

Green Entrepreneurship

Successful business cases of Green Entrepreneurs in the Mediterranean



Regional Activity Centre
for Cleaner Production



Green Visions: The socially responsible travel experience in BiH

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Name:	Green Visions, Ltd.
City, country:	Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Name of entrepreneur/ founder:	Five founders: 2 from BiH, 2 from USA, 1 from Holland

Description	Green Visions is one of the BiH's leading eco tourism and environmental groups. This company has pioneered the responsible tourism movement in the country and is dedicated to promoting and preserving the natural and cultural heritage of the highland areas. Green Visions specializes in mountain walks and hikes ranging from a nice day trip to a ten day tour of the most amazing terrain in south-east Europe. Accommodation is usually in the homes of the villagers or in mountain lodges in the highland regions. Meals are the traditional, organic foods from the highlanders themselves. The following activities and services are part of company's offer: walking and trekking, mountain biking, rafting, canyoning, village tourism, tour skiing and snow shoeing, cultural heritage tours (rural focus), hotel booking, vehicle rental, airport transfers, guide services. Tours are mainly based in BiH, with the possibility of extensions on short trips to Croatia and Montenegro.
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Investment	<i>Startup capital:</i> BAM 60,000 for the purchase of equipment, computers, vehicles, hiking gear, camera, marketing, etc. <i>Rate of return on investment:</i> not available. <i>Sources of funding:</i> Sale of tours, from one-day to forty-day tours.
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Stakeholders	Adventurers in BiH and around the world, trained tour guides, local population in rural areas who provide meals and accommodation for the visitors.
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Employment generation	6 people full time, 10 guides are employed during the summer season.
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Timeline	<p>2000: A company was registered by a group of hikers, who perceived the underdevelopment of rural areas and saw potential for the development of highland tourism. They began gathering groups of foreigners and organizing one-day tours. In subsequent years, tours have been extended and improved, and today the company has a variety of different adventures on offer, which on average last up to ten days.</p> <p>2002-2003: in cooperation with the Federal Tourist Community and Ministry of Tourism Republic of Srpska, Green Visions has elaborated and published a Tourist Guide for Bosnia and Herzegovina.</p> <p>From 2002 to date: Green Visions has issued six different publications on tourism and mountain destinations in BiH.</p> <p>2011: Green Visions, together with eight other adventure operators in BiH, has founded The Adventure Tourism Association in Bosnia and Herzegovina (ATA BiH).</p>
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Feasibility study	Feasibility Study or any other type of study was not conducted prior to starting a business. The founders of Green Visions recognized the huge potential of rural and mountain tourism in BiH considering that, at the time they started the business, no one was organizing similar tours anywhere in BiH. They have anticipated that this kind of tourist offer would attract many visitors from around the world.
Geo-social-economic setting	Not available.
Key features	A high quality customer oriented service that offers travelers an authentic and organic experience of the majestic Dinaric highlands whilst providing local communities with vital social, spiritual and economic support to maintain their traditional lifestyles.
Overall rational and motivation	The main motivation is to change the perception of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a country that has gone through the war, with a vision of a country that has a lot to offer to travelers and adventurers.
Strenghts	The kind of pristine and wild nature of Bosnia and Herzegovina does not exist in many places in Europe. For this reason, BiH has been drawing an increased number of visitors over the past decade. Initially a destination for mainly regional and European travelers, Bosnia and Herzegovina now attracts visitors from the US, China, Russia and other far away locations.
Challenges and constraints	At the beginning of their business activities, Green Visions did not have any support from the local authorities responsible for tourism, who were mainly oriented on city tourism and did not see rural areas as attractive sites for tourists. Generally, corrupt government, absence of cooperation within the different levels of authorities, none or poor support of the authorities towards entrepreneurs, are all huge obstacles in doing business in BiH.
Direct activities and Impacts	<p><i>Social:</i> Green Visions is helping rural and high mountain communities to be actively involved in eco and rural tourism offer. Many of the locals are already included in the tourism business. Green Visions is currently assisting various communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to develop their own Bed and Breakfasts accommodation. This will help the communities to improve their economic status through sustainable development: preserving the ancient traditions that have allowed generation after generation to maintain good lifestyles and ecology harmony; and to introduce new, modern methods of eco-tourism, farming, and other economic endeavors that will not drastically change their traditional ways and allow them to maintain families and community growth.</p> <p><i>Environmental:</i> Green Vision is founded on the principles of balance and harmony between man and nature. The organization is dedicated to promoting and preserving the traditional ancient highland lifestyles and their precious nature. On one hand, the tours include visits to the wildest parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the highest mountains, the steepest canyons, the breathtaking rivers and the national parks, and on the other hand, visiting the old and mysterious cultural heritage and learning about the traditional way of life in high isolated villages.</p> <p><i>Economic:</i> Green Visions has local partners within the communities that they visit during the tours, who provide the visitors with organic meals and accommodation, and thus provide economic benefit to those communities; 6 people employed by the company.</p>

