

Approach on sustainable development through the involvement of local community in tourism food industry: a case study of Azuga resort, Romania

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Abstract: In the context of sustainable development, sustainable tourist destinations must focus on the stability and well-being of local communities, which play a defining role in the destination by maintaining the quality standards of the landscapes and through their involvement in the activities of the tourist area. In this context, the aim of the study is to analyze the level of involvement of the local community in the food industry through their inputs and outputs in Azuga mountain resort. The methodology consisted of: consulting national and international literature on the involvement of local communities in tourist services as an intrinsic element of the sustainable development of tourist destinations; field research and observations in the year 2017; research methods and tools such as investigation and semi-structured interviews. Graphs and charts were processed using Microsoft Office - Excel 2016 software and maps were processed using ArcGis 10.4.1. The results show that the involvement of the population in the food services sector is moderately sustainable and that it can be maximized; the cause for this is the migration of the work force from the surrounding towns and communes to Azuga, which leads to an increased carbon footprint because of the constant commute. The local food system involved in tourism as well as the local entrepreneurial initiatives tend to be sustainable, but they can be improved by including products of local mountain farming. The study concludes that national tourism policies and local authorities should take steps to encourage the involvement of the local community in the food services sector. The study is useful for the research of this topic, as well as for tourism stakeholders and government administrations in the hope of bringing positive change to the management policies of sustainable destinations.

Key words: sustainable development, local community, food services, tourist destination, Azuga

1. Introduction

Azuga is an area with great tourism potential on both a national and an international level, whose assets must be maximized in the context of the Carpathian

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