

## Emerging professional profiles for cultural tourism in rural areas

The development of rural tourism initiatives in less favoured areas highlighted the need of new professional roles for a better performance of local actors respect to the visitor's request. This new profession can accompany the tourist visiting the areas and promote collaboration between the local different stakeholders. The experience of the Trentino pilot actions carried out under the SY\_CULTour Project highlighted the professional role of the "territory guide" (Accompagnatore di Territorio) and of the "Ecomuseum facilitator" (Facilitatore ecomuseale). The Autonomous Province of Trento issued special regulation for the territory guides and for the constitution of Ecomuseums that are briefly explained in the poster.

This poster shows the concrete experiences of two persons that in the Trentino region are involved in the SY\_CULTour project and take part in the pilot project as territory guide and Ecomuseum facilitator: they are respectively Stefano Mayr and Adriana Stefani.

The Posters analyzes their educational and training paths, the personal experience and the main aspects relevant for a successful cultural tourism in rural areas. The knowledge of the territory, local cultural values and traditions and positive relations with the inhabitants are the common and basic skills for this activities but also the aptitude to listen the tourist desire is fundamental for a successful activity. We believe this features may have a general relevance to reach part of project goals.



### Ecomuseum facilitator



**PERSONAL INFORMATION**  
**Adriana Stefani – 14.03.1974 Feltre (BL)**

#### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

She got a degree in Art, Music and Performing Arts at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Bologna. She attended an MBA on "Communication of cultural heritage" and different professional training on European funds, planning and project management.

#### WORK EXPERIENCES

Between 2002 and 2005 Adriana collaborated with Vanoi Ecomuseum coordinating and promoting the Ecomuseum's activities. Since 2006 she works as freelance professional, expert in the field of research, planning and promotion of cultural heritage, focusing on historical and ethnographic issues, coordinating participation and fund-raising actions.

#### PERSONAL REASONS

Beyond her choices and professional experiences, Adriana has always been interested and involved in themes concerning development and valorisation of rural areas. She was born in a mountain rural area and, after her training paths and work experiences, she decided to return living in that area, where depopulation and consequent social fabric impoverishment represent an increasing risk.

The aspect that most drew her to the topic are the contradictions expressed by the so-called marginal regions, rich in terms of environmental and cultural heritage and therefore with a strong potential tourism-employment that contrasts with a less development economic system. In these areas social and economic questions has prompted, over the last few decades, many residents to move elsewhere for work-related reasons or just to "get closer" to services and opportunities offered by urban areas.

In her professional path, many times, she has worked in cooperation with Italian Ecomuseums – endorsed by the national "Local Worlds" Network – and in particular with the realities of Trentino. Ecomuseums generally arise in less favoured territorial contexts as engines for local development and pursue, each interpreting it in their own way, the promotion of the area in terms of "collective growth of the community" thanks to the direct involvement of local population and different actors.

The strengths for the area development, not only from a tourism point of view, are natural, traditional, environmental and cultural values of the place. These actions require a cross-sector development through participation of local actors, sharing of objectives and evaluation/appraisal of possible interactions and consequences for the area rather than a "top-down" policy.

Adriana thinks that this approach, although slower and high structured, is the right path for a concrete and sustainable development of a marginal region, both for new tourism proposals and especially for the valorisation of the local population standard of living.



### Territory guide



**PERSONAL INFORMATION**  
**Stefano Mayr – 01.04.1963 Trento**

#### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Stefano got a degree in Natural Sciences at the University of Camerino (Macerata province). He attended various professional courses, that permitted to develop (which developed in) practical work experience and important human contacts. Among the most important courses: "Control and on certification organic farming" in 2005 (76 hours), organized in Trento by ICEA (Ethic and Environment Certification Institute) with subsequent training period. In 2008 he took part in the first course to get the qualification/licence of "Territory guide", organized by the Autonomous Province of Trento and the Mountain Guides College (approximately 280 hours). An important contribution to his training was the active cooperation, even with coordination assignments/tasks, in European projects (e.g. Life Nature) and participation in studies of environmental planning within cross-sector groups of experts.

#### WORK EXPERIENCES

His career has evolved from the initial participation in scientific and zoological research projects to environmental analysis and planning and of mountain regions, with work experiences in the Alps and the Apennines. When he was still a student, he started to carry out courses on environmental awareness and to draft educational brochures and texts. Stefano asserts that knowing the world of organic farms has given him the opportunity to weave together the existing skills with practical problems and to develop an overview of the region where he lives, although known thanks to an intense hiking activities. «The course to get the qualification/licence of "Territory guide" has represented an important step to be able to convey to a wider community my experiences and emotions».

#### PERSONAL REASONS

The first approach with territorial development was around 2000 when he took part to a study on habitat improvements for wildlife, on behalf of the Wildlife Service of the Autonomous Province of Trento and in collaboration with other experts. Dealing with species living in hay meadows and pastures habitat has been unavoidable to face issues about causes and possible solutions for the evolution of the agro-forestry landscape. The studies on the establishment of Valtrigona WWF Reserve (in Lagorai, Trentino) and the creation of the Reserve of Lombardy (in Val di Mello, Province of Sondrio, Lombardy) gave him the opportunity to be directly involved in promotional and local tourism development strategies in rural areas.

He collaborated with an organic farm in Spormaggiore (Trentino) in a project aimed at the revitalisation and valorisation of a site of traditional agriculture with an high natural value, realising also a guide on it.

In 2012 he participated, as Territory guide, in the creation of the first mapping on organic routes in Trentino and in the creation of the brochure "Bio-paths in Trentino", commissioned by the Agricultural Service of the Autonomous Province of Trento. In the meanwhile, the Territory guide activities with groups, in collaboration with Ecomuseums and privat farms, are slowly but gradually increasing.



#### STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Adriana asserts that: «the role of Ecomuseum facilitator gives me the opportunity to be in contact with people, to know places, stories, traditions and knowledges but also to make these known, and for these reasons makes this job, every new assignment, more attractive». On the other hand she states that: «the role of Ecomuseum facilitator has been not well defined yet, at least in Italy, and often its role is confused with that of the coordinator, thus underestimating the discrete but continuous action of aggregation and cohesion of ideas, proposals, requirements, opportunities and people». In her opinion these activities are important for a successful and satisfying development of a project and the simultaneous growth and maturation of the actors involved.



#### STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

The strength of the Territory guide profession, at least in Stefano experience, is the cross-sectoral aspect that allows to weave together various skills and competences gained over the years with local, cultural, historical and ethnographic aspects. «I feel satisfied when I'm able to convey enthusiasm and emotions, that are hidden behind the appearance of the first glance. I'm happy if I succeed in increasing curiosity and desire to learn more, triggering a positive reaction that leads first to know a place and later to visit a farm and taste its products causing, in general, the beginning of a good relationship with people met».

## Results/Conclusions

The Trentino Ecomuseum Network, born in 2011, gathers the eight Ecomuseums actually recognised by the Autonomous Province of Trento and operating on its territory. The Network coordinates and promotes actions and projects undertaken jointly by the involved Ecomuseums.

The Trentino Ecomuseum Network is composed by: Argentario Ecomuseum, Chiese Ecomuseum "Porta del Trentino", Judicaria Ecomuseum "dalle Dolomiti al Garda", Lagorai Ecomuseum "nell'antica giurisdizione di Castellalto", Val di Peio Ecomuseum "Piccolo Mondo Alpino", Tesino Ecomuseum "Terra di viaggiatori", Valsugana Ecomuseum "dalle sorgenti di Rava al Brenta" and Vanoi Ecomuseum.

Many Territory guides cooperates with Ecomuseums or are involved in their activities. Self the professional figure was actually born as a result of specific requests from the Ecomuseums. The collaboration between the Trentino Ecomuseums Network and the Association of Trentino Territory guides within the SY\_CULTour Project is therefore an important acknowledgement of the guides role and allows to look for future joint activities, encouraging local stakeholders and communities to be involved in the decision-process. If you can get away with a logic network in which to share experiences and knowledge, beyond the immediate difficulties linked to obtaining funds. In Stefano opinion «among Territory guides and Ecomuseums should be established a good relationship to create a positive feedback in which both components support each other as part of a general view that exceeds any problems».