of this project is to launch tourism into the economically weak region Murcia,<sup>5</sup> because tourism has long been one of the most important economic factors in Spain.<sup>6</sup>

In this project a concept of ecotourism for the region of Murcia has been developed. First the project background, the ecotourism itself and the Region of Murcia will be explained. This is followed by the project description and the objectives of this project. The Isla Perdiguera in the Mar Menor plays a severe role for the project implementation and will help to attract holiday makers.<sup>7</sup> Several economical and holiday activities will be explained as well. Finally the costs of the project, the project risk analysis and the project controlling are outlined and explained.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Schnieder, A./ Sommerlatte, T. (2010), p. 2ff.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Freyer, W. (2005), S. 468f.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Müller, SKornmeier, M. (2001), p. 48f.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. OECD (2012), p. 419f.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Kirstges, T. (2003), p. 231f.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Landgrebe, S./ Schnell, P. (2005), p. 353.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. <http://www.regmurcia.com/servlet...>, date: 02.04.2013.

## 2 Project background

### 2.1 Description of the Región de Murcia

Murcia is located in the South-East corner of the Iberian Peninsula, between the regions of Valencia, Andalusia and Castile-La Mancha. The region occupies an area of about 11,317km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>8</sup> The landscape offers multiple contrasts: irrigated and dry farmland, plains and mountainous areas, coastline and inland, vineyards and tableland. The coastline extends over almost 170 kilometers, where you can find small beaches and bays with rocky cliffs. Particularly striking is La Manga.

A coastal strip of land which is naturally arisen surrounds the Mar Menor lagoon and separates it from the Mediterranean. The coastline of Murcia brings together a huge number of interesting landscapes and many declared protected natural areas, where you still can find many autochthonous species of flora and fauna and animal species today.<sup>9</sup> However, Murcia has often been unattended by many tourists although Murcia has a lot of important criteria for ecotourism.<sup>10</sup>

The region of Murcia has the typical Mediterranean semi-arid subtropical climate. Due to these climatic conditions, the average annual temperature is about 18 °C, with hot summers (maximum temperatures of 40 °C) and mild winters (an average temperature of 11 °C during the months of January and December). Days of rain in this area are very scarce. It's about 300-350 mm per year. Falling mainly in the spring (April) and autumn (October).<sup>11</sup>

According to the most recent census figures, corresponding to 1st January 2011, the region of Murcia has an official population of 1.470.069 inhabitants and a density of population approximately 129.9 inhabitants per square kilometer, which is superior to the national average of 93.9.<sup>12</sup>

The city Murcia is as the capital of the Region de Murcia known for its historical buildings and attracts visitors with several cultural and sporting activities like the

<sup>8</sup> Cf. <http://www.murciaturistica.es/en/tourism.location>, date: 02.04.2013.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. <http://www.murciaturistica.es/en/tourism.landscape>, date: 02.04.2013.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Drews, A. (2011), p. 29f.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. <http://www.murciaturistica.es/en/tourism.climate>, date: 02.04.2013.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. <http://www.murciaturistica.es/en/tourism.population>, date: 02.04.2013.



annual Vuelta Ciclista a Murcia. More than 420.000 people live in the city of Murcia; many of them work in the service or agricultural sector.<sup>13</sup>

The port Cartagena and the cultural important city Lorca are important touristic places in the Region de Murcia. Cartagena is the second biggest city in the Region of Murcia and is connected to Murcia by train. The trade port, the old city wall, two forts and the castle Castillo de la Concepción which was built in the 11<sup>th</sup> century are visited by thousands of tourists each year.<sup>14</sup> The historical important history of Lorca and its remains can still be visited. Furthermore the city offers many ancient churches and is connected to Murcia by train as well.<sup>15</sup>

Culture, history, art and architecture have left an impressive heritage. All of it can be contemplated and admired in a diversity of natural settings, in the actual locations where the monuments themselves were erected, or within one of the museums.<sup>16</sup>

The inland provides there many landscapes and nature conservation areas. Examples of this are the 'Natural Park of Sierra Espuña' and the 'El Valle Nature



**Figure 1: Region of Murcia, Spain**

**Source: Google Maps**

<sup>13</sup> Cf. [http://www.spain.info/de\\_DE/ven/otros-destinos/murcia.html](http://www.spain.info/de_DE/ven/otros-destinos/murcia.html), date: 04.04.2013

<sup>14</sup> Cf. <http://www.cartagenaturismo.es/>, date: 05.04.2013.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. <http://www.spain.info/de/ven/otros-destinos/lorca.html> 05.04.2013.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. [http://www.murciaturistica.es/en/tourism.cultural\\_heritage](http://www.murciaturistica.es/en/tourism.cultural_heritage), date: 02.04.2013.

Reserve'. Visitors can also find places of special ecological interest like the 'San Pedro del Pinatar' salt lagoons (which border on the province of Alicante) or the 'Calblanque nature reserve', nestling on the Mediterranean coastline close to 'La Manga'.<sup>17</sup>

## 2.2 Basic concept of Ecotourism

The term of ecotourism is not consistently interpreted. Ecotourism is defined as "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people." (The Ecotourism Society, 1991). This is also the definition which we use in this project report.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation in Germany describes ecotourism as follows: Ecotourism is a conception of eco-friendly tourism. This concept includes a sustainable, responsible treatment of plants, animals and their natural environment. The subject sustainability includes the use of regenerative resources and focuses on the careful treatment of the environment.<sup>19</sup> The aim especially from the scientific side is an "Ecologically Responsible Tourism". Ecotourism has become increasingly popular by German tourists.<sup>20</sup> The problem with this type of tourism is the assignment from other forms of tourism, which use "green tourism" only for marketing purposes.<sup>21</sup>

The target group of our concept is the upper middle class, because this audience takes a very large share of our society and has an purchasing power above average. This group of people consists of mostly responsible consumers who are interested in an alternative holiday with social, economic and environmental sustainability. Their goal is to gain authentic local experiences during their vacation and to give something back to the communities they visit.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Cf. <http://www.murciaturistica.es/en/tourism.nature>, date: 02.04.2013.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. <http://www.ecotourism.org/what-is-ecotourism>, date: 02.04.2013.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. <http://www.sustainabletourism.net>, date: 05.04. 2013.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Kirstges, T. (2003), p. 4.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. [http://www.bfn.de/0323\\_iyeoeko.html](http://www.bfn.de/0323_iyeoeko.html), date: 02.04.2013.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Kirstges, T. (2003), p. 202ff.



### 3 Project description

#### 3.1 Main targets

The project objectives define the targeted situation, which should be achieved by the project. One of the most common causes for project failure is the lack of adequate and feasible targets. For that reason, the determination of the objectives is a very important task and one of the first steps in the project process. Clearly defined project objectives build the basis for the whole project planning and they grant a result-oriented working of the project team. With the help of the objectives the project controlling can ascertain whether the project is successful and the goals have been reached.<sup>23</sup>

By defining the project objectives, you have to note that the objectives should be specific (worded unequivocally), measurable (qualitatively and quantitatively), accepted (motivating), realistic (reachable) and timely (limited time to reach the success). With these criteria the project plan will create good objectives, which are easier to reach than objectives that disregard them.<sup>24</sup> It is very difficult to reduce a project to only one objective. Normally a project has a lot of different targets with different priorities. For that reason it is relevant to implement a target catalog (see Appendix 1), which splits the targets in 'must have', 'should have' and 'nice to have' targets to show clearly the priorities.<sup>25</sup>

The project should strengthen the tourism in the Región de Murcia with a view to sustainable development of the whole economy in this region. With this project the unemployment rate in Murcia should decrease by creating new, safe jobs and the ecological awareness of the population should grow.

As described in chapter 2, Murcia is characterized by an unique environment, which applies to protect it. This is an important reason for reaching especially tourists with an ecological thinking. The protection of the environment stands next to the increase of the tourism utilization on top of the project targets. The target group of the tourism in Murcia should be good-situated people with a high ecological awareness, because the project does not set out to create a normally

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Pfetzing, K./ Rohde, A. (2009), p.203 ff.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Zell, H. (2012), p.12 ff.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Bea, F.X./ Scheurer, S./ Hesselmann, (2008), p.119.

touristy place. The table (see appendix 1) shows all of the project objectives in short and they were defined in accordance of the five criteria of project objectives (specific, measurable, accepted, realistic and timely).

### 3.2 Project plan

The consideration of the aims shows the importance of the conversion of the plan for the Region of Murcia. Nevertheless, the conversion and reaching of the aims need a certain strategy or a structured plan. The so called project structure plan indicates the process of the project realization in detail. The project structure plan works as a *guide*, which integrates the operations and duties structured and ordered by their importance.<sup>26</sup>

The project structure plan is defined concerning the contents as „a hierarchically graded arrangement of the complete plan in single clear working packages.“<sup>27</sup> It is the aim of the project structure plan that independent work routines are held on and are limited, so that the completion of the project can be realized as quickly as possible. The conversion of the plan can be divided in different levels which depend, basically on the extent of the project. The representation of the project structure plan can be illustrated in tabular form, however, also as a simple list or graphically.<sup>28</sup>

For the definition all relevant criteria which form the planning to a unit had to be gathered. The necessary work routines were distributed to the single participants and a completion appointment was fixed. Up to the completion appointment the work routines have to be worked out and the project manager must be carried. The contents of the project structure plan exist of four important components. With the plan the consideration of the project background, project description, project realization and the project success is especially important.

The called aspects form the project structure plan to a unity and determine the *route* for the activities to be done. The duties are divided into certain working packages which are transferred to the single participant. The single working

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<sup>26</sup> Cf. Wyrzens, H. (2010), p. 121f.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Wyrzens, H. (2010), p. 122.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Wyrzens, H. (2010), p. 122ff.

packages which must be transformed by the participants are described in the following segment.

### **3.3 Project team and working packages**

By the representation of the project structure plan it becomes obvious, that at the beginning of the conversion a uniform overview of the activities must be created, so that the conversion can be realized as quickly and good as possible. In order to make the project structure plan a full success at the end of the project, the division of working packages which can realize the conversion as quickly as possible, especially makes sense at the beginning. The called open questions must be cleared in the approach, because a project cannot be planned from beginning till the end timewise.<sup>29</sup> The working package is a not more to be divided job. A working package describes a summary of activities of the same kind which are worked on in small groups or divisions.<sup>30</sup> The completion of working packages is determined as a rule only briefly to in the medium term, because the completion of the other working packages must be waited, so that at the end the results can be gathered. The unification of all working packages proves the whole project at the end.

The project team contains of six people and a project manager. For the realization of the project the single working packages were divided into the part duties which have been assigned to the single persons responsible. The part duties in the area of the project background are the description of the region of Murcia as well as the explanation of the ecotourism. In the area of the project description the definition of the aims, which return the sense for the conversion of the project is especially important.

Besides the expiry and the possibilities are described by the project realization for the vacationers, while the lodging and journey, the ecological activities, as well as the holiday activities are indicated in detail. The project success, which should be reached of course afterwards that is analyzed by a cost plan, the project risk analysis and the project controlling. At the end of the completion of the single part

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. Schiersmann, C. (2011), p. 194.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Winkelhofer, G. (2005), p. 149.

duties, the results are gathered by the project manager, so that a uniform plan is given.

## **4 Realization of the project and the working packages in detail**

### **4.1 Accommodation and arrival**

#### **4.1.1 Ways of arriving to Region Murcia (international guests)**

The arrival from Germany is due to the far distance to the south of Spain by plane. The Airport Alicante is situated nine kilometers southwest of the capital. In 2012 it handled 8,855,441 passengers, 62,468 flight operations and 2,525 tones of cargo. Most of the passengers are from the United Kingdom, Germany and the Netherlands. Associated with a marketing concept a part of these tourists can be enticed to the region of Murcia and its new eco-tourism.<sup>31</sup>

The airport Murcia-San Javier (MJV)<sup>32</sup> is located in San Javier's district Santiago de la Ribera in the province of Murcia. In 2011 about 1.3 million passengers passed through it.<sup>33</sup> It is primarily approached out of the United Kingdom and Ireland, so that German passengers have to make a stopover, for instance in London, Manchester, Liverpool, Newcastle, Dublin or Glasgow. There are various airlines that target the destination Murcia, currently Iberia Airlines, TAP Portugal, Ryanair, Jet2.com Limited and Easyjet Airline Co. Ltd.<sup>34</sup>

The transfer from airport to port of call happens via shuttle because it is only a few kilometers. National guests can travel to the airport Murcia-San Javier by train or car and have the opportunity to use the provided shuttle as well. The vehicles for the shuttle service are leased to remain flexible depending on the number of visitors in terms of number and size of vehicles. For the crossing to the Isla Perdinguera a passenger ferry is chartered. To facilitate final payment, e.g. in days of usage, the assignment for beneficial use is based on the method of time charter. Here the ship-owner provides an operational ship including employees, so that the user neither has to care about maintenance nor repair issues.<sup>35</sup> Another

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Aena Aeropuertos (2013a), <http://www.aena-aeropuertos.es/...>, on 11.04.2013.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Flightstats (2013), <http://www.flightstats.com/...>, on 04.04.2013.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Flugplandaten (2013), <http://www.flugplandaten.de/html/...>, on 04.04.2013.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Aena Aeropuertos (2013b), <http://www.aena-aeropuertos.es/...>, on 04.04.2013.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Mankowski, P. (1995), p. 90 ff.

relevant mode of transportation will be the Corvera Murcia Airport, which is supposed to be opened previously in the first quarter of 2014.<sup>36</sup>

#### 4.1.2 Accommodation

The accommodation's external resembles a typical Spanish finca, a country house surrounded by an extensive land. The property shall give a natural and ecological impression. The interior is formed and designed very luxury. The rustic exterior with the noble interior also increases the complex' attractiveness for potential private investors. On failure of the project the estate can be sold. The hotel chain Paradores finances the Finca. Accordingly its name is Finca Paradores. The Spanish hotel chain Paradores, which is completely owned by the Spanish government, was founded in 1928 and offers service-orientated holiday experiences in 93 hotels all over Spain.<sup>37</sup> Based on the long tradition of Paradores, the hotel chain is nationwide known for its high standards and has many regular customers.



**Figure 2: Example: outside view of a Paradores Hotel**

**Source:** <http://www.parador.es/en/parador-de-la-gomera/photos>, date: 30.06.2013

Finca Paradores offers basically single and double rooms because the whole conception is targeted on a group of persons that regularly leaves the area to spent time outwards. According to the upscale audience the rooms are spacious. Because of the hot temperatures, especially in the summer months, drinks are included. In addition to water, different teas und juices various organic products are offered. Tested companies, which especially turn their attention to

<sup>36</sup> Cf. <http://www.corveraairporttravel.com>, date: 30.06.2013.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. <http://www.parador.es/de/paradores-heute>, date: 06.05.2013.

environment-friendliness, provide the different fruit juices and wines. The Finca's conception is ecologically, so it shall possess a water desalination plant, which can be seen as investment. On the one hand water for the daily needs is gained, for example for the sanitary facilities, swimming pool, the watering of plants, fields and plantations, etc. the gotten salt can also be used differently and maybe yield a good return.

Finca Paradores targets to differentiate from conventional tourism concepts to set an example for the environment and against unnecessary dissipation. The bed linen and towels are not changed automatically every day but rather every second, third day or as needed. In addition to a lot of water the hotel can save energy. Depending on investment opportunity, the electrical power supply can be ensured by solar heating system and some smaller wind engines. In the region of Murcia a lot of days of sun are just as common as the consistent wind inshore. Even in the summer months the wind blows from the sea inbound. The thermal compensation emerges from the rise of the air above the land areas that is more heated.

The cuisine mainly represents local products, i.e. produce, fruits and vegetables from the region are preferred. The rest of the offering is out of organic products, whose cultivation and harvesting are tested regularly. Furthermore the cooks use fresh seafood, obtained by regional fishermen and companies. The hotel fills the vacancies with native employees to have a share against the high rate of unemployment in the region of Murcia. The hotel has the opportunity to reduce unemployment in two ways: it reduces it directly by employing people and indirectly by purchasing exclusively local goods (especially relating to foods and services).

Conventional energy carriers are finite, the prices for crude oil and gas steadily increase and the fire and explosion danger is much higher. Therefore the property Finca Paradores shall cause less impact on the environment and shall be heated ecologically. Ecological energy carriers are nearly inexhaustible and more harmless while burning. Therefore the hotel's management shall use wood pellets, compressed wood, biomass and biogas. The region of Murcia is one of the hottest and driest areas in Europe. That is why heating periods are not able to schedule and the aforesaid methods only cause costs if they are really used. Efficient damping, insulation and stones, which act as a heat accumulator, complete the



ecological concept. Thus the Finca's attractiveness for a stay in colder months increases.

Furthermore the project team plans fireplaces for the outdoor area. In the summer season they can be used to prepare special foods with corresponding attachments. In the colder seasons tourists can use them to heat up. Generally the hotel will hold a maximum of 250 guests.

To increase customer satisfaction and in order to reanimate holiday memories, a Finca Paradores online shop offers gifts and food specialities. The shop can generate additional income and has the potential to keep in touch with regular customers.

## **4.2 Ecological activities**

The focus of these kinds of tourists is spending holiday in harmony with the nature. The most important point is to have fun and a great holiday time in nature NOT to have it on costs of nature. The target group is interested in saving and preserving the nature. This holiday concept includes a lot of activities, which go with the idea of an ecological tourism.

One activity is a trip with a sail boat to "La Manga Del Mar Menor". La Manga has one of the greatest nature reserve areas. In spring time there are more than 50 different kinds of birds. The specialty about this place is that La Manga is only a land tongue. Just a few meters from the shore of the Mar Menor there is the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. This is the only place where these two seas are that close. Birds which came over the Mediterranean Sea stay there for a couple of days to move than on to the colder regions of Europe. The tourists can be a part of the journey of the birds. In a maximum group size of five people it is allowed to move into this nature reserve areas and to observe the birds.

In case a tourist wants to stay at the island he could work on the own fields. The finca has its own garden where fresh fruits and vegetables always grow. It depends on the season which kind of fruits ripens. In small groups the tourists will work on these fields and will harvest the food for e.g. salad for dinner. In the morning, when they sit in the sun it is allowed to pick up some oranges and to have a fresh orange juice. The respectful and deliberate contact with the nature is one of the most important points of the concept. The guests of the Finca have the

chance to decide what they need for the meals and how much of it. So Fruits and Vegetables were not available when there is no season. The seasonal / regional agriculture is supported.

There are more activities than observing and working in nature. Another point which is very important for ecological tourism, is to respect the cultures of the holiday place. The idea of this kind of tourism is to live like a native. One activity brings the tourists very close to the inhabitants of Murcia. In groups of 15 people they visit small restaurants and will have dinner there. Together with a guide they get the chance to have a look behind the scenes. The restaurant's owner shows interested guests the main points of real Spanish cooking. They learn about the secrets of real *paella* and a lot more. The tourists support the small and normally unknown restaurants and uplift the turnovers of the owners.

Also there is a day journey. If there are more than five interested persons a journey to *Jumilla* is possible. Jumilla is one of the greatest wine areas of the region Murcia. In the season the guests have the possibility to work on the plants and to pick up the bunches of grapes. Also they get a tour through the production of the wine.

When they visit the wine fields out of the season there is not the possibility to pick up the fruits but they can taste different wines and will learn a lot about many different influences for this special taste. Of course they can buy some bottles of wine and can enjoy them on the way back to the finca for example together at the sail boat.

In the Region of Murcia are many old buildings. Arriving at the mainland the tourists can make a bike tour. On this tour they visit some churches. Some of them are still in use but a lot are not more than ruins. These ruins are in their own way beautiful and worth of seeing. A tour guide will tell stories about these old buildings. The tourists will see more than the standard cathedrals, they will learn many facts about Spanish history. The focus is not only to show the beautiful things of this region - it is to show the reality.

These activities help the guests of the Finca Paradores<sup>38</sup> to enjoy their stay and to have a great time in the Región de Murcia.

### 4.3 Holiday and relaxing activities

Apart from the ecological activities, holidaymakers should also have the opportunity to carry out typical holiday activities and excursions.

A sporting activity, which is immediately offered, is diving in the 'Mar Menor'. Together with an instructor who comes to the island by appointment, beginners and also advanced learners can admire the beauty of the Blue Lagoon under water. Beginners will advance a theoretical introduction and they have to complete a training session in the pool. As soon as this step is done, the fun can start and be immersed in the water for two hours and to inspect the underwater world. The diving events take place in groups up to a maximum of 4 persons to ensure a personal service as a result. Additionally to the diving activity, there are various other possible activities to be experienced around the 'Mar Menor':



Figure 3: Different activities around Mar Menor

Source: [http://www.alhambravillas.com/wp-content/uploads/mar\\_menor\\_golf\\_resort.jpg](http://www.alhambravillas.com/wp-content/uploads/mar_menor_golf_resort.jpg),  
date: 30.06.2013.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. [www.parador.es](http://www.parador.es), date: 07.04.2013.

In addition to activities directly on the island, tourists should have the opportunity to experience the Spanish mainland and its culture. To do this, day excursions and short tours with overnight stays are organized. One of these tours is a trip to Valencia. The round trip lasts three days. The starting point is Murcia, where a shuttle picks up the holidaymakers in the morning and takes them to the 'Parador de Javea'.<sup>39</sup> At this hotel, which is with the hotel chain, the tourists will spend the next two nights. Vacationers can check in in their room this morning, where a basket of fruit and cold drinks are available. After a snack visitors can explore the town of Javea. It offers many attractions with historic core. In particular, the narrow streets and the building with arched portals and Gothic Windows stand out in Javea. Vacationers can also relax at the beaches and coves.

On the second day, the tourists have the possibility to take a shuttle directly to the Centre of *Valencia*. In the third largest city of Spain the visitors can have a guided tour to explore the cultural highlights of the city. Here, in particular the historical and even futuristic buildings attract tourists. For example "Ciudad de las Artes y de las Ciencias", the city of science and arts. Or they can visit the cathedral, which combines the elements of baroque and futuristic elements.

In addition to the cultural tour the tourists can alternatively spend the day on the beach or can take a walk on the promenade to test one of the different cafes. Of course Valencia also offers shopping or the possibility for dancing in the evening and enjoying the nightlife. Here the tourists themselves can decide whether they want to be back in the hotel in the late afternoon or if they want to take the "night shuttle". The third day offers a variety of facilities. Holiday makers can enjoy the day at the beach, relax at the hotel pool or go play golf even after Valencia. The day is at your disposal. However, the shuttle is available and takes vacationers to the desired location depending on your preference. In the early evening holidaymakers leave again to spend their further stay on the island direction Murcia. The tour includes breakfast in the 'Parador de Javea' and drinks of all categories.

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<sup>39</sup> Cf. <http://www.parador.es/de/tratarFichaParadorCabecera.do?parador=044>, date: 06.04.2013.



**Figure 4: Brunch at the Parador de Javea.**

**Source:**

**[http://www2.parador.es/paradoresdeturismo/ondemand/paradores/galeria/115845967\\_166200913155.jpg](http://www2.parador.es/paradoresdeturismo/ondemand/paradores/galeria/115845967_166200913155.jpg), date: 30.06.2013.**

A two day trip, which is offered especially for visitors with children, is the 'Aqualandia' in Benidorm in combination with an accommodation in *Alicante*. The journey to Benidorm takes just one hour. In the morning holiday makers will be picked up by a shuttle and drive to Benidorm. The tickets to the water park 'Aqualandia' are organized in advance. Thus it saves waiting times on the goose area visitors. The water park offers a lot of fun for children. The park on an area of varied over 200,000 square meters presents Europe's highest water slide and also other different water slides, a wave pool and for the little ones, the "Advent Home" with mini courses. In addition, the 'Aqualandia' provides a green space of 75,000 square meters, which invites to relax.<sup>40</sup> To offer travelers a perfect day trip, a picnic is prepared at lunchtime, which should ensure the physical well-being. Those who do not want to participate in a visit to the 'Aqualandia' can experience the city of Alicante, which is about forty minutes away, at the time. Alicante offers several attractions and has an historic center. In addition travelers can participate in guided tours through Alicante.

There are several other possible for one or two day trips to popular cities close to Murcia. This includes guided tours to Cartagena, the national park 'Parque

<sup>40</sup> Cf. <http://www.benidormist.com/de/benidorm-aqualandia.asp>, date: 10.04.2013.



*Nacional de Sierra Nevada*’, *Málaga and Cordoba*. Travelers can stay at one of the Paradores hotels near the mentioned places and are able to enjoy the high standards of the Spanish hotel chain. An exemplary offer for a trip to Valencia can be found under appendix 3.

#### **4.4 Marketing concept**

On account of the target group defined in chapter 2.2, the marketing of the ecotourism focuses itself above all on travel agencies. To increase the name recognition of this holiday possibility, different test persons from internationally known tour operators are invited to spend a whole week in the finca after completion of the project. Especially the well-known organizers like TUI, Tjaerebork, Thomas Cook, Alltours and SKAN Tours will be invited to the trip.<sup>41</sup> The test persons are supposed to write a report about the vacation. These reports may be used for advertising purposes. In addition, these reports can be taken over in travel catalogs or can be quoted.

The offer for a holiday in the Región de Murcia will be listed in the best known travel catalogs. Here the mixture of ecological activities and typical holiday actions will be described and supported by appealing pictures of the activities, the finca and the region. The reports of the test persons will be send directly to a great variety of travel agency chains to increase the popularity of ecotourism in Murcia. Another marketing measure is the online marketing. There will be an offer on the homepage of the hotel chain ‘Paradores’ which will point out the possibility to spend a vacation in the finca. Moreover a link to the homepage of the ecotourism can be integrated into the official online presentation of Murcia. By clicking on the link prospective holidaymaker can reach directly the homepage of the finca. The website will be created in cooperation with a graphic artist and will inform about the possible holiday opportunities in the finca and the activities offered. About the provided homepage prospective customers can request an offer and easily book online.

Besides this, the holiday possibility will be presented on different online portals with main focus on ecotourism. These webpages like "ecotourism.org", "yourtravelchoice.org" and "renatour.de" are often used by potential customers to

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<sup>41</sup> For detailed information visit: [www.tui.com](http://www.tui.com); [www.tjaerebork.de](http://www.tjaerebork.de); [www.thomascook.com](http://www.thomascook.com); [www.alltours.de](http://www.alltours.de); [www.skan-tours-travel.de](http://www.skan-tours-travel.de).



inform about a possible vacation.<sup>42</sup> Especially the German online portal "renatour.de" offers the perfect platform to present the vacation in Murcia to German holidaymakers. This webpage focuses on ecotourism, nevertheless, the relaxation and other aspects of a typical holiday do not miss out. There is a responsible person in the finca, who coordinates all reservation inquiries and consults every customer, if needed, to offer a unique experience. In addition, this employee will also be in charge of creating additional offers to generate customers in the low season. These special offers will be passed on to the different travel agencies. According to Chapter 4.3, the city of Granada and its popularity are used for marketing purposes. The city is a great attraction for tourists. Visitors to the city are mostly prosperous and so they form a target group of the project. In Granada, posters and offers for the Finca can attract additional customers for a holiday in Murcia.

All ecological activities, housekeeping, shuttle service and catering are included.

	Price adult	Price children
	Main-season / Off-season	
<b>7 days</b>	1015€ / 940€	525€
<b>10 days</b>	1450€ / 1343€	750€
<b>14 days</b>	2030€ / 1880€	1050€

**Figure 5: Pricing Model for a 7/10/14 day vacation at the Finca Paradores**  
**Source: Individual project exposure**

## 5 Project controlling and overview

### 5.1 Projection of costs

The budgeting of a project has an important meaning for all involved parties during the different project phases. At the beginning of the investment it is necessary to find an investor who guarantees for the funding. The means must be available during the whole project realization. During the project conversion the control of financial budgets counts to the most important tasks of the project manager. Significant negative differences between the planned and the actual financial situation may be a reason to stop the project in order to protect the dimension of resources.

<sup>42</sup> For detailed information visit: [www.ecotourism.org](http://www.ecotourism.org); [www.yourtravelchoice.org](http://www.yourtravelchoice.org); [www.renatour.de](http://www.renatour.de).

With this tourism draft a high beginning investment which includes the purchase of the island as well as the building of the Finca Paradores is an important condition. The project is so conceived that the investment finances itself as quickly as possible. Nevertheless, a non-achievement of the Break-Even belongs to the biggest risks of this project. To reduce the risks and the high beginning investment it is possible to sell parts of the Finca to private investors. The acquirement by investors, for example single rooms of the Finca, contributes to the financing of the project. However, their influencing control can be disadvantageous in the other course. In addition, the establishment of the Finca is to be planned so that a cost-covering sale of the building is possible in case of a failure of the project.

The planned holiday activities will be carried out by local partners who will be paid after use. Beside a positive contribution to the local economy the competition of the local partners allows the Finca to keep the costs low. This also helps to limit the financial risk.

The project costs are based on offers by different subcontractors in the Región de Murcia. The costs are calculated with an extra 15% for advances in prices due to higher material, personal costs and/or inflation. The detailed structure of the project costs (planning and realization) can be found below.

<b>Project Costs</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Budget (Average case)</b>	<b>Budget + 15% (Worst case)</b>
<b>Starting Costs:</b>			
Project Team		1.000 €	1.150 €
Various Material		600 €	690 €
Travel Costs		6.000 €	6.900 €
<b>Total</b>		<b>7.600 €</b>	<b>8.740 €</b>
<b>Project realization:</b>			
Purchase of Isle		Provided by government	
Construction Finca Paradores		8.900.000 €	10.235.000 €
Solar Energy System 1.800 €/ KWH	30 KWH	54.000 €	62.100 €
Water desalination	300m <sup>3</sup>	35.000 €	40.250 €
Garden and fields near Finca	150 m <sup>2</sup>	2.500 €	2.875 €
<b>Total</b>		<b>8.991.500 €</b>	<b>10.340.225 €</b>

**Figure 6: Project costs including starting and realization costs**  
Source: Individual project exposure

<b>Finca Staff</b>	<b>Number of employers</b>	<b>Monthly salary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Marketing Manager	1	2.200 €	2.200 €
Cook	3	1.800 €	5.400 €
Kitchen Help	2	1.200 €	2.400 €
Service Staff	8	1.300 €	10.400 €
House Keeper	3	1.600 €	4.800 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>25.200 €</b>

**Figure 7: Monthly staff costs**  
**Source: Individual project exposure**

## 5.2 Risk analyses

The risk analysis is one of the most important components of a successful project. For the prevention of capital loss with a failure of the project and for an early recognition of dangers for the project's success possible risks should be analyzed. This helps to prevent setbacks during the realization. Typical risks of a project are the excess of the finance planning as well as temporal delay with the project conversion. In addition, missing know-how as well as lacking motivation of the project participants can be a danger for the project success.<sup>43</sup>

With this project there is on account of the project dimension a raised risk which goes out the typical risks. The present unsafe situation in the European economic zone leads to an increased risk for investors. This circumstance may come up during the early financing of the project as well as on the long-term trying to reach the breaking even or profit. Another economic recession of the Eurozone can entail a sinking interest of the consumers in vacation. This is especially a danger for the ecotourism, because the possibility insists that potential tourists tend to book cheaper kinds of holidays. Additionally, the growing meaning of ecotourism can likewise lead to new competitors becoming active and possibly entice customers. During the project realization exists the risk of a lack of cooperation of the local partners. It is important to show up the importance and the financial potential of the project in order to convince them.<sup>44</sup>

In addition to the risk analyses the controlling of the project is a key factor for its success. The project controlling, normally done by the project manager, controls

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Rinza, P. (1998) p. 55.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Bohinc, Tomas (2010), p. 141ff.

the progress and the compliance of timely and financial restrictions. Extensive communication within the project team helps to reduce risks and motivates the members. The most important component of the controlling is a regular comparison between planned and actual situation. In case of negative alterations (e.g. delay) it is essential to countersteer in order to protect the project's success. If the differences between the planned and actual situation show severe differences it is necessary to consider a stop of the project to protect the resources left.

## **6 Conclusion and perspective**

The Region de Murcia belongs to the economically subnormal developed parts of Spain. Indeed, the region shows high potential, which can be utilized by this project. For a problem-free conversion of the project it is essential that all involved parties act in concert. Especially the support of the region, the Spanish government and the hotel chain Paradores are indispensable for a successful project.

The risk of the high beginning investment is heavy to find in economically difficult times, however, the advantages exceed the risks and become acceptable in view of the possible project success. At this time the currently low credit costs, thanks to low interest rates, are an significant advantage.

With a successful project implementation it comes to a lasting increase of tourism in the region what numerous advantages for the local economy arise from. A decline of the unemployment, a raised purchasing power and a stronger attachment of the population with the region de Murcia are only some of the economic advantages. Additionally an improvement of the image nationwide will arise, as well as after the borders of Spain, which distinguishes itself by ecologically deliberate, high-carat tourism. The area also becomes interesting for day tourists and weekend tourists resident in Spain.

The (foreign) corporate clients can also hold congresses and conferences on site and are an attractive target group for the region. A generation of these customers is promising, because it concerns a lucrative target group. Also for the companies themselves the offer is very attractive, because they can profit from the green

image and use this for their outside reputation. In addition, the possibility insists that former corporate clients also spend privately a vacation in Murcia.

With success of the project it is advisable in the medium to the long term to think about the establishment and use of other real estates with focus on ecotourism. Thus other potentials in the region can be used at most and affect Murcia and the surrounding regions positively and sustainably. Maybe the project can even generate a basis for further underestimated holiday places in southern comfort, to jump on the trend of Ecotoursim.

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## Appendix

**Appendix 1: Main project targets**

	<b>Must have targets</b>	
<b>Objective specification</b>	Sustainable development of tourism and economy	Protection of the environment
<b>Measurable by</b>	Increasing number of tourists, earnings out of tourism, decreasing unemployed rate	Investments in environmental measures (e.g. desalination plants, ecological vegetable gardening, solar electricity), keep CO2 production on a low level
<b>Accepted by</b>	More tourists in Murcia --> more money for the population, good reputation for the region	Development of the region, sustainability, differentiation of mass tourism
<b>Realistic</b>	Murcia is very attractive for tourism because of the weather and landscape (cf. Chapter 2)	You can protect the environment with very small action and reach a big impact, people feel connected with the region
<b>Timely</b>	<b>In the next 5 years</b>	<b>Permanent</b>

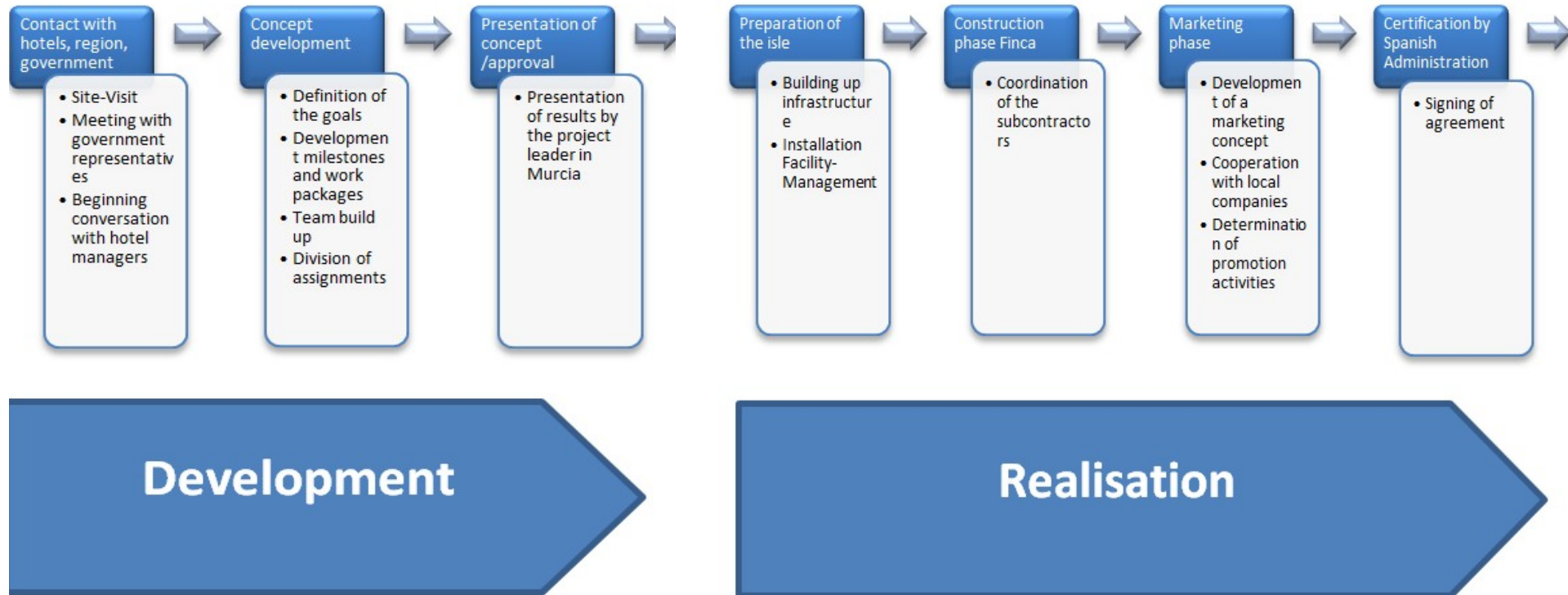
	<b>Must have targets</b>
<b>Objective specification</b>	Provide incentives for tourists to visit the Région of Murcia
<b>Measurable by</b>	Number of tourists, new attractions for tourists (cf. Chapter 4), positive headline about Murcia (newsletter, TV reportages, travel catalogs, etc.)
<b>Accepted by</b>	Earnings for the Région of Murcia, more jobs, satisfaction of the tourists
<b>Realistic</b>	Murcia is very attractive for tourism because of the weather and landscape (cf. Chapter 2), easy to implement the ideas of Chapter 4
<b>Timely</b>	<b>In the next 3 years</b>

	Should have targets	
<b>Objective specification</b>	Satisfaction of the tourists --> tourists who return to Murcia	Image change of the region, trend away from low-cost-tourism to the high-class ecotourism
<b>Measurable by</b>	Surveys, number of tourists who returns for vacation to Murcia	Surveys, positive headline about Murcia (newsletter, TV reportages, travel catalogs, etc.)
<b>Accepted by</b>	Satisfied tourists will recommend the vacation in Murcia	With the ecotourism Murcia will earn more money (compared to low-cost-tourism)
<b>Realistic</b>	Providing new incentives for tourists will create a higher tourist satisfaction, the tourism is for Murcia a great opportunity, so the population and the government should work hard in order to have satisfied tourists	With the environment protection and the unique offer of ecotourism, Murcia arrives easily it's new target group
<b>Timely</b>	<b>In the next 5 years</b>	<b>In the next 3 years</b>

	Can have targets	
<b>Objective specification</b>	Revive old traditions	
<b>Measurable by</b>	Old traditions of farming or winemaking will revive due to the ecological orientation of the region	
<b>Accepted by</b>	Strengthen the degree of attachment of the population of Murcia, very interesting for tourists (unique offer)	
<b>Realistic</b>	Old traditions can serve as a tourist attraction, you have to find people who know these traditions	
<b>Timely</b>	<b>In the next 3 years</b>	

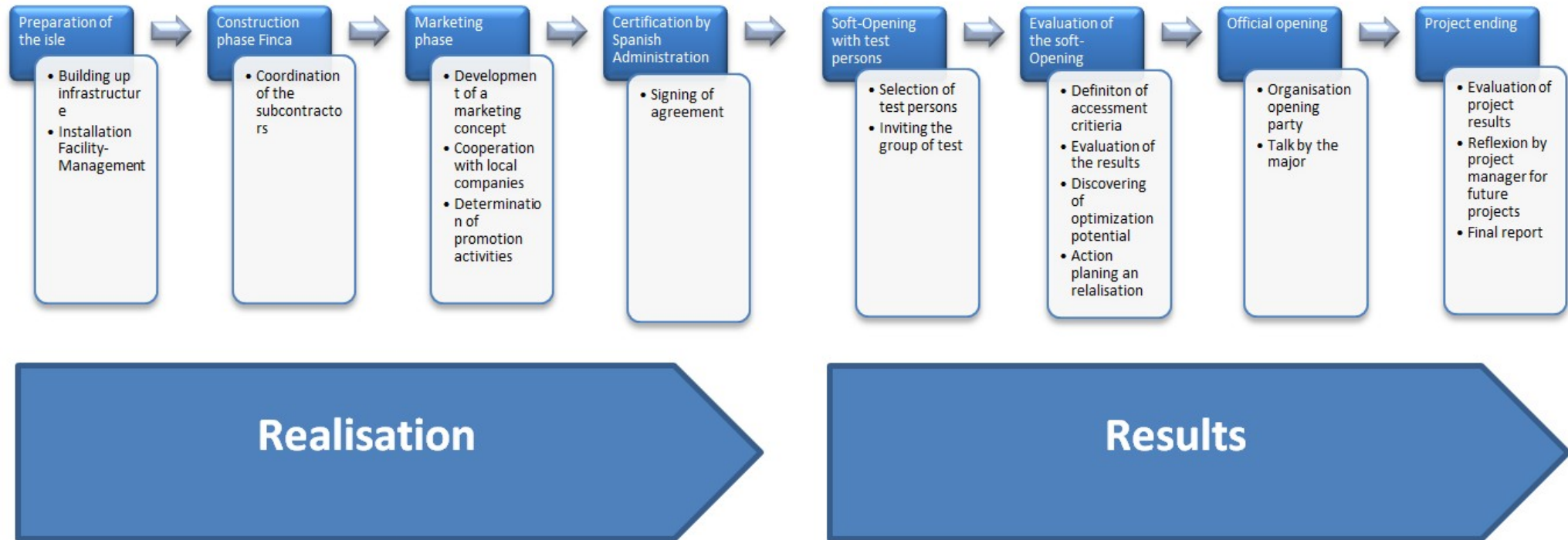
## Appendix 2: Project phase-plan (structured)

**Main components / stages: 1. Development Stage / 2. Realization Stage / 3. Result Stage**











## Appendix 3: Flyer for a trip to Valencia

*Roundtrip Valencia*

*Discover the Región de Murcia*



*Discover the  
surrounding area in  
only three days*



Paradore de Javea; breakfast & drinks included;  
excursions included; 130€ per Person

MORE INFORMATION AT THE RECEPTION