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STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION AND THE INTEGRATION OF THE THREE PILLARS OF SUSTAINABILITY

The case of the Green Teams in Kamnik and Maribor,
Slovenia

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Abbreviations

ETIS	European Tourism Indicator System
GDS	Green Destination Standard
GSST	Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
STB	Slovenia Tourist Board
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development

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Abstract

This thesis analyses the role of collaboration and stakeholder involvement in the endeavour of integrating economic, environmental and social sustainability in tourism development. The specific case of the Green Teams in two Slovenian destinations, Kamnik and Maribor, are used to identify the issues that emerged within the Green Teams concerning the collaboration between the involved stakeholders. Furthermore, several projects, which are related to sustainable tourism development in Kamnik and in Maribor, are examined according to how they link the three pillars of sustainability and success factors are identified. This serves the purpose of creating recommendations for the Green Teams and the belonging stakeholders in Kamnik and Maribor, but also in other destinations, as well as for the Slovenian Tourist Board and the Institute for Sustainable Tourism GoodPlace, who are not only managing the Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism (GSST) but also being responsible for the implementation of sustainable tourism in Slovenia. Further research can then put the findings more specifically in the context of the GSST and draw conclusions on how to optimise the certification scheme in order to integrate economic, environmental and social sustainability.

By analysing personal interviews, which were conducted with the members of the Green Teams in Kamnik and Maribor during the research trip to Slovenia in April 2017, as well as strategic documents for the implementation of projects related to sustainable development, issues were identified concerning the relation between public and private institutions, affecting the quality of collaborative arrangements between them. Lack of awareness, trust and involvement of the civil sector are the main issues here. Through awareness-raising and educational measures, which allow for hands-on experiences and an immediate and regular confrontation with the issue of sustainability in all its aspects, as well as the engagement of a neutral, independent entity such as the voluntary sector, as an intermediary, could solve these issues and support the integration of economic, environmental and social sustainability. An ideal solution that fully satisfies all involved parties is not possible; however trade-offs and imposed measures are impeding long-term agreements and benefits and need to be replaced by measures that create mutual benefits. Also, appearances and reputation need to take a backseat, for the national government as well as for the local destinations and the stakeholders. Instead of trying to achieve set goals in the most comfortable way, where the least resistance is encountered, conflicts don't need to be avoided, but searched for. Only this way, problems can be tackled at the root and a transition to a sustainable destination, in all its facets, can succeed permanently.

1. Introduction

During the past years, Slovenia moved to the forefront of sustainable tourism in Europe. Its career as a role model for sustainable development started in 2012 with the Tourism Development Strategy 2012-2016 entitled 'Partnership for the sustainable development of Slovenian tourism', setting the goal that *"in 2016, tourism in Slovenia will be based on sustainable development and will, as a very successful industry of the national economy, importantly contribute to our country's social welfare and reputation in the world"* (Slovenian Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, 2012, p. 36). Considering Slovenia's reputation in the world, one can say the goal is achieved. Through several awards and distinctions, Slovenia's efforts have been recognized internationally: the capital Ljubljana, the European Green Capital 2016, received the Tourism for Tomorrow Award from WTTC (World Travel & Tourism Council) in 2015 and the Golden Apple Award from FIJET (*Fédération Internationale des Journalistes et Ecrivains du Tourisme*) in 2016. The Netherland organisation Green Destinations didn't only designate Ljubljana as one of the Top 100 Sustainable World Destinations, but also declared Slovenia to be the first 'green' country in the world. On top of this, National Geographic awarded Slovenia at this year's ITB ('Internationale Tourismusbörse') in Berlin with the World Legacy Award in Destination Leadership. Undoubtedly, Slovenia has significantly grown in popularity as a destination for 'green' and responsible travel all over the world.

But what does this say about the country's sustainable development and social welfare? The population's well-being is dependent on a multiplicity of aspects and of course, a rise in popularity can lead to tourism growth, which in turn can result in a number of benefits for the local population. However, tourism can also create important damage to the natural environment and the quality of life if no explicit measures are taken to prevent these damages. Not only economic sustainability is important, but also environmental and social sustainability have to be taken into account if a destination aims at positioning itself on the scale of sustainable tourism development. In Slovenia, the 'Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism' (GSST) has been developed in order to make sure, that all three pillars of sustainability are respected when developing tourism in Slovenian destinations. The concept of certifications for sustainable tourism is a contested one though: do certifications represent a destination's or provider's genuine effort to engage in sustainable practices or is it just green-washing to attract more tourists? Do these programmes really help to make tourism more sustainable, not only in an environmental and economic way, but also socially and culturally? Keeping in mind that Slovenia enjoys an international reputation as leader in sustainable tourism, the question that arises is how the GSST actually supports the goal of basing tourism in Slovenia on the principles of sustainable development.

An important aspect of the GSST are the Green Teams, stakeholder working groups that have to be created in every participating destination. The members of these groups are what stands behind the success, or the failure, of the GSST, because they are making the decisions which are moving the destinations towards a genuine sustainable development – or away from it. It can be assumed, then, that what is happening inside these Green Teams plays a crucial role in achieving an integration of the three pillars of sustainable development. Therefore, by means of analysing the Green Teams of Maribor and Kamnik, this thesis will answer the following research question:

How can collaboration between stakeholders in a tourism destination enhance the integration of the three pillars of sustainability?

With the two sub-questions:

- What issues can be identified concerning collaboration with the Green Teams in Maribor and Kamnik?
- What are the success factors when linking the three pillars of sustainability in Maribor and Kamnik?

These questions are asked in order to find out how, if, a rather newly emerged destination, which gained a high reputation within a short time through numerous awards and accolades, manages to do justice to this reputation and continues to strive for improvement. The findings can be useful to the Green Teams of Maribor and Kamnik, but also to the managing parties of the GSST, the Slovenian Tourist Board and the Institute for Sustainable Tourism GoodPlace, by receiving an external perspective on their progress.

The literature review will deal with a theoretical perspective on collaboration and stakeholder involvement as well as the links between and the integration of economic, environmental and social sustainability, the so-called triple bottom line or three pillars of sustainability. Then, based on personal interviews conducted with the members of the Green Teams in two Slovenian destinations, Maribor and Kamnik, and the analysis of strategical documents (amongst others), the collaboration within the Green Teams will be assessed and several projects, related to sustainable tourism development in both destinations, will be further examined and classified into how they link the three pillars of sustainability.

2. Methodology

2.1. Background

2.1.1. The Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism

Having been part of Yugoslavia, Slovenia only became an independent country in 1990 and had to fight since then with negative perceptions concerning the security and culture of the country, as well as with the popularity of their mighty neighbours Austria, Italy and Croatia. Over the past decades, Slovenia managed to overcome these negative perceptions, which also shows in the number of tourist arrivals from foreign countries: while in 1992 – one year after Slovenia's independence – two million foreign tourist arrivals were recorded (Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, 2014), this number more than doubled until 2015 with 6.6 million foreign tourist arrivals (Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, 2016).

The Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism (GSST) has been launched in 2015 as a response to the National Tourism Strategy 2011-2016. This strategy is based on the decision to not focus on the development of mass tourism, but to gain international popularity as a 'green' and sustainable tourism destination. Therefore, the principles of sustainability play a crucial role in tourism development in Slovenia. One measure that has been implemented in order to achieve sustainable tourism development is the GSST, a national certification system for destinations and tourism providers, which, according to the European Sustainable Development Network (ESDN), is "*among sectoral instruments for SD [sustainable development] one of the most successful*" in Slovenia (ESDN, 2017, online). In 2017, after research for this thesis has been concluded, parks and tourism agencies have been added to the GSST. In the following, the GSST will be described in more detail in order to provide the reader with background knowledge to understand the position and role of the Green Teams.

The GSST is managed and developed by the Slovenian Tourist Board (STB), which is also responsible of providing educational and promotional support to the destinations and tourism providers. The scheme is implemented by an accredited partner, the Association for Sustainable Tourism GoodPlace, which monitors and assesses the members of GSST. The criteria according to which this assessment for destinations takes place are derived from the Green Destination Standard (GDS), developed by the Netherland based organisation Green Destinations, and include the following: Nature, Environment, Identity & Culture, Tourism & Business and Destination & Safety. Tourism providers are assessed by obtaining one of six labels that are recognised by the GSST: Travelife, Green Globe, EU Ecolabel, Bio Hotels, EMAS (the EU Eco-Management and Audit System) and Green Key. Natural parks need to be part of either the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme, or Europark Federation network. In the following we will however focus on the assessment and certification of destinations and not go into more details about tourism provider and park certification.

In order to obtain the 'Slovenia Green' label, the destinations have to follow a number of steps that enables them to join the scheme. These steps are adapted from the European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS), a voluntary management tool for destinations launched by the European Commission in 2013 (European Commission, 2016). A visual representation of the organisation of relations within the GSST can be found in Appendix 1. The destination has to:

1. appoint a so-called 'green coordinator', which is in charge of managing the GSST for the destination. This green coordinator is mostly a member of the local or regional tourist board.

2. This green coordinator is also setting up the 'Green Team', meaning a group of relevant stakeholders for the development of sustainable tourism in the destinations. The STB and GoodPlace are only suggesting possible stakeholders for this team, but there are no strict requirements and hence the constellation of the Green Team varies from destination to destination.

3. Awareness has to be risen among the several stakeholders about sustainable tourism development, the GSST and the consequences of a participation in the scheme. How this has to happen is not specified in the documents.

4. A Green Policy has to be signed by the mayor of the destination municipality, that has been created by GoodPlace and serves as a guarantee that the destination and its stakeholders commit to the sustainable development of tourism. In connection to step 3, the municipality has to hold an event, during which the Green Policy will be officially signed and that can be attended by all stakeholders and the media. Some destinations, for instance Maribor, choose to let involved businesses sign the Green Policy, but this is not a requirement.

5. The destinations have to carry out surveys among visitors, residents and local tourism enterprises, identifying their respective opinion and perspective on the current state of tourism in the destination.

6. The results of these surveys are also being incorporated in the data reported that has to be completed, serving as base for the assessment of the destination. The data report includes all criteria and indicators of the GSST, and the destinations have to specify their progress in each of them.

7. The application, including the data reports, has to be submitted to GoodPlace, in order for them to assess the conformity of the destination with the GSST. After the evaluation of the application, the destination is awarded with the Slovenia Green label. Depending on the number of points, it receives the Gold, Silver or Bronze certificate.

The different criteria categories are rated with points on a scale from one to ten. The results, including the number of points received in each category, are summarised in an Evaluation Report that also lists a number of recommendations for improvement measures.

8. In the following six months, the destination has to draft an Action Plan, presenting the measures for developing and enhancing the sustainability of the destination.

9. A central aspect of the Action Plan, and of the GSST overall, is that the destination determines its local character and Unique Selling Proposition (USP). The destination has to fill out a form prepared by GoodPlace, describing their distinctive features in six different areas: Nature and Natural Values, Cultural Heritage, Gastronomy and locally produced food, Green tourism products with local character, Sustainable architecture and Green innovation and social responsibility. This mainly serves promotional purposes, but also for the destination to more closely deal with their characteristics and how they distinct themselves from their competitors.

10. Members of GoodPlace then spend an on-site visit to the destination, in order to meet the coordinator of the Green Team and review the data that has been provided by the destination.

The 11. and final step consists of the implementation of the measures defined in the Action Plan, and the re-assessment of the results after two to three years.

By June 2017, 22 destinations and 13 tourism providers across Slovenia have been certified according to the GSST criteria, plus three parks and two tourism agencies which were certified for the



Figure 1 Destinations and tourism providers certified with the Slovenia Green label (June 2017) (STB, 2017)

first time in 2017 (figure 1). Two of these destinations, Kamnik and Maribor, will serve as cases for this study.

Green Consortium

In June 2016, an association was established by GoodPlace and the STB, called the Green Consortium (STB, 2017). It was created as a supportive tool for the members of the GSST, destinations as well as tourism providers and parks, for marketing and cooperation purposes. A membership is not mandatory, which means that not every member of the GSST is also part of the Green Consortium. So far, the Green Consortium has 18 members (STB, 2017), who meet several times a year for workshops and other informative events dealing with sustainable tourism development.

2.1.2. Kamnik

Kamnik is a municipality 24 km north of Ljubljana in Central Slovenia with a population of close to 30,000 in 2016 (Municipality of Kamnik, 2017a). It is located within the Kamnik-Savinja Alps, a mountain range belonging to the Eastern Alps, situated in Northern Slovenia and Southern Austria. Accordingly, tourist activities are focussed on outdoor activities like hiking or cycling through the mountains. Other important tourist attractions are amongst others the Velika Planina, a mountain plateau within the Kamnik-Savinja Alps close to the town of Kamnik, featuring an original shepherd village that can be visited in the summer time (in winter time, the shepherds leave the village to live in the valley); the spring of the Kamniška Bistrica, the river running through Kamnik; the old city centre of Kamnik; and Terme Snovik, a popular spa hotel in Slovenia, engaged in environmentally friendly operations (Municipality of Kamnik, 2017a).



Figure 2 The source of the river Kamniška Bistrica (own photography)



Figure 3 The old city centre of Kamnik (own photography)

In 2015, the municipality of Kamnik counted 21,092 tourist arrivals, from which 57 percent originated from foreign countries, most of them from Israel, the Netherlands and Serbia as Top 3 countries of origin (Kamnik Tourism and Sports Agency, 2016). 55,790 overnight stays were recorded, here 65 percent from foreign guests (ibid).

Kamnik received the GSST label in May 2016 and was one of the first certified destinations in Slovenia (Municipality of Kamnik, 2016). Based on the assessment according to the criteria of the GSST, it received the following scores: Nature 7.8, Environment 7.6, Identity & Culture 8.0, Tourism & Business 7.8 and Destination & Safety 8.4. As two of the categories scored 8 or higher, Kamnik was granted the Slovenia green Silver label.

2.1.3. Maribor

Maribor is Slovenia's second-largest city situated in the region Drava in the North-Eastern part of Slovenia with about 105,000 inhabitants measured in 2014 (Municipality of Maribor, 2015). In the East of Maribor is located the Pohorje Mountain, which is an important Slovenian destination for outdoor activities like skiing in the winter or hiking as well as cycling in the summer. The Tourist Boards of Maribor and Pohorje are merged into one Tourist Board, the Tourist Board Maribor-Pohorje.

Beside the Pohorje Mountain, the most important tourist attractions are the vine hills in and around the city and the Old Vine House, where the oldest vine in the world grows for now approximately 450 years (Maribor-Pohorje Tourist Board, 2017c). The Drava River, running through



Figure 4 Drava River and Lent, the riverbank area

Maribor, is a Natura 2000 site and offers several sport and leisure activities, such as kayaking, rafting or sailing as well as walking and cycling trails (ibid).

In 2016, 110.329 tourists arrived in Maribor, from which 87 percent came from foreign countries and 214,371 overnight stays were counted, from which 86 percent were foreign guests (Maribor-Pohorje Tourist Board, 2016). With these numbers, tourism grew by eleven percent compared to 2015 (ibid).



Figure 5 The House of Old Vine during the festivities on its 10. anniversary (own photography)

Maribor obtained the Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism certification in September 2016 (Maribor-Pohorje Tourist Board, 2017d). Based on the assessment according to the criteria of the GSST, it received the following scores: Nature 7.9, Environment 8.2, Identity & Culture 8.3, Tourism & Business 7.7 and Destination & Safety 8.9. As at least two of the categories scored 8 or higher, Maribor was granted the Slovenia green Silver label.

2.2. Data Collection

2.2.1. Qualitative research

The data collected for this thesis is based on a qualitative research approach. Different qualitative research methods are used to complement each other, in this case documentary analysis and in-depth interviews. The theoretical knowledge presented in the literature review will be illustrated through the cases of Kamnik and Maribor in Slovenia. In order to receive an authentic impression of the cases and be able to adequately interpret the collected data in its context, the researcher spent three weeks in Slovenia: one week in the capital Ljubljana, one week in Kamnik and one week in Maribor. During this time, all interviews were conducted.

The research undertaken is of contextual or exploratory nature, which means that particular phenomena and issues are examined and the participant's understandings and interpretations of it are described and analysed (Ritchie, 2003). It is basically the question about what the reality is, in contrast to the question about why or how it is (ibid). In this thesis, it will be explored what stakeholder involvement in the context of a certification scheme requires and how sustainable tourism development can be reached through it, illustrated by the case of the Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism (GSST), more specifically the building of the Green Teams within the GSST. The research deals with understanding the context of the GSST and the processes within it, focussing on the involvement of collaboration between stakeholders. The use of qualitative research in this case is justified by the complexity of the relationship between tourism, sustainability, and stakeholder involvement. Qualitative research is about understanding contexts and processes of a phenomenon, by immersing oneself into these contexts and processes and exploring the participant's understandings and perceptions, to ultimately gain deeper and more personal insights. In order to understand the functioning of the GSST and the roles and relationships of the stakeholders in context of sustainable tourism, it is indispensable to understand how the stakeholders think and act, which can only be achieved through letting them explain it freely, from their perspectives and in their own words.

An approach to qualitative research was applied, combining the analysis of naturally occurring data, in form of documents, and generated data, gained from in-depth interviews. This serves the purpose of triangulating the findings in order to enhance the trustworthiness of the research. Through the use of different methods of data collection, potential biases and one-sidedness are counteracted.

The documents analysed for instance are official strategies just showing one perspective – the one from those who initiated and developed the Green Scheme, and who therefore have a high interest in making it look positive. In order to make the findings more credible, it is therefore necessary to explore the perspectives of other people and organisations involved and compare them to what is being said in the official documents. It also allows to compare the official intention of sustainable tourism development presented to the public with what is actually being implemented.

2.2.2. Document analysis

The documents used in the context of this research can be divided into two categories: documents that helped the researcher to gain necessary background knowledge about the GSST and its functioning, and documents that were analysed in order to assess collaboration and links between economic, environmental and social sustainability in the two destinations. The first category comprises the following documents: the Slovenian tourism development strategy for 2012-2016; the Green Destination Standard, listing the criteria and indicators used to assess the sustainability of Slovenian destinations and certify them; the European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS) Toolkit, from which the certification process is adapted; an overview of the functioning of the GSST as well as a PowerPoint presentation held by Tina Zakonjšek from GoodPlace; the Green Policy that every destination being part of the GSST has to sign; and the National Character form, that has to be filled out by every destination being part of the GSST. The documents that were analysed more closely were: the evaluation reports from Kamnik and Maribor and the action plan and annual report from Kamnik; in the context of sustainable mobility and infrastructure, the mobility and transport strategies from Kamnik and Maribor; in the context of sustainable supply chain management, the website and information brochure about the project 'Taste Kamnik', as well as the website, press releases and information brochures about the 'Regio Vitalis' and 'Flagship Products' projects from the Institute for Innovativeness and Entrepreneurship (ZIP) in Maribor; in the context of the revitalisation of the city centre of Maribor, the website and peer review report of the RESOLVE project; and in the context of sustainable events, the 'Manual for the organisation of sustainable sport events'.

A content analysis was carried out to examine the documents. This means the identification of themes and the way they are treated as well as their frequency in the documents (Spencer et al., 2003). In a first round, certain documents were examined in order to identify the understanding of sustainable tourism from part of Slovenian tourism officials; on a national level through the analysis of the national tourism strategy, the Green Destinations Standard, the ETIS toolkit, the GSST overview, the Green Policy, the template of the National Character form and the evaluation reports; and on a local level, through the National Character form filled out by the destinations, the action plans and the annual reports. This took place by asking the following questions while reading the documents: What meaning

of sustainable tourism do they want to display? What priorities do they set when developing sustainable tourism? How important is the role of different stakeholder groups for them?

In a second step, the analysis was focussed more specifically on the themes stakeholder involvement and collaboration, with the key words private sector, community/residents, training/workshops, awareness raising, cooperation/collaboration. These key words were chosen according to the definitions and principles of stakeholder involvement and collaboration found in the literature and further described in the literature review of this thesis. The documents analysed here were the evaluation reports of Kamnik and Maribor, as well as the Action Plan and the Annual Report of Kamnik. A large part of the information was taken from the personal interviews. Unfortunately, Maribor couldn't deliver an Action Plan or an Annual Report yet, which is why the first part of the analysis had to base exclusively on the personal interviews held in Maribor.

The third step consisted of analysing the available information materials about projects that were mentioned in the interviews as contributing to sustainable tourism development, in order to identify if and how a balance between the three pillars of sustainability is achieved. Not all the interview partners were still responsive after the personal interviews in order to provide the researcher with official strategical documents. The researcher had therefore to rely on public content such as websites and informational brochures, which are not as detailed, but, in relation with the personal interviews, gave enough information. The analysis of these documents was broader, meaning that it was not searched for key words, but for broader contexts. A focus was thereby set on specific measures that are taken and an identification of how these measures create a link between two of more pillars of sustainability.

2.2.3. In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews were conducted with the following people:

Destination	Name	Position Role in the GSST	
	Tina Zakonjšek	Project Manager at GoodPlace Supervisor of the GSST	two meetings (one at the ITB in Berlin and one in Ljubljana)
Slovenia	Petra Čad	Research, Development, Innovation and EU projects at Slovenian Tourist Board National Coordinator of the GSST	provision of information via e-mail
Ljubljana	Petra Križan	Head of the Department of Tourism Service Quality Development and Control at Ljubljana Tourist Board Coordinator of the GSST in Ljubljana	personal interview in Ljubljana
Kamnik	Sara Bitenc	Staff member (?) at Agency for Sport and Tourism in Kamnik Coordinator of the GSST in Kamnik	personal interview in Kamnik

	Barbara Strajnar	Head of Department for Development and Investments Member of the Green Team	personal interview in Kamnik
	Matej Slapar	Deputy Mayor of Kamnik Member of the Green Team	personal interview in Kamnik
	Bernard Jarc	Organisation of sport and animation programmes at Terme Snovik in Kamnik representing Petra Zlatoper, member of the Green Team	personal interview in Kamnik
	Peter Pančur	Manager of Guesthouse Repnik in Kamnik Member of the Green Team	personal interview in Kamnik
	Grega Ugovšek	Staff member of the Board for Sport and Tourism in Kamnik President of the Tourism Association Kamnik (no member of the Green Team)	provision of information via e-mail
Maribor	Karmen Razlag	Advisor for Projects and Development at the Tourist Board in Maribor Coordinator of the GSST in Maribor	personal interview in Maribor
	Živa Bobič Červek	Senior Advisor at the Department for Environmental Protection and Nature Conservation in Maribor Member of the Green Team	personal interview in Maribor
	Marko Kac	Co-founder and Senior Consultant at the Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Member of the Green Team	personal interview in Maribor
	Igor Kos	Project Manager at Municipality of Maribor Member of the Green Team	personal interview in Maribor
	Gordana Kolesarič	Project Manager at the Department for Development and Investments in Maribor (no member of the Green Team)	personal interview in Maribor
	Marko Kremžar	Assistant Manager at Hotel Tabor in Maribor (no member of the Green Team)	personal interview in Maribor

Table 1 Interviews conducted during the research period in April 2017

The interviews with Petra Čad and Tina Zakonjšek served the purpose of receiving background information about sustainable tourism in Slovenia and the GSST, as well as the general reasons for and functioning of the Green Scheme. The meetings with Tina Zakonjšek were also rather introductory conversations that took place at public places (one at the ITB in Berlin and another one in a café in Ljubljana), which is why they weren't recorded. However, a number of follow-up questions were answered via e-mail. Tina Zakonjšek also established the connection to Sara Bitenc in Kamnik and Karmen Razlag in Maribor, which enhanced the chances to receive a reply. Sara Bitenc and Karmen Razlag - the Green Coordinators of Kamnik and Maribor - provided information about the functioning and implementation of the GSST in the destination as well as the working processes of the Green Team. The other members of the Green Teams gave insights into their or their organisation's approach to sustainable tourism and their contribution to the Green Team. This way, the GSST was explored on the

national as well as on the local level. The interview with Petra Križan was held at a time when the researcher still planned to include Ljubljana as case study in the analysis. However, this interview still gave insights into the general approach to sustainable tourism in Slovenia and the working processes in Ljubljana, which were useful for the researcher's understanding. The only member of the Green Team that could not be interviewed was Alenka Babnik from the Department for Environmental Conservation in Kamnik, as she didn't respond to any contact attempt from part of the researcher. Bernard Jarc from Terme Snovik was sent as a representative of manager Petra Zlatoper, but couldn't provide any helpful information, which is why the interview was dismissed from the analysis.

Grega Ugovšek was approached in order to receive more information about the functioning of Tourism Associations (*Turistična Društva*) and their involvement in tourism development. The interview with Gordana Kolesarič was recommended by Karmen Razlag, in order to receive more information about the RESOLVE project which formed an important part of the analysis part of this thesis. The interview with Marko Kremžar from Hotel Tabor in Maribor was initiated in order to receive the perspective of a tourism business, which are not represented in Maribor's Green Team. It was also tried to arrange an interview with the manager of Terme Maribor, the largest accommodation provider in Maribor, unfortunately unsuccessful.

The interviews were unstructured and rather took form of guided conversations. During the interviews, the researcher used topic guides (Appendix 2), listing broad topics and questions that were relevant to the research. The topic guide was amended with more individual topics and questions before every interview. The interviews covered broader topics, as for instance the interviewees opinion about or their take on sustainability, and more specific issues, like challenges in cooperating with other stakeholders in the context of the GSST. However, the researcher didn't prepare a set of exact questions or determined the order in which these questions should be asked. It was largely up to the interviewees to take the lead of the conversation and present their perspective, while the researcher's role was to guide the conversation through broad topics and ask for specifications if needed. This approach allowed the researcher to receive as much background information as possible and gain deeper insights into the interviewees true opinion about tourism development in Slovenia, the cooperation with other stakeholders as well as priorities and perceived challenges. In personal conversations, critical and maybe delicate topics can come up and be discussed. Letting the interviewees speak freely also allowed the emergence of topics that wouldn't have come up otherwise, as these issues were unknown to the researcher before and revealed situations specific to the circumstances in Slovenia. At the same time, this unstructured approach to interviews gave the opportunity to go into more details when necessary and uncover knowledge that only the interviewee would have. As Gard McGehee (2012) states, in-depth interviews are useful when the research question requires depth and specificity as well as the exploration of perceptions and opinions. The

choice of location for the interview was left to the interviewee, in order to make sure that he or she found him- or herself in a comfortable environment, which raises the chances that the interviewee opens up and speaks freely. This way the researcher also aimed at reducing the slight unease that could be noticed due to the language barrier, as most interviewees didn't speak English fluently. The data gained this way could complement and verify the data gained through the analysis of the documents. Statements made in the documents could be challenged, the implementation of plans announced in the documents could be verified, and different opinions on the subjects could be gathered and compared with the public opinion.

The interviews were analysed similarly to the documents through a content analysis. The themes and key words were the same, however the different contexts played an important role: on the side the official setting, directed to the public, on the other hand a more personal setting, revealing individual opinions and perceptions.

2.3. Limitations and trustworthiness

A limitation that has to be taken into account is the language barrier between the researcher and the interviewees. Even though most of the interviewees were able to communicate in English and provide the researcher with the necessary information, they often had difficulties to express themselves and find the right words. This interrupted the flow of the conversation, led to more insecurity from part of the interviewee and rarely even discouraged her or him to pursue the thought. The researcher sometimes tried to help finding the right words, but as this falsified the interviewee's response, she refrained from doing so too often. Instead, the researcher suggested to use an online dictionary, so that the interviewee could find the words him-/herself without too much difficulties and the researcher's intervention. This was certainly not ideal, but still allowed a more fluent conversation and took away a bit of the pressure that the interviewee felt through the language barrier. The language barrier also prevented the researcher to engage in conversations with local residents or members of Tourist Associations, especially in Kamnik. Even though they were very willing to help when the researcher approached them, the information gained from those conversations was limited, as they either didn't understand the questions or couldn't give elaborated answers due to their limited English vocabulary.

The research trip took place around Eastern, which meant that many potential interviewees were on holidays and weren't available for a meeting in person. This was for instance the case with Petra Cad from Slovenian Tourism Board or Grega Ugovšek, the president of the Tourism Association Kamnik. In these two cases, a majority of questions could be answered through e-mail correspondence, which didn't allow the same depth as interviews would have, but still provided an important amount of information and insights. Many of the destinations' Green Coordinators who were contacted didn't

respond at all or had no time for a meeting, or because they were in holidays at the time of the research or because they were in holidays before or after the time of the research trip and were too busy. This reduced the number of possible case studies drastically and the researcher had to choose the destinations according to the Green Coordinator's availability. This is however not necessarily seen as a limitation to the research findings, cause this way a bias in choosing the cases could be excluded and it could be avoided that the research would go in a – for the researcher – favourable direction. The elimination of a bias supports the credibility of the findings.

The credibility of the findings was also enhanced through the presence of the researcher on-site, in Ljubljana, in Kamnik and in Maribor. The researcher wasn't only able to gain an independent perspective on tourism development in the three destinations, but could also gain insights into everyday-life, mentalities and culture of Slovenes. This helped to interpret the collected data and identify underlying meanings in what was written in the documents as well as said in the interviews.

Another important pillar of trustworthiness is the transferability of the findings, meaning the ability to produce generalisations on the basis of the findings (Decrop, 2004). Through a thick description of the case, its context and the collected data, the researcher provides the necessary background and information for readers to assess the findings on their own, but also to show similarities and connections to other cases and contexts, to which the findings could be transferred. The sampling process is crucial as well: cases have to be chosen that can be representative for the broader sample population or for similar populations and settings. This is why in this study, the researcher refrained to use Ljubljana as a case, even though it was the only Gold destination at the time and perceived as best practice example in Slovenia, considering its special position within the GSST. The researcher wanted to explore how Slovenia approaches sustainable tourism and as limited time and budget didn't allow to explore all the destinations of the GSST, decided to concentrate on 'average' destinations within the GSST, representing the majority of members of the scheme. As 14 out of 22 certified destinations are Silver destinations, the researcher chose to use cases out of this category of the GSST.

3. Literature Review/Theory

3.1. Principles and challenges of sustainable tourism development

The principles of sustainable tourism are based on the concept of sustainable development, which was first defined by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in 1987. In the report entitled 'Our Common Future', also known as Brundtland Report, sustainable development is defined as *"development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"* (WCED, 1987). The report emphasises two concepts: priority should be given to the world's population's needs and the limitations of the environment's ability to these needs, in the present as well as in the future (ibid). In 2015, the United Nations established the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, defining the core elements of sustainability as economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection (United Nations, n.d.). This refers to today's general understanding of sustainable development being constructed on three pillars: economic sustainability, social sustainability and environmental sustainability, or as Farrell (1999, p. 189) expresses it, the 'sustainability trinity'. The consensus is, in order to reach a sustainable development, a balance between these three pillars has to be established and the economy, the society and the environment have to be developed in an integrated manner.

The role of tourism in achieving sustainable development is explained by its global impacts in economies and societies. Rutty et al. (2015) note that especially the negative impacts of tourism are addressed in current discussions, defining *"climate change, coastal urbanization, biodiversity loss, fossil fuels consumption, disease transmission, and cultural commoditization"* as the most important issues in this context (Rutty et al., 2015, p. 36). However, tourism can also have important positive impacts, such as poverty alleviation and the empowerment of disadvantaged groups, and the need for a sustainable development of tourism grows out of the need to strengthen these positive influences and reduce the negative impacts of tourism it can have on the economy, the environment and the society (Bosak, 2016; Alvarez, 2014). The UNWTO defines sustainable tourism development as *"tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities"* (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005, p. 12). Despite of this definition, there exists a multiplicity of approaches to sustainable tourism development and the meaning of sustainability may vary from person to person, from organisation to organisation and from society to society (Butler, 1999; McCool, 2016a). There are a variety of terms in tourism literature, sometimes used interchangeably with 'sustainable tourism', sometimes used to determine a type of sustainable tourism: ecotourism, alternative tourism, responsible tourism, community tourism, pro-poor tourism or – as opposed to 'mass tourism' – small-scale tourism.

Generally, sustainability refers to three dimensions: the economic, the social and the environmental dimension, the so-called three pillars of sustainability. Economic sustainability refers to the generation of prosperity at all levels of the society, the cost effectivity of all economic activities and the ability to maintain these in a long term (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005). The environmental pillar stands for the conservation and protection of resources, biological diversity and natural heritage and the reduction of air, land and water pollution (Goodland, 1995; UNEP & UNWTO, 2005). Social sustainability includes respecting human rights and cultural differences, strengthening social equity and cohesion and ultimately contributing to the communities' quality of life and well-being (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005; Murphy, 2012). Ideally, sustainable tourism development links these three pillars in order to find a balance between them, and involves stakeholders from all three dimensions (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005; McCool, 2016b). In practice however, many challenges are getting in the way of developing sustainable tourism in such a balanced and unbiased way.

Recently, the definition of sustainable tourism became to be extended and more pillars are added to the base on which sustainable tourism and development is built. Choi and Sirakaya for instance argue for a holistic approach to sustainable tourism development being *“ecologically responsible, socially compatible, culturally appropriate, politically equitable, technologically supportive and, finally, economically viable for the host community”* (Choi & Sirakaya, 2006, p. 286). Accordingly, the objectives that sustainable tourism development should pursue are widespread across all pillars: increasing local incomes, diversifying the economy, raising living standards and reducing poverty, empowering local communities, minimising environmental impacts, safeguarding natural and cultural assets, satisfying visitors demands (Cater, 1993; UNEP & UNWTO, 2005; Sharpley, 2015). However, it is important to understand for academics as well as for practitioners and governments that sustainable tourism isn't supposed to be a niche product, but that all tourism should adopt the principles of sustainability and aim to contribute to sustainable development (Clarke, 1997; UNEP & UNWTO, 2005). For the sake of clarity, the following thesis will focus on the three original pillars of sustainability: economic, environmental and social.

The lack of a clear definition and a common understanding of the concept is just one of many challenges to the implementation of sustainable tourism development. The stakeholders involved in tourism development are very diverse: private tourism enterprises, the public sector, local communities, voluntary sector organisations and tourists – all have different understandings of 'sustainability' and conflicting interests, which have to be taken into account. The tourism industry's and policy makers' main goal of generating economic sustainability for instance stands in contrast to the general aim of sustainable development to protect and enhance social and environmental environments (Berno & Bricker, 2001; Wickens et al., 2015). In order to achieve a holistic approach to

sustainable tourism, Berno & Bricker (2001) therefore call for partnerships and integration among the various stakeholders.

3.2. Linking the 3 pillars of sustainability in tourism development

3.2.1. Cooperation and stakeholder involvement in sustainable tourism development

3.2.1.1. Stakeholder involvement

The term 'stakeholder' refers to *"those groups and individuals who are associated with tourism development initiatives and therefore can affect or are affected by the decisions and activities concerning those initiatives"* (Waligo et al., 2013, p. 343). Tourism stakeholders are numerous and diverse and their oftentimes conflicting interests challenge the concept of sustainable tourism development. When reviewing the literature on the topic, it becomes apparent that the opinions on who relevant stakeholders in tourism development are are divided. Especially in sustainable tourism development, the variety and heterogeneity of stakeholders is high, because actors from all sustainability dimensions have an interest in the development of tourism: the tourism industry, the host community including local associations, the government, environmental institutions and other special interest groups, educational institutions and tourists (Waligo et al., 2013; Timur & Getz, 2008). This means that voices from the public, private, voluntary and civil sector have to be heard and coordinated in order to establish sustainable tourism in a destination. The relationship between tourism development and these stakeholders is interdependent, meaning that tourism activities not only impact the stakeholders, but stakeholders also, and especially, have an impact on tourism activities and can hinder as well as promote the development of tourism. Therefore, it is crucial to include needs and interests of all stakeholder clusters in order to develop tourism following the principles of sustainability and optimise the quality of the tourist experience (Getz & Timur, 2005; March & Wilkinson, 2). As Byrd (2013, p. 12) expresses it, *"without stakeholder involvement, the term sustainable development would just be a marketing slogan or, at best, a topic for theoretical debate."*

The identification of relevant stakeholders in sustainable tourism development is discussed by for instance Waligo et al. (2013), Byrd (2007), Getz and Timur (2005) and Araujo and Bramwell (1999), who all highlight that stakeholder involvement has to begin with the identification of stakeholders and their education through communication and awareness-raising. Moreover, Getz and Timur (2005) and Timur and Getz (2008) suggest that the legitimacy of particular stakeholders to be involved in the development process can only be determined from within the stakeholder group, meaning that for instance the tourism industry should define which tourism businesses are to take part in the project, and not for example public authorities. Even though many classifications of stakeholders in tourism development exist, these can only be seen as recommendations for destination managers. The

decision on who is actually going to be involved can only be made on-site and varies from place to place and from project to project.

As important as the identification of relevant stakeholder groups is also the clear identification and coordination of their interests (Getz & Timur, 2005). Local communities are mainly concerned about the maintenance or the improvement of their quality of life, similarly to tourists who want to be involved in a satisfying tourism experience in order to increase their own quality of life (Cater, 1995). The tourism industry aims at long-term growth of their businesses and the creation of new business opportunities, which is highly dependent on the satisfaction of both the host community's and the tourists' needs and interests (Cater, 1995; Getz & Timur, 2005). According to Cater (1995), the cornerstone of sustainable tourism development and accordingly the most important need to satisfy, is the environment, which needs to be safeguarded in order for tourism development, or any other kind of development, to be possible in the first place. This coincides with the interests of governments, which also have economic and socio-cultural interests in order to create jobs and protect resources in their communities (Getz & Timur, 2005). Once these interests have been systematically identified and a sort of inventory has been made, destination managers can more easily coordinate them and make sure that every stakeholder has the chance to reach a certain degree of satisfaction through tourism development. Not all stakeholders can be involved to the same degree as others and compromises and trade-offs have to be made in order to find a development solution that comes as close as possible to a sustainable approach, but the important thing is that every stakeholder is heard and obtains the chance to express its needs and opinions (Cater, 1995).

This leads to the next aspect of stakeholder involvement: there are different kinds of participation for stakeholders, and not all of them result in active involvement and decision-making. Possible methods are for instance roundtables, public hearings, focus groups or surveys (Byrd, 2013), all of which lead to the integration of the stakeholders' interests and opinions in the development process, but don't facilitate the participation in the actual decision-making process. Arnstein (1969) developed in that context a 'Ladder of Citizen Participation', which starts with Non-Participation – where stakeholders are simply informed about any actions taken – and ends with Citizen Control – where citizens are not only fully included in any decision-making, but are also empowered to create and organise the development process autonomously. Based on Arnstein's ladder, Rocha (1997) created the 'Ladder of Empowerment', which makes a distinction between the empowerment of one single stakeholder or stakeholder group – Atomistic Individual Empowerment, where the ladder starts – and Political Empowerment, where the whole community of stakeholders is empowered and collectively taking actions to reach a shared goal. As Rocha (1997) argues, Political Empowerment, even though it is the highest step in the ladder, is not necessarily the ideal solution for every development

project and the degree to which collective action can be taken to serve the common good has to be assessed individually.

3.2.1.2. Collaboration

According to Byrd (2007) two areas of thinking have developed over the past decades in terms of stakeholder involvement. While the first area, which can be rather determined as the 'classic' stakeholder theory, ultimately grants privilege to those stakeholders with the most power and influence, the second idea, also referred to as 'collaborative thinking' refuses any prioritisation and emphasises a balance of power between all stakeholders (Byrd, 2007). Indeed, especially in sustainable tourism development with its various and diverse stakeholders, it is necessary to agree on common interests and goals and to collaborate in achieving these goals in order to efficiently integrate economic, socio-cultural and environmental strategies (Getz & Timur, 2005; Waligo et al., 2013). Generally, collaboration has been defined as *"a process of joint decision-making among key stakeholders of a problem domain about the future of the domain"* (Gray, 1989). Jamal and Getz (1995) add the notion of 'inter-organisational domain', acknowledging the fact that tourism settings become more and more complex and interconnected and that collaboration is necessary between the organisations, not just within the organisation. Among others, Selin (1999) and Bramwell and Lane (2000) emphasise the need of cross-sectoral partnerships in order to allow dialogue and negotiation between different sectors in a destination which will enhance a holistic perspective on tourism development and create sustainable tourism.

According to Selin and Chavez (1995), partnerships oftentimes result from particular events, a crisis or the intervention of a broker for instance. Other reasons for the emergence of collaborative arrangements can be a common vision or an already existing network that somewhat naturally lead to new partnerships, a strong leadership, incentives or vested interests (ibid). Selin and Chavez' tourism partnership model is based on the idea that consensus between all involved stakeholders has to be reached concerning the initial problem(s) (the problem-setting stage), goals (the direction-setting stage) and assigned tasks and roles (the structuring stage) before outcomes can be reached that benefit everyone (Selin & Chavez, 1995). Similarly, Robinson (1999, p. 393) states that *"prerequisite of partnership is reconciliation and reinstatement leading to a stable and equitable baseline of agreement"*. For Wood and Gray (1991), collaboration necessarily involves a shared set of rules, norms and structures, while all stakeholders still have to remain autonomous in their decision-making capacities.

The number of involved actors also determines the success of collaborative working: A small core working group involving only a few main representatives of stakeholder groups is a supporting basis for effective communication, respect and trust, which in turn facilitate the creation of such a level

of consensus (de Araujo & Bramwell, 1999; Bramwell & Sharman, 1999). In their study of collaboration and partnerships in Central and Eastern European tourism, Robert and Simpson (1999) come to the conclusion that these intangible elements of collaboration are fundamental to the success of collaborative processes, stating that *“successful collaboration can exist, for example, without measurable targets, but it will fail completely without trust and sincerity”* (Robert & Simpson, 1999, p. 328).

Bramwell and Sharman (1999) determine the success of partnerships by the scope and intensity of the collaboration, whereby success is here defined as an inclusionary collaboration process that involves collective learning. The scope of a collaboration agreement essentially means *who* is involved (see Chapter 3.2.1.1). The intensity of collaboration can be briefly summarized into *how* stakeholders are involved (Bramwell and Sharman, 1999): Do they participate from the beginning of the process? Do they receive the necessary background knowledge and are they continually informed about all steps and actions taken? Are decisions made collectively or are power relations preventing some actors to be merely informed about the decisions that are made? Is the collaboration process at the same time a continuous learning process for all stakeholders involved? Ideally, all these questions are answered with ‘yes’, and collaboration is an enriching and beneficial process for everyone.

In this ideal case, collaboration can be an important contribution to sustainable tourism development by promoting more attention to the preservation of natural, cultural and human resources, supporting a more equitable distribution of the benefits and costs, strengthening empowerment and capacity-building of less powerful stakeholders and overall raising the potential to a more holistic approach to policy-making and implementation of sustainable tourism development (Bramwell & Lane, 2000).

Collaboration facilitate the creation of social capital in the community; the links and relations developing among the stakeholders lead to a level of social cohesion and coordination that is not only helpful in terms of sustainable tourism development, but also in other parts of the community’s life, enhancing the overall quality of life (Hall, 1999; Jones, 2005). If these links and relations are used well, the expertise, capital and resources of all stakeholders involved can be bundled and a higher level of market intelligence can be established in the community, which ultimately leads to a high-quality tourism product (Bramwell & Lane, 2000; March & Wilkinson, 2009). Following Robinson’s notion that collaboration is not a mean to an end, but the end in itself (Robinson, 1999), strategic-learning and capacity-building can, and should, take place during the collaboration process and empower ‘weaker’ stakeholders in a way that brings about a change in the balance of resources (Bramwell & Meyer, 2007).

3.2.1.3. Challenges to stakeholder involvement and collaboration

In practice, the satisfaction of all stakeholders' interests and needs to the same degree is basically not achievable, and trade-offs have to be accepted, as Cater notes when he says: *"The careful balancing of costs and benefits is likely to result in a compromise solution which is site specific. It will probably be sub-optimal from the viewpoints of all concerned but, in the circumstances, will be the most feasible and the best practicable and, hence, more sustainable than hitherto"* (Cater, 1995, p. 27).

Power relations are often impairing a sufficient and balanced consideration of stakeholder interests, and collaboration only takes place between those who have the power and/or the resources (Bramwell & Lane, 2000). A sufficient distribution of power doesn't necessarily mean an equal distribution of power, but balanced in a way that leads to the best possible outcome for everyone (Gray, 1985; Jamal & Stronza, 2009). Budowski for instance (1976, cited in March & Wilkinson, 2009) classifies stakeholder relationships in tourism on a continuum from 'predatory' to 'symbiotic', where predatory relationships emerge when one or several stakeholders are in control and influence the development process considerably. In this context, Clegg and Hardy (1999) discuss the difficulties of establishing trust in a new partnership and how power relations can manipulate 'weaker' stakeholders into making them believe that a trusting relationship is established, when they are actually submissive and afraid to contradict or raise their voice. When a partnership lacks trust, misperceptions can arise among the stakeholders, which hinder honest and productive communication and hence collaboration process (Bramwell & Lane, 2000).

Collaboration can also be impaired by some legitimate stakeholders renouncing to participate in the process (Bramwell & Lane, 2000; Lovelock, 2001, Jamal & Stronza, 2009). This can be the case because of such a high level of mistrust towards other stakeholders that no beneficial outcome is expected, or because the stakeholder in question is currently in a powerful position that he is afraid to lose when engaging in a collaborative arrangement with less powerful stakeholders (ibid). Indeed, if values and beliefs of the stakeholders are too different and the distribution of power among the stakeholders too unbalanced, a collaborative arrangement might require too much compromise in order to achieve an outcome that would not be viable in a long-term (Lovelock, 2001).

Beside stakeholders who don't want to be involved, there are also stakeholders who can't be involved, because they have no possibility to access the collaborative arrangement (Bramwell & Lane, 2000). Mostly, this is due to a lack of financial, political and/or social resources and capacities, which prevents them to provide meaningful input or raise their voice. Often, it is the local residents who are affected by this exclusion, which is why a considerable amount of academic research focusses on community involvement and collaboration in tourism development (Murphy, 1985; Simmons, 1994; Reed, 1997; Timothy & Tosun, 2003; Goodwin & Santilli, 2009). Community involvement is often

recognized as important principle of sustainability in order to appropriately manage cultural and natural resources (Richards & Hall, 2000; Jamal & Stronza, 2009) and to improve the quality of life and well-being of the local population (Liu, 2003). Therefore, a balance should be pursued between the involvement of stakeholders attributed with more power in the community – mostly governmental institutions and private businesses – and those with less influence and authority – often the civil society (Bramwell & Lane, 2000). Again, this is an ideal that is difficult to achieve in real-life, but ideals can be good guidance for practitioners striving for the best possible outcome.

It is also important to notice that conflicts arising through challenges can contribute to a more efficient development process and more beneficial outcomes and should therefore not be avoided *per se* (Lovelock, 2002; Dredge, 2006). If conflicts are dealt with well, they can lead to more tolerance, innovation and more effective learning (Dredge, 2006).

3.2.1.4. A special case: Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)

Special attention needs to be drawn to public-private partnerships (PPP) in tourism. The collaboration between public and private institutions is known to be difficult and oftentimes characterized by conflicts. As Bordas Rubies (2001) notes, the private sector is mostly not satisfied with the contribution of the public sector and vice versa and these disagreements are often reported by the media, which leaves a rather negative connotation to PPPs in the public perception. Martin and McBoyle (2006) share this view by stating that a common opinion about PPPs among the broad public is the fact that both sides only engage in a partnership to gain access to additional financial resources. Moreover, Wilson et al. (2009) highlight the concern from part of public institutions, especially in protected areas, that through a partnership with the tourism businesses the generation of profit will come to the fore, to the detriment of environmental and cultural sustainability.

Even though these difficulties are well known and mentioned in the literature, actual studies about the functioning of PPP in tourism development and possible recommendations for achieving success are rare in the academic literature. Augustyn and Knowles (2000) set up some critical success factors for PPP, which are essentially the same as for partnerships in general: all necessary and legitimate stakeholders are involved equally (in this case members of the public and the private sector); the diverse interests are respected, competition is not hindered; resources, capacities and costs are shared; responsibilities are agreed on and clearly communicated; decisions are made collectively; and outcomes should not only be economic, but also social benefits. However, Augustyn and Knowles (2000) also conclude on recommendations more specific to PPPs, responding to some critical observations they made in their study of a tourism partnership in York. They noticed an emphasis on public sector involvement in PPP and call for a more direct and wider engagement of private institutions in order to ensure a balance between both sectors (Augustyn & Knowles, 2000). The

problem of power relations takes effect here too, in the context of intra-organisational participation: not only managers and experts should be involved in the collaboration process, but also employees, who are the most important and direct link between the organisation and the customers and whose empowerment in the partnership with a public institution can improve their motivation to commit to the company's and the partnership's goals (ibid).

March and Wilkinson (2009) as well as Martin and McBoyle (2006) notice an increase in public-private tourism partnerships, especially in the marketing area. The public sector provides key aspects of the tourism experience, such as infrastructure and information centres, both important for the interpretation of the site from side of the visitor (March & Wilkinson, 2009). At the same time, especially financial, but also other capacities can be joined and the project turns out to be more cost- and staff-effective, offering a better-quality service (Wilson et al., 2009).

3.2.2. Sub-conclusion: Integrating economic, environmental and social sustainability

The literature is divided into two camps concerning the needs for an integration of economic, environmental and social sustainability. Gibson (2006) and Crews (2010) for instance share the opinion that a focus on balancing the three pillars includes trade-offs, which should never be aimed at and exclude from the very beginning a successful implementation of sustainable development. According to Gibson (2006), a view on economic, environmental and social sustainability as three separate pillars is difficult when it comes to issues which are not clearly attributable to one of the pillars. If involved experts are trained separately in one of the dimensions and public authorities are classified into environmental, social or economic responsibilities, what happens when for instance citizens are raising their concerns, which are often not solely or clearly economic, social or environmental (Gibson, 2006)? Instead, Gibson (2006) as well as Crews (2010) advocate for an integrated approach to sustainability, which means that the three dimensions are seen from the very beginning as interconnected and interdependent, and sustainable development doesn't happen at the intersection of its three pillars, but through a holistic and integrative perspective on economic, environmental and socio-cultural circumstances and outcomes.

Cater (1995) on the other hand assesses trade-offs as something inevitable when trying to find the best solution for everybody involved and a solution that is optimal from all point of views – environmental, economic and socio-cultural – is not possible to reach. While this might be true to a certain extent, it is still important to strive for the optimum and use the approach that for instance Crews (2010) and Hansmann et al. (2012) suggest: putting the focus on mutual benefits instead of trade-offs. A proper implementation of sustainable development requests the involvement of participants from public, private and civil sector (Gibson, 2006) and through creating a win-win situation for all concerned, instead of just conciliating them with compromises, a satisfying and

sustainable solution can be found that will last in a long term. As mentioned before, challenges and conflicts are common when different interests are to be reconciled and Hansmann et al. (2012) confirm through their research the emergence of conflicts specifically when the dimensions of sustainability are tried to be balanced or integrated, or the other way around, the integration of the three pillars was initiated following the emergence of conflicts. Resolving these issues is therefore an essential aspect of finding synergies between economic, environmental and social sustainability and creating an integrative approach to the implementation of sustainable development.

4. Analysis – Cooperation and sustainable tourism development in Slovenia

4.1. The Green Teams: Cooperation for sustainable tourism development?

4.1.1. Identification of stakeholders – Over-representation of the public sector

The identification of relevant stakeholders is left to the individual destinations participating in the Green Scheme of Sustainable Tourism (GSST). The 'Green Coordinator', which is chosen by GreenPlace and is mostly a member of the local Tourist Board, is in charge of gathering together the principal organisations and individuals who have an influence on tourism development. This is the second step in the admission process of the GSST (see Chapter 2.1.1) and follows the recommendations given by the European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS) (European Commission, 2016). This approach allows an individual approach to sustainable tourism, adapted to the circumstances that prevail in the particular destination. As specified in the ETIS toolkit, *"there is no one set formula that works for every destination. It is important to be flexible and to take an approach that best suits the destination and the group of people involved"* (European Commission, 2016, p. 14). Only people living and working in the destination have this knowledge and can assess who would be important to involve. An external entity, such as GoodPlace in this case, might have the theoretical knowledge about legitimate stakeholders in a tourist destination, but is not able to assess the situation on-site.

However, this approach seems to reinforce power relations in the destination. Only one institution has the control over the formation of the Green Team, and can make these decisions autonomously. Who is part of the Green Team depends on the priorities and opinions of the one organisation, or in some cases even of the one person, which is in charge of the GSST as Green Coordinator. As Slovenia is a small country, everybody knows everybody and professional relations are often also becoming personal relations to some point. This makes it on the one hand easier to form collaborative arrangements, as contacts are either already established, or easy to establish via a mutual contact. On the other hand, it prevents an unbiased perspective on the situation and on the existing possibilities: those stakeholders that are already part of the network and have been involved in collaborative arrangements before, will be privileged over those that have been left out. This way, power relations are reinforced instead of balanced.

In Kamnik for instance, Sara Bitenc from the local Tourist Board invited stakeholders to the Green Team according to her experiences in working together with them and her personal impression of their motivations and values (Bitenc, 2017a). The result is a Green Team dominated by the public sector, with four of the six members being part of different municipal departments, only two tourism businesses – both hotels – and no representatives of the civil sector. In Maribor as well, only one member of the Green Team is representing a private sector institution, and the civil sector is not

involved at all. In both destinations, there are members of the Green Team though who would like representatives of the local population to be further involved, Peter Pančur in Kamnik and Marko Kac in Maribor, and who mentioned the importance of the participation and empowerment of the civil sector (Pančur, 2017; Kac, 2017). Interestingly, this importance seems to be understood by the private sector, while members of the public sector think it is enough to inform the local population (Razlag, 2017) or to provide them with jobs (Slapar, 2017). These types of ‘participation’ don’t include any kind of decision-making or active participation in the development of tourism and can’t therefore be considered as empowering for the local population. As the public sector is over-represented in both Green Teams, and the private sector doesn’t seem to be highly motivated to bring this problem to the table, the situation is not likely to change for a while. However, Sara Bitenc and Karmen Razlag both said that the Green Teams should include more members from different organisations and sectors in the future, a concrete plan or time line doesn’t exist though (Bitenc, 2017a; Razlag, 2017).

Especially in Slovenia, the involvement of the civil sector could be easily applicable through the Tourism Associations (*Turistična Društva*). Every town has several *Turistična Društva*, one for every district, and they consist of locals who are interested in tourism development and spend their free time to organise events or engage in other touristic activities (Ugovšek, 2017). These associations already gather members of the local population who have an interest in tourism and would be an obvious opportunity to include the voice of the civil sector into the GSST. But neither in Kamnik nor in Maribor this opportunity is taken. In both destinations, the existence of those *Turistična Društva* is acknowledged and valued, especially through the fact that they are financially supported by the municipalities (Slapar, 2017; Razlag, 2017). The collaboration between the municipality and the *Turistična Društva* seems however to be limited to the organisation of cultural events and their inclusion into the Green Teams is not a serious consideration.

The involvement of the private sector is perceived as an important aspect and Sara Bitenc as well as Karmen Razlag expressed their concerns that, in the initial phase of the GSST in both destinations, the private sector was not represented enough (Bitenc, 2017a; Razlag, 2017). The evaluation report in Kamnik especially mentioned the lack of cooperation with tourism business in the fields of energy consumption and the development of sustainable tourism products (Klavora & Apih, 2016a). In Kamnik, two private sector stakeholders were then added to the Green Team, chosen because of their importance for tourism development in Kamnik and because of their engagement in sustainability (Bitenc, 2017a). Important is however that not only the powerful actors are involved in sustainable tourism development, but also, and especially, the small, less powerful ones. Not only the two largest hotels should have a voice, but also the small restaurant and shop owners. As mentioned in Chapter 3.2.1.2, it is important that they are included from the very beginning, in order to feel genuinely integrated and taken seriously, and be able to contribute efficiently with obtaining all the

necessary knowledge (Bramwell & Sharman, 1999). By excluding them in the beginning and only inviting them to join after a while, as Sara Bitenc is planning to, important opportunities can be lost, they might feel neglected and their motivation might be diminished.

Karmen Razlag on the other hand raised the concern that no hotel exists in Maribor that received a certification for sustainable tourism and that there is no stakeholder that is actually representing sustainable tourism in Maribor to the outside (Razlag, 2017). It is not said if this is the reason why no tourism business is part of the Green Team, but when observing the members of the Green Team in Maribor it becomes clear that, similar to Kamnik, only powerful stakeholders are involved, and only those who are known for being able to enforce tourism policies and planning, and not those who should be able to enforce tourism policies and planning. The impression occurs, that, as there is no private tourism business engaging in sustainable tourism practices, they are not 'worth' being involved in the GSST.

This under-representation of the private sector might be the reason why no notable actions have been taken since introduction of the GSST in both destinations. While the local Tourist Board, the Department for Development and Investment and the Department for Environmental Protection can bring together important theoretical knowledge and draft plans for the development of sustainable tourism, the implementation of these plans does depend on the businesses that are in daily contact with the tourists and are ultimately responsible for the success of tourism in the destination. If they are not involved in the conception of the plans and can't bring in their knowledge about challenges in their daily business, the plans won't possibly meet their actual needs.

4.1.2. Organisation of the Green Teams – Lack of awareness among the stakeholders

Since introduction of the GSST, the Green Teams in Maribor as well as in Kamnik didn't meet frequently. The Kamnik team met once, in order for Sara Bitenc to introduce the GSST. According to her, they went through the Action Plan, which has been prepared by the Kamnik Tourist Board, and everybody could give his or her opinion about the steps that are being planned (Bitenc, 2017a). According to what has been said in that meeting, the Annual Report was prepared, responding to new challenges which arose in the year since the first Action Plan (ibid). These Annual Reports are a central monitoring instrument in the GSST and involving all members of the Green Team in creating it allows to include as many perspectives and gather as much knowledge as possible. Furthermore, the Action Plan, and based on this the Annual Report, determines necessary actions and roles and responsibilities are distributed among stakeholders. Most of these responsibilities are attributed to the local Tourist Board (Kamnik Tourism and Sport Agency, *Zavod za turizem, šport in kulturo Kamnik (ZTŠKK)*) and the others either to the municipality or to Terme Snovik. As Peter Pančur from Guesthouse Repnik is, according to Sara Bitenc (2017a), not actively participating in anything related to the GSST and didn't

take part in the creation of the Annual Report, no actions could be created or assigned to him and his guesthouse, and the contribution of the private sector is once again diminished in relation to the role of the public sector. This is especially striking considering some of the actions in the Annual Report that are consistent with what Peter Pančur is anticipating, for instance the development of local supply chain management or the improvement of the infrastructure on Velika Planina (Pančur, 2017; Bitenc, 2017b). Both parties have difficulties to reach out to the farmers and owners of tourist cottages on Velika Planina and make them understand the importance of reducing the traffic on the mountain (Strajnar, 2017; Pančur, 2017), but by pooling their efforts and resources, they could be more successful.

In Maribor, no meeting has taken place since the introduction of the GSST, and the only action that was undertaken in relation to it was the completion of the initial data report in order to be able to join the GSST (Razlag, 2017). Next to the actual Green Team, there is also a 'brighter' team, as Karmen Razlag (2017) called it, consisting of all the different municipal companies, like the public utility or waste disposal company. The role of this team was not to engage in any way in the GSST, but exclusively to provide the necessary information for the data report. The role of the core Green Team was then to gather this data together and create the report. Since then, neither an Action Plan nor an Annual Report have been created and the GSST seems to be on hold (ibid). Karmen Razlag (2017) justifies this with the absence of a manager for the Tourist Board and the lack of support from within the Tourist Board, as she is the only one in charge of the GSST currently. All the other members of the Green Team seem to be waiting for something to happen, too busy with their own business and not motivated to initiate something on their own. Marko Kac from the Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship mentioned several times that it is the Tourist Board's responsibility to move forward, similar to Igor Kos from the mayor's office (Kac, 2017; Kos, 2017). According to the interviewees, some projects have been initiated or are in the preparation phase, which could be related to sustainable tourism development (Kos, 2017; Kac, 2017; Bobič Červek, 2017; further explained in Chapter 4.2), but the lack of an assessment of the *status quo* of sustainable tourism activities in the destination in form of an Action Plan or an Annual Report, like the GSST requires, makes the coordination of these projects and a measurement of their actual contribution difficult.

This also shows that there is a lack of awareness concerning the GSST, its existence and its importance (Razlag, 2017; Bitenc, 2017), which is why most of the stakeholders are not motivated to further engage. In the private sector, this is especially apparent: Peter Pančur in Kamnik as well as Marko Kac in Maribor are very engaged in involving the civil sector in their activities and perceive this as a crucial aspect of sustainable tourism development (Pančur, 2017; Kac, 2017), but are not considering the possibility to promote the civil sector's involvement in the respective Green Team. This suggests that they don't perceive the Green Team, and hence the GSST, as a tool to actively provoke

change. In Peter Pančur's case, this is due to a lack of trust towards the public sector which is coordinating the Green Team and the GSST. Marko Kac sees himself rather as a consulting entity for the Maribor-Pohorje Tourist Board than an active member of the Green Team. Along the lines of what has been noted in Chapter 3.2.1.3, the lack of trust and the prevailing power relations entail that especially private sector stakeholders don't see the benefits of actively participating in the GSST and prefer solving problems on their own (Robert & Simpson, 1999; Bramwell & Lane, 2000).

A problem might be created by the fact that the entities that are involved in the GSST are mainly not from the tourism sector and don't have this topic on their daily schedule. First, this is a positive aspect as tourism is influenced and has an influence on other sectors and needs input from their perspectives. However, with regular meetings and more active involvement going beyond the completion of a questionnaire, they would be confronted with the topic more regularly and their understanding of sustainable tourism would become clearer. They would also develop the capacity to create a relation between their daily work – for instance in the Department for Environmental Conservation – with tourism development and an understanding of how tourism is intertwined with many different other sectors. Through the lack of personnel within the public institutions in Kamnik as well as in Maribor the employees in charge of the GSST have multiple other responsibilities and can't focus on the GSST, not even the coordinator of the GSST herself. In Kamnik, this problem has been noted in the first Action Plan created in the context of the GSST and has been, according to Sara Bitenc, resolved by increasing the staff of the local Tourist Board to 15 employees (Bitenc, 2017a; Bitenc, 2017b; Bitenc & Hribar, 2016). In Maribor, the lack of a manager for the local Tourist Board put the GSST on hold, but Karmen Razlag ensured that work on the GSST will be resumed as soon as the new manager starts (Razlag, 2017). This happened in May 2017, which was unfortunately too late for the researcher to observe if progress took place.

Time is here an important aspect, because a lot of it is needed to sensitise the stakeholders concerning sustainable tourism and provide a framework for effective collaboration. In both destinations, the time since entering the GSST is not perceived as long enough to raise awareness among and educate everyone who should be involved in sustainable tourism development (Bitenc, 2017a; Razlag, 2017). In this context, a focus is put on the education of the private sector: meetings in Kamnik taking place twice a year and workshops planned in Maribor are dealing with the basics of sustainability or certifications for tourism providers (ibid). This kind of activities are important for bringing all stakeholders on the same level of knowledge and are a good occasion for them to connect to each other. In this case and in relation to the Green Teams it is however important for the municipality, who is organising the workshops, to respond to the needs of the private sector, concerning the content of the workshops as well as the setting. Otherwise there is the risk that the members of the private sector won't feel that they are taken seriously and are reluctant to participate

or even to deal with the whole topic. Peter Pančur for instance complained about the bad timing of one of these meetings in Kamnik, that took place in the beginning of the high season when he had no time to genuinely deal with anything else than with his guests (Pančur, 2017). The resulting impression is that these workshops are only being organised “*for the sake of doing it*” (Pančur, 2017). Also, it could be interesting to invite members of the Tourist Associations to such workshops and connect the private and the civil sector through collective learning.

Overall the approaches to organising the Green Team varies between Kamnik and Maribor, which is also justified by the different sizes of the two destinations. In Kamnik, the coordination of the Green Team might be easier, because the number of relevant stakeholders is smaller and it is less problematic to reach out to them. In Maribor on the other hand, the network of tourism stakeholders is larger and some of them are also acting on the international stage, for instance with projects in cooperation with the European Union (further explained in Chapter 4.2). This makes it more difficult to attract the attention of everyone who would be relevant and make them commit to the GSST and/or the Green Team. The division of the Green Team in a ‘core’ and a ‘broad’ Green Team makes sense in this context; however it should still be made sure that the broad Green Team is informed and has the possibility to express concerns and opinions in the same way than the core Green Team. The concentration of actual decision-making capacities to only the few stakeholders that form the core Green Team is justified, as it ensures more efficient communication and a clearer decision-making process (de Araujo & Bramwell, 1999; Bramwell & Sharman, 1999).

4.1.3. Cooperation in the context of the GSST

As already insinuated in the paragraphs before, cooperation is a critical topic in Kamnik as well as in Maribor, especially between the private and the public sector.

Peter Pančur is very engaged in working together with the civil sector and mentioned plans to reinforce the connection between those groups, for instance mountaineering associations, the shepherd communities on Velika Planina or local fishermen, and tourism businesses, like hotels and restaurants (Pančur, 2017). Interestingly, he intentionally excludes the public sector from this collaboration and perceives the plan to connect the civil sector as his personal task, without communicating it to the other members of the Green Team (ibid). Of course, the municipality doesn’t need to be involved in every project, nor does Peter Pančur need to obtain the permission for his plans, but as already mentioned in Chapter 4.1.2, the public and private sector are both reaching out for the same goal concerning the development of Velika Planina and here, joint planning and the coordination of efforts would benefit the effectivity of the project.

So far, the Green Team served, in terms of collaboration, mainly for knowledge transfer between its members. During the only meeting that took place in Kamnik, the Action Plan was analysed and

every stakeholder could give his opinion about the given solution statements and, if applicable, make alternative suggestions. This way, problems were examined from different perspectives and the best solution could be found. For instance, the Action Plan allowed for trash bins to be installed on Velika Planina for better waste management (Bitenc & Hribar, 2016). But during the meeting, Alenka Babnic from the Department for Environmental Protection explained that trash bins would only worsen the situation, because people would get used to leave their trash up in the mountains, even if the bins are full, and somebody else would have to take all the trash down to the valley (Bitenc, 2017a). Without trash bins, people rather tend to keep their trash and bring it back down to the valley themselves. Like this, the Action Plan was revised step after step in order to create the Annual Report, a “*new, improved Action Plan*” (Bitenc, 2017a). This is an effective way to create an Action Plan or any kind of plan or report, and certainly one of the intended aims of the Green Team: sharing and combining knowledge from different disciplines to reach the best possible solution.

The Green Consortium is a helpful measure to connect the different destinations and tourism providers that are part of the GSST and to give them the possibility to not only learn together, but also from each other. This way, best practice examples can be given, destinations on all three levels of the GSST can exchange views and collaborative arrangements can be formed. The Green Consortium was for instance invited to come to the *Internationale Tourismusbörse* (ITB) in Berlin, the world’s largest tourism fair and to be part of the publication ‘Green News’, where they could promote their destinations and businesses. However, the fact that a membership is chargeable and not mandatory creates a competitive advantage for the members of the Green Consortium, because they gain knowledge and establish contacts, which the other members of the GSST don’t. The encouragement of competition is useful and important, but in this context, the learning process of all members is more important and it should be made sure that all of them have the same base of knowledge and capacities in order to develop sustainable tourism in the most effective way possible. Here, competition and appearances seem to be paramount. Instead of making the Green Consortium an option, the admission fee could be included in the fee that has to be paid anyways when joining the GSST. This way, the Green Consortium would lose its exclusivity, but everybody would benefit from the community that the GSST is.

As no extensive collaborative action has been taken so far in neither of the two Green Teams, projects will be analysed in the following that have been mentioned by the interviewees as contributing to sustainable development of Kamnik and Maribor as tourist destinations. This way synergies between the three pillars of sustainability will be identified and it will be assessed, what issues emerged or can emerge, what success criteria might be and how collaboration influences the process.

4.2. Balancing the three pillars of sustainability

4.2.1. Linking social and economic sustainability – Sustainable supply chain management

In both destinations, projects are established aiming at developing a sustainable supply chain from local producers to hotels and restaurants. Sustainable supply chain management can have important economic benefits, by providing a high-quality product that customers are willing to purchase for a higher price. Furthermore, because of the proximity of production place and selling point, it is likelier that a regular supply is guaranteed in a long term. Furthermore, socio-cultural sustainability is triggered by supporting local cuisine and traditions, but also by involving and empowering local producers.

4.2.1.1. *Taste Kamnik*

In Kamnik, the project is called ‘Taste Kamnik’ and is part of a larger project, ‘Taste Central Slovenia’, which involves municipalities in the whole region of Central Slovenia (Kamnik Tourism and Sports Agency, 2017). So far, the focus in Kamnik seems to be set on a culinary experience for tourists and the presentation of typical regional or local dishes, and less on local sourcing and the involvement of local producers (ibid). The introduction of local dishes to the menus of restaurants and hotels in order to attract tourists is prioritised before making sure that the local dishes are actually being sourced locally. This only became apparent when examining the Tourism Strategy ‘*Turizem Kamnik 2025*’, where ‘Taste Kamnik’ is mentioned several times as one of the most important, currently existing tourism products in Kamnik, but the development of a local supply chain system is only mentioned very briefly and imprecisely (Kamnik Tourism and Sports Agency, 2016). It is also one of the steps of the ‘upgrade’ of Taste Kamnik and wasn’t on the plan in the initial phase of the project (ibid). Matej Slapar from the municipality of Kamnik also highlighted the value of the brand, which is ‘Taste Kamnik’ (*‘Okusi Kamnika’* in Slovene), for the participating businesses and the increase in sales, but didn’t refer to the opportunity this could be for local producers and farmers (Slapar, 2017). This is also confirmed by the evaluation report in the frame of the GSST, that mentioned ‘Taste Kamnik’ as an effective promotional tool for cultural heritage in Kamnik, but also recommended the further development of the project in terms of local supply chain management (Klavora & Apih, 2016a). The demand side of the supply chain appears to be prioritised because much concrete plans exist to improve the quality of the products and of the experience than to further develop partnerships with the producers (Kamnik Tourism and Sports Agency, 2016; Slapar, 2017). However, as part of the ‘Taste Kamnik’ project, a market is organised once a month where local producers have the possibility to sell their products (Ljubljana Tourism Board, 2017). This is a first step to include local producers and strengthen their position in the local economy by making them more visible. Now a next step should be to encourage partnerships between the local businesses and local producers on a regular basis in order to support the social aspect of sustainability in Kamnik.

4.2.1.2. *Institute for Innovativeness and Entrepreneurship in Maribor*

In Maribor, the process was managed differently. It wasn't the municipality or the Tourist Board who initiated the development of local supply chain management, but Marko Kac and his Institute for Innovativeness and Entrepreneurship (*Zavod za inovativnost in podjetništvo* (ZIP)). In 2014, as part of the project 'Regio Vitalis', he initiated together with Austrian partners the INNO-RURAL network, supposed to foster the partnership between tourism and local producers and farmers in order to establish sustainable supply chains in the whole region of Styria in Austria and in Slovenia (ZIP, 2014). Meetings and workshops were organised that brought together businesses and producers and put a focus on the social and economic sustainability of the supply chains (Kac, 2017). When the 'Regio Vitalis' project was finalised in 2016, a succeeding project was initiated, 'Flagship products' (ibid). This shows that there is genuine interest in the topic of sustainable supply chain management and cooperation and that it is not given up just because the project period is over. During the interview, Marko Kac also made clear how important cooperation across all sectors is when it comes to sustainable tourism development (Kac, 2017).

As a private non-profit organisation, ZIP is in a good position to be the linking element between the different sectors, because it is a neutral and independent entity whose main interest is not the generation of profit. Marko Kac has been operating for 20 years in the area of tourism and sustainability and has the necessary knowledge, experience and contacts to create such links between the private, the public and the civil sector. However, still only very few tourism businesses in Maribor implemented sustainable supply chain management into their operations (Kac, 2017; Razlag, 2017). Here the priorities seemed to be reversed compared to Kamnik: the cooperation with local producers and their involvement is paramount, and cooperative arrangements are mostly created with tourism businesses in the countryside, while the promotion and presentation of these efforts and products towards tourists in order to attract larger numbers doesn't seem to be actively pursued. In order to reach economic sustainability for the local producers, it is however important to cooperate with larger businesses and/or businesses in Maribor, where most of the tourists in the region are concentrated, and to stimulate the demand for local products.

Overall it can be said that in both destinations, efforts are made to introduce local supply chain management and to link it to sustainable tourism development, but in both destinations the link between the social and the economic pillar didn't succeed completely yet. Interestingly, both destinations went in opposite directions compared to each other, which suggests that a balance between the involvement of the Tourist Board and a non-profit organisation – so-to-speak a cooperation between the public and the voluntary sector – could be useful for achieving a balance between economic and social sustainability.

4.2.2. Linking social and environmental sustainability: Sustainable mobility and infrastructure

In Kamnik and in Maribor plans are being developed to improve the infrastructure in the destination and promote more sustainable mobility, among tourists as well as among locals. These projects are not directly bound to tourism development, but have a large impact on how tourists behave in the destination, how they perceive it and how their visit impacts the natural and social environment. By focussing on the development of sustainable mobility and infrastructure, environmental damages are reduced, which doesn't only benefit the nature and the climate, but also the health and therefore the well-being of the local population.

4.2.2.1. *Integrated Transport Strategy for Kamnik*

Recently, a new mobility plan has been set up in Kamnik, focussing on the development of sustainable mobility (Municipality of Kamnik, 2017). The plan has been set up after identifying problems and concerns that local residents raised, for instance safety issues for pedestrians and cyclists or lacking intermodality between different public transport means (ibid). Based on this, and the need to adapt the traffic situation to Slovenia's strategy towards sustainable development, cycling paths are expanded – in the city as well as to areas around the city centre, mainly tourist areas –, safety measures are taken for pedestrians and cyclists, public transportation is further developed to make it more comfortable for local residents and charging stations for electric cars and bikes are installed (Municipality of Kamnik, 2017; Slapar, 2017; Strajnar, 2017). Car traffic, which is the most popular means of traffic in Slovenia, is still growing steadily in Kamnik (Municipality of Kamnik, 2017). This trend is tried to be discouraged by making public transport and cycling more attractive and hence, slowly but steadily, change the preferences and habits of the local residents (ibid).

This is also a crucial point for tourism development. Even though the tourists coming to Kamnik are interested in nature and deceleration, and they are especially demanding environmentally sustainable experiences (Pančur, 2017), there is not enough of them to motivate a long-lasting transition to sustainable mobility in Kamnik. This transition has to come from 'inside' in order to last in a long-term, which is why the municipality's approach to create a change of the residents' habits through incentives such as easier public transport connections or subsidising the bus fare for workers or residents with special needs is the right approach. This way, the needs and wishes of the local population – safer and more comfortable public transportation and cycling – are combined with the needs of the natural environment and the tourism industry – more and more sustainable transportation.

As mentioned in Chapter 3.2.2, trade-offs are oftentimes condoned as inevitable when trying to integrate the dimensions of sustainability (Cater, 1995), but should be turned into a win-win situation

for the involved parties, contributing with mutual benefits (Hansmann et al., 2012; Crews, 2010). In this case the residents have to compromise, in a short term, by reducing the use of fossil-fuelled cars, but are in the same time provided with alternatives such as improved public transport or cycle lanes. In a long term, they will benefit from more efficient mobility options, better health and possibly even more income through an increase in tourism spending. From part of the municipality it is important to not impose these measure on the residents, but to inform them about their plans and give them the opportunity to be part of the planning process. This could for instance be achieved through a trial phase in which roads are closed for car traffic over an extended period of time. This way, residents and visitors can experience the change and give their feedback and the municipality can assess what consequences such a transition would have.

4.2.2.2. *Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) for Maribor*

Such a trial phase was carried out in Maribor, where a transition to more sustainable mobility and infrastructure is also aimed at (Municipality of Maribor, 2015). In the context of the European Mobility Week in 2015, the main traffic road in the city centre was closed during three weeks in order to assess the impact of such a measure on the whole traffic system (Kos, 2017). The results showed that no major traffic chaos occurred through the closure of the city centre, which encouraged the municipality to close the city centre permanently for individual transport, only allowing bikes and public transportation (ibid). An important aspect here is also that through the exclusion of traffic, the river bank, which is currently one of the main traffic artery of the city, can be used to develop green spaces and leisure offers (Municipality of Kamnik, 2017; Kos, 2017). Loudness and stress caused by car traffic will be directly replaced by nature and relaxation, which will not only increase the quality of life in the city centre but also increase the chances that more tourists are attracted to this area.

While this certainly has a very positive effect on the natural environment as well as on the quality of life in the city centre, the opinion among residents about such a measure is reticent (Razlag, 2017; Kos, 2017) and an implementation should be treated cautiously. Igor Kos is convinced that closing the city centre for traffic is the right thing to do: “[...] *you have to choose, what is important: health of the people, or commodity. And, for me this is not a choice*” (Kos, 2017). This quote shows very clearly the power relations which are at play and that, no matter what, the municipality has ultimately the power to decide. It is not sure where the motivation comes from to encourage more sustainable infrastructure and mobility that fiercely, but considering the fact that higher business investments in the city centre are expected once it is organised more attractively (Kos, 2017), it can be assumed that the well-being of the local population is not the only ambition. However, some of the actions mentioned in the mobility plan for Maribor have already been implemented, for instance free internet on public busses, safe bicycle storages, real time passenger information at bus stops and the

development of a bike route system throughout the city (Municipality of Maribor, 2017). These measures are making public transport and bike traffic safer and more comfortable and result, according to Igor Kos, in an increased share of for instance bike traffic, compared to all traffic in Maribor (from five percent to eleven percent in the last five years) (Kos, 2017). In a long-term, this reduces negative influences on the natural environment and promotes a healthier way of life among residents and visitors. However, it has to be ensured that the measures taken are supported by the local residents, so that their implementation can be successful.

In Kamnik as well as in Maribor it is tried to find a link between environmental and social sustainability by adapting mobility and infrastructure according to sustainable principles. In Kamnik, the opinion of the local population seems to be further integrated on the first sight, because the mobility plan is based on a survey among the local population, which doesn't seem to be the fact in Maribor. If the implementation of the announced measures will take place, and will take place according to the needs of the residents, cannot be assessed so far, as the mobility plan has been developed so recently that no implementation measures have been taken yet. However, the foundation for a balance between environmental and social needs is set in both destinations and further collaboration between the municipality and the local residents is needed to implement it in an adequate way.

4.2.3. Linking economic and environmental sustainability

4.2.3.1. *RESOLVE: Revival of the city centre in Maribor*

The RESOLVE project in Maribor with its aim to revive the city centre is examined here separately from the development of sustainable mobility and infrastructure, because it has an explicit focus which distinguishes it from the rest of the endeavour. While the mobility strategy for Maribor has the aim to introduce an environmentally friendly approach to mobility in Maribor and improve the quality of life of the citizens, the RESOLVE project focusses on boosting the local economy in the city centre while considering environmentally friendly transport and delivery (Kolesarič, 2017; Interreg Europe, 2017a).

The RESOLVE project is supported by the European Union and includes partners from nine different cities across Europe (Interreg Europe, 2017a). These partners are working together on a regular basis in the context of study visits and peer review trips to the different cities, in order to evaluate the individual progresses, learn from each other and collectively develop solutions (ibid). This partnership allows for the analysis of problems from different perspectives and the possibility to experience best practices – and potentially bad practices – first hand. This knowledge can then be used to improve own practices. In April, a peer review visit took place in Maribor, where partners and experts from three partner cities came to evaluate and discuss Maribor's situation (Interreg Europe, 2017b). Topics were the enhancement of pedestrian zones, cycle routes and public transport as well

as the reduction or optimisation of delivery in the city centre in order to reduce negative environmental influences without harming local businesses (ibid).

It can be seen that, at least in the planning phase of the RESOLVE project, the focus on the support of the local economy is set for all measures and the involvement of and cooperation with local shop-owners is mentioned as an important step (Interreg Europe, 2017b). This is a crucial aspect: in order to actually boost the economy in the city centre, it is necessary to involve those who are creating the economy in the city centre. This gives them a certain power here, which makes them indispensable to the municipality and an important partner to be involved. The RESOLVE project is therefore a good example for public-private partnership (PPP), also contributing to the development of tourism development as not only residents but also tourists are important customers for businesses in the city centre. According to this, the first steps that have been implemented by the municipality of Maribor concern the communication with the owners of the businesses in the city centre in order to find out what their needs are to increase their success and how much delivery can be adapted to reduce the negative impact on the environment. For instance, Gordana Kolesarič from the Department of Development and Investments, responsible for carrying out the RESOLVE project, found out that the very short opening hours of shops, restaurants and cultural institutions in the city centre are discouraging customers to come to the city centre and lead them to go the shopping mall instead (Kolesarič, 2017). Even though the owners and members of the staff are aware of this issue, nothing is done about it (ibid). By involving the municipality and creating a stakeholder working group with all the business owners in the city centre, the reason for such inactivity can be found and awareness can be risen towards the benefits of adapting the businesses to the customers' needs. On the other hand, this working group also serves to find out how mobility in the city centre can be organised more sustainably, for instance by planning common deliveries for several shops or restaurants at the same time (Kolesarič, 2017). The positive response of the local business owners towards the RESOLVE project so far and their complaints about a missing link between them and the municipality (Kolesarič, 2017) shows that such a cooperation is overdue and can create change, but only emerges now, when the initiative comes from such a powerful institution as the European Union.

Economic and environmental sustainability can be achieved here by involving the business owners and using the municipality's resources and capacities to fulfil their needs while at the same time reducing carbon emissions where possible. It is important though to take care that the economic interests don't overrule the environmental aspect of the project. As mentioned in Chapter 3.2.1.3, businesses are likely to prioritise their economic success (Wilson et al., 2009), which puts the municipality in the responsibility of raising awareness and pushing the businesses towards more environmentally friendly operations. The cooperation on an international level with European partners

and experts working on the same field gives here the necessary input and inspiration about how this issue has been solved in other cities.

4.2.3.2. *Organisation of sustainable events*

The organisation of events has an important impact on tourism development, as events are often the reason why visitors are coming to a destination and are hence responsible for a large part of tourism income. If managed successfully, they can lead to economic sustainability in the destination by generating income regularly. On the other hand, taking into consideration the environmental impacts of events becomes more and more important (Dickson & Arcodia, 2010) and by organising an event according to sustainable principles damages to the natural environment can be limited while awareness towards the importance of nature protection and preservation can be risen.

In Maribor, several events are organised throughout the year, attracting domestic as well as international visitors. As Živa Bobič Červek (2017) explained, the Department for Environmental Conservation is putting efforts into convincing the organisers of those events, especially outdoor events, to apply sustainable measure such as the use of eco-friendly cups or the reduction or avoidance of fireworks. She perceives it as a difficult endeavour, as the event organisers' main goal is to attract as many visitors as possible while keeping the expenses as low as possible, and both eco-friendly cups and less fireworks are working against these goals – in a short term. Only through municipal ordinances concerning these two topics, the Department for Environmental Conservation could enforce more sustainable practices for the organisation of events (Bobič Červek, 2017). This shows the high focus on economic benefits that is prevailing in the event industry in Maribor and the need for the municipality to raise much more awareness about the importance of more sustainability in the organisation of such large events. For another event for instance, the Department for Environmental Conservation advertised the use of bikes instead of cars to come to the festival, so that the area around the festival ground would not be damaged by too many cars parking there (Bobič Červek, 2017).

In general, the Department of Environmental Conservation is suggesting to every event organiser in Maribor to comply with the 'Manual for the Organisation of Sustainable Sport Events' (*'Priročnik Za Organizacijo Trajnostnih Športnih Dogodkov'*) that has been developed by the non-governmental organisation Umanotera based in Ljubljana (Umanotera, 2013). The eleven key criteria promoted in this manual for organising sustainable events (Management, Communication, Supply, CSR, Venue & Infrastructure, Natural Environment, Mobility, Energy, Waste, Food & Beverage and Water) and the 108 sub-criteria are mainly aiming at creating an environmentally friendly event and suggest actions such as the offset of greenhouse gas emissions, the use of renewable energy and the offer of regional and seasonal food and beverages (ibid). All these measures are not negatively impacting the economic efficiency of the event, especially not if introduced regularly and in a long

term. According to Živa Bobič Červek, most of the event organisers don't take into consideration the guidelines (Bobič Červek, 2017). This shows that voluntary measures for more sustainability in the organisation and implementation of events are not taken, and the event organisers need to be further informed and motivated.

The continual effort that the Department of Environmental Protection puts into informing organisers as well as guests about sustainable measures shows their commitment to the topic, but also the effect of imposing such measures. The event organisers are complying because they have to, and not because they are convinced of the need for eco-friendly cups or sustainable mobility options for the guests. The result is that, every year, the municipality and the organisers have to negotiate again and put more efforts into defending their respective interests, resulting – most likely – in another municipal ordinance and the same problem in the following year. In the beginning, it might thus be helpful to create incentives for the event organisers, such as an eco-label for sustainable events, or to organise educational meetings and workshops for them in order to introduce them in more depth to the issue and the environmental consequences of events. This way environmental sustainability could gain in importance in a long term and be linked to the economic sustainability of successful events.

5. Conclusion

The Green Teams in Slovenia are predominated by public institutions, namely the local Tourist Boards and several different municipal departments. The few represented private businesses are those that are known as already having a large impact on tourism development and are also not very interested in actively contributing to the Green Team's activities, unless they are asked for support. The civil sector is completely left out, even though its involvement could be very straightforward by inviting members of the Tourism Associations (*Turistična Društva*).

The goal of the GSST, and hence of the Green Teams, should not solely be to monitor the progress of sustainable tourism development, as most of the involved stakeholders are perceiving it. In order to adequately do that, it should bring together all the stakeholders that are important for sustainable tourism and create a collaborative environment in which the powerful as well as the less powerful can contribute. Therefore, the Green Coordinators should engage in genuinely identifying all legitimate stakeholders through for instance a thorough network analysis, not by following their feeling or acting out of convenience, and find a balance between public, private, civil and voluntary sector that suits the need of the destination. Awareness and trust need to be risen in both destinations, especially between the private and the public sector, so that all stakeholders understand the benefits of being involved in the Green Team and can use this partnership to effectively pool their knowledge and resources. Important here is also the consideration of other sectors' interests and needs from part of those who are in charge, as shows the example of educational meetings organised by the Tourist Board in Kamnik for the private sector. Very simple things like a bad timing can harm a good relationship and impede a successful cooperation and can be prevented easily.

So far, the Green Team mainly served as a knowledge sharing platform in Kamnik, and as a monitoring tool in Maribor. Even though these are certainly aims of the GSST, relations and partnerships can be created through the Green Team that can further boost the development of sustainable tourism by bringing together stakeholders that would otherwise not become connected. No other associations exist neither in Maribor nor in Kamnik, which are exclusively dealing with sustainable tourism development, so this tool should be used and exploited as much as possible.

As the second half of Chapter 4 shows, such cooperative arrangements can be useful to find a balance between economic, environmental and social sustainability. The voluntary sector plays here an important role as neutral and independent entity that has the ability to mediate between conflicting parties, here for instance the public and the private sector. In order to provoke change in a long term, the motivation has to come from 'inside' the involved parties and can't be imposed on them, which is why an intermediary entity is needed to point out the importance, the benefits and the challenges of the endeavour from an unbiased point of view. Education is important too in this context, in an ideal

case with the possibility to make hands-on experiences as it is the case in the RESOLVE project through field visits and peer review trips. This motivates on the one hand, stimulates competition, and allows for a longer and more intensive confrontation with the issue, which might benefit the understanding of the issue. Such measures could also enhance genuine collaboration between the public and private sector.

So far it seems that the Slovenian destinations rather strive for a balance, and less for an integration of economic, environmental and social sustainability, following Gibson's (2006) definition. Solutions are tried to be found in the most comfortable way, where the least resistance is encountered in order to avoid conflicts. The aim is to achieve the goals that have been set from part of the national government and Tourist Board and to do justice to the reputation of a 'green' and healthy destination that Slovenia has constructed during the last years. However, conflicts and points of friction need to emerge, in order to identify the actual needs and interests of all stakeholders involved and develop an integrated approach to sustainable tourism.

Further research could consist in identifying how collaboration and stakeholder involvement should take place in the specific project areas in order to support the integration of all sustainability dimensions. How is the voluntary sector as intermediary supporting the creation of sustainable supply chains? How do genuine public-private partnerships enhance sustainable mobility and infrastructure in a tourism destination? And how can all of this be linked to a certification scheme such as the GSST, so that thorough monitoring and evaluation of the sustainable processes in and for tourism development can take place?

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Appendix

Appendix 1: The organisation of and relations within the Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism

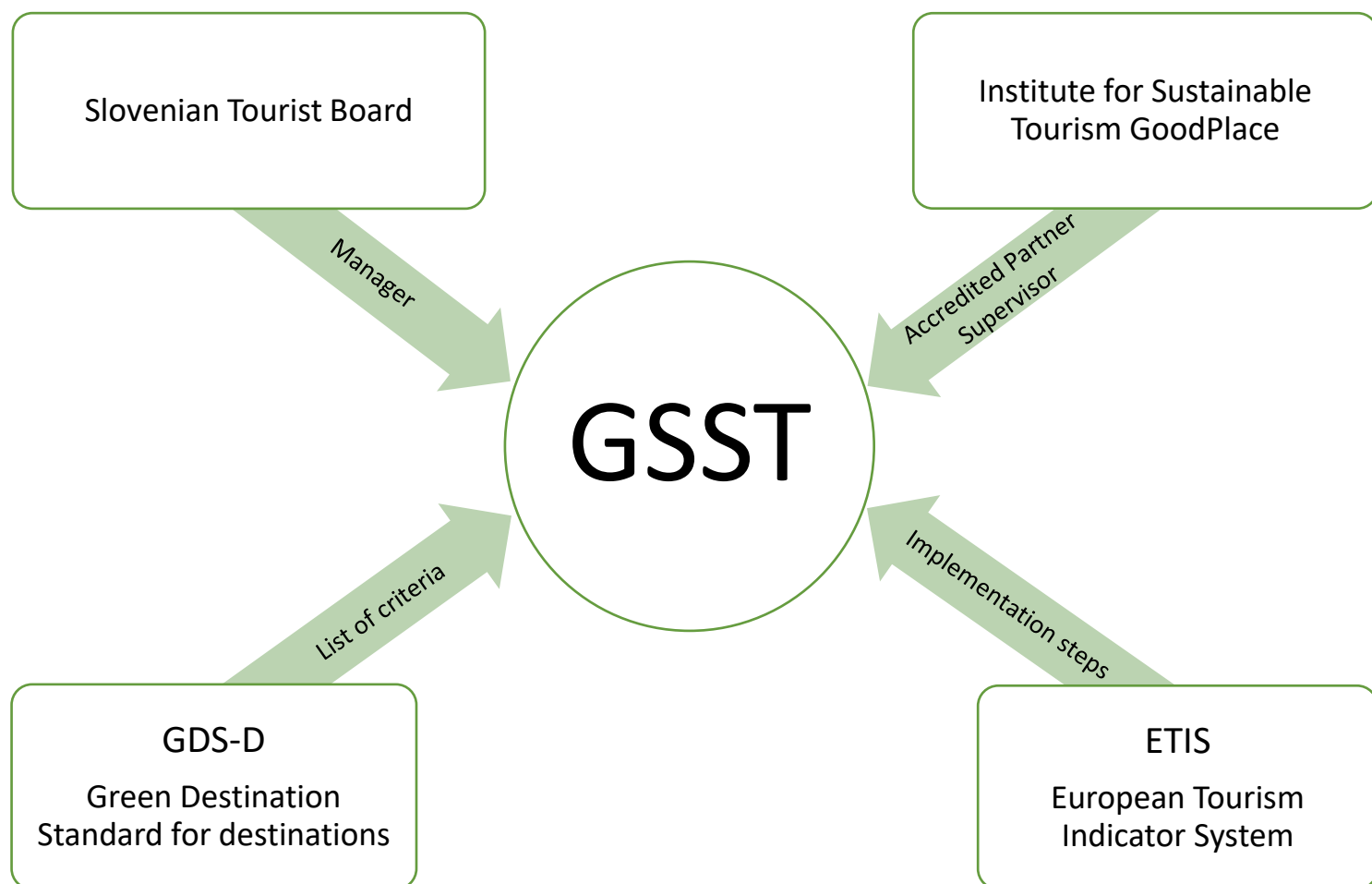


Figure 6 The organisation of and relations within the Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism (GSST) (Source: own representation)

Appendix 2: Topic Guide

- General understanding of sustainability
 - Definition / key aspects
 - Challenges
 - Specific actions / projects / measures taken in the context of sustainable tourism
- What measures or actions did you undertake since you are part of the Green Scheme?
- GSST and certification schemes
 - Reason for being part of the GSST
 - Benefits and challenges of certification schemes
- Green Teams
 - Current members
 - Plans in adding / letting go stakeholders
 - Reason for having chosen these stakeholders
 - If civil sector is not represented: why?
 - If private sector is not represented: why?
 - Roles and responsibilities of the particular stakeholders, contribution to the Green Team
 - Role of the Green Coordinator
 - Coordination of Green Team, challenges
- Collaboration within the Green Teams
 - Relation between the members (trust, conflicts, previous contacts / cooperation)
 - Communication between the members
 - Organisation of meetings (frequency, content..)
- Green Consortium
 - Benefits
 - Activities
- Green Policy
- Unique Selling Proposition: how does it fit with sustainable tourism?
- Public-private partnership
 - Challenges
 - Benefits
 - Specific examples / projects
- Involvement of local residents in tourism development
 - Citizens' quality of life as important reason for the development of sustainable tourism and the GSST in Slovenia
 - Measures taken in the destination
 - challenges
 - Plans and possible improvements for the future
 - Tourism Associations
- Sustainable Supply Chain Management
 - Opinion about the importance
 - Implementation in the destination

- Specific projects
- Goals and hopes for tourism development in the destination
 - Future challenges
 - Most important changes that have to take place
- Is there anything you want to add, any important questions I didn't ask?

Appendix 3: Interview with Petra Križan, Ljubljana Tourist Board

(First part: I explain my thesis)

PK: Actually here in Ljubljana the whole municipality works on it.. Eh, we are kind of coordinator for this project, Green Scheme, but the whole project started in 2006 when we started closing the city centre and our mayor and the municipality prepared the infrastructure to put.. to turn everything to green you know, and then we had the possibility to put also good content for tourism on this infrastructure. So our municipality made the strategy, it's sustainable strategy, it's a document also on the website but in Slovene unfortunately and it's until 2025. And there it's written how to change different segments of life to become sustainable. So, we work with municipality office, then with private sector, that means with hotels, with restaurants and tourist agencies. Actually all stakeholders that are related to tourism. So, inside of municipality we have different departments, such as.. for water.. I don't know how to say it in English.. for water in Ljubljana, in the whole city. Then urbanistic dep who is planning what to build, where to build.. Then we have special department for development and European projects, which are all sustainable. Then we have this.. for garbage we have a big company, inside of municipality, SNAGA.. We have this.. the biggest centre for recycling the garbage again to.. products.. I don't know. Then we also department for culture and for environment and public parking spaces and also for busses. And each person from this department is actually in the scheme. Because when I coordinated this project together with GoodPlace, we talked to each of them. We got a meeting, we explained everybody what the point of this project, that we want better quality of life and the main aim, that we want that everybody that is living in destination, local people, have good quality of life. And so what shall we do? And then we made this ETIS and GSTR.. So when we had the meeting with this group, we had individual meeting and with these indicators measured what the situation

of sustainability at our destination. And then we got some results. Something was good, actually almost all indicators were good because we are doing this since 2006 a lot. And the price we won last year, Ljubljana Green Capital of Europe, it's actually a proof that we live this kind of life, but it was a process, it wasn't from yesterday. So..

HS: When did you do this meeting with the stakeholders?

- For that measurement in 2014. And then.. then we found out with this survey, or with this.. that there is, at destinations, there is missing hotel with sustainable certificate. Actually that means they are not acting sustainable enough, because if we are Green Capital of Europe we should also have accommodations green. And the second thing was that we are not practicing green supply chain. That means from garden to the table, this vegetable, and it isn't working. We have 150 peasants on one side and the other side here restaurants and hotels and they are not connecting. So we started then these two aims, and we said to all stakeholders 'Okay we will work in next 10 years, we will work on these two products'. So then in 2015 we invited APTA representatives from GB and they suggested that we should implement Travelife certificate. It's a green certificate for accommodations, and it's not so complicated as maybe some other trademarks for green tourism. And then we had another meeting with all hotels in Ljubljana and we made a workshop and we represented to them.. that is better for everybody if they also act sustainable and they change their way of everyday business and.. then in 2016 already two hotels got this certificate. So it was a process of one year. They implemented this system in their everyday life and then they got commission that checked if they are doing everything right. So Hotel Park is one hotel, that is actually very green and sustainable, because they work with locals, with public and private sector. And Hostel Celiska is actually the first hostel in the world

that got this certificate because there aren't actually any hostels that got this certificate. So we can also promote our destination through this certificate. So this was one thing, and the other thing was these supply chains. We started to work with local restaurants because tourists asked us 'We want to eat local food'. So in Ljubljana you had international cuisine, everything mixed. Some are offering local food, but that was not a lot. And now in two years it changed. So we implemented brand Taste Ljubljana and we communicated that also on our website. Actually my colleague here she is working with these restaurants every day, on personal level about how to offer to tourists local food, how they represent stories when they offer local food, but we also have this brand, and restaurants are marked with this brand 'Taste Ljubljana' [*goes to get a brochure of 'Taste Ljubljana'*] and we tell them to put it on the menu and then we have here listed restaurants that are offering.. for example these green [*shows one page of the brochure*] are offering more that kind of food and we also have these recipes [*shows another page in the brochure*], or, if anybody wants to take that home and cook this food also at home. And the next step in this project was the green supply chain because we also wanted that these local food is made of the local..

- ... comes actually from local..

- Yes! And now we are working two years on that process and it's very slow and very complicated because our hotels have their own suppliers with good prices, maybe this food has better quality it's a little bit more expensive. And now we are negotiating actually connecting these stakeholders, peasants and hotels and municipality, so that's supply and offer and demand come together. That's what difficulty we have now, website it's in Slovene because.. We are representing 50 peasants from Ljubljana.. vegetables that they are offering and local products. And hotels and restaurants can offer this food on their website or they phone. We have now three hotels in the project and three restaurants..

- And when did you start the project?

- In 2016. These are two main things that came out of these Green indicators. So I think it's a great tool because you can measure where you are and what you have to do. And then you again check. I don't know if you understand..

- I do! Do you have regular meetings with these stakeholders, and reassessing basically what new challenges could come up?

- Yes. Actually, here they meet one time a week each Monday they have a meeting with the mayor and they are checking what has been done.

- In the context of the Green Scheme?

- It's everything but also one part is Green Tourism. So we don't have extra meetings but in that meeting each Monday with the mayor we are talking about that.

- And you are part of that meeting too?

- My director, yes. And last year, when Ljubljana was the Green Capital of Europe, there was a special group made, it was each month it was happening. Each month had a content of sustainable.. One month it was water, then August was the month of sustainable tourism. Actually, there is a website, 'Ljubljana for you', they made this website. And they have this mission about the infrastructure and all sustainability. Because.. I don't know how to say.. there is a mayor and then there is.. four under-mayors. And she was leading that project and she had a group and when my colleague was on that group it was a group for the green capital. And they were coordinating the whole project.

- So this Green Capital project?

- Yes. And, so I don't know if you got the feeling, but here on each step everything has to be sustainable. So it's in the policy of this municipality.

- Sustainability has many aspects, there is the social, the environmental and the economic

aspect. Do you feel that there is a priority towards one of these aspects?

- I think, it the environmental aspect is the most, cause the municipality's work is.. it's the most.. we are working on that a lot. All these departments I told you before about are working on that.

- And do you feel that.. Those stakeholders that you have there, they are not especially.. they are not tourism ministries. Do you feel that they put.. they are very engaged in tourism?

- We have to push them. But I think from last year, with this project Green Capital, they realised and understand tourism more. Because they actually prepare everything so that good tourism can happen on the destination.

- Do you have an example for that?

- Aha.. [*thinks*] For example, one of these.. the department for water put 30 water tabs in the city and the water one of the clearest in Europe because we don't use any chemicals. And actually you can drink water all over the place, which is practical example for this. Then for garbage, this department they make these boxes for garbage that are going in the ground and back up. And then we have guided tours in the city, and then guides stop and show people, and this is like an attraction. I think each department is actually through that kind of project connected with tourism.

- Before you said that the main goal behind all of this is to better the quality of life of the residents here. How do you think that happens?

- You have to talk to them. Our mayor has each first week in the month hours when he opens the door, and they can come and talk to him. And we work also with them directly. We invite them to roundtable, when we represent any project we ask them what they think about that. And they have opportunity to give their own ideas.. So we also last year started measuring how local inhabitants are satisfied

with development of tourism, and we found out that they are satisfied in 92%. So they think that Ljubljana is not overcrowded. We also located where tourists are moving because, we try to manage the tourist flow in the city. So we have here in tourist offices also this book where they can write what's okay or what is not okay, what should be changed..

- The residents or the tourists?

- The residents, and the tourists, both. And there is a website that Ljubljana.si, it's website from the municipality, they have also FB page, and it's for residents. Because here we are working like that: our website, visitljubljana.com is for tourists. And we have 95% of foreign tourists, only 5% of domestic. So we are very focussed on foreign market and for the residents it's that webpage. So actually we put all information for residents at that webpage, and we have also each month the Newspaper Ljubljana, it's all about what is happening in the city. So through that media they got also information what happens. We work also with several communities.. It's town districts.. and we talk also to them. So, to get in contact with locals. For example we had project 'Ljubljana Rose'. Ljubljana Rose was made in Germany. [*laughs*] By [*name of the gardener*], it's one very popular gardener. We wanted a white rose. So we're gardening these roses in the districts, if you know. To help residents to have more beautiful surroundings..

- Do you have a specific group representing the locals, that you work with? Or who are your working with when you say you're working with the communities?

- We are working with 15 Tourist Associations. We are actually financing them each year, their programme, we help them with tourist tax. It's from the budget. We collect the tourist tax, this is our budget for activities. Now this month we are also making an action for more beautiful Ljubljana. And we clean with this association and the inhabitants of the city. And 3rd weekend of April, on the 22nd of April, we give people that are cleaning the town plants as a

present. These plants are actually.. They are eco-plants, they are interesting for bees, so bees come and.. *[laughs]*

- ... collect the pollen?

- Yes, thanks. *[laughs]* This is this Ljubljana Rose project we have *[shows a magnet with the rose on it]*. That's a magnet. This year we have also big event for the lovers of roses.

- But that is also Tourism related?

- Yes.

- Is it supposed to attract the tourists to the particular districts?

- Yes.

- So, in the Green Scheme, are there any projects/measures that you took specifically related to that Scheme? Destinations have to make an Action Plan [...] Did you prepare such an Action Plan?

- Yes, we make an Action Plan every year. We have our Tourism Strategy, I have actually a summary in English. It's development and promotion of tourist destination 2014-2020 and we have five policies. And for example the green, development of sustainable tourism is written here. We have five main goals, we have to implement them in five years and they are written here more specifically. And when we implemented also this Green Scheme we actually put all together. So we have for example.. we would like to make new sustainable tourism area in the towns, maybe somewhere also out of main centre, that is one thing. Then together for tourism with local residents is the second one. Then together with the tourism associations as we talked also.. the 4th is Ljubljana the Green Capital. Now this is not only the price but our commitment. So we'll use that for the time long, to communicate and to make some actions in the future. And we are responsible. We try to convince the stakeholders to be responsible, and here in the company, we also have some sustainable.. like this for garbage and different actions, to act more.. So, each year we make a

plan, and then we realise, and we check what we've done and what should we plan for next year. And we check this plan two times per year. So this is it.

- But that is not specifically related to the Green Scheme? That is what you are doing internally?

- Yes. It is but, now I also made a report for Tina and we also made here a plan, what should be made and all these are also here. If you understand..

- What do you think are the biggest challenges in coordinating the stakeholders towards sustainability, or towards working for sustainable tourism?

- Very big challenge is to connect people together. I think now people in last 2-3 years, we are working more directly with all stakeholders. And they now started connecting with each other. Now it's easier because we got the different prices from.. on international level. And they started to understand, what is this sustainability. Because at the beginning everybody was so "Wow.. what's this.. green?" Everybody did ask "What do we get from that?". And when we started talking to them and explaining that we all get better quality of life and that we will spare some money.. then they started following us. So now it's a little bit easier, but in the beginning it was very tough.

- So you think that the financial incentive was the main motivation?

- Yes. It's in private sector, definitely. And it's very important for the whole country of Slovenia, that in national level the tourism is communicated green, active, healthy and that it goes on regional and local level, so that we have all.. that we all are thinking in the same direction. So this is now happening on national and on local level. And LJ is a quite big player in that role. And once big stakeholders follow you, then all others are coming, so you always need one or two of them.

- Which were the ones that started?

- These hotels.. with the Travelife certificate. After implementation they realised "Wow it's better, we have more money for other things, people communicate more among them their stuff, guests are more satisfied, we can profile our offer in that field, people are actually.. tourists are now searching some of the.. hotels with that certificates". So the whole process moving, but here is the main point. When you know how to explain them what they will get from that, they will.. then..

- You had workshops and meetings with them to raise awareness?

- We had few workshops yes. And at the beginning they didn't know.. "What is now, we have other things to do..", but this year four hotels will make this process so we will get new accommodations with green certificates.

- Do you know if the stakeholders, public and private, are working together?

- In Slovenia, it's not working yet. But we all know it should come. We have on one side very strict law for public sector, on the other side it's private sector. So this is a challenge for our country, that we work more together.

- Why do you think they are not working together?

- The laws are the main problem I think. They can work together through some European projects, but otherwise we don't have the practice, PPP. So I think when we will have that the tourism will be much better here.

- Do you have any measures or plans in place to work towards that?

- Yes we have also written here. It's so difficult, for example, if you want as a private company public event on public space, you cannot put any advertisement anywhere.. and the main aim of private sector is to advertise themselves. So it's very.. this should change. Because we get.. Ljubljana Tourism gets money from tourist tax. That means, if Franz is coming to Ljubljana, he pays the Tourist Tax and this tax is coming here and then we have some

development to put money back to private sector. But it's not enough, we need some PPP. Also that we have support from government, that it's normal. But they really have to change law restrictions, because it's very closed system.

- What about the private sector and the locals, is there any kind of collaboration?

- They are also working for example with these local peasants. Some work directly, some we try to connect together. We are now having this moment sharing economy is coming, so a lot of Airbnb is also coming to the destination. So, residents are actually in business. It's for destinations we would like that this is regulated, so that they pay tourist tax, because they come here and take our brochures, these are made from tourist tax for example. But okay, it's normal moment, moment of business. So.. when we have some events or hotel has events, invites also some local people that offer local souvenirs or local food, through that.. Some sport events are here also happening for example. And people come, sport competitors come to be with local people. I know these bikers, not the type of Red Bull event, that is made for public, but some other event, they come with aim to be with local residents. They want to sleep with them, this couchsurfing..

- So you feel that visitors are getting more interested in getting in touch with locals?

- Yes, more and more. We are now also in Ljubljana tourism, making more local experiences. Not just.. on one side we have this classical trip, people that come to Slovenia want to see it in one day because it's so small. One day Ljubljana, the next day Bled, Skorja and ..., this is this classical "Blitzkrieg". And on the other side there are some people that want to be more with locals, and we make this, that you go for example, that you involve yourself in the product. That you make something and take it home for example. For example, you can go on Velika Planina and spend a day with shepherds. You can eat their food, that they are cooking on the mountain, and make a cheese,

it's a love cheese.. And you can take it home. So and drink local Schnaps. And now we made for that 4 products, in Ljubljana, in the nearest green surrounding. Because people are asking for that and we will now test these 4 local experiences, how they will act on market. So we have that in English also.

- The local people that are concerned, in these areas, do you get that they are interested too?

- Yes. I know they are interested. Because 2 years ago, Ljubljana and 25 municipalities, it's the region Central Slovenia, we are working also in this area. And 2 years ago we needed to search this territory, the offer, the locals, what are they offering and what is the potential to make local products. And so we went there in that space and we made 8 workshops, it was a project whole year, and we talked to all stakeholders that were interested, from local accommodations, to local cheese makers, craftsmen, everybody, and we tried to teach them how to represent their local offer on the website, because they didn't know. The just had good product at home, but they didn't know to.. how to take this product from them to tourists. So we had to talk to them at workshops, with all suggestions, simple, what should they do, they should put something in internet, that it should be in English. That somebody, when the tourist come local, they should speak one foreign language. How to make their offer accessible. Because here in Slovenia, the food has high quality, and the prices are not so, we have here really potential. But people just don't know how to make it. So we made these workshops, and we got out 16 products from this area. The next step was, "What should we now make with these 16 products, which have potential, which don't have? What are our target group on other side?" Because we have very good website, that has also e-shop and we sell experiences. So then we decided, "Okay, let's try with 4, focus on the market, and test what happens". Then we invited tourist agencies to go with us on the territory and test the 4 products. And that was what we were making last year, the whole year we were working again with these

locals, testing this. And last year we also had 8 workshops again for these 4, agencies were testing, we were testing. And this April we put that in our shop on the website. And so, these are made for individuals, that means that you and your friend can go now.

- Is there a guide?

- It's guided and he drives you. And you can book it at home in your couch.

- Can you describe one of these experiences?

- One was that with the shepherds. The other is "Spend a day with Count Blagaj" [...], it's a culinary experience. Guided tour in castle.. She is singing.. tea with count.. everything made local.. wine tasting (with honey).. cheese making farm.. taste.. one of the best restaurants in the region, cooking only from local ingredients.. not commercial, but personal and local.

- Who designed this experience?

- We had one agency, two people and Tourism Ljubljana together with locals. And when we made it, the agency told us "okay", and they also told us that groups are also looking for more local experiences, not just 'Blitzkrieg'.

- Are the Green Teams / Destinations working together? Cooperation on national level?

- Yes. We have Green Consortium, it's leaded by Tina and Jana, and the members of this team are from National Tourist Board and Ljubljana and all Green Destinations from Slovenia. So the main purpose of that association is how to promote the green content of this project. So we talked together about the actions, what we will do this year. For example we were in Berlin, you saw the stand, this was one of the goals of the Consortium. So we make promotional activities together, and on the other side.. we have 5 workshops, and they teach us what to do, how to improve our green offer.

- And is there an exchange between the stakeholders, that they can learn from each other?

- Yes. Yes. It's working with us absolutely, a man called us and I sent them documents, we talk about our experiences. What are challenges, what are good sides, we don't have any problems with that.

- So there is open communication between everybody in the Consortium?

- Very open, yeah.

- What do you think is the benefit from that?

- I think it's benefit for everybody. We are all growing and learning from each other. And connecting. It's better connection.

- And any challenges arising from that?

- No. We have good experiences, really.

- Why do you think that these certification schemes are good to develop sustainable tourism?

- It's very good for the promotion of the destination and also for the stakeholder. As I explained some people are searching for that type of accommodation, when they have this sign tourists maybe have more trust. On the other side, this scheme is very good because you can measure where you are, what still has to be done to improve, and then each year you check again, what have.. did you make and what has to be done. So it's for the promotion and development of the destination.

- What are the main goals that you have for the GSST, for sustainable tourism in the future?

- One thing is that all our action will be sustainable, and one of the most important products are these green supply chains. After the pilot project, it will also be on national level, local food from whole Slovenia.

Appendix 4: Interview with Barbara Strajnar, Department of Development and Investment, Maribor

HS: Can you just quickly tell me what Department you're working in and what your position is etc.

BS: This is Dep. For Investment and.. Development.. And we're working on development projects for our municipality. And we're working on.. EU funds, so for some projects.. that's our job here. We are.. 1, 2, 3, 4.. 4 colleagues that are working on this topic.

- So, also infrastructure development?

- .. More general, and infrastructure too. But I prefer other, not infrastructure. I work more on development projects..

- What kind of projects are that for example?

-Right now we are we are with some.. I work on regional, you know.. Municipalities in Slovenia, if you know, are.. a lot of municipalities are small, Slovenia has more than 200 municipalities. Kamnik is one of the biggest municipalities. It's still small. We need to do some investments, some projects that.. are more than only for one municipality. And we don't have formal regions, formally.. We have statistical regions. So I work on these regional part, we're working with some other municipalities on some topics, you know.. Some with Ljubljana, some with.. Now we have a project here in Kamnik-Slovenia Alps, and we are 5 municipalities.. We never really cooperated in history, but now we are starting to work together because we have one mountain, but because of relief, ehm, because of mountains, we are not really.. together.. connected. But now we are working on project of water of Kamnik-Savinja Alps because.. we have really good water and a lot of springs, more than 60. And we want to connect all that springs and.. work on that.. first for us, that we know that this is very important to have clean water these days, that this water you can drink. In some springs it's not very clean, I think, but we will analyse all the springs, ehm, and to do

some improvements where it's not clean. And then.. after that.. ehm.. develop tourism on this base, to do some together stories.. to go from one spring to the next, drink the water.. to develop some stories that we have something in history in common..

- So in what you're doing you're always a little bit related to tourism?

- Yes.

- Is what you just told me in relation to the Green Scheme?

- Last year we established Association of Kamnik Slovenia Alps and it comes from Tourist Association.

- These tourist association is that these civil groups?

- Yes, all the municipalities are connected, and they.. Sara Bitenc is coordinator of that group, they have meetings once a month and do something together on tourism.. development of tourism, together. [...] (Kamnik Slovenia Alps)

- How long have you been part of the Green Team?

- Ehm.. Sara will tell you exactly. I think one year.

- So you, this department have been involved in this Green Scheme for one year now?

- Not this department, but municipality of Kamnik.. ehm.. the tourist office. It's part of municipality, but.. yeah.

- How did you get involved?

- Only.. associate with these projects and.. We have one group.. ehm, inside this municipality, that is working on different kind of projects, I'm part of that group. And Sara coordinated us. Some other colleagues are part of that group, and some from outside.

- This group is the group that is working on the Green Scheme?

- Yes.

- And you are part of that group too.

- Yes.

- Since when are you part of that group?

- Last year. We have only met once.

- But with all the other members of the team?

- Yes.

- Other than that, are you somehow collaborating with them?

- Yes, with some yes, with others not yet. Because they had some different.. But we intend to cooperate more. Work together more. Yeah.

- This one meeting you had, when was that?

- Last year, November/December.

- What did you do on that meeting?

- Sara told us something about this Green Scheme, because we have not.. all information. And we.. had his or her.. everybody told where he can participate.

- How would you participate?

- We did kind of project that we are developing here. Green project.

- Can you tell me a little bit about it?

- We have some.. nature protections.. ideas, some.. promotion of nature, promotion of.. [*says something in Slovene*] environmental.. conservation and.. protect environment.. And we have a mobility.. we work on a mobility plan, to get more cycling paths. And we had one project about city walk.. City Walk is the name of this transnational project, it's about walking paths through Kamnik. It's a Central Europe you know. And the partner (? 9:45) is Kamnik.

- So it's paths through the city to walk for tourists?

- Yes, we will.. We just started this project and we will make the strategy for walking paths.

- And that resulted from the Green Scheme?

- Yes.. because we promote walking instead of driving cars. And we have a Green Line beside Kamniska Bistrica river, and we build walking and cycling paths near Kamniska Bistrica. We want to.. build, or arrange from the start to the end of the river. We are working on that, we have managed for quite.. here in Kamnik it's already done.

- Are you collaborating with other stakeholders?

- We need to collaborate.

- How do you do that? Do you meet..?

- Yes, yes. We are working together with.. we have a project with, I don't know if you heard of.. Tunjice, it's a village here and they know a lot about fruit gardening, and they have some old knowledge. So we are supporting them to get some money, to get some EU projects. And they are working, and they are.. trees.. some old trees you know.. [*says something in Slovene*] seeds..

- Yes.

- So we are working together because we can't something on the places.. we work here in the office, we need some partner..

- You need their knowledge..

- Yes.

- And in the tourism projects (path, cycling) are you working with the other stakeholders in the Green Team?

- Yes. With Alenka Babnik we work together on the project 'Velika Planina'. You heard from Velika Planina. Because we are now working on mobility plan in Velika Planina. With Terme we are working on some projects.. transnational.. We have.. some.. We have not results yet, but we have.. candidature for transnational Central Europe Project. To develop their tourism more.

- Here in the area?

- In the area, Terme Snovik, and cultural heritage and natural heritage.

- It's a tourism project?

- Yes, tourism and cultural heritage together.

- What is that project about exactly?

- It's about connection of terme places, like Terme Snovik and cultural heritage. To develop more. And to involve stakeholders you know. Some rooms, some apartments.. Tujinska (?) Valley is a quite agricultural and rural place.. that stakeholders, inhabitants are more involved in this tourism.

- What kind of stakeholders are important to involve?

- Inhabitants, farms maybe. They have food, horses.. that kind..

- Are you already working together with residents?

- Yes, maybe, sometimes.. but they have to have interest.

- Do they have interest?

- Some of them yes.

- Are they approaching you?

- Yes, they came here, if they had interest. Or if we heard from them, we contacted them.

- So I talked to Petra Krizan, from Ljubljana Tourist Board.. Are you working with her somehow, or with Ljubljana Tourist Board?

- Yes we are involved with Tourism Ljubljana, RDO (Regional Development Organisations) for all the region.

- Petra Križan told me that PPP is difficult here in Slovenia?

- Yes, it's true.

- So why is that?

- I don't know.. I don't know really, because.. they have their own money, they are working without support of public money. And maybe.. they don't want the public sector to be

involved. They are working what they want. They want.. from public body maybe only money.

- Are there challenges in working with Terme Snovik?

- Yes maybe.. they have their own plans.. only for them, and we have more.. big plans you know, for the whole municipality. If it is on them.. interest, it's okay, but not everything is.. for their good on the first moment.

- What do you do to overcome this?

- I think, we are working on that.. I suggest tomorrow you ask Sara, because she is working on that, I don't really work on tourism.

- Meeting with the Green Team: plans for cooperations or projects?

- Not me.. Not.. no, no concrete plans.

- Anyone else from the Green Team members?

- Yes of course, Tourism Department are working with him [Peter Pančur] because he has some night capacities, they are going there with tourists that are coming in Kamnik, and keep there, and eat there..

- So there IS PPP?

- Yes, yes, yes.

- What are the benefits from PPP?

- Of course it benefits, I think it's necessary. To do more together. We need to find common language.. because we want more tourism, more satisfied guests.

- How does PPP lead to more satisfaction?

- Maybe public can.. municipality.. or maybe on national level.. I don't know. We have to manage the.. place for their [private sector] development, that they can develop whatever they do, that they can build another swimming pool maybe in Terme.. yes.

- At time of the first meeting, you already had the Slovenia Green certificate?

- Yes.

- And in the whole process before that, where you involved?

- No. Sara worked on that.

- Never been approached to give any details for the application?

- No, but now we want to improve this you know.. In Green Scheme we planned to do this [action plan] and Sara and we all want to work on this, to do something, to improve Green Scheme.

- What do you (your department) think is the most important thing to improve?

- The most chaos is in Velika Planina. It's a real chaos.. cars everywhere, and it shouldn't be. So we are really working on that, that we will stop this. Here will be.. if we managed.. Because there are a lot of stakeholders, everybody.. I don't know if you were there.. but it's really beautiful mountain. It's really chaos. Everybody do what's he wants.

- The tourists?

- No no, the tourists.. The tourists too, but they are just watching the beauty. But there are farmers who have their cows and their cottages and the owners of tourist cottages and a lot of different groups of people who are up there. And they are building roads, they are driving with cars everywhere.. So we work right now on that to stop traffic. That and there are some other things, to improve what was damaged.

- Has there already been natural or cultural damage?

- Yes. Because it's natural heritage of national level [..? 24:15] cause it's Karst plateau, and it's damaged with the roads, and the cottages are under cultural heritage and some were rebuilt.. not in the original way.

- Do you have any concrete plans already?

- Yes we have. First we want to establish a park, but it's difficult because the stakeholders on the farms are against. You can't do something that people are against because they have on their own heads what they have. That they

can't.. They will not be able to do what they are doing now. But we are now preparing a new.. law, that we will stop the traffic under the mountain, under the Velika Planina. And only farmers and some owners of cottages will manage to go with car, and not in every day, and not in every hour. We will decide when.

- And the plan to establish a park, you won't pursue it?

- For now, no. But we hope, it's a process.

- So you will work with the residents and try to make them understand why it's important.

- Yes yes, in a soft way.

- Do you think there is a benefit for you to be part of the Green Team?

- Yes of course. I think it is. Cause right now it's quite popular to be part of Green Team, everybody says 'Oh you're good, you're part of the Green Team'. It's something that.. we are proud of and we are working more green.

- So it has an influence on all your working processes?

- Yes, that it's good to be green.

- Do you think anybody who is not involved in the Green Team in Kamnik right now should be involved?

- It's not necessary to be.. part of a group, but it's necessary to be involved.. somebody.. it's his place, to be involved on some things and projects.

- What do you think is the role of the Green Team?

- I don't know if we are different because we are part.. It's more like personality.. Are you more green, or more for 'dirty' development..

- What do you think is the reason that the Green Team exists?

- Because Slovenia is really green, and STO at national level want to.. give priority to this kind of development.

- So you exist to ensure that somebody is dealing with sustainability and to coordinate everything?

- Yes, it's good I think because.. You know history.. we have, here in Kamnik, big factories, and big pollution of nature... It was old Yugoslavia you know.. We have factories here.. for 1000 of employees, and a dirty industry, and now everything changed I think. In.. People, we are different. Some like nature, and some not. It's good to work on this. To protect nature and environment.

- So.. to raise the awareness that this is important?

- Yes.

- Do you make any promotional activities, to raise awareness?

- Yes, in every project that we are working on we want to raise awareness, yes. And we will.. we have a lot of work to do, on this topic.

- Why do you think is such a certification scheme, like the GSST, is important?

- I think this is the future, green tourism. Especially in Slovenia, it's what we have. And this is the future, it's the only way.

- What does sustainability mean to you?

- It means that we work with nature. Only what the nature .. Not too much.. sustainable.. not too big.. damages.

- So nature is the most important aspect of sustainability?

- Yes, not too big hotels.. You know it's.. benefit to go to nature.. It's nothing really needed to be there, because everything is. The trees, the rivers, the waterfalls, everything.

- What is the most difficult part about being sustainable?

- It's our way of life, cause we are really not sustainable.

- And you think your department can have a positive impact on that?

- Yes.. Only positive effect. But change is.. change is in all.

- What is your biggest hope or expectation for the development of Kamnik?

- I hope we will to manage to show people some very beautiful parts of Kamnik, that even a lot of.. Kamnik inhabitants don't know maybe. But they are easy to get there. We will include these in the tourist offer.

- Did you receive any written material on the Green Scheme from Sara?

- Yes, on the meeting, she gave us something.. yes. *[She agrees to look for it and send it to me]*

- Why do you think your department should be part of the Green Team?

- Because we have the biggest development projects in this municipality. It is good to have green projects, more green investments in... Because some want new roads you know, asphalt roads.. and this.. We have to.. it's good to do this, I think.. To do more nature projects.

- Since you are part of the Green Team, did you change anything in your working processes?

- Maybe a little. That we think more about sustainability..

- Does everybody in the department know that you are part of the Green Team/Green Scheme?

- Yes, I hope. *[laughs]*

- What do you think is the difference between your responsibilities as a public agency and the responsibilities of the private sector?

- Yes.. we are responsible for.. development.. We have to put down the lines, where development goes, and they have to go on that lines, private sector.

- So you make the rules and they have to follow.

- Yes, yes! *[laughs]*

- DO they follow?

- If it's rule.. law rule, they have to.

- Do you develop laws in cooperation with them? Do you consult them?

- Yes we do. But they are, private sector like Terme Snovik, they are much more sustainable. They are 'eco terme', EU Marjetica.. biomass for.. this.. they are very sustainable.

- Is that an exception here in Kamnik or are more private businesses going in that direction?

- Yes, because it's trend.

- Do you think it will last?

- Yes.

- Did you perceive any changes in Kamnik since you are part of the Green Scheme?

- It's difficult to say because it's not very long, it's only a year. It's really difficult to say if there are more tourists because of that, but I think it's a process.

- Do you expect it to become more?

- Yes.

- Is that a good thing?

- Yes, but not too much.

- Do you have any plans about what happen when it becomes too much?

- No. *[laughs]* But if there are too much tourists it will be no more interesting.

- Do you know about the annual report that every destinations has to make for the GSST?

- Yes.

- Did you make it already?

- No no.

- Are you involved in preparing that report?

- Yes. But Sara, is.. it's her work.. She is responsible for that part, but we will cooperate with her.

- How will you cooperate with her?

- I don't know yet. To prepare a report from my side, what I have done for this Green Scheme to improve the topics that we were low evaluated you know. That we would like to improve that part.

- So you in this department worked on the 'low' points (from the evaluation)?

- No, this group of Green Scheme, Sara.. on that meeting, this was the topic of the meeting. We looked where we have low points and we.. we decided to improve that..

- And that is when you talked about the Velika Planina for instance, that is a 'low' point? Are there any other low points that you are involved with?

- Yes, it's generally, I think, maybe better to talk with Sara tomorrow, because she has detailed.. She knows everywhere.. yeah.

- Have you actively worked on any of these points already?

- It's in plan.

[Ask for plan for Velika Planina and water project, she wanted to send it on Wednesday]

- Is the water project part in relation to the Green Scheme?

- Not directly, but it is I think. It's really.. that kind of project.

- So you think it will influence the evaluation of Kamnik?

- Yes.

- How exactly?

- Because it is.. the project is.. The.. *[takes a call]* Because the project is.. is focussed on potentials of this area, water and nature, and.. it will be really sustainable plans.. Not only.. awareness of drinking water, raise awareness.. and.. nothing to build in nature..

- On which categories of the Green Destinations standard do you think has this department the most influence on?

- Uh.. Environment & Climate of course, and Culture & Tradition. And Social well-being and Business & Hospitality, I think too. Yes, because, this one, Nature & Scenery.. yes.

- How do influence Culture & Tradition?

- Because we.. we are.. [*say something in Slovene*] encourage cultural tradition through projects, we are co-financing these things. We are helping some associations, small local associations, to.. which are doing on this traditions, on local knowledges..

- Tradition and development is usually something that works against the other. How do you think that can be connected?

- I think that development on tradition is really a good thing. Because we have our roots but you need to go down to research our tradition and develop on that.

- How do you influence social well-being?

- Social well-being.. [*looks something up on her computer*] The first one is Nature.. I have some other..

- Oh yes, because the evaluation that you get is in 5 categories, but the GDS is in 6 categories. What are the categories that you have?

- Nature & Protection (Mobility, Information and Education, Green Politics and Open..), Environment, Tradition & Culture, Tourism & Management, Destination & Safety.

- But.. still, do you think you have an influence on social well-being? This department?

- Yes, a little bit. We have some budgets and we can do something of.. let's say social well-being.. yeah.

- What could you do?

- I don't know if we are really doing something.. I think not.

- So, no direct projects?

- No.. not that I can remember.

Appendix 5: Interview with Sara Bitenc, Kamnik Tourism and Sports Agency

SB: We were all in the pilot process of the Green Scheme. We got the sign in March, and I think Ljubljana got it a little bit earlier, because the European Green Capital and that's why they needed it before.

[...]

Maybe I can tell you just a few things first: When we started in Kamnik with the Green Scheme, we had a Green Team, but this Green Team wasn't actually working really good. We were just collaborating for the Green Scheme, so just for the part where we actually.. been in the process of including in it and getting the sign. And after that we actually didn't collaborate anymore. And then we found out that our agency for tourism.. that we have to start a new Green Team with different stakeholders, not only from the municipality and us, but also from accommodation. So that's why we included Terme Snovik and this Peter from Guesthouse Repnik. And so.. that's like.. So we started again with the Green Team last year, let's say November, something like that, and before, after March, we were actually not that active I have to confess, because it was just too much stuff, and my co-worker, Alenka, not Babnik, but another Alenka, she was firstly.. she was the one who was actually taking care of the Green Scheme. I was helping her, but she was the leader. And then she went to maternity leave, so that's why we were having a bit of problems. But we realised that this is not strategy of tourism, Kamnik.. that we have to be sustainable, so we realised we have to do more active on this field. So that's why we started this Green Team in November again. But we found out that actually all the things that we were doing in the meantime from March to November, when we were not actually active, they were also.. They were for sustainability as well. Because Kamnik is.. it's not just that it's.. you know, it's green anyway, we don't have to be sustainable to be green, we are working towards that anyway, because this is our goal in.. I don't know how to explain this, it's hard to use the English words *[laughs]*.

Actually all the activities that were happening last year were also being part of our plan. So now that we have to.. in March, at the end of March, we had to send them a report about what we were doing in the past year since we got the sign. And there were actually a lot of things that we have done, that were in our plan to change it in the 3 years that we have from one evaluation to another you know. So I guess we were doing things even though we actually weren't doing it deliberately. Now we are more active, all of us, we are also working as a group, as a Green Team, everybody knows that they are included, so it's more, how do you say.. conscious. Cause before we were doing it without actually knowing that we were doing it. And now we have a plan, we have activities that we are planning to do, we are more focussed.

HS: This first Green Team, who was part of that?

- Alenka and two women from the municipality.. and I think also Matej was, but he wasn't as active as he is now. And that is it actually.

- So only from public agencies?

- Yes, that was also one of the problems I think, that we really needed to include the private sector. Especially because Terme Snovik are really one of the most eco-friendly accommodations in Slovenia. They have this European Eco-label. Yeah, but that was it, we were actually just trying to get the information that we needed. So if you have seen the Excel document, or maybe Tina showed you the platform?

- No, but Barbara showed me something, I think that was the Action Plan?

- Yes, that was actually something that Alenka and I wrote alone, without the Green Team. As I said.. our Green Team, the first one, wasn't really active. It was more something that we needed to have because of the Green Scheme.. how it has to be done. It wasn't really

something that really help. It was more to get the information that we needed for the Green Scheme, and not something that we would work on in the future, unfortunately. I think the most important thing is that now we have it and now we are actually working towards that.

- You had your first official meeting with the Green Team in December? What was the purpose of that?

- Actually it was to go through the Action Plan, that we wrote in March or even before, but haven't really been doing anything on it, on this plan, at least not deliberately, like I said. And we went through the Action Plan and then every member of the Green Team had time to think about which of the activities in the Action Plan.. where he could see himself. In which activity.. what can you do to make this action work. That was mostly the.. why we met. And so that we meet each other, because I wasn't sure if everybody know who everybody is, because you know the municipality and the accommodations don't really work together, we are sthg in the middle. But I think for the team works, it has to know each other, meet from time to time. So that was the.. that's why we met.

- When did you make the action plan?

- I think it was.. We got the sign March 1st, and I think it needed to be send to them somewhere in February.. I'm not sure.

- Before you got the sign?

- Yeah, I think February 2016. Because you needed to do this in order to get the sign, it was part of the Green Scheme. Not sure if there are any documents about the Green Scheme in English.. [...] Well there are some steps that you had to do in order to get the sign, and this was one of the steps, to make this action plan. Of course it's obvious why you need it. Because then you have a plan and you know what to do, not just doing it because that's what is happening. You can see every year what have you done and what you haven't you done. We also added some things now, we didn't stay with just this action plan, because in one year,

some changes showed, and some things are not.. how do you say that.. I don't know. Some things are not needed.. We found out that they are not needed in Kamnik, that we need maybe other stuff..

- So they were in the first action plan?

- It's a very stupid example maybe, but we wrote that we need to put the.. trash into Kamniska Bistrica Valley, but then Alenka Babnik said, if you put the trash can into the nature, people are actually not.. they are bringing the trash there and they are leaving it, also around the bin, they are leaving it around and everything is actually even more dirty. And people are actually not that sustainable anymore, because they are.. 'OK, they have trash cans, so we can leave our trash there, we don't have to bring them back to town' you know. There is a mentality that, if you go hiking, and you have to drink and to it.. I don't know if that's all around the world, but in Slovenian we have this mentality, everything you bring to the mountains, you also bring back. You don't leave anything there, no trash, no nothing, because somebody has to bring that down to the valley. And we have to keep that mentality, not put trash cans into the nature, and that tells the people that you have.. 'OK, I can leave my trash here, somebody else is gonna clean after me.' Then we were thinking, OK, so, that's not actually a good idea to put the trash cans in the nature, we're just not going to put them there, we're just going to put signs 'Just take your trash with you'. That's why, this is one case. But there were more this kind of cases. So that's why we changed a little bit this action plan.

- In this case with the trash cans: How did you get to this result?

- That was this first meeting actually, when we met in December. We were going through the Action plan and then everybody could say 'OK, this is good, I can find myself in that' and Alenka said 'I don't think this is smart, that we do that I think that is not a good idea, not a good action' and then she told us why. And we were saying 'OK, we see your point and we're not going to do that'.

- Did you already make the Annual Report?

- Yes that's what we have done in end of March. I thought that's why she sent you to us, because we have to send this report, and I think it was quite good, because we have done a lot of things, even though not deliberately. Yeah.. we were.. It was made almost the same like this [points to the Action Plan] but not in Word, but in Excel. [...] This is the new action plan actually, the new, improved action plan.

- But that's the report from this year?

- No from this year. Yes. This is from last year [action plan], when we got the sign.

- And on that report [annual report] all the stakeholders from the Green Team worked with you?

- Not everyone.. Some of them, like Peter [Pančur], he is not communicating a lot.. But he is a vital part of this team, because he has a good.. he is thinking green and he is actually doing that in practice, he is doing that with people who come to their pension, so that's also important. He is also a hiker, he is really living with the nature, so that is I think important to have him. Because he is looking in the same direction as we do.

- If he is not really responsive, how is he contributing?

- He is not let's say.. having.. he didn't write me 'I'm going to do that, I'm going to do that..', but he is still doing things, sustainable things, but not on the paper. So.. you should talk to him so you will see. He was there on the meeting, he was talking a lot, he was giving us good advices, what we should do, what he thinks we should do, what are the things that he sees with the people who come to the pension and this kind of stuff. This is his input actually. Repnik, restaurant and pension, is not officially green yet, but I think they are a good.. I think they should be.. I think they are thinking about it, to get a label like Terme Snovik has.

- That is also one of the points that you are aiming at, having more certified hotels.

- Yes we actually had last year I think when.. we meet every year a couple of times with the big stakeholders of the private sector. And we had a meeting and some woman from GoodPlace came to us and she was talking about these labels.. And they were listening and they were asking questions. So that was our first step. But now we have to make the step where we finance them or just partly finance them, that they get the sign.

- So none of these hotels already started the process?

- No, I don't think so, I'm not.. I'm not actually.. I don't know. I would have to ask them, if they are thinking about it. But.. because in Kamnik, there is mostly apartment, and small rooms, and stuff like that. There is bigger stuff, but they haven't started doing on that. But some of them.. Repnik I think, he has potential. Also maybe the hostel [Pod Skalo], I think they also have.. I think they should go through this process as well. So.. but, step by step. I think we will need more time, not just two years to convince them from that. Because people are just getting.. You know in Slovenia, this Green Scheme started to develop this sustainability. Before that, it wasn't really much talked about. So now people are actually just getting to know this stuff, beginning to understand what that actually means. Not just stopping whatever they are doing, but something that.. it would bring more guests to them, better guests actually. And they need time to do that. We also needed time to adopt this green scheme and all that. We are doing it one year and we are still not getting everything. So I understand that they need more time, that they need to understand that it's good for them, and that is not just over night.

- What do you think is sustainable in Kamnik?

- Even though I would say it is not just the nature.. but I think it's green. You can see a lot of nature, you can see clean forest.. and the clean river of Kamniska Bistrica, well just in the.. up in the Valley of Kamniska Bistrica.. Also the culture. I think one of the part that we are not using a lot. But it has potential in Kamnik to

become.. are good for tourism. We have a lot of private sector stakeholders which are working on the sustainability part. But not only accommodations, okay Terme Snovik are one of them, but also Arboretum.. they are also I think one of the.. very strong in the field of sustainability. Because I think they are keeping this special.. how do you say that.. sorts of.. I cannot remember the word.. You should go there and see. They have different types of.. not vegetables..

- Plants?

- Plants! Thank you. They are also one of the.. I don't know, what else..

- Back to culture maybe.. What do you think does culture contribute to sustainability?

[interruption, Sara is looking something up on Google Translator, small talk]

[talk about Velika Planina]

HS: Tourism in Maribor is very focussed on the Velika Planina, it even is your USP, and then it is so hard to reach without a car.

SB: We're really trying for that.. but so much depends on money. *[found the word on Google Translator]* It's heritage, that's what I meant! So the heritage that we have, it's cultural and natural heritage. We are keeping this heritage from the past alive. So not just in the town of Kamnik where there is a lot of stories of the past, a lot of.. monuments.. Kamnik as a town, as center.. it's actually protected. Yeah, the whole city center, just the part up to here and the Šutna street, it's protected. And it was.. Kamnik is a really old town. It was mentioned in.. 1200 firstly, in the middle ages. So it's really old and we're keeping this alive with stories, with guidance, using the monuments of Kamnik for modern things, like having the concerts on Mali grad, having the weddings.. So I think this is.. we're keeping the monuments and the heritage alive by keeping it still as it was before, as it can be. But still bringing this closer to people, to tourists, but also to the people of Kamnik. And the same is with the natural heritage, with the heritage of Velika

Planina, Kamniska Bistrica and the stuff you can see there, like the gorge. So we're trying to make this protected, not everything is protected yet, and Velika Planina as well, so I think this is the part where the culture and the heritage is contributing to.. You mentioned Velika Planina before, why is it so important.. Because it actually connects... Kamnik really has a lot of stuff, as you can.. maybe you found out already, because it has the mountains, and it has the town from the middle ages, it has Terme Snovik, which is spa, it has Arboretum, which is a.. like a.. big garden or something like that, one of the biggest in this part of Europe. And.. a lot of this are things mixed on one small place, and it is really hard to position on the market, 'What are we?'. And Velika Planina, the story of Velika Planina, kind of connects the mountains with the valley, because the shepherd, which live on Velika Planina, are there during the summer time, and in the other parts of the year they were in the valley. So that's something that connects actually. Like.. not.. It's a story which we can relate to or something like that. It's because Velika Planina is something special, it's not something that you can find in every other part of Slovenia. So I think that.. if you want to be seen on the global market you have to have something special, and that's why we have Velika Planina.

- Back to the Green Team: why did you choose those stakeholders to be part of it?

- In the past year I was actually working with every part of these Green Members.. members of the Green Team on different projects. With Matej we are working on a project of making.. On Velika Planina we are making a track around the biggest sights. With Barbara we are working on Kamnik Savinja Alps, we have some kind of membership with other municipalities around Kamnik Savinja Alps, and Barbara is also helping me with that. I know Peter because we talked a lot when some journalists from Ljubljana were sent to us and he was showing him around, or something like that. And I know he works with Repnik and that kind of stuff.. That's actually how I found out who they are, how do they think.. My opinion was that they

are working towards sustainability in Kamnik, they are trying to do that.. That this is their mentality. Also Petra Zlatoper from Terme Snovik is really passionate about that. She is really working towards Terme Snovik being more sustainable. And sustainable not only with the hot water that they are having, you know, the thermal water.. the pumps.. not just that kind of stuff that we actually don't understand. But also things that they are.. bringing sustainability closer to the people of Kamnik and to tourists, which come, you know to the small people. So because of that, you know because they are so.. Because of their thinking, because of their actions, because of what they were doing when they were not actually a part of the Green Scheme. That's why I realised these people should be actively included in the sustainability programme. That's why actually. It was not like.. It was my opinion, actually, mostly. And the opinion of our director.. she agreed.

- So it was more based on the person, and not necessarily on their position.

- Also positions, yeah, because.. Barbara is working on development, Alenka is for the environment, Petra is Terme Snovik, she's.. they are an accommodation with eco label.. Peter is.. mostly because of him, because he is that kind of person that makes things in that direction, Matej is.. 'sub-mayor', or how do you say that.. And they have.. They are strong on their fields, and their fields are contributing to the Green Scheme you know. They are working on the right positions as well, that is also why they are part of the Green Team. But mostly because I knew them, because I knew they are persons that I can rely that they will work on sustainability. Also that. But of course, yes, they are working on the right position, that's plus.

- Do you think that you have a good mix, or is there someone you would like to have on the team, who is not right now?

- At the moment not, no. But I think in the future, when more and more people in Kamnik realise that sustainability is the way we should

go, more people will show up that are needed to contribute actively in the green way. But at the moment I think this is.. in the group there should not be more amount of people than there are, because it's hard to work. Even now it's hard to work because some of them are not.. they are having their own works, and some of them are not really responsive, you know. I think the most important is, that they know that they are in the Green Team, that they are working on the activities that they are planning to do, and that is the most important for now. I don't think that there should be I don't know.. 10, 12, 15 people in this Green Team, because they wouldn't relate. They wouldn't be.. you know, if there is a small amount of people they are like 'I have to do something so that this is going to work'. If there are more people they will say 'okay, he is going to do it'. And also if there is a more people from one field they are thinking 'Okay, on that field, I don't have to work that hard, because they are working on that'. And also, they are the kind of people, I don't have to push them to do that, they are doing it on their own.

- What about local residents, or these Tourist Associations, are you working with them?

- Actually, my co-worker at the agency, he is also the president of a Tourist Association, in Kamnik. So they are included in one way too.

- How are you working together with them?

- On the field of sustainability not really actively, except of my co-worker, Grega. But we are working together on other fields. They are organising events and we are helping them, and we also help them financially, if they need. We talk to them through Grega.. with some of them we are working on different projects, because they are active people who work for their associations. You know we have associations for every part of Kamnik.. Let's say, Kamniska Bistrica has its own association, etc.. They are working on their projects, and if they need our help, they are somewhere that we can connect, we work with them, so that's how. But not specifically on sustainability part. But I think that we don't have to think that

everything is sustainable.. We just have.. Some actions, on the first sight they don't look sustainable, but after a while you can see that they were contributing to this.

- These activities you are doing with them, for instance the events you are organising with them, they are also counting in the GSST?

- I don't think.. No, because there are not so many.. these informations weren't needed in the GSST. But not just events.. If I give you.. Let's say, Kamniska Bistrica, the association that works there, their president is really active as well, and we help them.. how do you say that.. to make the spring of Kamniska Bistrica, you know the little lake.. we help them financially to make this spring a little bit nicer, to make the way around this.. We actually help them that this place looks nicer, that people who come there know where to go, not just walk everywhere, you know, that kind of stuff. I don't know.. You cannot put that as an action in the evaluation of the Green Scheme. Because it's not really planned, but they are working on that and they are asking us 'Would you like to do that, would you help us' and we say 'Yes of course'. So that kind of stuff.. [*One of the associations*] came and said 'Okay we are making some of the ways for the hikers' and we are putting up a sign [...?], that kind of stuff. So that is also good for sustainable tourism, for people that are walking in Kamnik, not just driving around to other places. So this is also on thing that contributes to being more sustainable destination. We have more hiking paths, and that's one thing that also associations are working on, and if they need our help we are helping them, as an agency.

- You have one point [*in the action plan*] about sustainable mobility, that would be related to what tourism associations are doing?

- Yes, I think that we but inside also that we are making more hiking paths and more cycling paths.. So it is actually.. but not so specifically. But I think in the report I wrote something like this as well.

- Here [*in the action plan*] is also something about communication among stakeholders and involvement of citizens..

- Ah yes yes, that's also one thing that we have to work on. We.. actually.. we didn't work so much on the.. when we were in the process of getting the sign, there was one step that we should tell the citizens of Kamnik more about the sustainability and that we are included in this Green Scheme, and all this stuff.. But it's actually really hard to show them and to tell them that, you know. We were writing in the.. there is a newspaper.. open newspaper.. local.. how do you say that.. one person has a webpage where he puts all the things about Kamnik on.. And we were trying to come to the citizens of Kamnik through that. But it's really hard to make them know: this is actively happening, we are doing this for sustainability. It's the same as with the accommodations, and getting the sign.. People are slowly realising that this is something good. Because they are afraid that this will mean.. that they are just being limited in every step of their way. They cannot.. if Kamnik will say it will be protected on some parts, they cannot build houses there, they cannot put fire, and that kind of stuff. And they are afraid of that, so it's really hard to tell them 'Yeah, we are working on sustainability, and that is good for you as a citizen, and also good for the tourism, so people will come here even more. And in the long term that is going to be cheaper for you as well, because you are going to use the.. alternative kinds of energy..' You know, so we should work on that more, so we will.. bring the sustainability to every person living in Kamnik so he will understand that this is something good. But this is actually.. we don't know we are still looking for the way, how should we do that. What is the best way to.. get them to understand? Because you know Green Scheme is something really hard to understand. It's complicated, even for the people who are working on it. And.. how one simple person from Kamnik is going to understand that this is something good.

- Why do you think it is important to have public agencies and private business on the Green Team?

- I think that.. well, if we are looking from the aspect of tourism, it's because we.. OK, we as agency, we have Tourist Information Center, we are working with tourists as well, one on one, you know. But mostly.. people from, let's say, accommodations, restaurants, and that kind of things, they are actually having more contact with tourists and.. if we.. and on the other side, municipality has more contact with the citizens of Kamnik, you know. So everyone has its own ways to come to the people, because that's the most important thing.. that people will realise and start working sustainable. Not just the agencies, or the accommodations, or other stakeholders, but that we come to the people. So that's why we need to have people from different fields.. different kinds.. people that have different ways to.. speak to every person. So, B2C or how do I say that.. You know. I think that's the main reason. And because we have different aspects, you know. They are looking from one.. they are looking on sustainability on one.. from one point of view, and we are looking from another, and when we meet we put our thoughts together, we can come to something.. like with this trash cans, you know. We were looking it from.. 'OK, we should have these trash cans, people bring trash, OK, lala..' and she's from the environment, and 'No! We don't have to..' and, you know. That's why I think.

- Are there any difficulties in making public and private working together?

- Well.. because.. we just met and we were talking to each other.. not, actually, working with each other, you know. Ehm.. yeah.. but when we were working with the accommodations, let's say, or the.. let's say, with the other private sector.. let's say.. Arboretum, Velika Planina.. they have different points of view, they have different views on stuff, it's really good, because they have their.. That's also the problem, because we have public money, you know, we are financed from

the municipality and from the country, and they need to earn their own money. And that's also.. that's.. we look differently on stuff.. How.. We are doing for the investment mostly.. and private sector sometimes forgets about the.. not the investment.. about the development, yeah. We are developing stuff, and they are just have to.. cover the cost and they sometimes forget about the development. And I think this is the biggest crash, because we think that without the development we are not gonna to come anywhere. We are just going to be on one.. place, and doing the stuff we are doing for 20 or even more years. But.. they.. they cannot, invest money that they don't have. But we have the investment money and we have to find somewhere in between, so that we are both.. we are maybe investing, so there is development, and they are going with us on that track.. they.. It's really hard to explain..

- I know what you mean.

- Maybe that's I think the biggest reason why.. there is a problem with.. working together. But.. no, I didn't.. in this Green Team I didn't really.. I haven't seen the problem. For now.. Maybe it's going to be in the future, yeah.. But, in the moment I think it's okay.

- Are there any projects that different members of the Green Team are working on together right now?

- Well.. mostly it's us working with the municipality and working with the accommodations.

- So you're are kind of the..

- Yeah, we are in the middle. So that's why we are here, because.. still we are working mostly on the tourism part of the actions you know, we cannot work on the.. Yeah of course we are trying to work with the mobility.. with the public transport and stuff, but we are not strong enough for that. But.. we can.. can help the municipality to work on that. And we can help the accommodations to help.. with connecting tourists.. to get them know that.. we are sustainable. So.. we are.. we are here

for that, that we are helping on this field.. We are also the ones who started the Green Scheme, we organised the meeting of this Green.. members.. team, so yeah, we are link between these.. fields, actually.

- So the cooperation right now is happening basically between you and the different members?

- Actually yeah. And between the municipality and the accommodations. Because.. in this Green Team there are tourism stakeholders you know. I mean.. from the private sector.. so.. we are agency for tourism and the municipality also expects us to work with them, so they don't have to work with them directly, it's no point you know, because.. we are.. that's why we are here, we are agency for tourism and... I don't know how to explain it.. *[looking up something on Google translator]* On the field of tourism, we are the link between the.. private and the public sector. But on the other fields I think that also the public and the private sector are working.. just.. without the.. middle..

- The link? Without you being the coordinator?

- Yeah.

- So what do you think is the biggest challenge in being this link/coordinator?

- *[long thinking]* Maybe.. the biggest challenge is the time. Ehm.. maybe not what you expected. But.. there is a lot of things that we work on, and it's hard to be concentrated only on the part of sustainable.. sustainability. As I said, we are doing some of the things that are also sustainable, but not deliberately.. ehm.. they are not written in the action plan let's say, you know.. so many things. We have the events.. we have to.. ehm.. I don't know, if I start to tell you everything that we do, you know.. it's a lot of stuff, and it's really hard to be concentrated on the sustainable and on the Green Team all the time. The time just flies you know, and you realise that a year has gone through and you haven't done anything.. specifically for that. You know, there should really be.. there should be just one person just

doing that.. if.. something.. if big changes.. if.. you know.. if we want to.. let's say.. if we want to pursue.. No.. How am I going to say.. With the citizens of Kamnik, if we want them to believe in sustainability, someone should really be doing only on that. All the time, just putting the things on the.. in the local newspaper, on the web, having the events connected with sustainability.. giving them all the information through social media, all of that.. just thinking and doing just.. just about that you know. Like in Ljubljana. There was a person who was actually.. who was.. how do you say that.. responsible for the Green Capital.. and.. not just one, there was more. And everybody else was also working on that project, you know. But not just on that project, they were contributing with other things. We.. here in Kamnik, there is not that much of us in the agency.. or it wasn't.. before this year now, now we have.. there is more people in our agency now, but just about a month. And before that it was just actually me.. and one or two other people working on tourism. And it was really hard to be concentrated on this.. just this all the time. So I think that was the most challenging, that you have.. you know that you would like to do.. work on that, but you just cannot do that all the time, you know. You don't have the time, you don't have the resources, the finances.. Also, the municipality is.. they realised that sustainability is the right way just when we got the sign, not before. So.. and before these changes, so that you actually get the finances and they.. they support you with all your actions, that needs time too you know, that cannot just go 'Okay, we just need to be sustainable, we have the sign, pouf, you have the money, you can do that' you know, it's not like this. This wheel is turning slowly. So it's.. I think this is the most important part yeah.

- So you don't feel that you can combine your general work with the work on the Green Scheme?

- No! As I said, we are doing things also, but not deliberately. The things we are doing are strategies written in the way that they are

going to be sustainable. So all the other actions are also with this thought. But.. as I said, you really have to concentrate it.. this is a big project, to make one destination sustainable, to convince people of Kamnik to be sustainable, to convince the other stakeholders in private sector to be sustainable. We have to work with the people, and to be working with the people you have to have time you know. If you.. it's easier to work with the computer, to send e-mails, and that kind of stuff, but.. you cannot convince anybody just doing that. You really have to go there, to talk to them, to ask them 'What do you need? Where do you see yourself helping with the sustainability? What is sustainability for you?' you know.. It takes a lot of time.. a lot of effort. And usually not.. the results are not.. there is no big results, it happens slowly. That's why I think.. it's not going to be that fast. Maybe.. on the.. Maybe in the field of tourism, let's say.. with GoodPlace and Slovenian Tourism Board, maybe with us also, the destinations that are included in the Green Scheme, we are thinking 'Okay, we have done some improvement in this field'. But if you.. generally, if you will ask people in Slovenia if they know the Green Scheme, I think there is not a lot of people that knows that. So, it's nothing like that, even in Kamnik.. not a lot of people know that. Yeah, they know.. let's say, they know Green Capital, that Ljubljana was Green Capital, but as Petra told you, they weren't actually working on the Green Scheme. They were just working on that project. So that's why people know 'Okay, Ljubljana is green, okay, they have this'. But do you think they know that they got the Gold sign? I don't think that. I don't even think that Ljubljana people know that. [..? 58:45] So you can understand that Kamnik people, how would they know? If you would get.. Okay., you are the green.. Kamnik is green.. I don't know.. destination.. in the whole world, okay, than they would know that. Okay, just one of the destinations with the sign.. yeah, good.. maybe 3% of people know that, the other part is just, okay, you know that we are green. So.. yeah, I think this is the biggest challenge, not just in Kamnik, but in Slovenia in general. And I know..

that STB is really working on that. In Berlin, they were presenting Slovenia as 'Slovenia makes you green' and.. so.. but you see.. how many.. just one fair that it was really seen. But.. we.. we are actually included in the Green Scheme for one year, and they were preparing me before for one year, and it was in the last strategy from Slovenia to be green, but until now.. through the other parts of the world, that wasn't really known. See.. would you know that Slovenia was.. let's say.. have.. should be.. they had it in strategy to be green let's say 5 or 6 years, maybe more, before? No, you just found out that now, and that's Slovenia, it's bigger. And for one Kamnik we need another 5 years that everybody would realise that. So that's challenging I think.

- So, raising awareness you mean.

- Yes! Thank you, you put it nicely!

- Why do you think it is important for you, Kamnik, to be part of the Green Scheme, or any certification scheme in general?

- I think this is the benefit. Because.. they.. on the national.. The whole nation Slovenia is working on the sustainable development, and because we are included in this.. Green Scheme, we are also a part of this.. they are thinking on us when they are doing sustainable things. Like this, they sent you to us. They are also.. when something else happens, something green, something sustainable, so they also think 'Okay, maybe Kamnik should do that as well.. so.. we should include them in this national programme' or.. I don't know.. 'Green Mobility' let's say, I don't know, I'm making this up. And.. we don't have to do all the things alone, we don't have to think about all the development things on our own, because Slovenia is thinking.. or the GoodPlace, the ones who are working on the Green Scheme.. They know 'Kamnik is included in this, we should invite them to this project, this sustainable project'. That's why I think. And also because I think, once Slovenia will be known as a green country, more people 'Okay, Slovenian is a green country' and when the Green Scheme is going to be.. when more

people are going to find out about the Green Scheme, and.. after.. I don't know, 2 or 3 years, we will still be in the Green Scheme and they will know 'Kamnik is also in the Green Scheme' so.. this, that we are not all.. all on our own with this, but also we have a [..?].

- So you get more possibilities to develop your sustainable..

- Yeah, and to work with GoodPlace on some project that they are working on and.. get.. and to develop into these fields.. yeah, that stuff..

- Are you working together with other destinations that are part of the Green Scheme?

- Ehm.. nooo.. not actually.. but through the project that took place in [?? 1:03:10], we worked with them there but not directly just us and them.. Not like this..

- Are you part of the Green Consortium?

- Yes.

- What exactly is that again? Are you part as a destination or as the members?

- Ehm.. we are part.. Every destination which has a sign.. ehm.. and every accommodation which has a sign.. actually can.. include.. can be.. in the consortium. So from Kamnik, this is us, so ehm.. the agency of tourism, and also Terme Snovik. Yeah.. that's how it works. Through this we can work on the project that I told you. They are.. they are working on a lot of stuff, they are connecting with the STB, with the government and.. when they invited to do some things, like in Berlin, and they invited then us to go to Berlin as well, you know. Like this.

- Here [in the action plan] there is something about workshops and individual counselling for providers..

- Yeah.. that.. like I told you with the big stakeholders.. private sector stakeholders, and we had a meeting..

- Ah so that's what is meant with providers..

- Yes, providers.. Let's say, Terme Snovik was part of this meeting, Repnik.. ehm.. Pod Skalo, Velika Planina with the cable car, the Arboretum.. they were part of this meeting and there we talked.. we brought this woman from the STB.. and she was talking.. ehm, from the GoodPlace, and she was talking about the labels, which they can have in there.. ehm.. accommodations, or anywhere.

- When was that meeting?

- Uff.. last year ehm.. maybe in September? I'm not sure.. sorry. Because we have usually.. last year we have 3 or 4, and it was after March.. so I think there were 3 more..

- Of these meetings?

- Yeah..

- So you have them on regular basis?

- Yeah, 3 or 4 months.

- With the same stakeholders?

- Yeah.. the biggest ones actually, the ones who are really contributing to Kamnik tourism, or working more on that. And.. we have also meetings with the providers of the accommodations, we just had that. And.. also with.. with the restaurants, which are included in the Taste Kamnik.. project.. We have different kinds of meetings, but with this bigger stakeholders.. 3 or 4 times a year.

- And that's not specifically for sustainability?

- No. No but.. we were thinking, instead of just talking about the project that we have, we should also have workshop, or.. maybe just.. someone with experiences from this field come to them and talk to them and ask them 'Okay, you have a label, how does this work? How much do you pay?' you know, that they get information from first hand. So that we should also do that, not just meetings with.. actual things.. Okay, we have to talk about this event lalala I don't know, but.. something..

- Since you are actively engaging in the Green Scheme, did you perceive any changes? What kind of projects did you implement?

- Well.. I should have the.. report, I should have it in front of me.. but.. let's say, one of the first things, that we.. that were written in the action plan, that we did last year, it was that we get more people in our agency for tourism, more staff, that we can actually work, as I said, on these fields as well. Ehm.. we have done that, and also we got a bit more money from the municipality, so we can work on these things as well. We were also actively working on the paths.. hiking paths on the Kamniska Bistrica, that is one thing I could remember. Than this workshop, we had some of them.. What else.. I don't know..

- Well if you have it written down..

- I will send this to you, yeah, I can't remember now.

- When I went to the ITB and when I read the STB strategy, the citizens' well-being and their quality of life was always mentioned as the main goal of sustainable tourism. How do you think is that achieved or can be achieved here in Kamnik?

- I think this is.. ehm.. we should.. that kind of mentality is needed because.. First, we.. if we will live good, Slovenian people, in Slovenia, we will have what we want from this country, or.. in this environment, than everybody else who is going to come here is going to be satisfied as well you know. Because.. I mean.. also the tourism is changing more in this so.. We want to go somewhere and see how locals live, we want to engage with them.. This is important. So if people which engage.. which are.. communicating with the tourists and they are not satisfied with the living in the country, so.. and then tourists will come to me and ask me 'So, do you like Slovenia?' and I will say 'No, this is crap'.. So I think this is important also for the development of the tourism, that people which live here who are the biggest ambassadors of the tourism, are the ones who are satisfied with the living here. So.. yeah.. it's also achieved here in Kamnik, and everything.. hiking paths, or cycling paths, or.. I hope in the future also the.. public transport will improve, and other stuff as well, the green air that we

are.. how to say.. that the trash is being sorted.. yeah? All this stuff, clean water.. so.. things that are also important for the locals as well as.. not.. I mean the tourists, of course they like to come somewhere it's clean, but locals, they live there all the time.. this is essential, how can they live? You know. So we are working on that as well, also the municipality, it's working towards.. the stuff that will help the locals live better. But we as an agency for tourism we are thinking how to.. we're thinking.. municipality is more thinking how to make this for the people of Kamnik, and this thing that they are doing, or that anybody else is doing, for the locals, we are trying to make.. we need to promote those stuff to the tourists, so that they will also kind of.. that it's nice here.

- What would you like to be achieved in the next 5 years in the context of the GSST or in sustainable tourism?

- I want that.. I want that Kamnik would get more.. for Kamnik yes? I want that.. the most important thing that we have to work on is get the right accommodations, and to get the public transport, and also.. that we don't.. that we are staying focussed on the tourism which don't bring masses, but that brings those people who can appreciate the nature and the calmness and the.. local traditions and the heritage that we have. We have to stay focussed on that. I know that it's easier to say 'We want to have a lot of people, and they will bring..' ehm, a lot of people means a lot of money. But it doesn't actually work like this. I think we have to stay focussed on the tourism that will bring people who appreciate things that we have and who are willing to pay.. I don't know, more for this stuff. Because, if we do that we are going to keep the nature.. good, well.. How do you say..

- Conserve it, protect it?

- Yeah.. We're still going to develop tourism which has a lot of potential here in Kamnik. So, I think that's the most important. So in actions, I think you need to get accommodations with labels in the field of tourism and the public

transport for everybody.. And in general I think that is the way we should keep.

- Anything I didn't ask, anything else you want to add?

- No, I think you asked a lot of things..

Appendix 6: Interview with Peter Pančur, Guesthouse Repnik, Kamnik

PP: From private business point of view, it's still kind of confusing sometimes. Because you have all these green certificates, you know. All sorts of green certificates, and you.. me and most of my guests don't even recognise the value of those certificates yet, you know. It's just.. you have to have some of that. But.. the way how I see it from the private point of view, the business we are doing.. we are doing many sustainable things not.. like the part of the scheme, but because we know that the guests appreciate these things, you know.

HS: The certificates?

- No, the way how you try to be sustainable, the way how you operate, the way.. even what you offer. For instance, you offer seasonal. We try for instance now, I'm preferring for breakfast, wild garlic. Because wild garlic now it's everywhere. In one month they will get elderflower for breakfast you know.. We don't [..? 01:10] gestures, you know. Then there are also the guests sometimes that tell you certain things what you should change to be more aware you know. For instance for the first year, and I was against that, the owner said 'You have to change all towels everywhere, in all the rooms' you know, 'This is what we offer'. I said 'Okay, first it's bad for the environment, second it's pricey, third some of the guests will object' you know. And all of this was true you know. So what helped was actually when the guests started to complain to me you know, to change this policy. So, it always goes both ways you know. And then.. what you offer, even what you sell to your guests, it's always local, it's always from the farms and it's.. you know.. not.. it's nothing to do with thinking about great Slovene eco scheme, it has all to do with what you want, for your guests. And many times those things are actually the same, you know, in the end. So, what.. I would try to avoid is.. to do any shopping in shopping malls for breakfast you know. I would like to introduce hand-made local bread, again as a part of the much bigger story, but also with the most local story you know. SO.. it's always also.. you

know.. guests are the most impressed about those crazy little things you know.. You know those are the things they are searching for actually. And it's a fact that many guests already recognised, Slovenia of course is green, globally received (? 03:05), it's quite obvious you know. And they want more of those things you know. They go more rural.. they go more you know.. to those things. So this is from the.. now, what we will do.. But.. it's a tricky thing. So last year I visited one.. great eco hotel on the triple border with Austria and Italy, in Kranska Gora, in North-Western Slovenia. And their main and only identity is that they are eco. It's a small hotel and.. they struggle, you know, in a way. You know, they are just promoting their.. this blanket was made out of blabla, and this is fair-trade, and this is from here, this is, you know.. And they are somehow lost in this only identity they have you know. So they should.. you know.. they won't.. get enough customers, only with this identity. You know, they should develop something beside being only eco.. you know. It's.. It's really.. It's great place, it's amazing place, but.. if their.. sole purpose is just pointing out that they are green you know.. it gets tiresome you know. Those things have to be a bit more subtle.. A bit more.. you know..

- In the background?

- Yeah yeah. You know, if you're screaming this you know.. So now.. I'm actually still deciding.. will we get one of the green certificates. I would also be more than pleased if we could do something with.. the electrical bill costs. But you know, the house was made three years ago you know.. Some changes won't be done for a decade now. So.. I will see what is possible to do, for these certificates you know.. But this is only for business.. from the private business point of view you know. And.. when I speak with the other hotels, they are somehow lost as well you know, because.. you have.. green certificates, you know, all sorts of them, and.. people are still not.. you know, what to do.. how?? How do you choose? What's

reasonable, what's not? How much should you invest? You know, as a private business.. to those things, you know?

- Do you get any kind of guidance?

- You get some basic guidance. You get some basic.. you get.. Tourist Board.. either from this part of Slovenia.. Tourist Board, either from them, or you could always ask.. I don't know.. to the.. I could ask directly.. because I know people who are in Tourism Board of Ljubljana you know, for basic guidance. But otherwise you know, people still have to.. you know, have to recognise. But.. the way how I describe.. how I do the business, how I try to stay green or local.. this is quite common. Many places here really do their best to be as local, as low carbon footprint possible, you know. You can do..

- Sara told me this morning about the meetings with someone from STB or GoodPlace and the private sector stakeholders here in Kamnik. Is that helping?

- This was just an introduction you know. So.. and if you have this like once per year.. okay, fine. But sometimes.. there is this.. disconnect about.. [..? 07:10] in a way, you know. They are sometimes doing this for the sake of doing it, and we.. it's either.. poorly.. chosen season for us you know. So, if I had that kind of meeting in May, in the beginning of my high season you know, when I start working 14-16 hours per day you know.. okay. I had the meeting you know, see you in half a year you know. But at least they gave us you know.. those basic points you know. But it's a fact that.. now you have those.. I think it's 3 levels of being green.. in municipality. So you have, I don't know, silver, gold, or bronze.. and then you have couple of years to go to.. to add value you know, to what you have. So now we had this first meeting, this green group, couple of months ago, and now.. actually, what I have done in this time.. okay, try to see what the Golden places have done, you know, to come to that level, plus then to see, okay, I know that, most of that is useless for me, because you have to work with what you have you know. So now I'm figuring out

some sustainable solution for here, for this part, for the mountains, for the valleys.. you know.. for how to handle the hiking paths you know. And my first objective is to better connect all of those civil society parts that are here.. Here you have.. all sorts of groups that work in the mountains, in the fields you know, from the shepherds community, to the mountain rescue team, to the local mountaineering association, to the mountain-biking clubs you know. How to better connect all of them, you know, to.. to do mainly things without the state involvement, among themselves, you know. How to.. actually bring civil society to a big higher level you know. Because it's too [..? 09:30] you know. Even the local communities with civil societies you know.. everybody works for himself, too many times, you know. It's.. now I just try to find the best way to organise this you know.. solution you know.. to.. Even to detect.. the issues from.. you know from all sides.. in a bit different.. environment you know. Without government or lo.. or even local municipality involvement. First, how to.. because there are certain issues.. things that you could easily do yourself.. For instance, we have just in this municipality we have hundreds of kilometres of amazing forest trail you know.. And when we were starting to talk about that we need good cycling paths.. we have like hundreds of kilometres of good cycling paths. What we have to do is just mark them correctly, you know. Go through them, mark them probably, and there is not even one euro that would have to be invested to do all sorts of things, you know. But for this you need everybody that is involved.

- All these groups..

- Yes. For instance if you want to run your bike in the Plateau of Velika Planina, of course you want to have good relationship with the shepherd community on the [..? 11:00]. How would you drive around this.. you know. Those things are still.. you know like, nobody is actually doing something.. active about those things. And this is one of the things that.. if you.. lack this connection then you have all

sorts of [..? 11:18], also green solution.. You can.. and then everybody loose everybody you know, it's like this. We are still short in Slovenia in.. selling good local stories, and we have all sorts of great local stories. Or even we don't.. sometimes.. recognise that.. certain things that are really common for us, for many of the tourists are mind-blowing, and we are not even aware of that you know. All sorts of those things you know. For this you need somebody with experience in tourism, somebody historian, local anthropologists, somebody that spent time on the mountain you know, who.. again, who reconnect in a way you know. So what bothers me the most is [eckonisation?? 12:10] of the civil society you know. They are not even aware that sometimes they are doing the same thing in the end you know. So, for me this is one of the things where we could then easily resolve many issues, for instance how to handle traffic in the valley here you know, towards the mountain. Because, for this you know, you can all just say, by the local decree, the road is closed you know.

- That's what's Barbara told me, that there is struggle with the..

- Of course, but.. Yeah, but again, the people working in the municipality many times are not aware of.. how to address those local problems you know. And they don't even recognise the civil society you know, and.. which is even worse, the civil society doesn't recognise that it has a voice, you know, or how to speak up their voice, or how to address certain things. I'm now lost in last months between how to.. first.. approach those people, you know. Some of those people are.. mountain creatures you know. *[laughs]*

- You first have to find them. *[laughs]*

- Yes, somehow you know..

- So there is the challenge to get them to cooperate with you..

- Yes.. No.. and also to cooperate with everybody. Plus you know, to recognise that.. tourism is one of the futures. Also sustainable tourism is one of the stronger things that can

emerge here you know.. They have to forget about industrial past you know, however glorious it was you know. And people.. that.. this is the thing you know. Only people that work in tourism are aware of the potential here. So it's our job again, it's my job, to explain to all of them, why and how, and this will be good for all of us, for the environment you know, for those things you know.

- So, you think there should be a link between the municipality and the civil society too?

- First it's about us you know. First, it's about us to connect. And not vertically, you know. We don't need this, we need horizontal connections you know. Somehow, a network you know. You know now, what has changed here in tourism is.. when my generation in a way took over.. tourism.. we don't have all the old grudges you know. Even some of our parents.. I don't know whoever had old grudges, we don't operate the same way you know. Even the old guy here, before, walking here *[pointing to a point behind us]*, so he is the previous man.. owner. Now he get the business to his daughter and son. And he mentioned this to me at least twice a month when I'm here.. that he is optimistic, because he sees that we work together you know. You know that we started to work together properly. It's not too late. But it's.. it's just common sense you know. For instance, if I have a guest, in the high season, there for 5-7 days, it's not my interest that he is there all the time. My interest is that he goes around, to try the best beers here, than after he had free meals in our restaurant, then it is my interest that he tries something else as well, you know. And then we are sending people all around, and this was not the case before you know. And now that we realise that if we can work together, and many times we are competitors, and we can still work together, in many ways, then we have to level up this, to the whole community you know, and let them recognise.. actually, show them, that tourism can be.. sustainable tourism, that's one of the best things you know. Business people here, you know.. Last summer I had one group from the states.. and it was August, we

were sitting outside in the garden, and the whole family of the owner of this property were sorting the potatoes you know. They have big fields next to the river, you know, and this group from the United States ask me 'So, what are they doing?'. I said 'Okay, they have fields there and they are sorting the potatoes for the restaurant'. For them, this was mind-blowing. To have their own potatoes for their own restaurant, and the family prepares it this way. So those are the things.. we now actively.. you know, it's not showing off that we do this, but you know.. just.. present what you're doing you know. And there are a lot of things that could be presented in the proper way you know. So..

- It sounds a little bit like you think that the cooperation between the private and the public is.. less important?

- Yes! More important is, that we cooperate among ourselves better you know. So, I don't expect ANYthing from the tourist board. I have NO expectations you know, always..

- Why?

- Because it's.. many things you know.. because Tourist Board you know was always blamed for all sorts of things, you know. So, if accommodations were empty, the owners of those accommodations point the finger to the Tourist Board. Bullshit. You know, it's your job to save your house, you know. It's your job. It's not the job of the Tourist.. You know, the people were used.. because, before the internet, it was like this that the Tourist Board sent guest, you know.. People came to town and they sent one here and one there you know. And people were still expecting the same you know, that this is the job of the Tourist Board. But if you ask me, the proper job of the Tourist Board should be, but it almost never is, to do what we do by our own incentive you know, connect, by ourselves. They do try it, you know, they do try but.. I like the Tourist Boards in Slovenia but.. there is lack of.. I don't know, sometimes it's awful to say this, but.. some basic corporate governance, you know. Because it's.. they don't even talk to each other, the Tourists Boards, you know. And they

all go from scratch many times, they lose time, they are public sector.. they are public sector you know. SO.. and.. okay this is much broader problem in Slovenia, in this public sector. They are not motivated many times, you know. Because even if they are doing good... That's it, they are doing good you know, they are still paid the same, you know. So you're working at the Tourist Board, let's say, in Kamnik. You come to the team, you know, all fresh, with a lot of energy, you have certain ideas, you know. After.. they let you be for a couple of weeks, and then they say 'Okay, let's go for a coffee' and then they say to you 'Okay, super nice, you have great ideas, but that means for all of us, more work for the same.. wage. But this is the problem of the public sector in Slovenia in general. But it's also the one.. one of the crucial problems of the Tourists Boards then you know.. This is one..

- And you have the same feeling now with the Green Scheme?

- Yeah yeah, but you know.. Here is the thing. This breakthrough in green schemes and all of that, it's partly.. it goes for the Slovene Tourist Organisation, but the big chunk goes to Tourist Board of Ljubljana, which is the only one, the only Tourist Board in Slovenia that is.. you know, doing a really, really decent job, on all levels you know. All of the other Tourist Boards they just react, you know, these local things. They are not.. they almost never have their policies set straight you know. So the agents are the main Tourist Boards, but the main Tourist Board has little influence to the local Tourist Board, you know. Because the people in the Tourist Board are afraid by the local municipality, so nobody can control them you know. And each of them from those Tourist Boards has its own.. set of rules, its own agenda, its own ideas what they should do, you know. So.. for this, to bring Slovenia really to the top level of eco-tourism and sustainable tourism, Slovene Tourist Board will have to be much more aggressive.

- Aggressive in what way?

- In.. I don't know.. more.. more heavily promoting really this Green Scheme in all these places that are doing good [22:20?]. I don't know, I don't know how to.. you know it's tricky. It's tricky sometimes also, because then.. you know, we have this PR campaign, you know, that works fantastically, on the European or world level, you know. And then you have a lot of small stories that fit perfectly to the narrative that the Tourist Board wants to sell. [...? 22:45], when you start a big.. you see, there is so much that has to be done. And.. some.. I don't know.. sometimes it's just about.. one guy, that can change the story, you know.. For all of this ideas. For instance, the previous manager of the Tourist Board here, she came from the private sector. She stayed here for 3 years, she has done a marvellous job in those 3 years, and then she went back to the private sector, the job was done you know. And.. I miss, most of the times, this kind of skills by the leaders of those Tourist Boards you know. Most of these people don't have this set of skills you know.

- These private sector skills?

- Yeah, you know. And to implement many of those things you would need.. private sector skills that are a bit more aggressive you know, goal-oriented you know. Much less meetings, a bit more work done.. you know, these things.

- So you have the feeling that there is not enough happening in Kamnik right now?

- Yes, exactly.

- And what do you think should be done about that?

- It's hard you know.. because, we have tried all sorts of things, in Kamnik, broader, you know.. So, if it will be the only incentive of the Tourism Board for this Green Scheme, it will be bad. It.. It.. will result, I don't see a big potential to move things aggressively forward. Then you also have to be aware that the local municipalities and how much.. budget of these tourist boards, and what can they do with this, it's not that much again, you know. So.. for instance now, when I try to figure this out,

what to do, and when I have questions, there is nobody in the Tourist Board here that I could address with these questions you know, of course not. They don't have enough knowledge about this, so I go straight to VisitLjubljana, Ljubljana Tourist Board, you know. And this you know.. if you ask me they should do the same. Come on you know.. You have [?? 25:30] somebody that is better than you, not, you know, try to reinvent one world or.. I don't know what.

- What is it about Ljubljana Tourist Board that makes it so much better?

- They are professional. You know, on all levels. They are.. you know, they are still inside the public sector, but the way how they are organised is like private company. Because the mayor of Ljubljana was a business man. And he organised his public sector like [?? 26:05] machine, you know. You know, this is why I said that it can only be one guy who can change the complete story. Which is sad actually, you know.

- Do you think that the destinations or the Tourist Boards should work together more?

- Of course.

- They are not right now?

- No. For instance.. and it's crazy, you know.. Before this job here I was a manager of one hostel in Kranj, which is a town 20 km from here, it's actually the capital of [region]. A bit bigger than.. for Slovene towns it's a city already. 50,000 people, you know. So.. and that town, it's.. really, just for transits you know. You have guests, but always only for one night. But many guests for one night. And I realized in the first year, when I was manager at that hostel, that this town, it's.. famous cycling path that connects Budapest with Venice, and that every Dutch person that spends some time on the bicycle, goes to that pilgrimage at least once in his life. And at a certain point I had like, 20, 30, 40 Dutch cyclists per week, you know. And they were all complaining about the cycling paths around Kranj, you know. And the local Tourist Board explained to me 'Yeah yeah

yeah, we are doing our best, we want to.. We already have some money, so we can build, I don't know, like 700 km of great cycling paths, but just to the city border'. And I said 'What, you cannot speak to the local municipality next to you?' 'Yeah, well.. not, because they are not organised as a part of the public sector, they are civil society association. Because the municipality is too small to have a proper Tourist Board' And they said 'So, everything stopped because we have nobody to speak in the local municipality'. So, that kind of problems we are talking about. So, not just important.. speak to each other. At certain point this is.. those are bureaucrats you know and when they say 'Oh, okay, this doesn't go, so.. it doesn't go'.

- They stop and run.

- Yeah. So this is also many times the problem. Like.. but again, you know.. certain parts of Slovenian didn't see this as a problem, you know, they fixed it. And you have certain municipalities, they created like, on the Karst region, you have cycling paths that go through 6-7 municipalities. And everything works smoothly, you know. And they could all speak to each other. So, this is always also.. a part of the.. bigger picture. Yeah but you know, there are even many things, for instance.. I don't know if you spent some time in the mountains..

- Not yet.

- So, Velika Planina, now, they have to resolve one issue, on the plateau. It used to be a skiing resort, it's actually not anymore, so they should tear down certain things you know. Some items, and you know, some stuff that's left from before. But there is one thing. We have built much less in our Alps than the rest of the Alpine world. So.. and we built much less because we didn't had money, you know, to build.. So we didn't put much items, concrete.. to our mountains. And many people, that cross the Alps, and come here, and spent few days, said, for them, this is one of the highlights of the whole Alps, you know. When they see.. sometimes, you know, not even a trace of the human, you know, just nature, you know. So..

and again, this will be niche opportunity in 21st century. Any tourists, this is the things they are searching for..

- And what's the challenge about it? You said..

- Yeah, no no no, we still have.. for instance, if.. this is one of the most magnificent mountains we have in Slovenia. And since it used to be a skiing resort, you still have these..

- Ah.. tear it down..

- Yeah. And this is always ridiculously expensive, you know. For those things, you know, I never understood.. To tear down some thing, costs.. uff. Almost as much as to build it you know. And to move it. So..

- Yes. The reason why I didn't went so far is, that it is kind of difficult to get there, if you don't have a car.

- Aha!

- So that's a problem too, isn't it?

- No, it is. It's.. Kamnik had, and will have again super solution with the free bus. To the valley. There was a free bus that went for almost three years, for the tourists and for the locals, a couple of times a day. Then they stopped funding it, and now, they found money again, and it will be introduced. But I think only in the season. And it will run couple of times. But now, you have like 3 busses per day. We will figure it out how you get there!

[small talk]

PP: You know what's the main problem? On this place? So.. the main company which controls the chair lift.. those things, is actually.. local municipality owned company. So 100% owner is local municipality. So then again, this company, works as a public sector in so many ways. It's painful for me to watch this. So last spring I had the best job. I was guide for all the foreign journalists and bloggers, who got here, you know. So, I spent a lot of time in the mountains, with those people, you know. And I quickly realised that this is like.. this is the way how our community functioned in socialism,

you know. Like, save jobs, you try to do as less as possible.. and you couldn't care less, you know. You really couldn't care less about almost everything. For instance.. they have this.. Oh, it's killing me sometimes you know. They have this.. website, and on their website they have a phone number 'If you need anything, call this number'. So if you call that number 'If you have any questions, press 2'. If you press 2, and then the voice says 'For all the information, visit our website'. And they are doing this for 2 years. And sometimes you know, it's really tricky. You have no idea in the morning, because their camera doesn't work all the time you know, weather, it's okay, is it windy, is it okay, cause then [?? 35:33], you can't reach them you know.. It's insane, you know. And again, this is the problem, because, if this would be a private company.. And.. but it's also killing me, because I know that private.. it's almost never a solution for those public things you know. You know, it's also.. it's hard you know.. to even figure out what's better in the end you know. To have a lousy public company or to have the private company that maybe even needs.. shut down the mountain, in certain periods.. you know. I don't know what's the bigger evil, you know.. And we tried even the combination of private-public partnerships, you know.

- And it didn't work?

- Almost never does. I don't even know how.. you know. Sometimes but.. you know.. I.. before I began to work in tourism I said many times 'This could only happen in Slovenia'. But now, I have, in several years I have met people from all over the world, and then when you speak a bit with them, you can quickly see that under surface, you know.. The shit is the same, you know, everywhere.

- But for the Green Team, you have two members from the private sector and the rest is public sector. How can that work then? It is like a cooperation between public and private sector.

- It is! We talk, we exchange opinions, you know. This is even for certain things that.. we

discuss at the first meeting.. let's say, in the summer time, in this Velika Planina, on certain days you have thousands of people, really, thousands of people. Because you can reach the mountain.. we always from the valley, then have a cable car, then have one row that goes around, than you just do the (? 37:58). People come there from everywhere, you know. And.. it's.. quite nice to see that even if there is big events, most.. like 99 percent of the people take their trash, go to the valley with that trash, and do everything nicely you know. And then I said 'Maybe, we just put a bit more garbage containers in the valley, then once they got down.. you know', and they said 'No no no, we tried that, it was a mess all the time, because people just threw everything there. It's better not to have them, you know..'. So for those things, for exchanging ideas you know, you need somebody that has.. you know. That will see private.. that will see things from my point of view, and somebody from theirs. So, I think this could work, otherwise, in a way. But.. I miss somebody that would be.. you know, it's like group thing, but it's really poorly for now.. run, and organised at the moment, you know.

- What should be done about it?

- A bit more initiative, from their side, you know. A bit more. But it's not, you know.

- Are there any stakeholders missing in the team?

- So.. how did I start? I start with, I see so many organisations and civil societies who should be really include in all of this.. in all of this. I'm missing this actually. So.. then, this is why I figured out that maybe we should connect before, and not wait for the municipality to connect all of us, you know. Maybe this is just.. job for this group. One of the job for this group. So this is why I want to go around this one.

- The involvement of the civil society?

- Yes, of course. Everybody, you know.. Because I was pissed off.. they were doing strategy of tourism for Kamnik for the next 6 years. And this strategy was done only by the Tourist Board, you know. Sara and two others,

I suppose. And the mayor and his office. None of those people has ever spoken with the tourists for more than a minute, you know. They don't even know.. or with us you know. With people that work in tourism, the owners of the bars, restaurants, of hotels, bed&breakfasts, you know. They just did the strategy. How? Why? And then, when they go to the tourist fairs in Europe, you know. I asked them a couple of time 'How do you decide which fair will you visit? Do you know where our guests are from?' They don't even have this good info. They have info who comes to the Tourist office in Kamnik.

- So they don't ask you..

- No, they.. They could do this in much smarter way if you ask me, you know. But this is again, this is the problem, because in the public sector.. so the perks are, you cannot loose your job.. But the bad thing is motivation, you know. And many times the only motivation they have is to keep the job, you know. To do the job on autopilot. Pffff.. I know I'm bitching.. Maybe I shouldn't, but I want to show you the reality of things you know.. Not just the dreams.. And.. I'm optimistic for tourism here. I'm seeing the goal. I see the potential, I.. know what we are doing right now, and all we could and should do. But for this we need a bit more than just people that work in tourism to realise this, to be aware. For this the community has to be aware you know. In many ways, I don't like the way how let's say.. Austrian tourism runs you know. But it's professional. I wouldn't like to copy, but I would like that the people here are also aware of the big potential of tourism. You know.. people in every f**ing village in Austria are aware of.. you know, and those things, you know. And people here are still not. So we could be a bit more laid-back Austrians in a way, you know.

- [laughs] You seem to be very laid-back!

- Yeah.. No but this is also the thing that many people say. Many people combine holidays in Austria with this part of Slovenia. And I heart more than once, after they are here one or two days, they say 'Okay, now we are relaxed!', you

know. You should see all the rules in Austria. You know, you come to your hotel and first you see 50 no's, you know. And fines. If you do this.. this, no this, no this.. It should be a bit.. You know, it's not rocket science, it's tourism. People come here to have a good time, you know. Your job is.. my job is quite easy you know. It is, I'm showing them good things.

- But aren't you scared that, if there is much more growth, it's gonna change too much?

- *[answers the phone]* Sorry. No, no, not here. For instance, here, even the local hotels close. The only hotel in Kamnik doesn't function now. It has been closed for a year and we are still searching for somebody who would run it, you know. So.. even all the new places that have opened here, are small little boutique hotels, or small b&b's, you know. So.. I'm not afraid that we would have thousands of tourists here you know. And what is the trend in Slovenia? It's actually a really good thing for sustainable tourism. So, now, on average, a new place that opens in Slovenia, family-run small hotels in villages, popping up everywhere in Slovenia you know. All offering pretty much the same things: fresh air, clean nature, cycling paths, walking paths.. those things, you know. And they, as I said, spread everywhere, and I don't see a trend to big hotels. Plus you know, this was since ever in a way our advantage, you know, this kind of tourism you now. Of course we still miss.. I would be more than glad if I would have a good competition with a good hotel here, but.. No, it would be, because I see it.. okay.. If you have a good competition, you are more awake all the time, you try harder. Plus in the low season we would all gain. Because now, we cannot even have a bus of tourists here. If a bus of tourists arrives for Kamnik, it would have to.. 3 or 4 places would have to share the tourists, you know. So..

- So you're more looking forward to growth?

- Yeah, yeah, to growth, and I know that growth.. in the following years, even this year, we will get two or three new places, but again these are either b&b that exist already for two decades and are now left behind, or again small

accommodations. Never big places, you know. I see growth, but I don't see, like, explosion, you know. You know, the growth.. it's.. now we are in Airbnb times, and all sorts of couchsurfing.. you know there are many things that are not new, just used.. more than.. before, so.. Yeah but.. this will never be the future. This is Croatian thing, you know. This big.. like, they have 800 to 900 stretch kilometres of coast, they can build big hotels. This was never our thing, so.. this is good.

- So, back to the certification scheme: You were saying you were going to apply for one?

- Yes.

- Did you decide which one?

- No. And now I know that I will start to call this idea again in October, when the season will be over, you know. Or November. Not before.

- Why do you want to apply for a certification?

- Ehm.. to change.. you know.. It's always.. I always see this as 'Why we wanted to go to European Union', as a country, you know. I never saw EU as a, I don't know.. heaven, or something magical. But I always saw the path, to their pretty awesome thing, you know. Because you have to change certain things of how you do your routines, you know.. for better. We trusted this, and this was always a fact. We had to change legislation, always for better, you know. Okay not always, but most of the times. But also, I see one of those certificates the same way, you know.. Of improving the way how can do your business. And know that in the long run, it will be cost efficient, it will.. actually.. be cheaper. So this is the reason. So.. but I still have to find which will fit us the most. Plus, you know, now.. I was.. First I wanted to purchase one electrical station to charge electrical cars. Because last summer alone, we had some 10 electrical cars you know. And then I said you know 'Okay, I will purchase electrical stations' because if you purchase that, then.. you're part of every app for electrical cars, you know. They all find you, you know. But then you know, I saw the costs, it would be some 3000€ almost, you know..

And then I realised that we already had a solution for this. Last year we charged every car that was there, you know. So, we will now just introduce this as a station, and you will have certain.. apps, that led you in even if you don't buy official one, you know. Just to be again recognised for the people with electrical vehicles. There is more and more of them, you know. So.. again just to be.. seen as one, you know. And I know that the local municipality, now.. they have purchased three of those proper stations you know. And they will start to advertise this through the summer.. You know, they do this as a part of the Green Scheme, I would say. I think so.. Or just because they could get.. some.. European money, to buy it, you know.. There has to be a reason, you know. There has to be a reason.. It's always something with that! And this is again something that is.. of course you want people with electrical cars for all sorts of reasons. So.. their purchasing power must be quite good if they drive, let's say, Tesla. And.. of course you want that kind of customer in your house, always. Plus, you know, again, you're seen as.. you know.. not left behind in a way you know. Because there will be many of those.. kind of local things.. either gadgets or.. being aware, of certain things, that.. you.. even certificates. I think that, in a couple of years, they will be so common, that basically you will have to have.. And you.. because the new generation are much more aware about the nature and shit. My nephew is 7, and, it was amazing.. two weeks ago, after Sunday lunch, he started to bitch about how somebody mishandled the trash in one of the bins you know. No, this is the indoctrination they get now in school. And it's pretty awesome indoctrination. There are ways.. this way from scratch. And we have to change the mindset which is much harder, you know. I think that the new generation.. those.. many things will come pretty fast at us. So.. for as much as we will be prepared better, we will be off, I would say. Even for those things you have to even now start to do certain things, you know. Even if you, not.. not believe in them, but don't take them seriously, you know. So.. this will be.. this is indoctrination of 21st

century. And it's.. by far the best I've ever seen in my life.

- So for the certification schemes for hotels, you said that you would do that for your own..

- Yeah, but I will still have to sell this to the owner, you know. I'm not the owner, so I have to sell this to the owner.

- Will that be difficult?

- .. It depends, on which I will decide, you know, to present, and if I will do good enough Excel spreadsheets you know [laughs].. You will see.. if some costs will go down, it will be easy to sell, you know.

- Do you think Kamnik joined the certification scheme for that same reason? Why does a destination need to be part of such a certification scheme?

- For the same purpose I tell you a minute ago. You cannot be left behind you know. So, when you have the movement like this, you can just not be left behind, you know. It's like.. I think, even the Tourist Boards that are included in those schemes, now they just do this as their homework. Maybe this is their.. there is no bigger vision you know.. Yeah, it's homework, you know.. It's their homework. They have to do it.

- But don't you think that then it wouldn't last long?

- No. No. Because I'm really optimistic because the generation behind us, that are coming now, you know. So.. Certain things will.. for them.. they will sound strange.. what we have (? 55:41), how we treated nature, or trash, or whatever. In a couple of decades. So.. for this reason I'm optimistic. But.. the reason why they are doing it is just not to be left behind, you know. Not to be.. So I miss a bit more of this.. positive push, you know. Not just this negative..

- A bit more genuine motivation behind it..

- Yeah, yeah.

- Do you think that will come?

- I just think that next generation will.. will do does things for the different.

- And now, they will keep their homework for a few years and then..

- Yeah. Yeah. You know.. for certain things I'm really optimistic, but for some.. for the rest, I'm a realist I would say you know. How they run, why they do it, you know. Because, I never saw.. I mean.. I see a spark for those things, when I listen to somebody from Slovene Tourist Board, you know, that is directly involved you know. Or when I see Petra Stusek present it, you know. I see spark then, you know. But for those kids (? 57:06), this is just a product (? 57:04), you know. Yeah.. I don't see any..

- But I talked to Sara this morning and she is quite young and seems to be really motivated to get this done.

- Yeah she is, but.. then, I would expect that she would kick some asses, to get things to move, you know. You know, that kind of.. (? 57:35), you know. To check up, or.. I just need this.

- So did I get it right, you only met once and since then there was no real connection between you and the other members of the Green Team?

- No. No follow-up.

- Anything else that happened since then in terms of the Green Scheme that you knew of?

- No. Because.. I also know why. When.. If your not a good student, when do you do your homework? In the last minute! You're catching deadlines you know. And I'm afraid that this will be the same you know. So Kamnik was just.. wanted to be Silver or whatever, and now, the next evaluation will be, I don't know, in two or three years you know.

- Yes, I think in 2 years.

- Yeah, you see.

- So that's the moment when they will start working on it again?

- Yeah, yeah.. No, I will do! I know that I will figure out this thing.. I will figure out before that, you know. But.. it's a fact that now.. let's say, from May until October, this will be really, you know.. in the back of my head you know. It will not be on.. Top 10 list of priorities you know. So.. but in half a year it will go on again, you know.

- So you have the high season.. What is with the public sector? They don't have 'seasons'..

- Yeah, they could.. But as I said you know.. each Tourist Board has its.. list that they do in January of the things that they do in a year you know. And.. we have this.. week [?? 59:53] every September, and they're already.. when I.. I visit them at least once a week, I go to the Tourist Board.. just to check up, to have a coffee with somebody, just to see what they are up to. And they are already explaining to me that they have this.. aah, this 3-day [? 1:00:10] festival in September and.. how stressful it is.. you know. They wouldn't survive a week in private sector. Yeah but.. this is bad, you know.. They should try both.

- So people from the private sector should be involved in the Tourism Board?

- Plus the people that work in Tourism Board should also..

- Work in private sector?

- Yeah.. yeah. To wake the fuck up.

- But they are probably not gonna do that?

- No. So this is why you need good managers in public sector, you know. This is the only reason. And.. I realise this last year.. Because I was saying good words about the previous job [*manager*] maybe once too much.. And they said to me.. they were three of them in the Tourist Board, Sara, Grega, and I don't know who else, and they said 'Yeah, but we really had to work our asses off'. And I said 'Great! Great! It's awesome!' you know. You could tell, you know, you could see the results, you know. 'Yeah, and she was bitchy sometimes'. Oh, Jesus! She was bitchy sometimes.. you know.

Try private sector once, for a while, you know. You will see what that means, you know.

- So since when is there a new manager for the Tourist Board?

- For a year. No, she's fine, she's good, you know. I like her. But.. it's also a fact that.. what do you think what's the salary of the manager of the local Tourist Board in Slovenia? So.. I would say that her salary is.. 4.. maybe.. maybe 1300€ per months. You know, so.. not that great. And.. she has to be here also for the weekends and.. you know. Not that great. And.. you cannot find the finest people then. You know, top notch people, with top notch ideas, you know. You can get good people, who have good characters.. nice persons.. you know, but.. not necessary, equipped with all the necessary skills to squeeze everything out of.. the whole potential of the job you know. This is the.. you know.

- I talked to Petra Križan from LTB, and she told me about these tours that they would organise here, to the Velika Planina. Do you know about that?

- Yeah, but.. this is different because, you know.. I know that Tourist Board of Ljubljana offers those things, you know. But.. you have to be aware that.. the guest that I have here would never go to the organised tour like that, you know. It's.. this is already a sideway in Slovenia, you know. This is not one of the five hot spots, you know. This is not Ljubljana, Bled, Piran.. something like this. And.. even the guests we have are a bit different you know. And I'm more than pleased with this, you know. Because.. those tourist centres, they get.. again, not the nicest expressions, but they are like.. sheeps in tourism you know. They need a shepherd, you know. Or something like this you know.. While.. and they are.. tourists tourists, you know. While, the guests we have in sideways are.. many more times a bit more travellers, you know. Much more individually oriented.. they need different.. guidance, you know. They need somebody that.. prepares them their own private tours you know, that can be without.. without any of that

interventions you know. Good for them. I also know why Ljubljana is trying really hard to do this things, you know. Because in the high season, Ljubljana is packed with tourists now, you know. It's.. much more than they can absorb you know. So they just try to send them out to the daily trips you know. And Kamnik it's the most obvious solution you know. It has some developed products, it has some well recognised spots, so.. for Ljubljana it's the easiest to send them here for a day trip you know. But our interest is.. you know.. have them here, you know.

- Yes, I was just about to say, isn't that kind of conflicting interests?

- Yes. Yeah, exactly. So.. in a way, I feel those day guests that Ljubljana sends here as.. I would say, I would be in Dubrovnik watching the cruise ship people that come.. shitting your place, go back to the ship and shipping away, you know. It's one of those.. you know. So.. I know they're trying hard, but sometimes our interests.. it's not exactly the same, you know.

- Did they talk to you or anyone in Kamnik before doing that?

- No. No, I have no idea.. You know.. many of minor hikers or at least, half of them, they don't use the cable car. They go from the valley, they do a daily trip.. they are a bit different. Or they cycle in the villages here, or they.. they want to fly-fish with the local fishermen on the river.. you know, those things, you know. It's a bit different you know.. It's a bit you know.. And they are much nicer to work with.. than..

- They are much more interested aren't they?

- Yeah. But.. they want for instance.. I realised the power of images years ago. Of the good photo. But here.. now, it's even more obvious. For instance.. they all come because of this plateau [*pointing towards it*], this is Velika Planina. But then, once they do this, they.. ask me 'So, what should I do now, where I should I go?'. And then the first year when I was working here, I said 'Okay, there is one amazing path, but you will need like, 5, 6 hours'. They

said 'Okay, this is too much'. And it was then many times 'No no, it's too much, it's too much'. And.. whenever I go hiking, and I really go a lot of hiking here, I have all sorts of albums you know, with great photos from the mountains, you know, and I just tell them the.. stories. And I always started with the photo you know. SO.. I just show them amazing photo from the mountain and they said 'I want to go here', and I said 'Yeah, but it's 5, 6 hours', 'I don't mind, I want to take this photo!', you know, from this spot, you know And now, I've done for them, you know.. whenever I have a couple, let's say in their 20s or 30s, I see them instagraming at dinner.. stuff like this. I see there.. potential for one of these things, you know. Then I'm sending them on, like, Instagram hiking trips. Almost, here.. Because you have so many great spots for awesome Instagram photos, that this is.. again, you know.. this is one the things, that is both sustainable, because they are just hikers and outdoors, plus they couldn't be more 21st century you know. With.. instagraming every moment you know. But for this again.. I would need a bit more help. I would like to be more connected with the local mountaineering association, because I see that some paths are poorly marked, or, you know.. in bad shape you know. So for this again you have to be a bit more to develop those things, you know..

- So to kind of wrap this up.. the thing that is missing is, or that you'd like to see more, is the connection to the civil society?

- Yeah, yeah, no, to the people.. whoever works in tourism, this is now fine you know. But the.. for the whole municipality to be aware of the potential of tourism I need all the help of the social.. of the civil.. of the complete society you know.. the civil society. This will go.. a bit slower..

- Yes, I asked Sara the same question, and she said no.

- It is. Almost everybody is missing. Yeah, even for those.. most amazing niche tourism products you know, I need all the help of the civil society. For instance.. when I have.. No,

because we have not.. we don't have here on the organised level.. like, fly-fishing as a product. But it's, you know.. it's one of the top notch places to do fly-fishing in Slovenia, you know. But for this I need the local.. this.. fishermen association that gives licences. I need help every time.. you know. I need them, you know. And.. we could develop all sorts of those little things to the products you know. To amazing products, we should all offer, you know. For those things you know.. And I know that the Tourist Board it's not aware of many of those things because they either don't.. even if people ask there, you know. For instance, you come to the Tourist Board in Kamnik and say 'Okay, do you have.. fly-fishing here?' 'Yeah, but not organised', you know. They've done their job, in a way, you know. But if somebody asks me, I always call the.. okay, is somebody available, is my Dad available, because he is a fisherman as well, I call him.. you know. You do something, you try to do the package, the product you know. Even if it doesn't exist, and there is so many of those little things you know. I had families from Dubai last year, that wanted to bake bread, do all those local things, all the way, you know. There are so many small farms here, that still do this like in the 18th century. But if we would do.. And there is also local association of farm ladies from this valley, Tujinska Valley [? 01:12:43], you know. If we would be better connected, there would be always just one phone call, organised, check, done! You know, those things.

- Do you think they are interested in that too?

- Yes they are. Of course they are. They are proud.. You know, many of those people don't do this for.. any profit you know. They do those things out of passion, out of respect for tradition, this is the only way I know. So.. and.. they would be more than willing to participate, you know. So.. we could.. we should do much more. But.. don't get me wrong. They're trying in the Tourist Board, you know. Even with some of those locals. And many time.. it's.. they try you know, they even call us for cer.. They have certain idea, let's say, you know.. But what I miss is then follow-up, you know. They have

idea, they present us the idea, and then I miss a bit more aggressive follow-up. So.. sometimes we are just either over-worked or something, you know. So you need somebody to.. either to push with one idea, not just present it and then 'There was no feedback'.. Come on, you know. They just drop it, you know. They just drop the ball. They are trying, they're.. 'Okay, then not'. They are not.. you know, there is no spark, there is no.. this is what is missing. No passion behind it.

- What do you think is your role in the Green Team?

- Somehow figure out the connection how to bring more shareholders to the table.

- Is that what you told Sara and the other members at your meeting?

- No.. because the first meeting was just.. introduction meeting you know. We received certain materials for the meeting, and then it was just introduction, and then at the end.. we ended up with 'You should all figure out with what you would like to do inside this scheme' you know.

- And then nothing anymore.

- And then nothing happened anymore. But as I said.. it's homework, and they have two years to do the homework. In the last minute you know. Copy-paste the ideas from there, you know.. As you do your homework at the last moment, you know. So this is the thing you know. And here.. here we were brought up with a bit more.. German mindset you know. We were ruled by them for more than 1000 years. And a decade ago I worked in a bar business with a group of Italians. It was hurting me so badly you know, it was really hurting me. Because.. they really improvise a lot you know. All the time. And they tried to explain to me.. because.. and I was really struggling with this, I saw it's.. just as a chaos. And then they tried to explain to me 'Peter, you should be aware that, when you're improvising, you're creating something new'. I said 'Okay, good point of view. But the way as I see it, if you improvise as much as you do, that means that you haven't

done your 'Hausaufgaben' [homework in German] you know. This is the thing you know. Then you have to improvise. If you're not prepared you have to improvise. This is why, you know, I preferred a bit more organised society.

- A healthy mixture of both.

- Yeah, yeah! And we should have this healthy mixture. Because we have influences both from the North, from the Italy, from the Balkans, you know.. So..

- That's what Tina told me, you have this.

- Yeah, but to be honest, it's a fucked up society. Because you are.. you never know who you are dealing with, you know. For instance, if I would go to Serbia, I would know, you know. But here.. many times.. even on those.. So, I was a bar manager in the city centre of Ljubljana. Next to the mayor's office. And he was giving me such a hard time, for months. And then, some of these people that worked for those.. local.. com.. public companies, you know.. started to really hurting us with some fines, stuff like this, you know. And I was thinking back then 'If I would be either in Belgrade, or in Rome, I would know who to bribe, to finish this', you know. But here in this.. crazy.. you never know, you know.

- Were you part of the Annual Report that Sara prepared for GoodPlace end of March?

- No.

- If you had to define sustainable tourism, what would you say?

- First thing.. but I don't know why.. First thing that emerged was 'low carbon footprint'. To be really low.. you know, to try to be really local. Second thing is 'no gas emissions'. Try to be the electrical.. or try to be.. bike & hike, you know. All the things that I try to introduce to my guests, here. Yeah.. or.. network, connections. You know, everybody works with everybody. This for me is sustainability, you know. Because this cuts all sorts of things. It cuts waster', it cuts.. you know.

[Small talk, recording stopped, started again]

PP: .. I was pissed off.. you know. Because they were only saying about how we should do the new red dots, and nobody was thinking seriously of.. GPS in the trails, you know. About those things, you know. So then I found the.. one guy that I know that works in this mountaineering section here in Kamnik, and one guy that develops actually those apps, but it's also from Kamnik, you know. Just to figure out if there is some short-cut, how we could do this, you know. And I also proposed this to the Tourist Board of Kamnik, like.. 2 years ago, that.. they should definitely do this, and they said 'Okay, we have neither time, or people that could do this'. I said 'No no no, you could change the.. you know, you can twist the story, you can do, like.. Tom Sawyer you know, with the painting of the fence you know. People will do this more that willingly for free, you know. You just promise them, like once every three months, the best path that anybody will do will.. I don't know, rewarded with, either weekend at our place or spa or something you know. Because there is now.. one of the strongest community in Facebook in Slovenia is.. one Facebook page that it's called like 'The Climber', you know. And each day at least 30-50 people post their trips, you know. And I said 'Okay, we just have like three basic demands, you know: it has to have a complete GPS trail, it has to have like written description, and it needs few photos, of the important cross-sections on the way and maybe.. one, like, view from the top'. And that's it, you know. People would more than willingly do this by themselves you know. Those things, you know. And then.. I had some feedback at the beginning, and there was the change in the leadership here, then they said 'Good idea, we should definitely do something about this', but it was.. digital was not even the part of the strategy 2016-2020. Proper digital, you know. And then they said 'Yeaah, we are developing new website, plus we thought that this idea, it's a bit more Instagram than Facebook', and I said, 'Yeah, but Facebook, everybody uses, you know, even my parents in their 60s', you know,

it would reach more people. So this was then.. you know. But I have a connection, and they said, you know, they are thinking (? 2:47) about this, you know, this mountaineering section, how they.. For instance, even when I send my guests to one of the trails, here, they are not marked trails, they are hunter trails. So for this purpose.. but.. for me this was no biggy because.. whenever I do those sports I use at least one or two sport apps, that.. do the trails, you know. And when I send my guests to some of the trails, I just copy them my trail and I just GPS whatever I do. They don't get lost, they don't miss the red dots if they are not there you know. So.. it's always some sort of a solution. So this is the only real contact I had with somebody to.. do something about it.

HS: Did you try for others?

- Yes I did, but you know.. again.. You know, I try, I help them, I even volunteer every year

with some jobs for the Tourist Board, you know. I get paid elsewhere, you know.. It's not like it would be.. my.. main objective, you know. I do, I don't know 20 hours [?? 4:08] every months, you know, to do something about it.

- So you think somebody from the Board should do it?

- Yeah. You know, just.. basically just like.. then, people will do this by themselves you know. Whenever I go, I do photos, I post, I use Twitter, I use Facebook, I use Instagram, you know. And I know that many people will do the same way you know. And not just for the reward, just to show what is all we have to offer you know. Many ideas, but still the..

- You can't do it on your own.

- No.

Appendix 7a: Interview with Matej Slapar, Deputy Mayor at the Municipality of Kamnik

HS: Could you first tell me briefly about yourself, what your position is, your responsibilities etc.?

MS: I'm Deputy Mayor here in Kamnik since last elections.. this was.. 2014 I guess, we just have 1,5 year more in this mandate.. And the mayor took me to develop tourism or to doing on the part of tourism and economy and.. so on. So in the last 2 years we made the business club here in Kamnik and also some co-working space for young entrepreneurs, and.. this was on this economy part. And on tourism part we prepare.. tourism strategy, which was.. confirmed.. on all stations and also on the municipality.. I don't know.. municipality council? With no vote against, so it was really.. good, and I think this is the way on which we will be doing on next few years. And in this tourism strategy we.. just combine everything and.. the great.. thing is that we just won this Kamnik Green and sustainable and.. what you're doing. We could look at this strategy [*goes to find a copy of the strategy*]. This is about.. 188 pages, and we just.. take the goals and then, like every strategy.. the way to achieve the goals on 4 main topics. So these are Marketing and Product, Economy and Quality and we will do that with Partnership and so on. This is my topic in.. what I'm doing. So tourism and this is the strategy which I'm proud of it, and I'm also proud of that, that we have a new manager of Tourism Center, and she just came when this tourism strategy was prepared, so this is also her.. timeline, or my timeline. She will be doing on that task, and I think this is completely.. the best.. She just came when this strategy was prepared, and we will just go now with this strategy.

- What is the focus of this strategy, in a few words?

- Ehm.. I will prepare you that.. [*makes a note*]. It goes that we have a beautiful place and that we have to market that beautiful place. And it also goes that we have to develop some new

products, because if tourists come to Kamnik, I think in this moment, there is not a lot to do. So.. we have to develop some new products, like, I don't know.. hiking with some men, or teachers, and.. we have to develop some new.. ways.. we mention there 5 new hiking ways. One of them is a.. story telling ways, and.. all this ways will go to a place where the view is really nice. This, and then.. we will work on quality of our products. Also which products are developed already, but which we have to improve the quality of this. Also in Repnik, but Repnik is the best our.. restaurants. And also they will have to improve their quality and we will make some.. organised improving or teaching system that will.. that every restaurant will come on this level, like Repnik, I hope.. that this will go. But we have also a.. timeline, for every.. thing what we will doing..

- Every aim..

- Yeah.

- Are you planning to do specific workshops with Repnik?

- Yes.

- Isn't Terme Snovik doing something similar? It was written in the Action Plan Sara sent me.

- Yes, Terme Snovik are our main player here in Kamnik, they make around 80% of sleeping, and they are really good in this green.. stories. Because they have all energy that they need, they make it from own sources. With wood, and so on. They are really good, and they took this award 'Marijtica'. I hope that they told you this..

- No..

- They are the first Slovenian company who took European award 'Marijtica', this is for the Green Scheme.. I will also prepare you this. They are just.. They are just in process.. in every process they are implementing this green and so on.. And they are the main player. We have here in Kamnik 5 main players. There are

Terme Snovik and [... 10:20] Tunicje, and then Arboretum, this is really nice park, and.. now, also Velika Planina, this is a really nice place. Have you been?

- **No.. [...]**

- [...] So this is the 4th.. pillar. So this is the topics we are doing, and.. this is about my work.

- **So where is sustainability in all of this?**

- Where is sustainability in all of this.. In all.. developed places or these.. pillars, they are doing in sustainability ways. So, Terme Snovik, the best player, and they took this Marijtica and their own resources and so on. In Velika Planina, we with all municipality laws and this, we don't permit that there will be massive hotels and this, because the water will then be damaged and so on.. So there, in this ways. And also we have in Kamnik some.. this electricity stations to.. and.. I will just write you some more instructions for this, okay?

- **What is sustainability for you?**

- That the.. that is also in the books.. But I think there is like.. everyone took.. I think that we took this nature and we have to leave this nature to this who come after us, and in this way.. no.. unspoiled, like we took this. So, this is the goal. But when we are doing tourism, and they are all.. especially tourism, we have to focus on this what we have, not.. on the globalisation. But we have our own workers, who are really hard-working, and.. good, they are really hard working. So these are our resources.. Workers are good, and also the food and the nature is great here.. We have a lot of water, which is great. And.. we have to take to the tourist this.. our things. Also food from here, local food. That we don't drive this food from.. other places, but we all this have here, so. It think that we have to be proud of our products, and we also have to improve to eyes of our citizens, that our products are really great, and we took some more money, to buy these products from locals, because.. then the money stay here. If we buy some cheap products like in Hofer, Lidl and so on, the money will go out of our country, or our

municipality, so we have to take this money to our citizens and.. then the economy will take place here. Not just take the money out of our municipality or our country. And we have everything what we need here, all resources, so we just have to take.. better.. Because in the past I think all Slovenians or also our citizens means that.. local is not so good. Everything that came from outside, from America, from.. is better, this is great, but.. now I think the times are changing, and also our market here.. we have market in Kamnik, by the local.. by the locals, and this is really.. a lot of people came there, in Saturdays and also in Tuesdays, and.. I think that people just want to buy healthy food and also every time better local food. So, we have everything, we just have to prepare this on better ways than in the past. So, beautifuller etiquettes and so on. We have to take to these products higher value. By the marketing, and also by the pushing these products through the.. with, and through our tourist center, so we.. produce some Trnic, you know..

- **The cheese?**

- Yes the cheese. And.. 2000 years ago, ehm, 200 years, sorry, this was the best thing in Velika Planina and they eat it, but in this years.. we just.. forget of this local food. But now we have to again.. do well (?) of these old foods and bring it to the tourists. I think that also tourists need some special stories, and locals, and.. this is our goal. But I will just structure this..

- **No, that makes sense, all good. The main goal of sustainable tourism in Slovenia according to the STB and Tina from GoodPlace etc., is the improvement of the locals' quality of life and well-being. What do you think about that?**

- Of course, if locals.. will be.. good.. will be pleased, also tourists will be pleased here. So we have to take everything to the locals, we have to do all the best for the locals, and then also tourists will be satisfied. So.. we are doing this.. *[makes a note]* I think that Slovenians, we have a good life. In the majority. So.. I think that

more than 90%.. just 10% is unemployment rate. So I think, who wants to work, has a work. But there are about 50 and more years old men and women, which do not have employment, but there is some troubles. But overall I think, in this country, there is.. a lot.. not a lot, but enough work, and we could make enough money to ourselves. So who wants to work has a work, and I think we have to be really satisfied about this position. But Slovenians are always 'nörging' [*moaning*].. and always are disappointed. 'Our government is bad, our.. everything is bad'..

- Germans are like that too..

- No! Really.. So.. But.. and, when we come together, we just 'nörg' [*moan*], and this is not good.. spirit. Because if we talk about goals, and what we can do to.. is better, than we can do this. But if we are just talking about how everything is bad, then also bad will be. So I think we have to.. change this kind of thinking, and then also results will come. But we will have to change, and this is a long-term process, but we have everything we need. So, we have somewhere to sleep, we have a lot to eat, if we are unemployed we took from government some money.. I think that everything goes. We have to just improve some more products, and market.. with market, we have to present our nature, our beauty to other potential tourists, and then they will come here and will some more money and then.. Because it's everything about the money and if we.. [?? 23:00] our people, they will take [*leave*] us more money and with this money we will develop some more products and also service will go upper. And the tourism is the best way to do it. By exporting services.

- Are you including the citizens in tourism?

- Yes the citizens are included with this nörging [*moaning*]. They are just, everything is bad and so on. And they are included.

- Are they coming here and complaining?

- They are complaining in the street and so on, and nothing is good. But now we have one more really.. really hard goal to achieve. This is

our city centre, which is really in bad shape. But like in many other places in Europe, so I think also in Germany, in Austria it was like this 30 years ago, the city centres were empty cause of the big centre [shopping centre] around the centre, and just people came to the centre to the shopping centres, and the city centre was empty. But they.. they really go with this problem 30 years ago, in Austria and also in Italia and.. I think in Germany also. And now if you come to some Austrian city centres, there are also some shops, and it is really.. life there. And in Slovenia we go with this problem a few years ago. Ljubljana as a leader, and also some smaller centre, like Celje, Novo Mesto.. The bigger cities, but the smaller cities didn't took with this problem yet. In Kamnik.. is now my opportunity, or my work also to improve this. So there will be citizens also involved. Because they are owners of these buildings, and they took.. they want higher price for rent, and I will do during next months some workshops with the locals, to persuade them that we make something together. To make some [?? 26:26] and we'll make also some app, that will all the stories go to the internet and some cards of.. that will encourage locals to buy in the city centre and not in the shopping centres, and life will come back to the city centres. So there will be locals included. And.. also.. they are included where they have jobs in our tourist organisations or companies. In Terme Snovik there are about 80 locals involved, because they have jobs there. And in Terme Snovik they are really good also in.. *društva*, you know.. Tourism Societies [Associations]. We have about 8 societies in Kamnik [*drawing Kamnik and different areas*]. And in every this area we have a local club involved there. And also they are doing some events.. Let's say in *Tuhinska Dolina* (?), where Terme Snovik is, there are about 100 events in whole year, which these locals in these clubs prepare it. So, last week there were Easter Market and.. If you don't understand me, just say it.

- No no, I understand you!

- So.. all of these clubs are preparing some events, and I think, in this way are locals

involved. And this locals which are in these clubs have their own interests, so they want to develop this areas, because if this area will be developed, more tourists will come and also every particular member of this clubs have their own.. or, not every, but I think, majority, or at least half of them, of the members of this clubs, have something they are doing. So, some.. making bread, some are making meat, and they have interest to improve the tourism, that they will took some more money, from the tourists or just from the developed places. And the Terme Snovik.. there was about 50-60 years ago, 100 years ago, everyone knew that there is hot water in Tuhinska Dolina. But then, 20 years ago, they took this water and there were.. one visionary, one man, Jan Kribar (? 30:20), who is now procurist there, he just made this, he just made with his company.. the pool, and then a few years ago this buildings with capacity of living. So, and he's also Director of this club in Tuhinska Dolina. There are also some clubs in.. Kamniska Bistrica is one club, Arboretum is one club, and I think that there is 7 clubs of tourist members. This is a way like.. where the people are involved, and also jobs, and here in my case, in city centre, it will be a really hard-working time for me, but I think we will do something. And also municipality will help with subvention to the.. service who will come, who will take some extra fee from the municipality, that they could go easier to demands. And also we make some fund to rebuild the houses and.. because now, it's not beautiful to see. It's like, old town, but it's not beautiful. So we will improve this by this fund about 30,000€, and we have.. we will take part of this money to owners who want to rebuild their houses. And will now in a few months rebuild the main street here, around the municipality, and.. so on.

- Are you working together with these tourism associations on specific tourism projects?

- Hmm.. municipality is taking the money for their salaries and so on. And we are their owners and everything.. what in the tourist is done, we are doing it together. According to these tourism strategy, and also according to

some particular goals, which are proposed in every particular seasons. Now we have this 1st of May event that we are preparing some stories, in Stari Grad, this is a point here up, event a few days. And then in the summer we have also Kamfest, this is really good event which took place for 14 days and in all these 14 days the city is full of people. And this I think we are preparing together. And then in September, in 2nd week of September, [Slovene name of the festival], this is cultural heritage festival, which take place every 2nd week of September. And also this are preparing together, and December, story of Kamnik. So everything what is done here in Tourism area, we are doing together with tourism centre, and municipality and the local clubs and the local.. particular.. company. We are trying to do it together. We are trying, and we think that with tourist agency, we are very close, but we also want to involve, which is this Partnership [pointing to the tourism strategy].. we want to combine everything, that we just breathe together.

- Yes, I was about to ask about this Partnership chapter in your strategy. Who do you think it is important to work with here?

- Okay. [makes a note] We think that also.. like, doing in groups, you know, it's more efficient if we do it one and one. So partnership, our tourism agency which is financed from the municipality, will.. is doing marketing for the whole destination, and also for particular bigger players. And.. this I think is partnership. They are presented in some market shops in Berlin or where we are going, so this is partnership from our side. And also from our side will be developed this.. WILL BE, it's not in this moment - but it also was.. You heard about *Okusi Kamnica* [Taste Kamnik], this is a story about local food. And we just made some recipes, from the very old local menus, like [lists a few]. And we just to improve the value of this local brand, *Okusi Kamnica*. And also through this stories, companies took some part of.. of this story. Because we just really improve the value of this brand. And when tourists or locals came to their restaurant, they.. they sold

more, because they have this.. our products on the menu. So, this partnership.. We also improve that.. and take this to the higher level. Because we will take some special guests to the local restaurants.. not guests, but.. evaluators, and through this steps there will be improved, they will be better. And they are just, with tourist centre.. they come together every 2 or 3 months, and they just say I think 'This is not great, this is not good' and they give us some input, what we could do better. So, this is also partnership.

- Where are these evaluators from?

- This WILL BE.. During this.. Through this strategy, we will just do the evaluators for the food, and for the.. marketing, for the other products, that they are selling to tourists and locals and they will just come.. They will be locals. And they will say 'This is our standard, you are doing this not correct, not as good as we want' and I hope that these companies will take this seriously and will improve their.. things. But it's really risk to do this because they could understand this like 'You're just saying us that we are not doing good'. So we will be really.. we will have to prepare this concept out of this strategy and.. really do this with the goal that we will be better not to have.. to come there to them and to make crash. I think that this will be really.. second hard work to do, that all of our restaurants will be like Repnik.

- So that is focussed on restaurants?

- Yes, restaurants but also some other products, which will be sold from our municipality or in the area. We are also part of some.. grouping.. Slovenia is combined by 15 areas. So Slovenia is like this [*draws map of Slovenia*], and there are some groups of municipalities, and we are in this municipality let's say, and also this grouping has their own.. for handmade products, a standard. And through this we are improving our manufacturers, that they are better. And they are also making brand, and through this brand, and position of this brand, they could sell more of their product. And also restaurants and

Okusi Kamnika will also take our own standards and our own brand. And also this is some kind of partnership, that they took something from being with us.

- Are you working specifically together with the other members of the Green Team?

- I think.. no. Sara is the leader of this thing. And we come together one time a months, or 2 months one time, and Sara take us exercises and we're just doing.. on the field that we're coming from. So Terme Snovik have their own stories, and Sara from tourism centre and I from municipality, so.. my work will be these electricity stations in Kamnik. And also we had time before this 'eco bus', but the call there was not the right, so we finished with this bus, because there were just costs.. 100€ per year (? 44:40), but the bus was empty. People don't drive with this bus. So we will have go through this project, what we have done wrong, maybe the route wasn't correct, maybe the timeline wasn't correct, so.. maybe the points where this bus was driving didn't good. So we will go through this project and I hope in the future we renew these routes and concept also.. that this project will come, the bus will come to our mindline (? 45:32). So these are the topics which Sara gave us or.. which we gave to Sara.

- So it's mostly about mobility..

- Also in these tourist areas. What we are doing are for the locals and also for the tourists.

- How would you define the role of this Green Team?

- The role?

- Why does this Green Team exist?

- The Green Team exists because we want to improve our municipality, or our area, to stay green and.. be sustainable. So everything what is done has to be done in this way. And the members of this team are from the particular companies and also from the municipality. So everything that is done has to be done in this way, and the exercises of the team is that we have to.. everything what is done, has to be

done in this green way. So this I think the goal from the Team is.

- Do you think there is a benefit of being part of the Green team?

- Yes of course, because we said Slovenia is a green country, and if we are in this area, if we are, like, municipality are with them, so we have.. we will be.. for our marketing will be better, for our position here in Kamnik it's better to be.. than not. So this is our benefit. To be there and also learn something from the best, and to take some good practice from the others who are also in the Green Scheme.

- Are you working together with the other destinations?

- We.. we just came to some events, where all those members are in, and we take the best practice.. we want to take the best practice from them. I think that this connecting is good. So we are thinking the same like that and the good practices are coming together [*makes a note*].

- What do you think are the biggest challenges of this Green Scheme for you here in Kamnik?

- To persuade the mayor [*laughs*]. No! But yes.. I think that every green idea is good to hear, and is really nice, and will be really good. But there is a lot of finance behind, and also.. not every green idea is good. We have also to.. We have to take the good ideas from the not good ideas. And that is the exercise of the Green Team. Not everything that green is, is good. So this is our work that we just good ideas.. And then our exercise is that the good ideas have to be implemented. And implementation is a hard-working process, because all the people just want to do like they were doing before. Routine is our.. everything what is new is hard to implement. And also there are finances behind and.. like Deputy Mayor position is, I think, have some strength, and also Sara and the Director of the tourism centre have some strength, and also the directors of the companies that are involved, they have strength, and people behind them, and they have to persuade them. So I think this is the

exercise, to implement the ideas, and to guarantee the money and to.. change the habits of the citizens and also from the companies. Because some entrepreneurs are.. but some.. who go through this crisis, which was in Slovenia in 2009, and who is now still, they just changed themselves, the companies, in the right way, and then they stayed. But the others are just.. who not change it, there is some of the companies, they just destroyed. They are not now presented anymore. So the best ones go through and are successful. But it's hard to some entrepreneurs to say 'Please do in different way, in green way', because they say 'We are doing this for 30 years, and we are good, and you don't have to tell me what I have to do'. So, also with doing this good practices and he will just look at these ones that are doing good.. and the good examples are.. pulling the economy and improvement. So, in Kamnik, like I said, Repnik is really good, and I hope that also the others will go.. follow him. Because he is really good, he is full of people going there. But on the other hand, the ones who are doing the same in 30 years, he is empty, restaurant.. So I think these green members, like Repnik is, will improve themselves, and also take this good practice to the others with him. And also with this evaluators we will improve this and..

- Is there public-private collaboration? Are there challenges?

- ...

- For example when you have the meetings, how is the communication between you and the private sector members?

- I think I'm doing in a way that we are doing here to service the public sector. So everything what we are doing, have to do in a way that the public sector will improve. Because.. not public, sorry, the companies. So, every our step has to be in this way. And if the private sector will see that we are doing honestly on that, they will go with us. And they will also trust us. So they.. every time we are on a meeting.. not every time.. But in general, they want more from us, so the marketing was not correct, and this

could be better, and also this and this and this, and do this more and this more.. They say that. But we are doing in a way that we are doing. We have also people, they are employed, so there are 3-4 people, and we have some money, and we are trying.. I hope.. and I think that the majority of them are happy.. or are satisfied with what we are doing. So..

- How long have you been part of the Green Team?

- For about a year now.

- Have you been involved in the evaluation process?

- Yes. And also put the answers in the questionnaire and so on, yes.

- But at that point you had a different Green Team?

- I don't know, I'm in this position for two years, I don't know what they did before, but I think before us there was no team.

- Sara told me, that the members of the Green Team changed after you got the certificate.

- I just think that after we took this award we just.. go with this problem more seriously, that then team has gone bigger, also new members got in.. Also this team is formal. Before there was no formal team I think, and this.. I think people are doing on the area (? 01:00:35),

there is a team, a formal team, and also.. responsibility is on us, to take some action..

- Which parts of the questionnaires, which categories, did you contribute to?

- I don't know, I just evaluated areas, that I think that are in this moment. So.. I was just fill in honestly how I think. And the areas were like wasting the [wraps? 01:02:04], there were really a lot of questions. It was really fine to took this award, like the other citizens I think we are not the best, we have a lot to do, so.. this green award will help us to become even better. Because there is really a lot of things to do.

- So it's making it clearer to you what you have to improve?

- Yes.

- What is the most important thing that you should improve to become more sustainable?

- Like I said, that we took the nature from the people before us and also to.. improve local.. consumption. And with all the things that we are doing, we are doing in a way that we not damage our nature. So.. that the citizens will be (? 01:04:00). And that we'll be doing with our nature and with our area, like good leaders, good manager of the nature.

Appendix 7b: Follow-up via E-mail with Matej Slapar

From: Matej Slapar [Matej.slapar@kamnik.si]

Sent: Monday, May 22, 2017 15:02

To: hserve15@student.aau.dk

Subject: RE: RE: Master thesis Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism / Aalborg University, Copenhagen

Helena, hello!

Sorry, for a delay, but I have a lot of work to do with organizing some events (<http://mekinje.info/slovesno-odprtje-mekinjskega-igrisca/>). Please find answers below. If you need some more specifics, please let me know.

Regards!

From: Helena Noemi Aimee Servé [mailto:hserve15@student.aau.dk]

Sent: Wednesday, May 3, 2017 11:34 AM

To: Matej.slapar@kamnik.si

Subject: RE: RE: Master thesis Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism / Aalborg University, Copenhagen

Dear Matej,

I hope you're well! I was wondering if you could send me the summary of the tourism strategy, as I mentioned below? It would help me a lot!

About the Tourism strategy (2016-2025, which was accepted in January 2017). The summary of it is below:

The main thesis is: Together for more successful Kamnik. So we want to encourage all partners, that work on Tourism area in our Municipality, and also in region. We want, that we are all (citizens, and suppliers of tourism products) proud on Kamnik, and that we love to live in our municipality and that we share our Kamnik with proud and concern with tourists and guests.

The strategy consist from 4 main pillars (through these pillars there are also below some actions that are identified):

- **Marketing** (we have to become more known in Slovenia and abroad)
 - o Connected and focused marketing plan via internet and traditional sources.
 - o Promotion of main suppliers and also making new info points with all information and destination animators.
- **Products** (we have to develop some new and also upgrade our tourist product in a sustainable way)
 - o After receiving Slovenia Green destination award, we have to work annually on improving indicators and implement measures for sustainable development)
 - o We will make 1,2,3,5 days package for tourist...
- **Entrepreneurship and quality** (we have to develop and encourage tourism sector)
 - o KAMtur accelerator (a fund to promote the development and implementation of business ideas - focus on innovation and green)

- KAMtur center of knowledge and quality (education, training, study tours, research, travel guides)
- Development and creation of brand quality - the concept of "Quality Kamnik" (first in the field of gastronomy - Flavors of Kamnik, later expansion into other products)
- **Partnership and organization** (we have to create a network of partners in tourism sector and upgrade organization of tourist suppliers and other stakeholders that work in tourism area)

The tourism Vision of Kamnik IS:

Kamnik is Active, Vital, Whole year, Alpine destination nearest Ljubljana.

Best regards,

Helena

From: Helena Noemi Aimee Servé

Sent: 19 April 2017 23:39

To: Matej.slapar@kamnik.si

Subject: RE: RE: Master thesis Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism / Aalborg University, Copenhagen

Dear Matej,

so, I just went through it, and there is not really anything that is still unclear to me :)

I think the most important would be if you could send me the summary of the tourism strategy, as we said last week, and maybe explaining a bit further the 'Partnership' goal that you mentioned.

Above, there is pure translation of main pillars of strategy. But, »partnership« goal is, like I said, partnership, where all partners have win situation. Suppliers of tourist products have more revenue and visit, municipality have more guests and also other suppliers and citizens will be happy, while they will sold more, why more tourists mean more new (external) money to our municipality, and also Tourist center will be happy, while suppliers and citizens will be satisfied.

Anyways, these are the questions I asked and I remember that at some points you made some notes, so if you feel that you need to add anything to your answers, you can do that.

I have made notes below. Hope it will help somehow...

Terme Snovik, our greatest thermal resort in 2008 year took EU award **"EU MARJETICA"**. This is award for energy effectiveness, and they took it as first tourist company in our country, and I think, that this is still like that (that they are still the only one with this sign. Marjetica mean some flower (Daisy/Courtney – ECOLABEL – www.ecolabel.si) – I don't know, why this name of award is...?). "EU Marjetica" is one of the key factors, that position Terme Snovik into market of Eco spas. This sign helps Terme Snovik by building its market brand name value and, it means some good practice in professional and expert level and also by general level of consumers. It helps them also by getting always new and even more and more informed and empowered consumers. Their model is like, that they all of energy (ingredients) that they need, they took it from locals (wood, (hot) water, food,...).

- Where is sustainability in your work within tourism?

Sustainability mean that everything we do, we do in the way, that in the future, our nature, and places will be like they are today, or. not damaged. It means that we develop everything, by thinking about the future.

- What does sustainability mean to you?

Developing our municipality, by the way, that everything, that is good for our citizens, will be great also for tourists, so we have to do everything in the way, that our citizens will be satisfied, and than also tourists and guests will be, and also nature will be pleased, by doing that way...

- The well-being and quality of life of local citizens is the main goal of sustainable tourism development, according to the Slovenian Tourist Board, and GoodPlace, etc. What do you think about that?

Exactly. By doing good for our people, they will be satisfied, and good voice will go abroad. So if they are satisfied, also tourists will be...

- Are you including the citizens in tourism development?

Yes. Citizens were involved also in creating the new strategy. They were invited to our courses, when strategy was being prepared. But more than citizens companies, that works into tourism sector was involved, because, they are doing our tourism... But also citizens were involved in course at the end of preparing strategy. But like I said, if people will be satisfied, they will said it to friends, and good voice will go around, so involving citizens is also very important.

- With whom do you think it is important to collaborate in tourism development?

With every stakeholder. First of all, with companies, that are doing tourism (biggest and also smaller ones). Than by connecting them, and further by connecting with organizations above municipality (regional destination organization, and country tourist organization).

- Is there collaboration between private and public sector in tourism in Kamnik?

Yes. Our Tourist center is preparing meetings with biggest and also smaller tourist companies. Tourist companies took marketing and more visits, Tourist center gets satisfied companies and bigger consumption in our region. But on this area, we have a lot more to do.

- Are you working specifically with other members of the Green Team?

We have meetings, and we are just reporting about developing of area, that particular member is responsible for.

- How would you define the role or the responsibilities of the Green Team?

By preparing development in a sustainable way. And also by, introducing some sustainable solutions (subsidies, for electric bikes, ECO BUS, which is for free (we have it, but, we restore it, because not efficiency... In the future, we will go again into this...), than electric cars filling in public places (and also by tourist companies,...) it is a lot of actions, but, we are going slowly...

- Do you perceive any benefits from being part of the Green Team?

It is responsibility, and also opportunity, to develop things in the way you want and believe in. 😊

- What do you think are the biggest challenges for the Green Scheme here in Kamnik?

To became really green. It mean, that we have a lot to do by changing the habits, of our citizens and also by changing the habits of tourists. We have to build the atmosphere, where cycling, hiking and local busses and trains will have priority, before the cars,... We have also to promote local

consumption, before everything, that came from abroad, and need a lot of fuel and people to be delivered to our place... It is a lot more to do, but, by the small steps, we go further...

Thank you!

Best regards,

Helena

Appendix 8: E-mail correspondence with Grega Ugovsek, President of the Tourism Association in Kamnik

From: Grega Ugovšek [grega.ugovsek@kamnik-tourism.si]

Sent: 18 April 2017 10:02

To: hserve15@student.aau.dk

Subject: RE: Master thesis Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism / Aalborg University, Copenhagen

Hey!

- We have 86 members most of them are from Kamnik, they are friends or at least they know each other and have common interest. In ours for example most of them own a national costume (which costs more than 1000€) or are mountaniers etc.
- Yes everybody can join a tourism association except if Statute of association doesnt allow it. For example if Statute (that 1/3 of members confirm at general assembly) had written that you have to live in Kamnik to be member that are the conditions. Our tourism association exist from 1950. Members can have their own ideas and if we have the money for it, we make the projects. We get money from our municipality, but not a lot/enough. President of association is the one who decides what will you do and he is responsible for everything.
- The purpose of association is doing something you like to do, but not professionally. Young people see an opportunity to get knowledge and than it is easier to get a job because you have experience. But most of the work is done voluntary or for a good snak, drink and fun with fellows. It also develops tourism in city or town where tourism isnt their prime or secondary source of income.
- Most important things are giving people opportunity to help develop tourism, give them knowledge and give them reason to be active, not just to sit at home watching TV.
- Projects with other associations are cooperation in representing our town on biggest torusim fair in Slovenia, a few years ago we even had EU project together (TIC areas in rural areas)
- Some do cooperate with private sector, we cooperate with public sector while taking care for Budnar museum house
- About Green Scheme nobody asked us yet, but there are some iniciatives. When they get out of ideas they ll ask us but atm, DMO's are the one that take care for that and sometimes encourage us.
- I m satisfied, but if we hade more younger members that are proactive that would be great.
- I think that tourism growth wont have negative influence.

Kind regards,
Grega

From: Helena Noemi Aimee Servé [hserve15@student.aau.dk]

Sent: 14 April 2017 19:55

To: grega.ugovsek@kamnik-tourism.si

Subject: RE: Master thesis Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism / Aalborg University, Copenhagen

Dear Grega,

thank you for your friendly reply, this is already really helpful!

I wrote you because Tourism Associations seem to be some kind of an 'institution' in Slovenia, there are so many in every city, and in Kamnik I felt that they are very involved in tourism development. Organising events together with the municipality several times a year, for instance.

However, the concept of such 'tourism associations' is unknown to me, as we don't have that in Denmark (where I study) or Germany (where I come from), not that I knew at least. So could you maybe briefly describe the functioning and structure of such a tourism association? I.e. how many

members do you have? Can everybody join a tourism association or are there any requirements? Since when do these tourism associations exist? Are the members coming up with their own ideas for tourism projects? Or who decides on what will happen next? This kind of background information would be great :)

Also, what is usually the goal or purpose of such an association? Do they actually exist in order to develop/promote tourism?

What would you say is the most important task of a tourist association? Like, if you had to describe your mission, what would that be?

You said you would cooperate with other tourism associations in Kamnik. On what kind of projects are you working together?

Are you also cooperating with private sector (hotels, restaurants)? If so, are there any challenges in this cooperation? And why do you think it is important (or not) to cooperate with them?

Are the tourism associations in any kind involved in the implementation of the Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism?

Or how would you say do they contribute to sustainable tourism development?

Are you satisfied with the tourism associations' role in tourism development? Why? What could/should be improved?

Do you think tourism associations and their activities will be rather endangered or rather supported by tourism growth?

Thanks Grega, I wish you great Easter holidays!

Best regards,

Helena

Appendix 9: Interview with Karmen Razlag, Maribor-Pohorje Tourist Board

KR: When we heard that the Green Scheme is out we decided actually immediately that we are wanna join it. Although for the first time we didn't do all the work, and then after we find this Green Team, which consists only of a couple of people, which is the small group, and then we have the bigger group. The bigger consists of all the companies that municipality of Maribor is also having. Let's say the public companies, the water, the waste.. all the companies, we involved all of them because of course we needed all the data that we had to collect actually from them. Just about one year ago, on April 22nd, when is the Earth Day, we made the signature, that all those companies join the Green Scheme, that they will try to do all the points.

HS: The Green Policy?

- They all sign the Green Policy, yes. On our website we have everything written down chronologically, but it's only I think in Slovene language, it's not everything in English, some thing is in English, but not everything. They all kind of joined it. But the real Green Team only consisted of 4 people, and we were the one that collected the.. all the necessary.. inputs and datas and put them into this.. ehm.. this..

- Excel sheet?

- Excel sheet, exactly, and sent it to those who came actually to our.. to our city and showed them everything and explained them everything.. so probably this is gonna be.. these are gonna be the questions you are gonna ask me. And how we are continuing and the things like this.

- Could you explain.. I would like to put a focus on stakeholder involvement and collaboration, so who is involved, and how they work together, and..

- We.. when we were collecting all those datas, we were kind of concerned because we don't have really like the.. hotels, or the ones who would really already be such a.. let's say, they would really already follow such a green policy.

Okay, there are some of them, and of course, they are trying to.. trying to have as little as much possible waste, and like this, some of them you know. But we don't have really.. we are the destination I would say.. that's a lack for us, we have really a lot of green things, we have our, let's say, our policy in the municipality is also, like, is that.. yes, we are doing such a things but we don't have any.. any hotel.. let's say, anybody who would have already.. any of the marks, of the certification. So this is our lack that we know it, and we have to kind of push it. Push it to work, you know. So we.. we are always like having communication with our hotels. If there is something new, if there are some lectures about it.. like, the Slovenian tourism organisation is organising, or the Slovenia Green Team.. Cause we would really love to have somebody where we can say 'Wow, we really have the green offer'. Okay, now we have some glamping, now we have some, let's say.. green offer that we are kind of.. let's say.. we say that this is the green offer for us, because they are like mostly connected with the nature, and like this. But on the other hand, we don't really have the one.. like, stakeholder? That would really have the green certificate, and that's the lack for us I would say. As in my opinion.

- Why is that? Do you perceive any motivation from their side?

- Oh, I didn't make that survey, I wouldn't know why. Not really, you know. Because.. let's say like this.. let's put it like this. Because on Pohorje Mountain, we have like really nice, let's say.. awesome green cottages, they are really really really made just exactly as the.. environmental friendly. But they just don't have any certificate, you know. It's like this.. you have to apply for a certificate, so it means.. it's not like we would not have some of them, but it's just like.. they don't have the certificate that they.. they would be proven as a really.. stakeholder that.. was green, I don't know. If you know what I mean. So we are not on this map, with somebody.. but yes, if we are making

like, kind of.. green promotion.. Or let's say, we always say 'Yeah, you go to this and this and this place, because they are really friend.. environmental friendly and they are like taking care of the nature', and like this, you know. But Maribor is not always like for the.. like, I always have to kind of.. thinking, because, now we are talking more about Maribor, because Maribor.. like, the city applied for the Green Scheme, but we are like always take the whole destination in.. context. We are like Maribor Pohorje, yeah, Maribor-Pohorje Tourist Board. That means we are not only.. we don't have only the municipality of Maribor, but three other municipalities that are here around. This is.. [three Slovene names]. But we are also a regional destination organisation for 22 municipalities around here. From Slovenian border to.. on the other side, closely to Croatian border, and then.. from.. it's like, one part from the.. one area actually.. doesn't.. for the tourists, that's not important, that it's 22 municipalities. It's just Maribor with the surroundings, let's say. But yeah, on the other hand, it's this like.. that we are this regional destination organisation, like.. the DMO for like.. all those.. 22 municipalities.

- But the Green Scheme is only in Maribor.

- As we applied it, we actually first wanted to do it for the whole region, but then as it was like.. going to be really complex.. we decided to do it only as a Maribor-Pohorje Tourist Board. Firstly just for.. a.. Maribor municipality, not for the whole region.

- So the members of the Green Team are only from here?

- Only from Maribor. Maribor and from.. mostly.. the municipality of Maribor and the public companies from Maribor.

- Could you tell me the names?

- Ehm.. there is like.. I can send you some e-mails and you can contact them. I already noticed them that you are coming today at 8 o'clock here and if they are having time they can join us for an interview [...]. So this is like.. one is from the municipality, he is actually the

kind of.. in the mayor's office let's say, it's called Igor Kos. And another one is Živa Bobič Červek, she is from the.. part.. how can I say, like from the nature, the department of the kind environment and the nature. So she is actually really all.. about all this datas, you will probably, if you need something more, I don't know. She is there. But they are not only.. also for Maribor, but for other municipalities. But anyway. And then there is here another external co-worker let's say, who is actually usually working on a project. European or anything that we are kind of having it here. So he was also a part of the team, and that's Marco Kac. So I will give you all the.. It's probably the best if I give you the e-mail with the contacts and you contact them. But also.. probably if you also need from the brighter team.. That was not really the team, that was.. let's say, the companies that was involved. So there I can maybe look for a.. look out for a contact person with which I was connected when I was actually working on the Green Scheme, to gather all the necessary data that I got it. [...]. And now at 9 o'clock I will meet with one colleague from the office.. from the municipality, let's say.. project office. And as they are now doing on some really nice project, I would say, it's called RESOLVE. It's.. and we are also kind of helping them, and part of it. And it's about.. just about.. how we will.. it's possible to make the city centre.. like, you know, more lively, more visited, and on the other hand, like.. if there are used like public transport and everything that's necessary here., all the parking places and all the deliveries and all of this. How can this be done in a more friendly environmental way. So.. on one hand, and on the other hand, like.. how can we solve all the problems that we are kind of facing now. Because the city centre, it's the city centre, and then you know, there are restaurants, there is pubs, there is everything, so they have to have the delivery, we loved to have it closed only for public, but there are some parking places so it's always full of the cars, and.. you know, how to make it like this, you know. And I'm happy that the project is now kind of started, and it's gonna be the next,

I don't know, three years, so.. this is also seen as a part of the.. you know, green thinking, you know. And our.. department for.. I don't know the right expression.. in English.. I will give you the contact also from this department. And they are like really taking care of the.. like, you know, that we are gonna get the busses which are not.. like, you know, all electric, or that like, we have the electric cars, and the bikes.. so, the city is.. the city has still like a lot of potential of doing in the best way. On the other side I also think that we are really kind of.. just that maybe.. never until that time, that we did kind of collect some data, we didn't.. we were really not that.. aware of the situation that we are already doing a lot of things in a way as.. eco-friendly, or green city, or.. like this, you know. But once we did collect all those data.. but, I would say, we have a lot of potential to make it, yeah.. to make it right, yeah..

- So where are the benefits and challenges of being part of such a certification scheme?

- I would say that now at that moment, the people are still not a lot.. aware of, we did get the certificate, and it's such an importance, you know. To.. as.. this is a process.. a process, people have to get know about it, like.. you know.. I would say not even we didn't start to use that information everywhere yet. So we didn't start to use it already everywhere, so how.. all the other departments and all the city would.. you know would get with this familiar. How can I say, not familiar.. Like, that's a process, that you are gonna be proud of this, you know. We are, but we still don't use it in a.. in a way we should already be from the first day, you know. So this is kind of maybe.. I'd say, maybe slower going as I would.. I would love to. But.. it's, as everything, this is just of kind of the process that it's.. has to be, I would say.

- So, that's the challenge.

- Yeah, this is also like one of the challenges, that.. that like really everybody will know about it. Because like, after we get it, yeah we tell them that, but like, you know, now we just have to repeat it and repeat it and like.. all the stakeholders, we are like kind of.. working

together, let's say, all the accommodations, all the restaurants, all the.. you know. Like, everybody has to know about it. This is not that they would know it already, you know. This is a process that people would know about it. Not even.. not even probably.. how can I say, not even we, as a holder of the Green Scheme certificate are not.. so.. doing it well. But, you know.. We are also in a consortium, so we are trying to be a.. kind of, let's say, always a part of it, what's the.. what the consortium has planned and so.. We just want to.. We wanna be a part of it, you know. We want to continue it. Although, as I told you, it's a really a process, to get that in line that we are a green city. Okay. It's a little bit.. sometimes confusing, because you know we have a football club here, which is like.. violet. And Ljubljana has the green colours. And so.. everybody here, who loves the football, say 'Green is not mine'. Even, you know.. So, this is kind of the process, also.. that, for all the people, that are living here we have to say 'Yeah, we are green, but.. not green because of the dress', you know. This is just something that.. you know, it's a challenge. It's.. a challenge I would say. Because whenever we speak about green and when.. because our material is quite green always, and like.. green and it's not really I'd say.. so.. acceptable I would say, from the maybe, from the.. here.. You know, like the big Maribor heart it's like purple. If we had a violet scheme, and it means that we are environmentally friendly and all that.. then everybody would know about it. But as we are speaking about green it's not so.. [laughs] So this is a process you know. That we will get.. Because they don't even.. sometimes they don't even get the things that.. are green. So we have a big challenge.

- So it sounds like you try to communicate it to the local population.

- Actually we did in the time that we were collecting. Now I have to kind of admit that like.. after we kind of get it we just like let all the media know about it.. like they.. but not really like we would.. you know, as the time, when we had to collect the data for the

certificate, we have to have the communication with the locals, because we have to get the answers. So therefore, you know. But like.. after I would say that we did not really so communicate anymore about it you know.

- Did you have any meetings with the Green Team since you received the sign? Or did you start any projects?

- No. No, only that we are a part of the consortium and that we are actually involved in there, but the Green Team did.. Okay we did meet yes, but not that we would continue here with any of the projects you know, really regarding this. We just like.. I just kind of like.. let's say, try that we put this on our promotional material that whenever we have.. But still not enough, still not enough you know. This will have to come like.. let's say, that also we here.. will also sort of.. let's say, communicate, like about the.. that we got the silver certificate.

- Do you have any concrete plans for the future?

- We would love, like.. to do it like.. When we got the certificate, but there was there written what we are good, what we are not so good, like this. So of course our goal is to.. that we will do towards this.. ehm.. this. Like you know. Now at that time we.. we got in September, in December our manager got, like.. It's a bit connected with our policy, and with our.. that we are not in the moment.. without a manager. And in May, our manager will come, a new one, and then you know I have to present all the things that we.. all the projects I'm doing. I know which are now the most important I have to do, so these ones I'm doing, you know. But anyway, we still have to continue. Therefore we are kind of.. doing it something, but not really, so much as directly. So I have to present this thing to our new manager and in the way of this we will then continue all to doing some more things. And as I'm at that moment alone at that project, from our company, it's also like this that I'm having a lot of other projects. Okay.. I'm aware of this that we have, I'm

aware of this that we have to do, and also like, participating in all the things that Consortium is doing. Of course, of course.. but not that like.. we would really continue with some of the projects, the Green Scheme, or.. of the Green Team, or.. something that we will continue. So that will probably be one of the things that we will have to do with our manager. Like, with what direction will gonna be the first one, what's.. what we are gonna do for the next steps, you know. So this is kind of now.. let's say.. we didn't really do nothing, but we didn't really do a lot, I would say. You know.. So, that's kind of..

- So what are the benefits of being part of the Green Scheme?

- Ehm.. I don't know if I can say already that there are some benefits, you know. I cannot. I didn't [? 22:13], I didn't.. But on the other hand it's of course, like.. If we got the Silver certificate, it means that we are then on our good way that our departments and everything is doing to the way that we are... like, let's say.. kind of nice city, what we are always saying. It's clean, it's green, it's friendly, it's like this. So it is.. this are, like let's say.. the benefits that we are part of this family, you know. But.. maybe it's like this that I can't talk about the benefits because we didn't really start to use it, it's so much, like I told you. We don't even have it in our signature, that we are green, that like.. part of the green family. That is one.. one sign that you tell somebody that you are proud of it or something. So it's like this probably. So.. we are not aware about what kind of benefits we can have.

- So why did you want to join the Green Scheme?

- Maribor is the second largest city, we just wanted to know how.. like, although we didn't join for the first one already.. There were already like about twelve cities in the Green Scheme when we joined or something, you know. But Maribor is the second largest city, you know. And then of course.. just.. kind of, have to. We want to know like, what we are. Although we think that.. like, sometimes I think

that we already know that we are better than just the Silver certificate, but anyway..

- You think that you are?

- Yeah. *[laughs]*

- Why?

- Because.. this.. But okay, on one side, you know. Not really from all the aspects, let's say. But like, from the part that's like.. the city is really so small, and it has like.. in a couple of minutes you are in such a green oasis. Let's say the Drava river it's passing through it. It's just an awesome.. it's just awesome one. The Pohorje mountain, it's just five kilometres from the city centre. And just a couple of walks you are in the most beautiful.. one of the most beautiful city parks that we have here. You know. And it's green, and all those wine hills, you know. This is all connected to the green. So.. it's the nature, it's just here. The city itself is, let's say.. lively, but on the other hand, still calm and like, let's say, you're feeling here very.. very safe. So, this. This are some things. But and on the other hand, we have like really awesome water to drink, like from the Pohorje mountain, that comes like.. In Maribor, Maribor has such a good water. I'm not coming from Maribor, I'm coming from another part of Slovenia. But I cannot drink the water at home. But here, it's just awesome water. So, you know.. You know, there are some.. But you know, maybe, maybe it's just like this that we are not really aware of.. enough, and don't tell that enough. And all the companies that are doing there.. doing really towards this, that would be better.. like, let's say, for the waste and for the energy.. But just, like, I would say, even now, when we collect that data, we still don't have like.. maybe.. how can I say, we are not aware of the.. aware of all the benefits and everything that we have, I would say. Because usually it's like this, that you're don't even.. are aware of what pearls you actually have, you know. I don't know if I can express myself.. So, this are the things that.. I know that we have like, as a city, really a lot of.. wow, such an.. such awesome things, but we don't really put them enough, like, let's say in marketing, that

we would say we have this, we have this, we have this, we have this, you know. So this is a lot of potential to do it, to tell it, that we are really really really good.

- So what do you think is sustainable about Maribor?

- Let's say.. all those transports, that are now getting to the.. really better.. let's say.. *[thinks]* You know, like I already said, that we have this core, and that everything is really really not far away. And by the mean of transport, like.. let's say, that we are gonna in the next years, like the vision is, that we are gonna close the city centre, or where it's gonna be only for let's say, electric bikes, or electric busses or something, that we are.. because last year the Koroška street was like experimentally closed. Okay, the people didn't like it anyways.. You know.. they.. like, you have to.. you just have to have a good plan, a good.. let's say supporting things. I would like that even the land.. the land that is on the river Drava, and Koroška street is just the third street up there. It's really.. very very very lively, about 18,000 vehicles goes there daily. We would just love to actually close it, but.. You know this is just because the people are used to it, to drive it here, to the city centre. Okay, it's really nice. You look at the main square, you see the main attractions, of course. But yes, we would love once to close it maybe all those places you know, that.. the city would be.. really like closed for traffic and of course now the solutions have to be find, and.. of course.. that.. a lot of this bicycle.. cycling tracks are now.. like each year new and new and new you know, so that the people can use the bicycle for the transport, not only the cars. And.. this is kind of let's say for the transport. And then.. ehm.. *[thinks]*

- That's a good start.

- Yes, a good start, I think so. You know, and.. as I already mentioned, this water that we have. This is one of the point that.. that also is really like, important. You know, like.. I offer you tap water that is really good, you know. Not that it's just like water, that it's kind of drinkable, but it's really good, you know. So..

yeah, kind of this. I don't know if I really got the point.. But, yeah, kind of this way.

- No, all good, you answered the question. Then.. I have to go back to the very start.. to the Green Team. In the Green Team there are only members of the public agencies, right?

- Yes.

- So, why are these people / departments important to be part of it?

- I don't know [*laughs*]. I didn't form the Green Team.

- You didn't? Who was that?

- It was our manager by that time. I was just.. I'm just like kind of coordinator, and I was the one who did all the job. But yes, I think that the most important thing is the man from the municipality from the office of the mayor is the one who is linked all the departments of the municipality, when we needed everything, so he was therefore a very important person. Another one I told you, from the department of Environment and Nature, it's the one.. he also has the links and the connections to all the things that we also needed.. Because you know we as a Tourism Board, we don't really always have the connections to all the departments, let's say.. Okay mostly we all with accommodations, and restaurants and, retails and like this, but not really, and our department is the department of economics, or how can I say.. Like in the.. that it's our.. they are like.. our connection in the municipality you know. So we don't really always have the connection to all the departments, you know. Although.. yes, all the public.. companies and.. like, in the municipality, they have these meetings, like every.. week, that they.. But this are only the managers there, you know. So.. I think that those two from the municipality from these departments they are really important for us, as a link, to all the other members or.. to all the other contacts that we then like.. I did actually work with them to get a.. all the necessary datas. So, this is probably those two.. And the other one, was just like.. the part of the team, which is usually, let's say..

work with us on the projects and.. he is also linked to, you know.. all the different partners and everything. So, this were like.. and then our manager was also the part of the team. But she's not here anymore, so.. That's, actually.. she kind of.. let's say, created this Green Team and decided who would gonna be in and who is gonna do what and like she put me as a coordinator, so.. yeah.

- So what was your job exactly as the coordinator?

- My job was.. you know, my job was everything what is connected to the.. to get the, you know.. the answers from the people, from the visitors of the city, from the hotels. Then you know, all the data collecting from the.. from the, all the job.. you know, that we could put everything in Excel scheme. And this colleague that is usually working on a projects, he was the one actually putting everything inside. I was just the linking thing, let's say.. I was getting the.. collecting the data and I would say 'Okay, you have to answer me please, we are doing the Green Scheme, and like this.. Can I get those data from you', things like this you know. But yeah.. our manager did present the Green Scheme in front of all of the others.. let's say managers of this companies, let's say, that are in this Green Scheme. Like.. the brighter team, let's say. We have the really.. the core, the small team, and then the brighter team is connected to the.. is all the others, but yeah, this is not really team that they would, I don't, have the meetings and these things, but they are important for that that we get all the necessary.. inputs.

- Before you talked about the links and connections that were needed, so.. collaboration, is that an important aspect in tourism development?

- Of course, I mean, it's like this.. We are always having a lack in the communication I would say, you know.. Not that we all would not do.. We all do a lot of great and awesome jobs, but the communication between also all the departments and all the.. all these public companies from the municipality is sometimes

not good enough that.. sometimes we could maybe more connect our projects and.. you know. So, hopefully this will change. But yeah.. It's still not on the level I would.. let's say, love, that would be. Because I know that sometimes some of them, and even we are doing good projects, of course we connect them to some.. that we know personally more, but sometimes it's good that we would more.. our.. It's a big city, it's a big municipality, a lot of departments and.. I would say that it's a.. it's a good start that we collaborate maybe more, but we are still not.. let's say..

- So why is that, that there is still not enough..

- I don't know. No I mean, it's not that it's not. It's maybe not enough. But not like.. you know, like, my suggestion would be, you know, everybody who is having an e-mail at the municipality.. you know, like me, that I'm having maribor.si, everybody.. we should be involved about all the things that are.. you know, but this is not happening.. we don't.. at the whole municipality, we don't have the.. let's say the.. how can I say.. information about it, you know. Okay, it still has to be.. of course, not everything goes to everybody, but you know.. sometimes.. the projects that are doing are not really maybe communicated very good, you know. So this is only this.. maybe, lack, in this big huge municipality. But it's not really this [... ? 38:19], because you know if you're interested, you know where to find you know, you work with some people, you ask this, you ask this, and you come to all the information maybe you need. But, anyway.. It's.. kind of.. challenge, that you know, are all really informed and connected and.. yeah.

- Is the Tourist Board working together with the private sector on a regular basis?

- Yes, yes, yes, yes.

- On what kind of projects for instance?

- You know like.. our Tourist Information Centre it's the one here actually knows all the accommodations, not only in Maribor, but in the whole region. That means, my colleagues, they are going each year to a visit like.. each

year, if there is somebody new coming to our team, you know, they visit all the places so that they really know, how the places look for when they offer it, when they offer it to the tourists, you know, when they come. So we have like, let's say.. everything on internet site you know, about the accommodation, about the restaurants, you know, like, the tourist information centre are doing. And we also have the.. communication between like.. those.. accommodations which are our partners that we sign the contract with them and.. like, we kind of make the bookings also for them. So this is in a part also for the.. with the accommodations. And on the other side we have some meetings with them.. there is also.. [*something in Slovene*].. means like kind of "association of small hotels". And there also.. is one representative, and we also have meeting with.. them. And on regular basis we are like really working with the.. with our biggest accommodation.. provider, that's Terme Maribor, with a couple of hotels. There are really our partner from the beginning already, as they are the biggest strongest, more financially.. helpful, you know, like we are going together to workshops, to fairs, to I don't know like we are kind of the team, like we share the expenses of everything also, you know. Because Maribor-Pohorje Tourist Board is going to a lot of fairs, a lot of.. workshops, a lot presentations, this is one.. our part. So we are working together with the.. accommodations and all the restaurants and all this. On the other side, we have the House of Old Vine. In Maribor we have the oldest wine tree in the world, world's oldest wine. That still.. giving grapes, that still our USP, let's say. We have a lot of things that all the others have, but you know.. this is our USP. Nobody has the world's oldest vine. So mostly last years we are putting our.. promotion.. like, efforts in promotion of this. And.. like always it's the world's oldest vine, and then you put everything.. like, all the other products that you have, you put on. That means, drink.. either vine, either culinary, either being active, either wellness, either something. But yeah, the House of Old Wine with the world's oldest

wine, it's actually one of the most important things I would say. In our promotion. Today is the.. This year is the.. This week actually, it's ten year of the.. anniversary of the House of Old Wine. The Old Wine is like.. 450 year old and we have inside about 130 bottles of different wines from the.. from let's say 40-60 wine producers in this area. So we are also having a strong connection, a strong net with all those providers. Wine producers. And on the other hand, as we always prepare a lot of wine events, we are also always connected to tourist farms, to all the producers that are producing the.. let's say.. that are producing also the food like, you know. Like tourist farms or restaurants or something, because we make wine culinary events, that means some of the wine makers come and some of the restaurants or something present in the House of Old Wine, there, that we are having like kind of these things. SO this is like.. so we are really having a lot of communication, and a lot of.. But there are also some projects that we are having, let's say.. partners, or.. supporters.. you know like, when the hotels they started with this.. chain of.. how can I say.. that they are breakfast really Slovenian, healthy breakfast.. and this is also one really important aspect I would say. I was already over a couple of years that some of the hotels, they are really having the connected chain with all this local producers, local food producers, and then they are, like.. offering the breakfast. So.. I would not know like, actually maybe at that moment if you'd ask me, who are, I know that Hotel Betnava for sure.. who actually started with this, and they are really very good at that. And they are really having the breakfast.. awesome breakfast. And I think that now, it's already spreading this.. you know, that the people are really.. At least if not everything, they are at least something that.. they are offering that really.. they are from like local producers and they are saying like 'This cheese is from this local, or this jam is from this local producer.. Oh, this fruit is from this one' you know. So they are also like this.. I don't know how is that, the English expression..

- Supply chain management.

- Yeah, exactly, exactly this. So this is also.. like it was already, like, a couple of years ago like.. they started, yeah, so this is really a good thing. This is also something that kind of brings to sustainability you know. Because you know, and we have.. we have just here down on the.. street there.. it's a called place 'Dubrina'. It's a place where also all this producers are having their.. things here, so we just love to buy our things there.

- Is it like a market?

- It's not really a market, it's a shop, but it's everything from local producers. Or either you bought cheese, of the vegetables, or fruits, or everything. Everything is supplied from the.. from the local producers.

[Interview is interrupted because of a meeting, postponed to the afternoon]

[Starting the second part of the interview with discussing who else I should talk to and what contacts she can provide me with]

HS: When I read about the Green Scheme or sustainable tourism in Slovenia, there was always the big topic of sustaining or even improving the citizens' quality of life and well-being. How can this be done here in Maribor? Or how is it done?

KR: Exactly that's this project I've been telling you about, like you will speak to Gordana. Cause this is.. this goes about the project RESOLVE, it goes about the project.. Like because, until now nobody did really at the municipality or somewhere in a.. really had.. all the stakeholders, all the retail.. retails or the restaurants or the.. like, in the city centre. Or even in the brighter area of the city. So now, through this project, everything is gonna be gained. All they are gonna be questioned, what they want, what they really expect from this. And this is something I see as a really.. big and nice project, like.. Even if it's going about the like.. it's not only because of the.. like, how to get a more let's say sustainable.. deliveries and all the things, and you know, how to get in the city, like.. you know because we would like to connect the city center with the Europark.

Europark is the big city shopping center, everybody goes there because they are having a free parking place there, you know. And people are not really coming so much to the city, and we would just like to connect this, and to connect.. we would like to connect this with let's say an electric mini bus, or something that would just go there and back and there and back, so the people cannot really say 'Oh I cannot go to the city centre' or something you know. Because we just want to make the city centre for the people that is really for the city centre.. for the people. But.. on the other hand we don't have any researchers or something.. not yet, that we would really know what the people love, and this is.. like, one of the projects that will get this information and this involves, everything.. regarding this delivery, regarding the public transport, parking places, and everything.. And I think everything will bring to the better quality of life. So you will speak with Gordana just about these things, and I think this project is just awesome. We just had last week here these.. experts from foreign countries.. I think it was like from Finland, from.. Netherlands, from.. I think, Czech or Slovak Republic, I don't know. You know, some experts where here and we were like kind of just discussing these problems and everything. So.. this is this. And.. then, a lot of projects are also with this Vlasta will tell you, the municipality.. the city itself is doing, with ener.. in the terms of energetic or something. Yeah. But of course on the other hand we are as a Tourist Board, we are always like kind of.. telling everybody that like.. Maribor is just a city that like.. you can just like.. it's a.. let's say, a paradise for hikers, bikers, like for being active, for being in the nature, and you know.. as the Slovenian is the whole, like 'Green. Active. Healthy', it's.. everything is like kind of connected to this.. this area, or this.. how do you say..

- Outdoor activities?

- Yes, outdoor activities, and everything, yeah. And the city itself has really a lot of.. I don't know, let's say, festivals, a lot of sports.. sports competitions. We are really, I mean we really

have a lot of good sportlers, like I mean really.. well-known, let's say. Or skiers, bicyclers, so.. Maribor is quite like the city with a lot of.. let's say, active.. happening.

- Are you involving citizens somehow in these projects?

- I would say so.. that the citizens themselves.. You mean, as Maribor-Pohorje Tourism Board or as the whole group, the Green Team?

- Both.

- You know like.. we are in any way kind of connected to the people.. to the locals that are here. We have the Tourist Information Centre, we have the House of Old Wine, even we do have the one shop on the [street name in Slovene, 09:50] street you know, and this is everything involved you know.. the people are just always getting the information here. You know it's like this.. Our Tourist Information Office, it's, I would say, not only for tourists and information about tourism. Because they just call for I don't know what. Where can they go for a dentist, or where can they do this and this, or I don't know. They even once brought to the girls their piranhas, because they had it at home and they didn't know what to do with them. And they just came to Info Centre, you know. So like.. it's.. you know, it's Tourist Info centre, so it's Info centre, so that means you should know everything. So let's say, in one way, we are very well connected with the local people because they get their information about everything at our place. But.. okay, this is like let's say.. this is one funny thing. But anyway.. we are like, as we are working together with a lot of winemakers, with these hotel providers, with these restaurants and everything, so I think, this our connection is this are also locals, you know. So, in one way this is everything connected to the locals. And we.. each year we give the locals the guiding through the city, which are like for free, you know that they can come and know more about the city, you know, like, I don't know we have the bicycle tour or either we have.. I don't know, some educational things, or like this.. But maybe, it's just not.. let's say, we did even

publish for last 2 year the magazine, the tourist magazine, called 'Oklicno', I can maybe give you some examples, that you will see. Now we stopped it, I'm not really happy about it but.. the new management.. the new [?? 11:55] [*Leaves to look for the magazines*]. So this is some really awesome magazine I would say. There are like always published all the things that.. let's say, have been done, what will be.. It's like kind of.. introduction about everything that.. [*I'm pointing to an article about the Green Scheme*] Yes, this is, yeah exactly.. this was also this year inside.. so, it's like.. kind of the magazine that gives you some news, but that also gives you the look into what's the destination Maribor and the destination has to offer. So this was like.. this we send to all the hotels, to all the let's say, hair dressers, to all the.. Yeah.. to the dentists or something.. so that people can also.. Okay, it's not really sent to all the households, what would be the best in my opinion, because if we will send that to each household, than everybody really in the city would probably know about everything, what Maribor-Pohorje Tourist Board is for, and what we are doing and everything, and what's happening and everything. Because.. he, here is the one.. actually thing that we publish every 3 or 4 months, for.. like to get.. the really.. the thing. Like here he was just like about the.. more about the wine, because there was a festival of.. and like, the autumn, and the Festival of Old Wine, here there are more like, let's say, spring thing, and like more winter or something.. there is a lot of thing. There is everything also on.. they all published also on our website, Visit Maribor. You just have to look online magazine Perfect and you come there and there are all informations there. So.. this is like I would say a really good example for like how to get.. how the locals also could get the informations. But.. yeah, it was not really sent to each household, then would be probably better. But even for this now I think it was really.. nice thing to do it and to have, to make it. I'm not really happy that we don't make it anymore, but yes..

- Why aren't you making it anymore?

- New management.

- And they don't deem it important to inform..

- As now.. till December till now we are kind of without manager.. management.. manager. Okay there is.. or one colleague who is doing some things. But of course, it's like this.. we are waiting now in May to come the new manager, and of course to the new manager we have to present, what we have been doing, what's this good for, what's this not good for, and like this. I just spoke actually with my colleague, she is the one now that is kind of presenting us let's say. And that we have to prepare this everything, which projects we are doing, what.. is this project good, why would we like to continue it, where are we at with this project, do we need more money for this, or for this, or do we need more people for this.. So, like, you know.. it's a kind of.. so.. I don't know.. And.. sometimes it's also like this.. we are recording but anyway.. it's politically.. This was the former manager, the idea is great, it's just awesome, I would continue it, but I don't know if we would really continue it because some of the people might say no that's not good, that's not.. because they didn't come up with the idea, you know. It's just how it is. Probably everywhere in the world. Or not, I don't know. At least here in Slovenia it is. You know because, somebody else came up with the idea, and he don't here anymore, so let's just [?? 16:18]. So.. and I also know, I personally know that some of the projects are gonna be done, let's say if I'm gonna be there for them, if I go, I don't know, nobody will take care anymore. I mean it's not necessary that the projects will go on. It's depending sometimes on the people..

- Yeah, on the person.

- On the person, which is involved into something and which wants to do something. That's how it is.

- And how about these tourist associations?

- Yeah we are connected, like because they are also having like.. *Turistična Zveza*, this is the like.. this is the institution for all the *Turistična*

Društva, for all the Touristic Associations here in our part. That means this is *Štajerska Turistična Zveza*. And then there are like [*listing some Tourist Associations in Maribor*], all the Tourist Associations that are making something. And we are, you know, actually.. kind of financially supporting them for their programmes also. And we are like also connected. Like, if they are presenting somewhere.. like they are of course presenting Maribor also, with the promotional material, something. And we just like, we are having a connection with them in the field of.. because we are really better connected with the events of the Old Wine, that means, that it's the form from the pruning to, I don't know.. to the harvesting you know. So, it's really a lot of work, all the work that has to be done in the vineyard, it has also to be done with this, our Old Wine, and with those are connected the *Turistična Društva*, these Tourist Associations, because of.. like when we have.. when we prepare the event in front of the House of the Old Wine, we just.. invite all of them, like, you know, that the present their part of the.. offer, so we are.. we are always having connection. But.. it's like this that we are having with.. *Štajerska Turistična Sveza*, this is like Styrian Tourist Association, who has then all of these Touristic Associations under them and we just like kind of communicate with maybe one, or maybe she organise the meeting or we are having the meeting here and we say 'Okay, let's do this for the St. Martin's Day, you will prepare this and this and this, you will prepare the harvesting of the Old Wine, yeah, you are gonna be there with your presentation and everything' and we go to some fairs together, some of them they prepare food, some of them are having dancing, so like this.. we are connected.. kind of.. because, Maribor-Pohorje Tourist Board is also one of the organisers of the event, you know, we are one of the organisers in the city. So we also.. have to have the connections to all of them..

- The people involved in the Tourist Associations, they are 'normal' local residents..

- Yes yes, they are the local.. the residents, which actually work somewhere and then in the afternoon, they are like, this.. doing in a Tourist Association.

-So this is kind of involving local people..

- Yes, of course, exactly.

- And they are more focussed on the cultural..

- Yes, exactly, cultural, and with the food, you know, everything, culinary.. cultural, natural, culinary, everything. At the moment. Let's say.. cause they also then says.. and everything. [???

- Do you have any ideas already about how you could cooperate with the private sector towards more sustainable tourism?

- That's just like kind of my opinion.. and maybe you know.. For all the.. let's say, this private sector, this hotels, you know, everything.. I would love that we would just doing next time, like I mean in experience (? 20:45) let's say, some kind of education, just, be more.. Because, we know that there can be sometimes just.. little things, you know, like we here have 'Turn off the lights', 'Don't use so much paper', you know. Just those.. this kind of things that we just like give to them, thinking this way, it gonna bring you more, like.. This is one of the things that I am kind of like.. let's say.. that I would really love that we would do for those.. let's say, stakeholders, or how can I say. That we would just like kind of.. or either, in a way, like, educate them or let them know, like, how they can, with little, little steps.. they can really have.. the.. I mean the.. less.. How do you say.. you know, less money they would put into.. something that is not really.. they can save money actually, with some kind of these things.

- But they need to understand that..

- Yes exactly. And that's the thing.. it's gonna take a little bit more time. It's the same with the locals that are used to get with the car just in front of the shop, just in front of the door of the restaurant, just in front of the.. This is the

process that we have to get to the people that they would a little bit change. 'No, now this is a closed area, you can only come that and that, but in this closed area we offer you this and this and this and this and this', and everything has to be connected. And I think that slowly we have to go this way, but yeah, it has to be close this, we have to offer you something here here here here, that you would love to come here, even by foot, even by bicycle and all this. I mean this is.. I think I'm kind of.. let's say, would love that to be, but we will see.

- You are part of the Green Consortium. How is that helpful, how do you benefit?

- I think that's quite good to be part of a consortium, because you have just one more.. one more.. path.. one more..

- Channel?

- Yes exactly, one more channel to get.. to some markets, like, which are more concerned about this green stuff and are looking for these.. This is just like.. also a good for our promotion that Maribor is a part of it. And.. if we on one hand can really be more green, it's really good, and if we can be part of a consortium, where we can say 'We would love to do this, we would love to do that', yes, and of course that we are happy about it, and this.. You know, I think it's.. it's worth to be a part of the consortium.

- Are you in exchange with the other Green Teams or other destinations?

- We are like, all the time.. Like tomorrow there is one workshop. Just about this that all the.. this, which are in consortium, all this Green Teams, all the coordinators or the people who are actually working on a Green Team like we, so, get together in about.. two months.. We are e-mails, we are all the time on a.. like the group, the team, like Tina, you probably met her.. Tina is doing a really great job, with Jana and the others, I think they are really doing a great job. With like, coordinating all of us, with like preparing the plan, like what we will do in this year and.. so, I think they are.. so, I'm happy that we are part of it. And, I see the benefits out of it. Ok, not maybe immediate..

but you know, it's like, if we continue this work to do, and together, and you know, presenting us as a green country, and like, what are these green aspects or what are these green.. let's say pearls or something, you know, in Slovenia, this is one channel more for a promotion. This was how it was also promoted to.. presented to us, you know, that this would be actually one of the key benefits out of it.

- Are only you going there tomorrow, or someone else from Maribor?

- No.. *[explaining that she has something else to do and can't go to the workshop, no substitute for her either, 25:30]* But otherwise, yeah, I did go actually.. I was going, and then there was one colleague going, but she's not working here anymore. So we were like two of us going, but yeah.. now we are really kind of.. in a lack of the people also.. But okay, tomorrow is the, let's say the workshop about social media and you know like this Facebook and these things, and all our.. let's say, my colleagues all.. they were all, which are working at the House of Old Wine and the Tourist Information Centre, they have all already been to those educa.. kind of educations. So they all know.. how to do it you know. And as I'm having.. as the other one let's say.. the other one workshop which is about sport tourism, with one really.. guy coming over here to make workshops with us, it's.. I think, it's much more important to be there for us, than actually on this social media workshop. I think I will manage to.. with the Facebook, yeah. And social media is.. *[laughs]*

- It's kind of self-explaining sometimes.. So, the Old Wine, is that the USP that you wrote into this GSST form?

- Yeah, yeah.

- So, how does this fit with sustainable tourism?

- Ehm.. Actually, we are always presenting it like the oldest wine tree, which has his.. her.. roots, just like going to the river, and the river was always in the history and it's still now important let's say, for the people who are living here, because it can gives you a lot of

things to survive and of course it's connected to the old wine road that starts in Maribor this kind of.. is connecting and spreading, let's say, all the wine makers and everything. So it's in one way.. let's say, is her role really important in the field of this.. let's say, I see the sustainability, because, she is so old. You know, this wine tree is SO old, it's really SO old, and her descendants are on four continents on the world. This is also one important thing, that when the prawning is, it's.. then you get this.. descendants, we give to some big cities, to the mayors of other.. I don't know, really big cities, and then they are having it there, and this is kind of connecting you know. Now we are preparing this new website, it's gonna be now published in two days, because it's in two days, there is ten years of the House of Old Wine. And there gonna be later on.. maybe it's because we are not collecting all the data.. where we.. where the Old Wine is growing in the world, because our wish is that every wine maker that's making wine in the world, we would love to have it once here. So.. okay, this is our vision. For a vision you have to do.. a lot of work, but yes, our vision is, let me say.. do something that we dare. So we dare to think that we once love that every wine maker would once come to House of Old Wine to see the Old Wine, the oldest tree. So I think this is.. as we are collecting all the.. all this descendants of the Old Wine and as they are really around the world, this is.. everything can be the path of the Old Wine, everything can be connected, and.. she is really with her age presenting for me something that is really.. I don't know, sustainable, something that's really.. I don't know, if I can express myself right. Just in this case, or in this way you know. Because, she is SO old, and she is so [wide? 30:15], so that means that kind of.. sustainability, that she.. she managed actually, I mean she was really, I don't know if you have visited it?

- Not yet.

- If you have time, please go down there. I can even say that you are coming, and they can explain you everything. But anyway they will explain you everything. Ehm.. and it's.. now we

are gonna have the.. on Friday, we have really, like let's say, a big opening of the exhibition and.. and then after it's gonna be a concert and the mayor will have some words to say, even the Director from Slovenian Tourist Board will come here to express some things, and we will have.. we will open the.. let's say the new exhibition about how it was before and how it is now. Even.. even now you can see it in the house that.. that the tree really was once in a bad shape. And then they started to revitalising it. And this is something that gives, at least me, I don't if everybody is here like this, but at least me it gives an inspiration to be strong, to.. like.. she's just there, alone, like.. you know for more than 450 years, no matter the weather, and.. you know, this! This is kind of.. that, it's really, a strong thing I would say.

- The role model for your city.

- Yeah, exactly. But.. we still didn't tell that loud, really loud to everybody, you know. Not even in the city, not that we would do it in Slovenia, not that we are doing it really really abroad.. But yes, we're doing it slowly in a way that yeah.. the House of the Old Wine is like.. She's the Old Lady from the Maribor land. And she's the one who's capable of.. I don't know, surviving many years and.. yeah. This is kind of model.. I mean she's really like.. we're talking as if she's a person.

- Yes I read that you call her 'the lady', and you're talking about her like about a person.

- Yes, exactly [*laughs*]. So this is this, and you know.. We have this, you know when you come from Ljubljana, in the direction of Maribor, you the hill with the chapel on it. This hill is called Piramida hill. And on Piramida hill, there is also a wine. And on another hill.. [*Slovene name*], is again wine.. vineyards. And on [*other Slovene name*], you know, this three, the most important city hills, they have all the vine. And even the Piramida is the most important because there was the first castle up there, and this is the city vineyard actually. And now they again started to taking it over, some of vine producers, and they are now really preparing the vine Maribor from this Piramida hill, you

know, it's.. So we are really kind of strong connected to the.. to the vine. But on the other side, Pohorje mountain as a green oasis with.. really a lot of green forest, with.. high moors, with some lakes, I don't know, with.. you know, everything is so green you know.. Slovenia is more than 60% of the woods, and it's

everything green. So it's just.. just green green green. With a purple heart! *[laughs]* I think we should do that more that.. we are green, but with a purple heart. That would be our.. yeah, yeah, I think I have to suggest that. I think I'm gonna do that and put that in the next promotional material *[laughs]*.

Appendix 10: Interview with Živa Bobič Červek, Department for Environmental Conservation, Maribor

HS: Maybe you can tell me what you did so far in relation to the Green Scheme.

ZBC: Yeah.. actually it began I think.. last year or in 2015, I don't remember exactly. They invited me to join this Green Scheme. And we prepared this questionnaire you know, there was this sort of form, Karmen probably told you.. I think this is sort of international questionnaire, about.. how many.. what percentage of area is like natural protected area and this kind of questions. And we worked together to fulfil this.. criteria, and.. at the end, we got this silver.. brand or how can I say. That's it. But.. there was no.. how do you say, major activities in connection with this. We just explained what we have done so far, on the.. our office for example have some learning paths and this kind of things in nature.. That's the majority of activities that we do.. I don't know exactly what should I explain.. I have some of this here [brochures about the paths], if you prefer in German or in English.

- English is fine. So these are the trails?

- Yeah.. I have two in English, we have actually 3 or 4 of them. This is Mariborski Otok, this is the island on the Drava river. So together with biologists from university we did some trail that.. in short explained here [*shows one of the brochure*], and this is the area of.. city park [*shows other brochure*], the border area.. So it's here, the area of Piramida and.. here..

- And that was developed for tourists?

- As well, yeah. And it's like learning paths for schools and.. like for everyone, everybody. It's in English and in German as well, it's.. the signs, yeah. This one [*shows one brochure*] is very near here, so, you just go through the park and up the hill, it's called Piramida.

- And when did you develop these paths?

- This one was 2008, and then each year.. just last week we went.. through, and then we change the signs that are damaged and.. we..

told.. we tell the forester to cut the trees that are dangerous and this kind of things, so.. it's kind of.. that's not neglected, we manage the area. And 2 years ago we put some new signs on, like for cultural and natural heritage as well. So we have both info plates in one, that is sort of exception, because they have their own layout, and the nature conservation has its own, and we have two in one.

- So with whom did you work together? Is there a department of culture?

- Yeah, but not municipal, this the.. state. It's like culture and heritage.. institute or how would you say.. Yeah, and we worked with natural conservation institute of the Republic Slovenia, and we work with NGOs like for.. herpathologic [?? 06:30] issues, I don't know.. like for reptiles and for butterflies and, yeah.. With university, with biologists and geographers, so..

- And that was also included in the Green Scheme?

- Yeah, we put here that we have some.. Educational and informational wines, or something like that. And we put this in the Tourist Information Centre, yeah.

- Why do you think the Department of Environmental Protection should be part of the Green Team?

- I think that this relation is quite important, because.. when you.. get to the point where you have to put something in the location for example and we say if that would have so permanent effect or not.. And.. what is the policy on that. We have some municipal ordinance on that environmental protected areas. They shouldn't.. supposed to do, you know, an event, whatever you'd like on the Maribor Island for example.

- Do you think tourism in Maribor has been any kind of threat to the nature or the environment?

- Not till now. But.. the Pohorje Hill is another thing. But it has a long tradition, the skiing.. I think that if today someone would like to establish a skiing resort, it wouldn't be possible or something. Because it's Natura site on the top and we have this mountain biking paths downwards and it's always.. sort of.. it's not optimal for each group of users.. I don't know how to explain. You know, with mountaineering, and.. just families passing by, and could be a sort of threat to those groups you know.

- To the groups.. living there?

- No no no, just, like, users of the place. You know, you have some walking paths and then you have this mountaineering.. mountain biking, right, and then you have skiers, and then.. yeah, so. But, it takes this, and it will in the future.. we have to live with this.. We have some complaints, but.. okay [laughs]

- You can't really do anything about it?

- Ehm.. yeah. Maybe.. in time, it takes some time to.. how to say.. educate the mountain bikers as well, that, you know, it's.. we have this law that prohibits mountain biking whatever you want. So.. Because you have these paths that is legal but, they don't have you know, like.. interest in it, it sometimes more interesting to go off-road you know..

- Do you have any plans or ideas how that could be managed?

- Yeah.. we had some meetings with police and inspectors.. But.. we had some.. how do I say.. weekend actions on the field.. like, to.. not to punish, but to say that you should stick to your rules, or something.. But, I don't know.. we lack of this.. how do I say.. I don't know, how do I say in English.. For example, police is more often on the field, like this.. [laughs] Sorry, my English.. Police is not enough on the field to.. to be there present, so they would have sort of fear not to go off the road. That's what I want to say.

- So there is not really an incentive for the bikers to stay on the road, because there is no risk that someone would catch them?

- Yeah. I don't say this for all of them.. it's just the locals that do that..

- Did you talk about this to the Tourism Board?

- Ehm.. I don't think they were involved in this.. Yeah. It's a good idea. [laughs] We will.

- [laughs] I thought you maybe put it in the survey..

- Yeah, I'm sure they are aware of this, but.. yeah, maybe more active.. I'm gonna write this down. [laughs]

- Did you perceive any benefits of being part of the Green Team, for the Department of Nature Conservation?

- Ehm.. Maybe that we are.. more heard, of.. what we are doing. That you can't do whatever you would like on the protected areas. We always say that and sometimes.. people are just preparing some projects, without knowing that there are some protected areas, so.. that's the main thing, I would say.

- So you are better perceived..

- Yeah.

- Also from the other members of the Green Team?

- Yeah as well.

- Are you working together with them somehow?

- We worked at the time that we prepared this.. Otherwise, we work on some other projects. Yeah, but not directly connected with this. With green tourism yes, but in general more than with the Green Scheme.

- Do you think it could be connected to the Scheme?

- Yeah, why not?

- Because so far, since you have received the sign, you haven't really worked on the Green Scheme, right?

- Yeah, yeah..

- So you only filled out the survey and then you received the sign, right?

- Yeah. Each of us is working on.. their own projects, but not like.. yeah..

- Are you aware of how this will continue?

- I hope we will meet more often and will prepare some sort of strategy or something, because that is what we will need.. Otherwise, I don't know.. it's just.. how do I say, evaluating our results, and.. that's it. We are repeating this is.. I don't know, a few years or..

- Yes, in 2 years I think.

- Yeah..

- Tourism and environmental protection are often perceived as conflicting..

- Could be, yeah..

- So you don't think it is?

- Ehm.. like, for example, of Pohorje Hill, okay. But otherwise.. it's.. it's not necessary that it is. So like.. we have this learning paths, and I think we.. the both institutions have the same goal, to have this.. responsible.. how do I say.. mountaineers, and school groups.. and we work together, they don't have like you know.. The goal to have.. busses going there or, you know.. massive tourism, so.. Drava river is something else. We are just at the beginning of making this.. making Drava as a tourist product. So.. maybe in the future there will be more conflict. But we are working on this together.

- With the Tourist Board?

- Yeah.

- How are you working on that together?

- It was quite spontaneous, because we have with Nature.. protected.. agency of Slovenia and.. the.. regional developmental agency from Koroška region, it's our.. and with Ptuj region,

downwards, so we have some.. unofficial working group, that we are members as well, and Tourist Board as well, so.. we are kind of connected in working together.. to promote Drava River as sort of.. connecting all these regions.. and to give it potential.. to develop the potentials it has for tourism, for nature conservation.. like.. rowing the.. and exploring Drava river, with bike and with everything.. yeah.

- So.. Will it be a threat if tourism grows here in Maribor?

- Ehm.. I'm more afraid of this spontaneous.. tourists, that, you know.. Would like to camp everywhere or would like to have.. picnic everywhere. That is more difficult to manage somehow. I'm not afraid about.. this organised groups, because.. we have something to offer and.. I think they are more than willing to accept this. We have quite a lot of sport tourism. I don't know, Karmen probably told you.. And.. I think that is quite okay to manage for now. I don't know.. what should we be afraid of. Maybe we should be prepared, yes.

- I just think.. If I see the surrounding countries, like Italy or Croatia, they are exploding, and you have all this beautiful nature around here and I just think 'Please Slovenia, don't make the same mistake, be prepared!' [laughs] Because I think tourism, or too much tourism, can be a threat to the environment..

- Yes, I agree with you. [laughs] I always choose a destination when I travel that are not too touristy, so..

- Exactly.. [...] And through all the public attention you get now, with all the awards and prices..

- But that's always Ljubljana and Bled, and.. the coast, and the Eastern part is quite..

- Would you wish that more people would come to the Eastern part of Slovenia?

- I don't know. Maybe more this conscious tourism.. eco tourism.. yeah. I wouldn't work

on the mass tourism. We have these spas that are quite well visited in this part.. Otherwise, I was born in Ljubljana and I was living there for 25 years, but.. I kind of.. didn't like it anymore.. yeah, it was becoming too touristy and.. It was green from the start, and when they started to advertise that, it was kind of.. everything was done for tourists. This was not pleasant.. I don't know, for young families anymore.. yeah. I like to go back there, but.. Maribor is more quiet. And it's the second biggest city, but it's like completely.. other.. story.

- Are you also working together with the private sector somehow?

- No, this office.. no.

- So you didn't have any contact through the Green Scheme..

- No.. I personally, no.. Karmen was responsible for that.. Maybe we met together in certain.. I think it was a press conference in the end or something like that, that we met and they talked.. but it was not like.. yeah, in the process of anything..

- Do you think, it's something that should be done in the future, connecting you, or other parts of the municipality with the private sector?

- Yeah.. the other.. offices work with private sector. What's it called.. it's like.. managing the.. it's difficult to translate.. the buildings, that are like.. municipal, and we give them.. that some public company can rent them. Or some private company, or whatever. I think we should certain strategy for that. Like, we want to have now the info point connected to the Drava River. And we should.. it would be like environmental-educational, and we would like to invite the private sector to this, to have like.. a small coffee place their or like that.. And then.. if it is.. now we have for example, if it is public space on the Lent, you know, the region of Lent, it's wider up Drava river, it's here [*shows on map*]. Ehm.. near the House of Old Wine. And the idea is that.. have this.. maybe public-private.. place, where you could have the information from the tourist perspective

and nature conservation. But it's the idea at the moment. [*laughs*]

- So why do you think it would be important to include the private sector in that?

- Because it's always a problem to have.. open hours on the weekends, for public workers. And.. that it would be some other source of financing. Like if it would be a café or something, like.. when there will be tourists, not just 8 hours of day. And we have the same plan.. not we, the people we are working on, on the city park, because we have this.. building, that was.. at the moment it is aquarium.. and terrarium, and it used to be coffee place. In old times. So it's from 1920, so it's kind of nice, but now.. we have aquarium there that it's not the perfect place for it. And so.. the idea is to.. put the aquarium near Drava river and the café would be here as well and it should be some private investor as well. We have working group on city park and we are at the moment preparing the management plan, because.. we have.. events here as well, that are not like.. sort of, they are intruders in the park but we don't want to say that we prohibit them, but we would just like to manage them..

- What kind of events?

- In May, we prepare.. the city prepares Opera Night, so it's open air opera. So this year we expect like 15,000 people.

- Also tourists, also from abroad?

- Yeah, mainly from Austria I think, but I think it's not advertised abroad or.. yeah. And it's here on the promenade [*shows on the map*], they put the stage here and then, we are concerned about where people stand and not.. throw rubbish on the grass and.. how to park.. yeah.

- And you're working on that already?

- Yes.

- Are you doing this every year?

- It's the third year.

- And you had trouble with this the last years?

- Yeah because you know.. Because people like to come directly with the car to the concerts, you know.. So this year we are preparing at the moment, like scheme to advertise coming with bicycles or.. yeah, public transport. And.. we even.. made the organiser conscious of that, that they are having concert in nature protected area, so.. this year, we have donation of some trees. They will like.. give back to the.. like, how would you say, compensation for.. yeah.

- So these are things that are a little bit related to tourism...

- Yeah.

- What benefits are there from being part of such a certification scheme?

- I think that.. maybe it's more recognised as some green destination, or maybe on the European map of green destinations. And.. as well.. with Slovenian tourists.. That's it, I would like that it.. tourism goes in this direction. Because, yeah, it's not.. developed to such an extent that it wouldn't be possible. So, I wish that maybe someday all the hotels would have this awareness and..

- When you filled out the survey, did you have the feeling that the questions asked would tackle the issues and problems of tourism?

- Yes, it's just that we had some problem because we don't collect the data in such a way, this is like translation of some international.. Maybe in 2 years we would have this.. like.. we would.. collect the data on purpose to answer such questions. Now we have.. for the first year it was.. like, a problem to find this data and to put in one form or one value of how.. each state.. probably each state has different form of data collection..

- Do you think that it helped you to collect the data?

- Yeah, maybe. Look from different perspective. I'm a geographer by.. not profession, my.. study field, was from like, geographical point of view. And I have a

specialisation in nature conservation afterwards so.. the questions from, you know like, pedestrian zones and this kind of.. what not.. it was something I wouldn't know about, but I wasn't like.. conscious that this would be something important here in this.. field of.. green destination, but.. it was interesting, like it was the mobility issue and water management.. It was broad perspective, yeah. Not just like tourism by itself.

- Did you miss any topic in the survey?

- Hm.. That was a long time since.. *[laughs]* I filled out this.. questions.. *[thinks]* No.. I don't know.

- What's the difference between this document and this document? *[pointing to the two documents Živa is looking at all the time]*

- Oh, it's the same. It's just here we have some remarks.. But it's the same.

- And that's the survey you sent to GoodPlace?

- I sent that to Karmen and she joined all the questions from every participants of the..

- Aah, so that's only what you.. Can I see it? I mean it's in Slovene..

- *[laughs, hands over the document]* I don't even know if that is the last version. I mean I have it printed it here..

- Did Karmen tell you what you should fill out or did you just fill out what you could?

- Yeah, it was like this.

- And, if you answered a question that someone else answered too, was that combined, or..?

- I think that Karmen.. that was here work. The methodology was.. yeah. We had a meeting about.. when we discussed about which topic is.. for example, here Nature, that is ours, for example.. Except maybe some.. I don't remember anymore.. *[reading]* The influence of touristic before the year 2000.. 1992.. Probably this was our..

- So that's the question you received.. 1992 because of the independence?

- I don't know why.. We have that.. the municipal ordinance from that year, so.. maybe.. I don't know why. We became independent in 1991.

- Maybe it took a year too..

- Yeah, maybe..

- So that says since 1992?

- Yeah, before and after.

- Was there any difference between before and after?

- I think.. we put in there that we have no data. And then, probably they.. they put, if they had some. Because, I no aware of..

- Yeah, you would probably need someone who worked back then, who can tell that?

- Yeah.. [pause] I work quite a lot with our.. geographical information system.. ehm, office or something. We have a person who have.. the data that exists, like state, and municipal, and for water, and nature conservation. Some data that they have, quite.. we put quite an effort to collect, so.. we do that together.

- So you had a meeting before feeling that out and then you decided on who would fill out what?

- Yeah. I don't know if somebody else has another opinion. Probably Karmen was the one..

- Okay, I will ask her later about that then. If I would ask you to define sustainable tourism in a few words, what would you say?

- [laughs] It would be to respect the nature as such.. It would be without a carbon footprint and.. let.. using some.. source.. like sustainable source of energy.. like, from hydro energy here, and.. without polluting the environment so much.. In connection with local resources, like.. eco farms we have..

- Are you working with the Tourist Associations?

- That's more Karmen. But now that we have this Drava.. working group, like I said.. Last year we had the first Drava festival, yeah, and.. we worked with.. [Slovene word], we say, it's like.. it's like this.. [shows on the map]

- Ah, Floß [German for float], it's the same in German.

- Yeah, so they have their own *Turistična Društva*, but it's.. active on the Drava river and yeah. In this Drava festival we try to connect all that are somehow connected to Drava, so we have this.. yeah, quite a lot of.. Their problem is our problem, like.. yeah, and there are some you know, kayak.. and there are some.. divers, and each have their own.. this.. organisation..

- Association..

- Yeah, association. That is in some part touristic as well. Some part.

- Yes I mean.. if there is gonna be more tourism on the river, there is also gonna be more diverse and more kayaks and..

- Yeah and this.. SUP.. paddling under water.. [laughs]

- And that won't be harming the flora and fauna in the river?

- Yeah it's.. a Natura 2000 site. Yeah, it's the whole Drava river. But.. since we are from the start, I expect that we will be included in all strategies, and all.. and how manage to.. stay in the frame. Like that.. the thing that are permitted and yeah..

- Do you have the feeling that it is in the mind of the people that they have to protect the nature?

- Not from all of course. But.. we don't have.. some, you know like.. some crazy ideas. We have one ship that is.. flowing from here to the bridge that is here, but that's not.. I don't know what to expect, if there will be more tourists. Yeah..

- So far, there are no plans to.. I don't know, limiting tourism or..

- No.. I would it could be on.. electric kind of boat. But.. if we would have 10 of them, it would be.. yeah, danger of.. I don't know. But since we have one.. It's okay.

- But electric mobility would be preferable?

- Yeah of course. We have this Lent festival, Karmen can tell you about this. We will like have... like.. at the beginning and at the end we have like.. fireworks. And our office is always against it. Because it pollutes the air, and water at the end. So.. it's from.. last year it was.. yeah, it's from this bridge, down.. So, we are not really happy about it. But.. each year we.. inform that it has an impact on nature environment, but..

- Who do you inform?

- The organisers..

- Is that a private organisation?

- Not really. It's like.. municipal run. Not municipal run, the municipality is the owner of the.. this cultural institution.

- But they don't react?

- It depends on the.. mayor, and on the finances and.. it's not like they would accept in general. It's one year it's okay, but the other..

- So one year they do a firework and one year they don't?

- Ehm, one year they do two, and one year they do one. *[laughs]*

- *[laughs]* Okay. Is that a compromise you can live with?

- Yeah. We tried with this.. how do you say.. eco-friendly glasses. Like.. on public spaces you need this.. the glasses you serve the beer and the beverage, that it's.. returnable. They have this in Vienna as well and.. we tried this, but.. It was accepted from the organisers more or less.. with complaints, so.. I don't know what will be this year.

- But they did accept it?

- Yeah, we have municipal ordinance on that, that there is no plastic like.. We tried with that as well..

- But this year you have to fight for this again?

- Yeah.

- And you don't perceive that they understand why this is important?

- Well.. we are trying, but.. you know, this festival is quite big and.. has.. more organisers, and you have to persuade everybody.. You don't exactly know what they do on the field. It's hard to.. yeah. It would be a big strategy to work on the green organising of events. We are trying little by little. Yeah.. it's more environmental than nature conservation issue, but yeah.. in the end .. there are not such a big that would be.. that we would be ignorant of this.. you know.

- Do you think it would be helpful if.. No. You said that the organisers are part of the municipality right?

- The main organisers, yeah. But then there are some small, you know, like.. who have this food and drink.. how do you say.. points.

[...]

HS: Do you think it would be helpful if this cultural institution would also be part of the Green Team?

ZBC: Maybe, yes. Why not. The thing is that.. it's always a question of financing, where you can.. yeah.. manage the festival.. Yeah.. But we have.. some.. NGOs from Ljubljana that is working like, for the.. that has actions all around Slovenia, develop sort of guidelines for organising the sustainable events, mostly sport events. And I always say that the organiser should have a look at that. It's not obligatory, but it's written there that you should manage the parking and the rubbish, and the.. all the aspects of this.. I think this is quite the main issue of green tourism, that we should develop in the future. Because we don't have tourists all

the time, they come mostly to this kind of events.

- **Okay, there are a lot of people..**

- Yeah, at the same time, and the same place.

- **So you think that should be something to work on.**

- Yes.

Appendix 11: Interview with Igor Kos, Mayor's office, Maribor

HS: So Karmen told me that you are part of the Green Team, and also that you didn't work that much on the Green Team since you got the sign..

IK: No. There have been some changes in the leadership of the Tourist Board of Maribor, you probably know. And now we are just waiting to see how the new face will react, but.. basically the stage is already set. It won't move in a way.. away from what we already set. I cannot now tell you what the new head of the Tourist Board will do, cause I actually didn't speak to her yet. I know what the previous one was doing and we supported this 100%.. so, this is the.. why actually we decided to go for this. We thought actually we earned more than silver..

- Yeah, Karmen told me that too!

- But okay. Let's leave it there. We had the Green Capital, so basically.. maybe, in the national scheme, it had to be like that.

- Why do you think you deserve more than silver?

- We have some practices that we had for a longer time than for example.. others, but I won't go that far in that direction, so. It's just our opinion, we leave it here.

- Okay. Can you maybe quickly tell me who you are, what you're doing, etc.?

- I'm a member of the mayor's cabinet, so I'm officially.. in the mayor's cabinet responsible for preparing investment projects. One of the.. actually two main goals, one was preparing projects for the European vision money, so call 'Integrated Territorial Investment' programme. So this is quite a large project, programme, that will target three.. main topics. One is.. energy efficiency, the second is mobility and the third one is urban renovation. So, we think that in preparing all this projects in the common way, with the goal of being sustainable, being green and opening this public spaces that are now used for green mobility.. for other, we are getting it in direction for visitors. If the Tourist

Board changes, the projects will still go through and that will us get to the higher level of.. sustainability throughout the city. If you know what I mean. Cause we will have the possibility now to connect all the cycling routes in the city, through that money. So.. which is huge for us, because now we have holes in the system, you know what I mean. One part is also, through this money, we will do our part of Drava river bicycle rail. Karmen probably told you about it. So we are pushing hard to get this bicycle way by the river of Drava done, this means from Austria to Croatian border. Together with 17 other municipalities, and our part through Maribor, which is quite large, will be done with European money. We will have to participate of course, it's not free *[laughs]*.. and we just passed last Thursday this problem through the city council, so it's basically set and done. Now we have just to implement it. The second part, which is even larger, is then urban renovation, and we will.. I can just show you here the spaces.. You have been probably down at the river?

- Not yet, I just arrived.

- Not yet. We can maybe take a short walk, it's quite here. Today situation is, that there is a road, on the river bank, which is used by commuters, or anybody, for transport east-west throughout the city. Now we will close this road. Completely. And we will make the river bank pedestrian. With some peers out on the river, so people can lie down. So we will completely change the use of the space through the projects. So this is sustainable in a longer run, not just in a short run. And there is also one street here above, which is one of the oldest in the city, it will also have a different use. It will not be for public transport, as.. you and me, but just as a public transport as busses, and access. So.. and this is then connecting this part, where we are now, which is oldest part of the city - not just this building, but this part of the city - to the river, directly. Cause now it's cut twice, through the roads. So we are connecting this together, in one big way, and

there will also be no traffic, so people will move safely. There will be also be possibilities for renovation, because now.. because of the traffic , people are not willing to invest in the old city.. So this is the big part.. We are planning in next 2-3 years to establish this.

- I guess the local residents are maybe a little bit..

- It's mixed. I can be honest about it, it's mixed. We did a, let's call it experiment with the street, just here Koroška street, 1,5 years ago, in the frame of European Mobility Week, maybe you are familiar with it. So this is always in September, throughout Europe. And we closed street for three weeks. On this problem, so public transport can go through, normal commuters cannot go through. And we measured on 15 points around this area what will happen, before and after. So we have the data before, and we have the data during the whole process. And we.. kind of now know, we can do that, because the traffic system in the city didn't collapse, nothing so big.. big of a deal happened. And the projection that we had before that, when we had press conferences and told.. people about it, they said 'Noo, this will not work' and everything. You probably know this kind of debate, and we proved they are wrong, so now.. we are going towards this arrangement permanently.

- I'm asking because Karmen told me about this RESOLVE project, and it sounded like residents were a bit more critical towards it, because they are used to driving their car everywhere.

- Yeah. And they will not be able to do that in the future.

- So you will just go for it and they will have to deal with it.

- We will have otherwise have problems in the other direction, you know. People are also complaining about the noises about mobility, so cars and trucks and everything. So, you have to choose, what is important: health of the people, or commodity. And, for me this is not a choice.

- So where is the relation to tourism in all of this?

- This area by the river is also where the oldest wine tree in the world grows. So.. this.. will not have busses stopping in front of it. If you know what I mean. So. This is from so many points wrong [*laughs*], that.. I cannot start. You don't have like.. coming with the bus to the Pisa tower.. you know what I mean. You park there, you walk there, or you have this small train, that goes through the city, that takes you there, but there is no way you are able to come with your own vehicle to.. this kind of monument. This has to change, that's it. We also think that space down by the river is too valuable for citizens to be parking lot. And of course, if you use, let's say, half of the space for traffic, then you cannot use it for the other means, which would then be second and third, you know. And we close this part of the town every year for summer festival, if you're able to come end of June or beginning of July, you're quite welcome here.

- The Lent festival?

- Lent festival, yeah. So we know also from this one month period, what this means for the traffic in the city centre. We don't have big issues. It's just that people are.. also me, used to drive through the streets, cause I was doing this all my life since I got driver's license, you know. But I stopped using it for example, to see how it will affect my life. I voluntarily stopped using these two streets, and I still live a normal life. [*laughs*] It's not a big deal. And I actually live here in the neighbourhood. So it would, from the commodity point of view, it would mean a lot to me if I can still use this. From the city point of view.. I just have to adapt, and that's it. And it's not a big deal actually, really not a big deal. So.. this is also connected.. nowadays, everything is connected you know. People can come and feel good down by the river, it's good for tourism. Cause if locals will use the space, the tourists will also come. Coming now.. already, to this area, but we think that.. On the experience from for example Graz or other cities here in the

neighbourhood, it doesn't make a big changes.. for the business. Actually they have a quite, slight growth in the middle run, if we do that. In the short term maybe, first 2-3 weeks, that would be problematic, but otherwise, in the long run.. cause, then, the businesses already, that are in pedestrian zones, wouldn't be able to have their.. economic.. but they are doing well. So, it's not a point of coming with the car. It's a point of feeling comfortable.. getting together with other people. If you are able to.. I don't know, you said, Friday you're leaving?

- Or Saturday.

- Probably Saturday will be better, cause Friday here will be full.

- Full with?

- Full with people. You will see how it.. And nobody will come here with the car. You know, the nearest parking lot to this is like, 300 metres away. So.. we are having good data from here, and we can transfer it to there. And we think that.. nothing spectacular will happen to the traffic in the city because of it. Of course, we have to do arrangements about parking for visitors, for the locals.. This is also part of the RESOLVE problem. We also did already in 2015 a sustainable urban mobility plan, so-called SUMP, and now we did last year integrated.. sustainable urban development of the city plan, which is also connected to the SUMP. So, we need all these strategic documents, that are now pointing where we should go, and we are just executing it. Now we are executing it.

- And is anything of that in relation to the Green Scheme, or building on the evaluation report from the Green Scheme?

- It was a process that went at same time. We knew already in evaluation these points were already accounted for. Simultaneously, if you know what I mean.

- Yes. I didn't see the evaluation plan yet..

- There were some remarks about the benchmarking.. destination and everything, but this is part of the Tourism Board, you know,

you cannot do it over night. You know, it's long term process. It started three years ago, we completely changed the promotion materials, so we got new faces everything. It went well. The numbers are.. last year were higher than in the year.. when we had this cultural capital. So.. we are..

- The tourist numbers you mean?

- Yeah. Let's say, we are 1/5 of the budget we had on disposal in 2012, or before 2012. Now we are doing better than that. So.. this is what.. this complete approach from the Tourist Board brought to the numbers. So.. we are basically having 10% growth every year. Visiting and overnight stays, so we came from 1.7.. Karmen has straight data, but I think, 1.7 nights per stay, we came to 2.2, in 4 years. So.. I think this is a.. quite accomplishment. So we know we are lacking with the connection to the neighbouring municipalities, like.. all, cause destination as we see it, is 42 municipalities, which Maribor is in centre, as original centre. And we are trying to connect all of them, and this is the hardest part. You know, you have 42 mayors. Which.. they wanna have everything, but pay for nothing. *[laughs]*

- So you say, collaboration between municipalities is difficult..

- It has some issues, yes. *[laughs]*

- *[laughs]* Very diplomatic. How is that inside this municipality? Are you collaborating with.. within the municipality probably, but private sector, or tourism associations..?

- We have a quite unique situation, because our transport provider in the city.. is also running.. infrastructure on the hill.

- On the Pohorje?

- Yeah, on the Pohorje hill. So ski lifts and everything is run by bus company. So this is quite unique arrangement. But.. it's.. last year there got it for 15 years per session [? 17:08], so last year was quite okay. I must admit, it was lack of snow fall, like everywhere basically. We have this artificial snow, and we had more than

100 days of skiing on this hill. And we have two different resorts, smaller ones, but they are connected, and there is also bus line connecting them on the hill. So, you come with a ski lift, or this gondel, up, and then you can move if here is not enough snow or you wanna ski here, you can just go to the bus and it takes you with a 15-minutes ride to the other one, and then you have another ski slopes that you can join. And then of course you can return and go down.. the second one. So.. this is one.. thing that we have. Then we have one big hotel chain, Terme Maribor, which runs.. some of the hotels. They have like half of the capacity of the beds and.. counter to them, there is.. now, the smaller hotels stepped together in one organisation, like organisation of smaller hotels, then we have one big one and a lot smaller ones, but they are.. on the bed counts they are almost equal, if you know what I mean. So they are two counterparts, and since they joined together they also have better results, because they have joined promotion, they also have defined a minimum price, that nobody gets dumping.. on the destination, so, you have to price your destination. We had difficulties explain that to them, but now they understand it. If one sells under value, everybody else will have to it, so everybody keeps the.. But Maribor is not like.. an expensive destination to stay.. So, you see. So we know.. we know for hostels how much you pay, we know for tourist offer how much you pay, we know for 4-star.. we unfortunately don't have 5-star anymore, because Habakuk lost one star, but I will.. I think they will invest and they will get it back. But this is private hotel so.. we as a municipality cannot do much about it. So.. this is on the.. hotel side, sort of speaking. And then there is a lot of good restaurants. Really good. This is one of them. No really, it's quite good, if you like.. the pizzeria there is actually valued as one of the best in Slovenia. But it's.. large so.. you take somebody. So there is around the corner, and we also have good education on the tourism side. So we have this.. we called it middle school, and then there is the faculty for tourism also. So they have a new place, at [Slovene

street name], maybe you can take a walk, there is also a restaurant called 'Seven', also good [laughs]. No.. you have.. And there where this restaurant is, the whole building is faculty. They have some.. on the top floor, they have show rooms. So they have hotel room that students can actually use as a.. getting together, everything, they have sauna place, and.. everything which comes together in a hotel, or smaller hotel, they can practice there. So you have restaurant, you have hotel room, you have that.. So everybody can get dirty, so to speak. So because of that it's.. [interrupted by a call].

- So.. why should Maribor be part of the Green Scheme?

- It gives you some kind of guidelines of.. what should be done, sort of speaking. And then you can have a check, where are you.. through applications. You know, through application, now where we are, where we are good, where we are not so good. And we can work on that issues. Or.. things that we have to improve that.. to be better. Because if we can make the city better for our people, we can also then transfer it to the tourists. And that's it. That's quite simply said.

- What is in your eyes the priority here in Maribor, what should be improved?

- There are some things, not just one thing. One thing is to better work together. This is a.. human issue, you know. Working together and not be so envious of the other.. somebody else's success, because he worked hard for that one. It's not.. like, this comes from alone. Just sitting in the coffee shop every day, sorry, it doesn't cut it. You know, and, to actually change the view of the people, if somebody is good, ask him why he's good and then try to be in your own way as good as possible.

- Is that inside the municipality?

- Also yeah, but it's Slovenia. But it's improving. For example we see here in municipality, that.. especially in Summer, for example restaurants and cafés in certain areas are joining together.. reducing own [?? 2:20]. We as a municipality

use [?? 2:25], by giving them discount on the.. using of the public space, so they can [?? 2:33]. And they are provided then programme for the citizens, on their own terms. For example here is one stage, then on the next square is one stage, on the Postna street is one stage, that you can actually see because they are not taking that one away. Here, stage will be set I believe in April or beginning of May, it will stay here till September. So then on the weekend it will be DJ or smaller groups, or something like that. And you have this on 4 or 5 points in the city, so this is quite good sign that people are starting to work together, for the common good. And through that we also have, where I feel problems, especially on weekends, so.. You can actually choose where you wanna go.. [laughs]. And feedback from people that are.. came here and saw that is really positive. You know, there is also now movement up on the hill with.. [Slovene word]

- The what?

- It's like.. wine stock, but it's.. it's not the cellar but it's just the kiosk where they can sell wine .. it's above the vineyard.. It's Austrian word (*Ausschank?*). So.. and there is a lot of now.. and just, we have as municipality.. we can let these initiatives grow, or we can stop them and say 'No, you have to pay everything'. No, you don't have to do this. And this is the one change that we did in this term, and it proved quite successful. And now they know, if they do that, they get this, and we know that economics work for them, so.. basically they have the motivation in the end to participate in that kind of activities.. And this is now getting throughout the city. This model is spreading, and probably maybe in some other cities also, but we are concentrating now on this. And.. there is also good connection with some restaurants in neighbouring municipalities, we are not just looking as a municipality to municipality, we are looking also brighter, because we are taking now this role as regional centre seriously, and we are acting like it.

- But in the Green Scheme you are only Maribor municipality, right?

- Yeah, we have to be because it's put like that. You know.. as a.. every municipality can apply, so we can apply just as one municipality, not as community of municipalities. If it would be green destination, than it's different question. You know, like a destination. But now it's just..

- So why should your department be part of the Green Scheme?

- It has to be. It has to come from the municipality.

- Why?

- Because we set up the Tourist Board, we own it. And it's part of the policy. So the municipality is policy maker. For example, when Tourist Board is making a strategy, they have to come to municipal council and they have to get this strategy approved, so.. municipality is the central part of this. They still have to work and do the think tank and everything.. and gather data and.. see where things are moving, what is relevant and everything, but it still has to be approved and then municipality provides also the financial means. To actually implement those things that are the strategy. So this is why the municipality is a central part of this. There is also support for the private sector, naturally. By organising some events, or by allowing this events to be organised, like.. we don't aim for Olympic games, of course, we are too small. But there are some other sport activities that can be.. here, for example we have training camps for the football teams, also now for hockey teams. We have covered ice ring, so they come here for their summer camps, which is quite good. You know.. we are not that high in the summer season, but through this activities we are quite well.. And through this being known as a sport-cultural destination.. is a good thing.

- So that's kind of what you're aiming at.

- No this is already happening. Because we got two football clubs, we got this football recognition, they play Champions League, which helps of course, they play Europe, you know.. this European League, twice, it helps also. Then we have this sport events here, on

the other bank also. So.. this is basically.. We have also one training ground up on the hill, which is 1000m above sea, so it's good also for.. height preparation. And they can reach it from the hotel in 10 minutes, with the gondel so.. Everything put together it's a destination with a lot to offer. You know, also the climate is quite nice. Up there on the hill it's in summer like, 5-7 degrees cooler, so it's quite nice for training you know. You can also walk in the woods, fresh air, everything. [..? 8:55] We.. as Slovenia, you probably know, we are covered 60% within woods, so we have to keep it that, so.. we are natural in what you wanna see it. We have river which is now.. very close to be open to swimming for example, so.. you can swim in it, it's not polluted anymore like 20 years ago.. Water sports are allowed. They are not practiced a lot, but they are allowed on the river. We are also pushing now this. This is one.. thing that we have to improve on. But it's just.. we need the hydro plant above, the hydro plant where is this sea that always is created. There is this activity quite well established, so..

- This sport activity?

- Yeah. This water sports activities. But not with the motor boat, but with pedals, and everything.

- Are motor boats allowed?

- Yes.. but with limited speed, so basically not funny. [laughs] And there is one area down there, where the railway bridge is, the blue one.. where ski jets are allowed. So between that bridge and the other bridge there is a area where there can train with their ski jets. So we allow that on there..

- Like, a little bit..

- Yeah, just go there. [laughs]

- So, what is sustainable about tourism in Maribor?

- Very good connection with the nature. We try to establish also local products in the restaurants, so.. we are not quite there where we should be, but it's going on. For example

just around this building, you have a local producing shop, so.. Dobrina, you probably saw it. And that is just one of the activities. We are now also .. we have community gardens, so people can produce their own food. In quantities that are.. basically, reasonable there. So it's no high production and we are trying with.. today is what, Thursday? No, Wednesday.. Today is.. farmers from the surroundings can.. with the Bio certificates, can..

- Ah, that's what they have on this..

- Yeah. So this is Wednesday and Friday. On Friday you also have here on this square.. straight bio, you know.. like, these are not so bio, but these are full bio. And then, the market place.. the old one, you have their everything. It's resellers, you have multi producers, you have.. So, this is a big thing about being.. local food you know, to cut out other things, also meat.. And this short distance is.. to travel from the producer to the consumer, you know. This all.. we try to be as green as possible. We have a lot also these.. electric plug-in stations already, for car charging, bike charging.. We are promoting.. cycling, a lot. We came in 5 years from 5 to 11% of the participant in traffic are cyclists, and with the measures that I described before we think it will go to 15, maybe. Hopefully. So yeah.. And the hotels have to work on the energy efficiency, but this is their..

- Yes, Karmen told me that you want to work on that.

- Yeah. But they have to work on that. We can provide them with.. we can provide them with some.. calls maybe, that they can apply to. Or some grants from European money or something like that, or from Slovenian, also, there are some schemes that they promote.. energy efficiency. But this is their part, you know. If I see.. this is a green hotel, we use as much energy as possible from our own.. Okay, I go there. You know, it's also with marketing.

- Do you feel that they are motivated?

- Not enough. Not yet, not enough.

- What should change?

- No, it's a slow process to change people, because mind is the hardest thing.. You can change the structure of this street in six months, you know. You just make a building plan and go for it. But to change habits of the people, the thinking of.. what is good for me in the long-run. This is hard.

- Are you doing something to change their minds?

- Yeah. Every day. You know, it's a process of small steps. And you have to take them every day, one at a time. And.. living by example, for example we as a municipality are now actively promoting circular economy. You are familiar with it?

- Little bit.

- So.. it's one thing to talk about it, but the other thing is to actually do it. And we organised our municipal utility companies.. in a circular way.. as one of the.. let's call it, one of the pilot projects in Europe. Cause, I have all the data from Brussels, and I know what the other cities are doing, and we didn't see it at that kind of scale yet, that any city approaches that. So basically all main companies are now connected. Water supply, district heating, transport, waste management, sewage management.. this is all now connected and we are trying to explore things that we are doing to circular economy on projects that more than one company will benefit from. So.. if there is just one beneficiary, this is the company's business, so they should do it. But if there is a connection or built a connection, that we are doing this and establish also Institute for Circular Economy, which now connects this things and works.. and I'm also now employed there.

- So Karmen told me about the core Green Team, which you are part of, and there is the broader Green Team, with accommodations and..

- Yeah, you have to gather data, you know, we cannot.. So everybody who has to give us data

is part of the project. And they are also aware of what we are doing, so.. some of them are more connected, some of them are less connected, so they are all aware and this is now part where motivations comes. If you have motivation to do this things, that you now know about, than just do it.

- So what is the role of the core Green Team?

- Not a big one. I just provided all the strategies to the team and.. *[laughs]*

- *[laughs]* And that's it?

- And that's it, yeah. No, the city strategies that are adopted in the city council, you get a frame, in which you can move, if you know.. So, this is this level, and then you have to adopt this to the implementation level, and this is part of the.. the other parts of the team are doing that.

- The broader parts?

- The broader parts, and the other core parts. So, I'm responsible for that part.. and I'm looking what they are doing in implementation, but, I.. except in circular economy, I don't actually mix with that. So, this is part from Tourist Board, they are paid from us to do that, so they should do it. We just oversee if they are doing it.

- And intervene if they are not doing it like you want..

- Yes.

- So you are kind of..

- Not as.. not as we want, but as they said they would do it. No no, what they want and what they said they will do is a big difference. *[laughs]* No, we are working together, there is no official supervision, you know. You have to work as a team, otherwise when you don't work as a team, then you work in other structures. And if you want to work as a team, then you should work as a team. So there should be trust involved.

- Is there?

- Yeah. From my side yes, I don't know from their side. *[laughs]* You have to ask them. But we usually provide what they need, so I think.. they trust us with that part.

- So the core team is making the plans and the broad team is implementing? Or is..

- The broad team is informed about what they should implement, and then we try to support them with the implementation. Also with providing information, data, also making promotions possible. For example, this year no, but in previous years we also.. went to Berlin, then in Munich, Maribor was a team in Munich fair, this is February probably every year. And.. one in Vienna, Maribor was the lead promoter of Slovenia, so.. And then of course, everybody can come.

- Yes, just to see where the responsibilities and roles are, because in Kamnik it was organised differently..

- This is not like.. fixed structure, you know. It's more, floating structure.. so, for example when we did that, if somebody didn't wanna give data, they called me, I called those guys, and then.. they got data and that's it.

- So we are almost done.. Just, if you had to define sustainable tourism, what would you say?

- Puh, it's difficult. Eeh.. I never thought about it. *[laughs]* No, to be honest. I know..

- What's the first thing that pops up in your mind when I say sustainable tourism?

- I would say 'local'. That's what it should be. And then it's connected on many levels to different issues. Energy efficiency, mobility, feel good, environmental.. Also weather connected. So, you have to know what you're doing in which period of the.. summer, autumn, spring. But.. as approach, it's integrated approach. You know you have to have integrated approach, because you have to look at variety of things that you have to put together, and you have to function together. So.. maybe.

- That's good. I didn't get that answer so far.

- I think a bit differently. *[laughs]* I'm in this 5% that screw up every poll.

- *[laughs]* Are you working with these Tourist Associations, these *Turistična*..

- *Turistična Društva*. Yeah, they are in the same floor. We put them together there. Because this building, here *[pointing in the direction where the Tourist Board's office is]*, is actually a bit important to what we are doing. It's a co-working space, that probably you noticed, and there is the Tourist Board. And in the same level, there is *Turistična Društva*, or community of *Turistična Društva*. So there is every community, basically. Or even, some parts of the town have this *Turistična Društva*. So this is more.. for example Maribor Tourist Board is here, and Slovenia Tourist Organisation is here, *Turistična Društva* is here. And their main office is here on the same floor. So we put them together, because they were spread throughout the city. And this was important for us that they are on the same floor, so they can work together. Cause if I'm on that side of the city, and you live on that side, we don't get together. Or we get together in some other places which are not connected with what we are doing. And.. we provided this building 2,5 years ago, for free, basically, to everybody. So co-working is.. they don't have to pay rent. Anybody there, don't have to pay rent. They just have to cover costs of their own activities and that's it. The building was empty for five years, and we thought a building in the city centre to be empty, of that size, which is 2,500sqm.. shouldn't be, and then we looked at ways how to do it. The thing was that for example Tourist Board rented offices just across railway station. And I said, this is stupid, we have here empty spaces which are ours, and they are paying rent there. So.. we moved them here, we moved everybody connected to them here, so they are in one place where they can work together. So we as municipality established optimal work arrangements for them. And they are also co-working, so they connection with NGOs.. We also provided

alternative tourism.. place in *Rajsefiberbüro*, maybe you heard of it.

- **No.**

- It's an NGO which provides different kind of tours.

- **How is it called?**

- *Rajsefiber*.

- **Aah.**

- It's a German word.

- **Yeah, I was about to say, sounds German.**

- We can go there, I can introduce you so you can talk to them, to get a different kind of scope on.. everything. So that place is also for free, they just have to cover their costs, electricity and whatever they have. This one we equipped with.. optical [25:15] internet, so they have access to whatever they need. And now they have to work. [*laughs*]

- **Okay, one last question. What would you like to achieve in five years in terms of this Green Scheme or in terms of sustainable tourism?**

- Just to be as good as possible. In every area. Just to improve to the level that is possible. All the points, just improve. Work on them, just improve. It's easy to come from 30 percent to 70. It's difficult to come from 70 to 90, but it's very difficult to come from 90 to 100. So, it's not a lot of effort to come to the.. let's say, positive, above 50, cause, you just have to do things, basically, to come above 50. But then to come above 70 or 80, you have to do some.. systematic changes to what you do, and then, you just have to be good.

- **And you think the Green Scheme is an incentive?**

- It's part of that, to.. It's part of that, it's not all of it. There is no way that's all of it, but.. it can be your guidelines. And it also give you monitoring. Where you are, how others see you. Because, how I see me or how you see you, is different from how you see me and how I see you.

Appendix 12: Interview with Marko Kac, Institute for Innovativeness and Entrepreneurship (Zavod za inovativnost in podjetništvo (ZIP)), Maribor

HS: Would you start by telling me about yourself, your position, your Institute..?

MK: Yeah, it is.. Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, and.. we are, let's say, doing things in the field of tourism development, especially sustainable tourism, of course. Rural development, innovation and entrepreneurship in the rural areas and.. of course, the innovativeness and entrepreneurship as such. It's in short.. We are combining our contents, our development contents with EU funding. EU projects. You can see one of them here [*points to a poster behind me*], it's about flagship products of the cross border region with Austrian Styria here.. It's one example of our activities which are based on.. let's say, creating the cooperation among.. agriculture and rural development on one side, and the gastronomy and tourism on the other side. And we are doing let's say the.. projects, and similar activities with Austrian partners, for me it's now 20 years. Yeah.. and European projects based on tourism development, and.. sustainability, let's say.

- What do you think is the most important about sustainability? Or how would you define sustainable tourism?

- As we have let's say.. a lot of green spaces in Slovenia, and it's quite, let's say, high positioned as natural destination.. Also, when you're respecting the Natura 2000 areas, based on the European classification.. I will tell as the priority for sustainability is actually human. For me. And cooperation. And in Slovenia, I can say, for these years.. the main weakness is cooperation. Among institutions, among.. support institutions for example.. among separate.. let's say.. economical subjects, and so on and so on. And.. let's say, also the.. working part of our Institute is, how to reach better and.. let's say more effective cooperation among key players in this region.

- Why do you think cooperation is so important?

- Because of the results. We have let's say.. some features and opportunities, of course.. I don't know.. how much you have time to see the surrounding in Slovenia.. Let's say.. in our region we have very good vine producers. They are actually in the middle of nature, [*shows a brochure*] it's one example, the road with the heart. It's I believe the most use photograph by the tourism promotion in Slovenia, especially in.. let's say, tourism in rural areas, for example.. for tourism farms. And.. the main problem is how to, let's say, convince those wineries.. to do together. They are cooperating in.. some, I don't know, ways, but it's still not at.. high quality level. Let's say, we cannot talk about the real networks or cluster. This is the.. let's say, on one hand it's a weakness, on the other hand it's opportunity. Because, also, more and more people in rural areas, they are youngsters, and they are business men, and they're overtaking now the farms, from.. let's say, the parents and the grandparents, and.. this is, let's say, for.. for us, this real opportunity. How to put them together and make more of this. How to bring the added value to the products that they are doing. Because, they are really of high quality. But they are not let's say, reaching the market, or the European market. They are more or less inside Slovenia, or maybe in neighbouring countries. Some of them are really good, they are also in.. let's say Great Britain and so on. But most of them are still stuck in Slovenia. But the products are really at the world's highest level.

- Yes, I tasted a wine yesterday, it was really good.

- [*laughs*] Yeah. For example, we have the world's.. unique, let's say, lady, old lady, it's the Old Wine. It's the only one, and the oldest. So.. we have a little, let's say.. lack, when we talk about the promotional marketing.

- So you think you can do more with this..

- Yes, yes, yes.

- What can you do?

- Cooperation. [laughs] It's.. let's say, some kind of Slovenian disease. Individuality is maybe good for the quality of separate products. But when we are talking about the.. let's say, promotion and marketing of.. integrated [? 6:40] tourists products and promotion destinations, it's.. quite different position. You know.. you need all the key players to run in the same way. And.. it's not always possible.

- So how does that work in terms of the Green Scheme and the Green Team?

- It was quite interesting.. let's say, time, to do with all the members of the Green Team. Quite good experience. But.. let's say, everything what is new, you can feel on one hand very.. positive let's say, effects, on the other hand a little bit of scepticism. But anyway, when you're talking about the green things, in Slovenia, it's.. quite popular.. last.. I can say 5 years. Because also the.. national destination organisation, Slovenia tourist organisation.. They are very active on.. this green tourism for.. let's say 5 years or even more now. It became quite popular, also among the.. let's say, offers in the field.. also.. it became.. let's say, in the head of the people a little bit more realistic we can say. And it's very good for the development of such products. Because.. on the other hand, you have the end users, let's say. On the one hand tourists, on the other hand the inhabitants of the destinations. And also, let's say, by our work, we are doing in this way to call this win-win situation. When we are developing some tourism products, sustainable tourism products, it's also the benefit for the inhabitants. It's.. it improves the quality of life, also in the destination as such.

- How?

- The quality of.. let's say, the offer. It's higher. When it's organised and.. when you have the, let's say, quality criteria, and also.. but, those products for example, we have here, I don't know, thermal mineral water, oil pumpkins, and the products of course of these things..

honey, milk and milk products and so on and so on.. We want to bring them to the higher level. In quality and in marketing. And of course this.. let's say, very very important factor – not only in Slovenia of course, also in whole European Union – sustainable local supply. It's very important, to have the let's say, raw material and the products from the area, from the destination. And then to, let's say organise them and to offer them to the tourists and of course to the inhabitants.

- Is that already happening in Maribor?

- Yeah to.. let's say, smaller amount, yes.

- Where, how?

- It is organised through.. how can we call it.. it's cooperatives.. one such cooperative is based also in the centre of Maribor. They are also cooperating with the farmers. And they are bringing.. raw materials, and products and let's say, apples, vegetables, fruits.. meat products, milk products, and so on and so on, closer to the inhabitants of let's say, Maribor city. That's one.. Also there are markets. Fruit and vegetable markets. Where you can, let's say, get the.. products from the region. Let's say.. in one.. way.. also, the.. how can I say, the.. bigger.. chains.. such as Interspar, Mercator and Tus.. they, let's say also used to do some activities on the local food to bring.. in their markets let's say. It's quite a trend.

- Is there anything specifically in the area of tourism that is done in terms of local supply chain mgmt?

- Hm.. on one hand.. Maribor-Pohorje tourist destination organisation is doing such things. They have.. let's say, events, through the year. And.. they are also based on the oldest wine, Old Wine. And within this, let's say, events, they are combining also local producers. For example when this big festival of the Old Wine, Old Wine Festival, is during the year.. Let's say.. they organise the 'Honey Day' or the 'Cheese Day', or such things. So.. And of course, what is the most important.. also based on the trends, tourism trends.. Of course tourists are coming to Maribor for example, they are going through

the city, take a tour, or something like that, but at the end, what they can experience, more, let's say, in the destination. And.. at this stage it is very important to include the offer from let's say, the rural area and there are let's say specialised tourism farms, which are on very high level. Very quality.. let's say offers, and.. this is then this main combining point of the tourist offers. And then, when we are talking about.. high.. higher positioned tourist products, we can talk about one in culinary, on one hand, and then the other hand active holidays. Biking, hiking, and so on. It's quite popular in this region. These are two main pillars, let's say, of tourist offer, which are more or less used here by the tourists who are coming, in our destination. And of course very important for us, because let's say.. they gain higher per capita spending by tourists.

- In terms of the Green Scheme you have only been involved in this whole thing for the evaluation right? To answer questions and to fill out the surveys right?

- Yes, yes. And to prepare the documents for the.. let's say, final evaluation..

- And since you got the sign, did you meet, or have there been any plans, or anything?

- Hmm.. it's quite.. let's say.. like the sea. *[laughs]* There are the waves, you know. They are going up, and they are going down, they are going up, and they are going down. I think it's good to have this, in our destination, because every time you can say 'Look, we are in the Green Scheme, we are a green destination'. And when you look around, what you can see? Here back it's Pohorje, it's green. Vineyards, green. And, let's say, you can step outside the city and you're in the rural area. So.. I don't know if you were at the Maribor city park?

- Not yet.

- Hmmm..

- I should *[laughs]*.

- Yeah, it's not so pleasant weather, but.. It was quite funny, years ago.. we used to work a lot

with.. experts from, I don't know, other countries, when we became the.. *[..? 16:30]* country for example, in the years 96/97, and.. those experts were quite impressed when we.. let's say, lead them through the city and lead them through the city park. It's quite usual for us. Yeah, okay, there is a city park. But they were really impressed with the park, because it's old, really old. There are old trees, it's organised, there are paths.. there are playgrounds for children and so on and so on.. it's the, let's say, the lungs of the city. And this green paths it's also combined with the city hills. There is Karvaria *[? 17:20]*, there is famous Piramida with vineyards, city vineyard.. And yes, everything green in Maribor. There is a lot of green spaces.

- So, you already started talking about it, but why it is important to be part of such a certification scheme?

- Hm. It's quite a good question because, let's say.. years ago.. we used to do some activities on the green certifications for the hotels. And.. there were always the questions 'What will become through this?'. Maybe in.. one period, when you gain this, let's say certification.. it's maybe.. before the time, that people really accept this. But in let's say following years, you can build the tourist offer, tourist products, on this, let's say, brand. 'We are a green destination, we can position it in the.. let's say, at the European market or the world's market', and.. when you let's say combine or.. let's say, make a comparison with the promotion.. just look the situation in Berlin. It was quite important signal for Slovenia, to become the world's greenest destination. And it's.. let's say, quite a capital, for the tourism development, green tourism development, sustainable tourism development in Slovenia. And.. when you compare the let's say, development of.. certain.. micro tourist destinations.. some 5 years ago and the situation now, you can discover now a lot of glampings. Lot of.. high quality camps.. campings.. Everything is in nature. Also the hotels, also the let's say, spas, thermal spas for example. We are working also with them.

They.. They are very aware of it, that it's important to put the local offer into their let's say, into their offer. Now they have let's say, also the milk producers for the local area, buy the breakfast, buy the lunch, and so on. Even preparing the smaller packages, with the products of the area.. Also for the tourists to bring them.. after they are concluding the tourists experience in the destination. So, they are making a huge step for.. because some, I don't know, 3, 4 years ago, they were self-sufficient. 'We are here, we are big, tourists are there, we don't care' *[laughs]*. It's quite opposite position now. Also because of the.. trends, tourism trends. Also when you go, or I go in some destination, what am I looking for? I am looking for local experience, local food, local drinks, local.. I don't know.. talk to the people, even. So.. quite.. yeah..

- And that also arrived in the mind of the hotel chains here in Maribor?

- Yeah. It's quite different to.. talk to them now, or some 5 years ago.

- But they still don't have a certification?

- .. The certification, actually, is now.. with this Green Scheme, is for the destination. But a lot of hotels didn't go to the let's say.. green or sustainable hotel certification because it's quite expensive. And they.. they have to see the.. let's say, the economic worth of.. this certification. If I, I don't know, pay for example some 30,000 euros, where.. what will bring them back to me, or I don't know, even higher amounts. So, that is the question. Also by the let's say farmers. The.. this organic, eco, bio certifications in Slovenia, they are expensive. And.. it.. also has the influence on the final price, of the products. Where can I now let's say sell these products. To whom? We have this let's say awareness raising, also for the producers. You are not targeting the whole market, you are not targeting the 100 percent of the users. You are targeting ten percent of the users, who are prepared to pay this price because they know that it's high quality product. And it's still a process, it's still a process. And the same is by the hotels. Now, I

don't know with this certification you will target this ten percent of let's say, potential users, potential tourists. And then this 10% will come to, I don't know, thermal spas, where they will mix with this 100% which have total different, I don't know, habits. And then, what is.. then the, let's say joy for this ten percent, to be with this users with total different, let's say.. also, manners. What will be the feeling then. It's also the process for the.. let's say, especially for the bigger offerers. To turn this.. let's say.. target groups.

- Are you working together with hotels or accommodations?

- Yes.

- What would be an example project?

- This is one of the projects now *[points to the poster]*, this is let's say, very alive. *[laughs]* Because we are doing it right now and we will do it until 2019. And.. the basic idea is.. on one hand, how to bring the added value to this verticals: milk, honey, thermal water. And then, how can we do this.. horizontal let's say combination and cooperation. Among them.

- Among the producers of these..

- Yes yes. And.. the main point of this horizontal let's say cooperation, are the thermal spas. Because they have.. of course.. a lot of tourists.. overnight stays and such things, and we would like to do.. at the end of the project the specific.. regionally specific product, tourism product. And also, let's say, some kind of new adventures for the tourists coming to our region. It's the main idea. And of course, have in mind this factor, sustainable local supply, how to bring this products to.. let's say, hotels, spas, and so on and so on.

- Okay. And the hotels are kind of the link, the connection between the tourists and the producers.

- Yeah, yeah, yeah. We would like to put them in this position. They are also doing some activities on this, already. As, we have spoken before, because the tourists would like to have

the local products in the hotels as well. And it is for us also very good opportunity to let's say boost a little bit this cooperation, among the agricultural producers and tourism offerers.

- And the hotels were receptive for this idea?

- Yeah, it's quite funny position. We had a conference some two years ago, also bound to the sustainable local supply cooperation between agriculture and tourism. And.. actually we faced them. First there were the gastronomy offerers and the.. hoteliers, talking about how it's important to cooperate, but issues are, I don't know, how to bring.. or how to assure the quantities through the year for the production in gastronomy and so on and so on. On the other hand the agricultural producers 'Yes of course, we are interested in cooperation and so on and so on, but issues are: we don't know, what are the desired quantities on the other side'. So, you're talking the same language people, you have to cooperate. So.. And, of course, in this position, we'd like to be the missing part. We're bringing together. Not only our institution, our institute, but also the partners, which are in the project on the Slovenia side area, let's say 4 partners. Who are, let's say doing the things on the Slovenian side of the border, in the Slovenian region. [lists the regions 28:10] And, actually yeah, they discovered that they were talking about the same thing. And then we also.. make a pilot cooperation among the hotel on the one hand, and.. this agricultural cooperative on the other hand. And it's.. it was successful, and it is successful. Because they are still cooperating.

- But that was a different project?

- Yes, it was the let's say previous project of this one. They are pretty much the same partners, it was the follow-up project actually. We concluded in 20.. at the end of 2014.. yes, and.. in.. last year.. yes, 2016, we started with this one.

- Do you think that is the kind of project that would play a role for the Green Scheme?

- It's.. not directly bound to the Green Scheme, but everything we are working on is bound to

the sustainability. It's not directly bound to the Green Scheme. But let's say, we can talk about, we have green destination. We are green destination. And we have to do all the supporting things that we kind of prove it, that we are green destination.

- Did you already work on the evaluation report from GoodPlace? The weak points and recommendations?

- Yees.. we sat together, but more or less it's now the issues for tourist destination organisation Maribor-Pohorje. Because they are the.. let's say the coordinators of this green destination label in our destination.

- So you're waiting, and if they need your help..

- Of course, of course. They are.. anyway they are doing on sustainable tourist products, as I said. They were very active in the last four or five years, to bring the tourist offer on such level that now we can talk.. anyway, we are a green destination. Either we have this labelling or not. Because of the, as I said, two main pillars. Wine and culinary on the one hand and active holidays on the other.

- I have the feeling that the Green Scheme is here a bit more in the background and the centre of your actions, compared to Kamnik for instance. Is that right?

- Maybe it's a bit different position. As you said, the green destination label is there. But more important: What are we really doing to prove this. And as I said, for example we are doing this project. It's not directly bound to the label, on the other hand there are activities which are sustainable. We will not end them in 2019, we will again do the follow-up, either through some new European project or through.. some, I believe.. [laughs], that we will have then the network or some kind of cluster. To manage this things. And of course, the first priority is sustainability. Anyways. In all, let's say, the pillars, not only nature and environment, also.. the other.

- So what is your opinion about such a certification scheme?

- I always used to look at these things positively. It's very positive that we have this green destination label. And we can use it on the long term. Because also the tourism, it's.. industry value have to run in the long term. It's a marathon. You can do some things from year to year, but you have to do tourism development systematically. And.. this is.. let's say very helpful.. let's say, green destination label.. to, let's say, do a little bit more, or a lot more, in sustainable tourism development in the destination. And this is also very important message to the inhabitants on one hand.. to the let's say local producers, to the tourism and gastronomy offers, on the other hand, and also for the tourists for coming into the destination. I would be very happy, let's say in some 5 to 10 years, we would be the higher recognised tourist destination within the.. European Union for example.

- Slovenia?

- No no, Maribor-Pohorje. Slovenia is some kind of recognised as a tourism destination. But Maribor-Pohorje.. It is green. We have products and everything and so on. But we would like to attract even more tourists who are.. I can say, highly aware of sustainability and green destinations.

- And you think that tourists actually look at these certifications?

- Ehm.. Pah! I don't know how it is communicated in let's say, in target markets. Inside the European Union maybe yes, but outside.. Yeah, when you tell to the tourists 'We are green destination, this is the certification'.. It's some kind of, let's say.. with the.. Old Wine. It's in Guinness Book of Records, it's certified that it's more than 400 years old, and.. such certifications bring some other idea about let's say product or destination or label.. And of course, also tourists are then more let's say aware of such destinations and products. It is important. It is important. Either they let's say, clearly know,

what is this green destination label, or if it's.. let's say, one of the neighbours and you used to look at them before, you, let's say, pack the bags and go.

- What do you think is the most pressing issue that needs to be addressed here in Maribor in terms of the Green Scheme or sustainable tourism?

- Cooperation. *[laughs]*

- *[laughs]* I was thinking that that is your answer!

- Yeah, every time. Cause.. this is the main weakness or obstacle. We can do more. We can do more with some let's say open and honest cooperation. On one hand the local community, the municipality for example, on the other the Maribor-Pohorje tourist destination organisation.. Support institutions, such as development agencies, agricultural institutes, chambers of craft and commerce, chambers of industry, and so on and so on. It's very important. And on the other hand of course, what is the most important, the producers, the gastronomy offers, hotels.

- So do you think all these institutions, parts you just mentioned, should they be part of such a Green Team?

- Yeah. Maybe not directly to the Green Team, but.. to keep them.. being informed about activities. And of course cooperate in activities to development of sustainable product. It's more important than.. this is, let's say, this is then the result. We are good in cooperation and development.. developing of sustainable tourism product, and this is the result then, 'Okay, we have the Green Scheme'. And it is working. To have the working Green Scheme, you need this other part. And it's more.. for me, it's more important this.. bottom-up approach than let's say, we have a Green Scheme, and then top-down. It's quite opposite. You have to have the.. let's say the position in the field, in the destinations, that you can prove this Green Scheme. Because, okay, you have the certification, what now? The tourist will come to your destination, you don't have let's say,

the offer, development, this way. He will come once and never again. It's not the right signal. [laughs]

- But I mean, now you have the sign, you are a Green Destination Silver.. whatever. And you got the evaluation report, and you have the Green Team, and you have all these things kind of set up. What is gonna happen with that? [laughs]

- The manager of the Green Scheme is Maribor-Pohorje tourist destination organisation. They have to keep an eye on it, and of course react when there.. any changes were made. They are this first level to manage this green label, let's say.

- So, you are.. an NGO? Or.. a private non-profit, is that right?

- Private non-profit, yes.

- So what do you think a non-profit can do, what the private or the public sector can't do? In sustainable tourism.

- Let's say, every key player have it's own role, in such a process, and everybody is important. It's not that, let's say, municipality is more important than some hotelier, or something like that. And the main idea should be, we are running in the same way. Which, sometimes, is quite difficult. Because let's say, the public sector have its own idea, the let's say economic sector is totally different, because they have to live, today and tomorrow. And it's quite different let's say, view, on the development.. But let's say the.. role of such institutions as.. for example ours, or support institutions.. is to bring those different ideas together, closer together, and to do as much as it is possible to gain the.. let's say, now we are talking about this Green Scheme and sustainable tourism for example.. Also, it is a similar by the other activities and products. It's pretty much the same. It's not only tourism.. let's say, specific, in this cooperation. There are also the other [..? 43:20], when you're talking about the private and the public sector. Sometimes it's quite hard to bring them together. To talk the same language of course, to cooperate.

- And you're trying to be the link between them.

- Yea, we are one of them, we are small, let's say, what we are doing in.. the way to bring together as I said, agriculture and tourism on the one hand, and of course, to bring together also the public and private sector, because of the importance, of cooperation. We can do more and better. When we will have quality sustainable tourist products, then we need a good destination organisation, to make a good marketing, together. Of course.

- So.. I think that's it. [laughs]

- [laughs] I hope you got.. some answers.

- Yes, I'm happy you talked so much about cooperation, because I tried to put a focus on that, and I had the feeling that was an issue here..

- Yeah, yeah. All the activities are very positive, but the main idea is.. how to do better and more. Because we can, we really have the knowledge, we really have the knowledge. And we have, let's say, people who are experts, who are specialists for some.. let's say things, but.. you need then very good and close cooperation.

- And it is the awareness that is missing?

- Yeah.. it is maybe this nationale.. maybe, sport, or.. I don't know how to call it. [laughs] It's a habit to look more individual than in, let's say, this cooperative way. It's not only in let's say this destination, it's pretty much the same in whole Slovenia.

- Are there any workshops or seminars or something, that are kind of pushing directly towards that?

- Yeah. Let's say, we are doing, we can say, this project work as some kind of micro-level. Because we are doing it in the region and as, let's say, kind of pilot action, actually. But yes, we have the meetings, sessions, workshops, even seminars, I don't know, conferences, which are targeted also on cooperation, of course. Because we used to work in this kind of

events with public and private sector and trying to put them together.

- What kind of events?

- Within this projects for example. This are.. let's say, content based, and practically, focussed. Not in some, let's say.. Scientific manner.

- So since you finished this project, or started this new project, did you perceive any changes of mind? Are they more..

- Mhm.. More aware, more cooperative.. Yeah. And they have also more cooperation and knowledge, which is important for let's say, further development. It's not maybe so hard now to, let's say, to come to them, to explain them 'Okay, we are doing something new now, and it's some kind of.. mystic' *[laughs]* It's not. This are.. this are really, when you.. how to say, we are not discovering the hot water, because it's already here. We just try to put this thing together and to bring the higher added value to them.

Appendix 13: Interview with Gordana Kolesarič, Department for Development and Investments, Maribor

GK: So the project is about reducing carbon emissions in the city centre. How to make delivery more sustainable.. Perhaps, by electric cars, we have a big pedestrian zone, you noticed. So we have a lot of entrances of cars, which are delivering during the day. So we would like to make this pedestrian zone more friendly to the people who are.. to the pedestrians. And.. we would like.. We will have a stakeholder group with shop keepers, restaurant owners, to discuss how all can contribute to reduce carbon emissions. So if we introduce electric cars, and if perhaps they can see how they can make.. common deliveries, not everybody on its own.. Because we have a post.. it's like a service from the post, which can enter whenever someone needs something. So perhaps they can organise in a different way, to reduce delivery. We will see how we can manage this, because it's difficult for them, they want to have their businesses. And.. we don't want to.. to harm the economy, we would like to boost the economy. So in this project we.. look.. the challenge is, how to boost economy and reduce carbon emissions. And also, inhabitants. How they.. we will have survey, how they get to the city, how do they use the.. do they go by bike, by car, by bus. And.. how they could also contribute, not to go always by car, but walk also, because Maribor is a small city, you have a lot of distances which are walking distances. So you don't have to use the car everywhere you go. So this is how to.. make some awareness.. raise awareness for people to think about mobility. How they could contribute to cleaner air and so on. And.. you have there all the project partners which are in the project [*points to brochure*]. We have had now last week a peer review of our document, of the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan of Maribor, and how.. we could improve it, we will make an action plan. Which will in the end.. should be adopted by the city council. And there we would like to introduce measures, how to reduce carbon emissions, how to reduce.. in a way, in a friendly way, delivery and

also.. the use of personal car for people in city centre. So this is about this project.

HS: So a few days ago you met with Karmen from the Tourist Board. How are they involved?

- They are one of the stakeholder member. We would like to boost also.. to make a revival of the city centre. Because lots of people are going to the shopping centre, there they can park their car, have coffee, have also lot of events, not just shopping. So we would like to show the people that there are lot of events, lot of interesting things to do in the city centre, historical city centre, cultural events, and so on. And we would like to raise awarenesses also among the public institutions to open also Saturday, Sunday. The museums, not all museums are open Saturday and Sunday. Tourists will come Saturday and Sunday, most of the shops are closed in the city centre. So.. we would like to make a stakeholder group to raise awareness among public institutions, shops, restaurants.. to see what we can do in the city centre, to have more people in the city centre. So if we.. if the shops are open also on Saturday afternoon, like in the shopping centre, people would be also in the city centre. So everybody is complaining, that the city centre is empty, in the afternoons, Saturday afternoon and Sunday, but if nothing is happening in the city centre, people are going to the shopping centre. But we have time on Saturday and Sunday to do some shopping, to meet some friends, so why not in the city centre, why going to the shopping centre? So this is.. are the challenges also in the sector of tourism, how to raise awareness towards that.

- Towards the tourists?

- Our.. target group are the shop owners, the restaurants, open also the doors on the afternoon, on weekends, because it would bring you more business, more profit and.. I have had some surveys with shop owners, and they told me.. for example, the Müller, who

told me 'Yes we normally, Müller closes at 1 o'clock, but I asked that we close at 3 o'clock, because in this time we have the most profit'. People are coming in this time.. mostly.. If they would open until the evening, I'm sure they would have also..

- Yeah, especially on Saturday..

- Yeah. So this is why we would like to involve citizens and shop keepers, and all who are coming to the city centre, to make together some strategy, how we, for all of us, could improve the city centre.

- And you said, they were a bit resistant towards that. Do you feel that now that you talked to them a bit, they are more open?

- Ehm.. if we offer them. If all of us are making an effort and offer something, I think yes. Because the shop owners, also restaurant keepers, they, in the special streets, there are about one square and two streets in the pedestrian zone, who already joined, and who now, already made some events, Saturday, Sunday, or during the week, to attract more people. So they also have more businesses, because the restaurants.. people go to the restaurants, if there is an open air concert in the street. Or, if people are organising some events in the street. So, they are already organising themselves, but they need also some support from the municipality. So we have to join all public institutions and all stakeholders to see where we can help each other to make this project work.

- When did you start this project?

- April last year. And, it will last until 2021.

- And you as the municipality are kind of the coordinator..

- Partner.. of this project, there are several partner cities. And in university of Rotterdam, where we have an expert of sustainable mobility, so we are.. together, we are also.. their experts, our experts, we are trying to improve our strategy, action plans, to reach this goal.

- And you meet with the other partners regularly?

- Twice a year, and we have study visits, we are going to the other cities to see what they have improved, they are coming here, we have.. peer reviews with experts, they are revising our documents, giving us advice how we could improve things, and the staff of the municipality is listening to that. So.. it's kind of awareness raising in several sectors.

- And how do you reach out to the citizens and the shop owners? How do you communicate with them?

- I go there. We have official meetings, we had one where we didn't involve all the shop keepers because we first wanted to see who is.. who would like to cooperate. Because they are always very busy and just to make such a big meeting, they have no time. So I'm doing a survey and I'm visiting about 20, 30 shops, to see who is willing to cooperate.

- And the restaurants too right?

- The restaurants also, yes.

- Do you see any difference in how the restaurants react compared to how Müller for example reacts?

- Yeah.. they are keen to cooperate, they would like to cooperate. They are saying that lot of times they don't have.. in lot of cases they don't have a contact person in the municipality, and they would like to cooperate more. And if there is any problem, they don't know, which department, where do they have to contact, so.. they would like to have this contact and this is kind of cooperation. Like a city manager. We need a city manager, something like that.

- Are you functioning as that right now?

- I'm trying to find someone during this project.. [laughs] In the municipality. Some persons were interested, but I don't know, we also need political support, and support from the head of the unit and so on you know, so this is about awareness raising to see if we can manage it, cause other cities.. lot of cities

already have a person who is their contact, where they can address their needs and.. where also they are heard. Not only that you say something and nobody really cares.

- So beside this resistance from the citizens, are there any other challenges?

- Of course, there are a lot of challenges, because.. Inhabitants would like to have access to their.. home, those who are living in the pedestrian zone. In other cities we know that they have access between some hours, but not the whole day. Here in Maribor they have a parking place in the pedestrian zone, they can go whenever they want, you know. So, how to.. We don't know how exactly to show them that this is also good for them because it would be more quiet in the pedestrian zone, also for them. So we will see what we can reach with them because.. in Maribor everyone wants to have a parking in front of their house, you know. If you take this away from them, that.. it's really bad. You don't want to do that.

- Yeah, you get used to things.. I talked to Igor Kos about that too, and he said 'Well, they need to get used to it, that's it'.

- No, we would like to have a dialogue, because.. And also if you take something, you should offer something. So we would like to find, what is this what we can offer to hear about their needs and to come together to see how we can manage this, but together.

- But you just started this process or are there already any results?

- No no, we just started it. Because last year we had some.. you know, all these European projects, you need a contract and all those things, we have signed and we had the.. project meeting to see what we will do and so on, so now it's the time where the project gets really started.

- Do you think this will somehow contribute to sustainable tourism in Maribor?

- If we work together, yes, of course, yes.

- Work together with..?

- Tourist Board, and also other.. organisations. Like museums, you know. We can offer them Saturday, Sunday, also they can enter the museums, it's very important to have the museums open Saturday and Sunday. Also for families, also for our inhabitants. Because we don't have during the week.. Because, children are in school and.. you know, during the week, and on Saturday and Sunday.

- Have you already contacted the museums and talked to them about it?

- Karmen told me that she has already put some contacts, so we are now establishing all those contacts.

Appendix 14: Interview with Marko Kremžar, Hotel Tabor, Maribor

MKR: So for us, we are really glad that Maribor got this certificate, Silver certificate of green destination.. because this is the way, we all .. also the hoteliers, we are part of this small hotels' group from Maribor, so this is one way that we all want to go. We understand that Slovenia is a green country, that this is the.. way to.. promote it, you know, for other tourists to say.. all the tourists that come to Slovenia would say 'Oh it's really green, woods are everywhere, and nature is so close to the city that'.. maybe for us that we live here, it's normal. Then, when tourists came from China they are taking picture of the sky. [laughs]

HS: Well, Chinese tourists..

- Yeah, but it's still strange to see, you know.. What..? [laughs] So this is the way we want to go. So in our hotel we are working very hard on the cycling tours, we want to offer the.. For tourists to have the chance to see the surroundings of Maribor, not just to go into the city and.. see the squares, and everything, but to get the feel of the nature around. Of course the heart of the.. everything, is the Pohorje hill. You probably been up or..

- No, but I heard about it. I've seen it from down here.

- It's a very nice hill with lots of things to do. So, this is one way, and the other way of course is to.. preserve the nature. What we can do as hoteliers is.. we can.. lower the waste.. amount of waste, we can try to persuade guests not to demand washing of.. towels.. this is now standard to all hotels, but.. it wasn't just a few years ago, it wasn't like that.. To try to see that we use as little water as we can, to have electricity in.. a modern.. not to spend also, as much electricity, as much water, and to have modern heating. This is also one of the plans we have. We have here.. it's called co-generation, it's a special.. It's also a newer technology, that, on one side it puts out heat, on the other side it produces electricity. So these are the things we say 'Okay, this we can do for the environment', to not pollute it, to..

- Are you already taking any of these sustainability measure?

- Yes yes, all the time. And this is also.. this is a two-way profit for us. We are trying to lower the costs on one side, and on the other side of course, take care of the environment. So this is, what I think, the most that we can do as hoteliers.

- So, energy management, and waste management.. Are you recycling..

- Yes.

- How about supply chain management?

- Yes, this is.. on this side we try to be as local as we can. So, where we can, and it's not.. the.. extra charges, too much. We are prepared to pay a little bit more for quality.. local food, but of course we still have to be in a normal price range, because it's only how much we can sell. The room for it.. yeah, you know. It's a 3-star, you have your limit, you know. You cannot..

- So that's already my next question.. What are the challenges for you as a hotel to be sustainable?

- Yeah.. this is they way we believe we must go. It's also this cycling this.. these cycling tours you know. We are with Karmen, we are working on this cycling tours in Maribor to get guests to maybe rent a bike rather to with the taxi you know.. It's this little things that we can do. And I believe that also Maribor.. the Tourist Board will help us, and guide us, what we can do. It's also good for the hotel and also good for the environment.. for Maribor to really be a green destination.

- Beside of these cycling paths, have you already any collaboration with the Tourist Board?

- Yeah, we all the time the connections with them. We try to work as hard as we can and they also try to connect with us.. as much as it's possible. This is very.. I think they are doing a solid job. You know, there is always problem

with the local authorities.. but this is probably the same everywhere, but I think at this time we are on the right way, a slow one, but on the right one.

- What would you wish that would happen to continue that right way?

- It's not that.. we are capable of taking care of our bookings and.. and selling the hotel. It's more of the.. to take care of the attractions of Maribor, you know. To put them.. we as a hotel, we cannot, we do not have the resources to tell people what.. all what they can see in Maribor, what's.. This is I think the task for Tourist Board, because I really do believe that Maribor has very much to offer. It is.. you know.. no, the Tourist Board also said, we are going the path of green tourism and wine tourism. Because we are the town of the oldest grape in the world. It's something.. we have a wine cellar under almost the whole city, we have a wine hill just next to it, you know the Piramida hill.. this are things you would not see in every city. We are very sporty.. sporty city. So.. we have an island on the river, I don't know if you have seen it.

- Can you tell me a bit more about this Small Hotel Association?

- Yes, this is association started 2,5 years ago, now there are like 8.. 6 to 8 small hotels in Maribor. Sizes from 20 rooms, to.. we are probably the biggest, yeah, with 56.

- And what was the purpose when this association was created?

- One was.. marketing for.. on foreign markets. And the second was to have a better connection as a whole group, to have a vote in the local municipality, you know. To have kind of a.. how do I say.. higher voice *[laughs]*. I don't know if it's the right term, but it's.. you know, if you're a small hotel with 20 rooms, it's.. it's hard to say something. If you are association that has 200-300 rooms, this is someone that you should take into consideration.

- Has there been any support of the municipality by creating this association, or how..

- No, not the municipality, but the Tourist Board is part of it, so they are connecting it. And we are slowly.. bringing it on. One.. one other thing is, for the supply chain, it's also different position of.. if you're 6 hotels, than if you're one.

- So beside the marketing, what are the benefits of being part of such an association?

- Well this.. one thing is information flow you know, we have regular meetings. It's always important to.. hear what others are doing, what's happening to them. So we are connecting also this big events. When something big is happening in Maribor, we are connecting to say 'Okay, we are gonna approach this organiser all together', so we.. so the same we are able to have maybe a euro or two higher price and we are also.. it's easier to work with us for the organiser. Because on the one side we have, I don't know if you know, Terme Maribor. They have.. they are much bigger than we all together. But then you have like.. two parties that you work with, so one is Terme Maribor and with our association, and then you can also.. you know, you can accommodate 2000-2500, almost 3000 people in Maribor, so.. It's easier than to have.. Terme Maribor, it's 6, 7 hotels calling them, and we are in connection. So this is one part.. and, yeah.

- For the supply chain management, what you said before.. How exactly did you mean that, how does it help?

- It's.. we are.. we have in the association, everyone has a task. So we.. say, okay, this hotel is.. because we are small hotel, so have to work everything. So it's.. It's hard you know to take all the offers for one thing, and for the others, so we will have one who say 'Okay, I will be doing this', the other one will do the foreign markets, the third one will be taking care of the European or the.. or the local.. when you're trying to get funds from the European Union,

you know. Somebody has to take care of that, to watch, if there is something that we can apply for and.. So, this is.. this is it. Because we cannot I don't know.. it takes so much time to just go through the.. offers for electricity, for the gas, for the TVs, for the food, for the washing.. So, it's also.. it's also different you know if you talk to someone with.. as representing 6 hotels or of a small hotel.

- So you mean there is someone who is responsible of the supply chain management?

- Yes, yes. There will be one that will be taking care of it and who is informing everybody else, you know 'This are.. I have gathered I don't know, 5 offers for this, I think this one is good, we can do this' and we're gonna say 'Okay, we are all gonna change to this', somebody is gonna say 'No, I'm not', but it's still okay, these are the small things that.. can help you.

- What is your responsibility, Hotel Tabor's responsibility?

- We're going to take care of the little things. So, the contracts.. this is also very important part you know. When talking to the supplier or the.. to.. to the organisers of the events or something like that, it's very important to have a good contract, because if something goes wrong you don't know what happens.

- Do you have a green certificate?

- No, no, no, we as a hotel, we don't, no.

- Why not?

- I don't think.. I'm not even sure there is one for hotels.

- In general the certificates, not in relation to the Green Scheme. I don't know, like Travelife..

- No, no.. we didn't. All the time we get offers for these certificates, we are.. like, a bit sceptical about them all.

- Why?

- You know, because it's.. I see it as a trend you know. They are trying to sell some certificates,

you know. I'm not even sure if it would be part of the bigger.. of something like Slovenian Tourist Board would do, or something like that, I'm sure we would.. we would go in. But like.. for private certificates that are on the market, we got an offer every week, one, two.. for 'Join our quality' and then they send you a certificate, it's like.. okay, you know, 'Who are you to do this certificate', so.. It really hasn't come around for us, that we will say 'Okay this one is, I don't know, a general.. something that we would say, we want to be part of this, it's important'..

- So you don't really see a reason why such certifications would make sense? Because it's a huge topic right now..

- Yeah yeah.. Okay, there was one, but.. a few years ago I think, it started. But for us it was.. we would like to go into it, but we didn't have the conditions for it. This is an old hotel and there are.. there are just things we cannot change, it would be too expensive for us if we would do that, no.. We are trying but we cannot turn the whole hotel around just to get the certificate. I'm sure if we would be building a new one, we would go that way, but now it's.. it's not possible.

- Yes, because every destination that wants to be silver certified need now to have at least one certified hotel, which is not the case in Maribor, so Karmen said she would work very hard to get a hotel to apply for such a certification.

- Yes, it's also I think two hotels from our association that are.. trying, that have almost all the conditions, they just have to change.. This are the newer hotels, so it's easier for them. I sure that.. I think it's Hotel Bau here that.. that is going to take it now.

- I saw on your website that you're listing information about every season. Why?

- This is the hotel theme. We have four floors, and every floor has a theme and in the rooms you can see, are photos of events in Maribor in that part of the year. So we have winter here in the ground floor, and you have skiing and the

Golden Fox Cup, and so on.. Four floors, four seasons, it's a theme.

- I was wondering if it maybe had something to do with seasonality, like you try to get tourists all around the year.

- We're trying yeah. But it doesn't.. It's just, we needed an idea, you know. You are a hotel, you need to do something in the rooms, and this is what we thought would be okay, and the guests say it's nice you know, they like to see the pictures. In the lobby you can see all the pictures in the rooms and then also see what's happening in Maribor.

- What is the main season in Maribor?

- It's July and August.

- And what about winter? I mean you are kind of..

- Like 10 years ago, or maybe more, it was a very good time because of the skiing, but now the skiing.. has moved a bit up you know. There's a problem on this altitude, there is not enough ski.. This year it was good, but normally it's not as good as this.. it was before.

- Do you think something should be done about these seasonality problems?

- Yeah of course, for us it's easiest working in summer you know, because it has good occupancy, but.. for the whole year around it's very hard, but I think this is the problem of every hotel or.. tourism all around the world I don't know. [..? 19:50] has four seasons full, sun, and everything. But here, we just have to do, to be able to accommodate all the type of guests, so we have business men, we have sportsmen, we have.. leisure guests, so.. they are.. that's how we come around the whole year.

- Maybe you as the Small Hotel Association can do something about that?

- We are thinking about it all the time, but it's most.. most that we can do is.. we can try to organise events or help the organisers of the events to.. to push them to organise them, to

bring people in. So we are very involved in sports, because we are next to the sports camp. This is the biggest, Maribor sports camp we have.. This is the main sports hall, the hockey hall, ice hall.. We have the one of the biggest training centres in Slovenia, football fields.. so this is where we try to.. to invest our energy.

- So you work a lot together with the sports hall? Are you organising events with them or is it just with the guests?

- We are trying. This is my area of expertise, I have been in sports all my life, also been a trainer, so afterwards I have specialised in sports tourism, I worked here nearby in Ptuj in sports centre in.. down at Pohorje, at foot hill [? 21:40], so this is what we are.. trying to do. Next year we are gonna organise.. we and the football club, we're gonna organise an international tournament. We are.. gonna have.. we are sponsoring, or partner of three tennis tournaments.. Hockey camp for kids.. So this is how we go. And we are trying to attract also sportsmen for preparation, for training camps..

- What has been your role so far in the Green Scheme? What did you do?

- Well.. not that much. [laughs]

- Have you been involved in the evaluation process? Like, a year ago or something?

- Yes I think they did.. But it was a few forms or something like that, it wasn't really big. We are more informed and.. as I said we are expecting to get some guidance from the Tourist Board to say 'Okay, we are going this way in our tourism, try to..'

- Would you like to be involved a bit more in this whole Green Scheme?

- I think that will be involved. For us that's.. we are still a small hotel that are.. we are very busy managing our operations, it's.. it's hard to.. do such things, or to be more involved and informed and help with some occasions.

- So since Maribor is part of this Green Scheme, did you make any changes, or did the Tourist Board approach you or..?

- No, not yet. But it's more or less.. we are still, this is I think the beginning, or how long is it?

- September I think..

- Yeah.

- So you expect that it will grow.

- Yes, it should.

- So why do you think it is good for Maribor to be part of this Green Scheme?

- Well I believe that this is where tourism is going, this is.. You know.. I think that Slovenia should go in this direction, for a more individual approach. Because we don't.. we also don't have the capacity for mass tourism, you know, for like big all-inclusive resorts or like this. It's more boutique tourism and this I believe.. Our biggest advantage is the green surroundings and.. places with very.. very little human impact and I think that this is what tourists will want to see you know. After being 1, 2, 3, 5 years in all-inclusive resort, and just going from one tourist attraction to the other.. you know, one part of tourists are just saying 'No no, this is not for me', I'm one of them you know. I don't like going into crowded tourist attractions, waiting in line to see something.. That's usually not that.. wonderful. I'm for.. nobody around, cycling.. paddling, just.. try to get to the nature as soon as possible. I think this is what Slovenia can offer.

- Do you think the Green Scheme help you as a small hotel? Because this whole scheme is promoting small, and small scale.

- Yeah, I think so. It's like.. that in this Green Scheme, I understand that it's also more of individual approach and more smaller hotels, better information from the.. local food in the morning on the breakfast. This is I think the way to go. And this Scheme will help.. tell people you know. 'You can get this here', because it's hard for us little hotels to just shout out.

- So Karmen told me that Hotel Betnava is very focussed on the sustainable supply management.

- Yes, they are..

- And they are also part of the Small Hotel Association aren't they? Did you communicate with them about that? Why are they doing it and others in the association are not?

- We are talking and they have one advantage, is that they are 4-star hotel you know, they can afford more. They accommodate more demanding guests, so they can offer.. You know, we are talking about the.. price difference per person per night about.. 10 euros or something, you know. And all the other expenses in a B&B are not that big, you know. We are talking about a little bigger room, and then you have here.. So they have to offer this extra.. And they can offer it on their breakfast, and I think they are doing a.. good job yeah. And we are just.. you know, trying. Trying to.. wherever it's possible.

- Can you tell me specifically what you're doing?

- Yeah, we are working on meat, this is one important thing that we are getting. We are getting local eggs, such things.. fruits as much as we can. And maybe in Betnava you get yoghurt and.. there is all the assortment you know. You know, the guests know.. this is why we have stars you know. We have 3-star, you say 'Okay I'm not prepared to pay this 10 euro extra, this is good enough for me' you know. And if you are, I think you need to get something. And I must say, when I come to a hotel, you know, 4, 4 superior, and these things, I expect you know. I expect local food, I expect.. everything, and if I go to a 3-star.. I know, you know. This is good for me, normal breakfast, fresh, clean, but I don't expect them to bring I don't know what.

- Can you tell me any specific projects that you are working on with the Small Hotel Association?

- Well one is.. one is we are bringing every year, for this old grape, there is a festival. And we are organising.. agents' study tour. So this is one first project, that we say 'Okay, we will do it together, we will all host, I don't know, everyone will host 2 or 3 agents for 2 nights'..

- Is it tour agents?

- Yeah yeah, from tour agencies. We are gonna invite them and this is one project. We have been together with.. on some fairs. You know, we have prepared the brochure, we are working on internet sites..

- So did you choose these fairs? Is it national fairs?

- Yes, we went to Prag, to Warschau, to Slovenian incoming fair.. workshop..

- Are you collaborating with these Tourism Associations or, I don't know, residents, or civil society, or..?

- No. We have the most connections to sports club, these are important things for us. So this part, and.. of course, if there is something local, we try to help as much as we can, but it's.. not really the big way.

- How would you define sustainable tourism, if I'd ask you in a few words?

- Hm. For me, what comes in mind is.. you know, to try to think of future generations, they are coming behind us. So this is what we also talked about.. the green way what we are trying you know. To save.. to watch the energy, waste management.. Also to invest in education your employees in this ways and..

- In this evaluation report that was done for the Green Scheme, they said that waste management in local companies needed to be improved. Is that like a known problem here in Maribor?

- I think it's not on the highest level everywhere, but I think it's not that.. Most of the companies are recycling, and trying to do their part. But I'm sure there is a lot of potential here also.

- What would you like to happen in Maribor in the next 5 years in terms of tourism or sustainable tourism?

- Most.. what we talked about before you know. I would like that Maribor would become.. that tourists would see it as a green.. as a green city, that means.. they will have in mind when they come to Maribor, they're thinking about Pohorje, they're thinking about outdoor sports.. enjoying the nature you know. We would say for our hotel 'Staying in the city, enjoying the surroundings'. It's like something we do with this.. we try to do with this cycling.. or hiking paths. And as I said, this is green, green is also the wine, so I think this is the way to say.. Maribor is a city wine.. every, 5 minutes all around are vineyards, hills, so.. so for tourists, and I know that this is a.. major tourism attraction is our wine. People are travelling all around the world you know, to taste wine, to see a vine, to see how wine is done. And we have here in Slovenia, and especially in Maribor and Ptuj, we have a long tradition you know.

- Challenges to work with the Tourism Board or with the public agencies in Maribor?

- There always are but we are.. I think for now we are managing to work together okay. But sure you know, we are not very very satisfied with the municipality what.. with what they are doing, how they are helping evolve tourism, but.. I don't know.

- So you think they could do more?

- Yeah of course. I think they could help us on many.. on many levels. Especially, you know, I mean this sport part of the.. of the tourism are most evolved, and I know the.. what could be done, and I think here.. we're really missing out, still missing out on the.. great potential that Maribor has, has very good sport objective but you know.. this sport tourism, everything is about good connection you know. Clearly defined prices, what we can offer, how we can offer, when we can offer, who can offer it.. And here is still a little bit of chaos.

- So the cooperation between different institutions, companies, agencies, is difficult?

- Yes, yes, it is. And mostly.. especially, when the municipality has their hands on. It's politics you know. This one knows this one, and this is..

- Are you talking to them about it?

- Yes of course, this is one part why we have the association. To say 'Okay, this is not okay, we want this, we want clear terms, how we can do this, we want clear.. things on this, help us on this event', you know. This are not the really big things, but it's.. I think they could do more.

- Is it working better since you work in this association?

- Hmm.. not yet. But I think that we were heard you know. That they see us you know.. But we are not gonna stop you know. We're gonna be here, this is why we have the organisation, we're gonna be writing e-mails you know, talking to them, coming to their meetings and say 'Okay, we need this and this'.. This are not things that we expect that are gonna change you know, over the night, just because we sent one e-mail, just because we called them once.. it's a process.

- Anything I didn't ask, anything you want to say..?

- No I think.. we said enough. *[laughs]*