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PERSPECTIVES OF DEVELOPING HUNTING TOURISM IN VRBAS MUNICIPALITY⁴

Abstract

Although Serbia has a generally high potential for the development of hunting tourism, they have not been fully realized adequately. In recent years, intensive talks about the “revival” of some hunting areas that were previously brought significant revenue to municipalities in which they are located. However, as one of the limiting factors for the development of hunting imposes a lack of funds for hunting infrastructure and revitalization of flora and fauna.

Vrbas, municipality previously valorize its tourism potential, primarily through hunting, and then through other forms of tourism, which it evidently available to. However, during the nineties, tourism is found on the margins of the overall economic development, to the municipality, and the whole society. Today intention of municipality is that tourists, primarily foreign, again animate and return to this important tourist destination of Vojvodina. Important role in this process will play marketing approach with all tools promotional mix.

The aim of this paper is to present resources to develop hunting tourism in the municipality of Vrbas and point out the strategic directions for its future development.

Keywords: *hunting, tourism, destination, infrastructure, income.*

ПЕРСПЕКТИВЕ РАЗВОЈА ЛОВНОГ ТУРИЗМА У ОПШТИНИ ВРБАС

Апстракт

Иако Србија има генерално велике потенцијале за развој ловног туризма, они до данас нису у потпуности валоризовани на адекватан начин. Последњих година се интензивно разговара о „оживљавању“ неких ловишта која су раније доносила значајне приходе општинама у којима су лоцирана. Међутим, као један од ограничавајућих фактора развоја ловства

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се намеће недостатак средстава за опремање ловишта адекватном ловном инфраструктуром и ревитализацијом флоре и фауне.

Општина Врбас је раније своје туристичке потенцијале валоризовала, пре свега, кроз ловни туризам, а потом и кроз остале видове туризма који јој евидентно стоје на располагању. Међутим, током деведесетих година туризам се нашао на маргинама укупног привредног развоја, како општине, тако и читавог друштва. Данас је интенција да се туристи, а пре свега инострани, поново анимирају и врате у ову значајну туристичку дестинацију АП Војводине. Важну улогу у томе ће играти маркетинг приступ са свим средствима промоционог микса.

Циљ рада је да представи ресурсе развоја ловног туризма општине Врбас и укаже на стратешке правце његовог будућег развоја.

Кључне речи: *ловство, туризам, дестинација, инфраструктура, приходи*

Introduction

AP Vojvodina has a long tradition of hunting, but nurtures and caring attitude towards flora and fauna. Unfortunately in the last twenty years there has been neglecting the most famous hunting grounds: Plavna, Morović, Karakuša, Karadorđevo Somborske forests, Apatinski ass, Deliblato sands, as well as the largest hunting potential, Fruška Gora.

Evidently present problems that burden Serbian economy and society are transferred to the tourism sector. However, preserved biodiversity of the area of the municipality of Vrbas is the basis on which to build development of hunting tourism.

1. Analysis of the receptive capacity of the municipality of vrbas

The receptive capacities are the basis for the admission and stay of tourists. Without their existing any plan for future of tourist development is superfluous. Characteristic of accommodation capacities of the Vrbas municipality is that they can quantitatively satisfied different kind of tourist demand, which standing out as prospects for the development of the municipality, but the problem is the significant decline of their quality.

Municipality Vrbas achieved better results in tourism (overnight stays and tourists turnover) than the other municipalities in the South Backa District (excluding City of Novi Sad) in the last seven years.

In the period 2005 - 2011, based on insight into indicators of tourist movements, it can be noted that in 2007 and 2008 achieved better results than in other monitored years. Detailed view of tourist movements per year is given in Table 1.

Table 1. Travel trends for the period 2005-2012. in the municipality of Vrbas

Year	Tourists			Overnight stays			The average number of overnight stays	
	Total	Domestic	Foreign	Total	Domestic	Foreign	Domestic	Foreign
2005	5 086	4 188	898	14 593	12 518	2 075	3,0	2,3
2006	9 304	5 346	3 958	22 055	17 787	4 268	3,3	1,1
2007	10 186	4 445	5 741	19 354	12 457	6 897	2,8	1,2
2008	12 415	7 900	4 515	17 635	12 054	5 581	1,5	1,2
2009	7 520	5 555	1 965	11 226	8 770	2 456	1,6	1,2
2010	4 044	3 704	340	29 341	28 740	601	7,8	1,8
2011	4 914	3 995	919	12 951	11 577	1 374	2,9	1,5

Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, publication “The municipalities in Serbia” for the years 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012.

Note: Average number of overnight stays was calculated by dividing the number of nights with the number of tourists. As the tourists registered in any place where he resided, in the case of changing the place comes to its restatement or duplication. Therefore, the average number of overnight stays, calculated in this manner, less than real.

Table 2. Accommodation units in the municipality of Vrbas

Type of object	Total	Category	Number of hotels units in the facility	Types of accommodation units and their number
Hotels	2	"Bačka" three star	59	22 single rooms 29 double bed rooms 2 triple bedrooms 3 four beds 3 apartment
		„Drago Jović“ three star	24	19 double bed rooms 1 single rooms 4 apartment
Motels	1	„Braća Mandić“ three star	34	6 single rooms 24 double bed rooms
Hostels	2	-	10	30
Total	4	-	104	-

Source: Municipal Administration of Vrbas, November 2013 .

Age of largest Hotel “Bačka” in Vrbas is over twenty years. The hotel has two restaurant units (big and small hall) and a coffee bar. Hotel has a conference room and adequate parking space. The average price for overnight is 18 euros. In order to raise quality services it is necessary to investments and adaptation, as well as training of employees according to the increasingly demanding needs of modern tourism demand and the very age of the facilities, as well as the development of the IT sector.

Motel “Mandić” was built in 1994. Motel completes the accommodation facilities of the Vrbas municipality. Motel offers 34 accommodation units, a restaurant room and parking space. Motel is categorized with three stars.

“City Restaurant” is located in the city center, the restaurant also has a 13 beds and open parking space as well as a cage for pets.

Restaurants in the Vrbas municipality is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Restaurant facilities

Restaurant facilities	Number
The classic restaurants	11
Dairy restaurants	2
Buffets and Bars	65
Pastry shops	4
Total	82

Source: Municipal administration Vrbas, November 2013.

It can be concluded that the restaurant’s facilities in quantity meet the needs of tourist demand and can complement the stay of tourists in the municipality, but hospitality units must constantly work on improving the quality of services to ensure competitiveness in the tourism market.

2. The resource base for development of hunting tourism

Hunting tourism representing most promising and most developed tourist product of the Municipality Vrbas. Because of the well-known events which were happened during the nineties and the economic crisis after 2007, investment in development of hunting is insufficient, and foreign tourists from Italy, Austria, Germany, France, Spain, etc, who had earlier visited the Municipality are practically reduced to a minimum.

Hunting tourism nowadays mostly done through guest appearances from other hunting associations from the country and from the Montenegro.

In the municipality exists a hunting association “Vrbas” with 500 members.

The structure of hunting associations with hunting area by local communities in the municipality is given in Table 4.

Table 4. Structure of the hunting associations in the municipality with an area of hunting grounds

No.	Name of the hunting association and location	Number of members	Hunting area in ha
1.	H.A. „Fazan“ Vrbas	212	9 000
2.	H.A. „Soko“ Kucura	48	5 000
3.	H.A. „Fazan“ Savino Selo	70	6 000
4.	H.A. „Zec“ Ravno Selo	45	5 000
5.	H.A. „Jelen“ Zmajevu	75	6 000
6.	H.A. „Jarebica“ Bačko Dobro Polje	50	6 000
Total		500	37 000

Source: Municipal Administration Vrbas, October 2013

The hunting ground is mainly used for hunting small feathered game and roe deer. Dates of hunting season on game species are given in Table 5.

Table 5. Type of hunting game and hunting season in the municipality of Vrbas

No.	Sorts of hunting game	Hunting season
1.	Roebuck	April 15 th to September 30 th
2.	Roe	September 30 th - January 31 st
3.	Rabbit	October 15 th to December 31 st
4.	Pheasant	October 1 st to January 15 th
5.	Quail	August 1 st - September 30 th
6.	Wild duck	August 15 th - January 3 rd
7.	Wild goose	October to January

Source: Municipal Administration Vrbas, October 2013

Hunting infrastructure in the municipality is relatively well developed, it consists of:

- 26 feeding places for large game (in every hunting ground at least 4);
- 18 located in the waiting Zmajevu, Kucura, B. D. Polje, Vrbas;
- 13 waterholes located in Vrbas, Kucura, Zmajevu;
- Through three hunting units watercourse DTD, the Grand Canal and detailed channel network by Atari all settlements
- In all the settlements and hunting clubs there is a hunting lodge.

It was developed and cooperation with all the hunting associations for which bordering three hunting grounds and which H.A. “Vrbas” is managed.

Cooperation with other associations organized individually and / or through hunting Alliance of Vojvodina. They are organized regular guest appearances include:

- H.A. „Fazan“ Savino Selo is bosom friend with H.A. „Srem“
- H.A. „Fazan“ Vrbas is bosom friend with H.A. „Nikšić“, Montenegro.
- H.A. „Jelen“ Zmajevu is bosom friend with H.A. „Kladovo“.
- H.A. „Zec“ Ravno Selo is bosom friend with H.A. „Zeta“, Montenegro.

Tourists from abroad (Italy, Austria, Spain) come primarily interested in hunting on a deer, while Italian tourists are showing particular interest in hunting quail

Domestic tourists usually love hunting pheasant and rabbit small game, and since there is a large interest in hunting roe buck or doe.

Hunting Association regulated price lists for shooting venison, which are in accordance with the price list which prescribes Hunting Association of Serbia, and every hunting association is independent in making decisions about price lists for a specific type of game. The venison can be hunted with previously issued permit and allows the removal from the hunting grounds with the appropriate shipping document and other supporting documentations (veterinary confirmation of the correctness of meat, etc.). Professional service has the gamekeeper employed full-time and volunteer guards.

Development of a hunting tourism is closely linked with the development of event tourism. On the territory of the municipality organized following hunting events:

- “Hunting pot” in Kucura is held in September;
- “Saint Eustatius” the Saint’s patrons day of hunters’ associations, which is celebrated on October 03rd.
- “Kinology cups” are organized by calendar for any year;
- Competition “Hunter and Dog” are organized by calendar every year.

By combining hunting, fishing and event tourism effects are significantly increases, while the municipality on the tourist market positioning as a destination for significant segment of hunting tourism.

3. Development of alternative forms of hunting tourism

As one of the alternative forms of development of hunting tourism in recent years practice suggested development of photo-safari. This type of tourism is in trend in Western Europe, North America and Japan. The concept of photo-safari is in accordance with the principles of “sustainable development”, preserving the environment, and so on.

Most tourists who are interested in this kind of active holiday have minimal requirements in relation to residence in the hunting grounds. The intention is on so-called. “Untouched natural environment” (flora and fauna).

A complementary development “photo safari” with hunting tourism will animate large market segment, i.e., it will be done the great dispersion of the tourism product and motivate additional tourist demand. This would increase the number of tourist visits, i.e. the Vrbas will become more tourist attractive.

4. The vision and marketing approach to the development of hunting tourism in the municipality of Vrbas

Vrbas to the domestic and international tourist market represented small tourist destination which tourist offer could animate specific market segments interested for tourism of specific interest with exactly specified types of tourist products.

“The decisive place in the market approach and the short and long term should have a domestic market. Such a attitude is based on the proximity of large urban centers of Belgrade and Novi Sad, which are also the largest cities in Serbia and potentially a major tourist emissive centers “.⁵

Hunting tourism plays an important role, primarily because of the long tradition and clearly present resources, and infrastructure built hunting. In order to successfully evaluate, all tourism resources (natural and social - anthropogenic) tourism should develop complementary to other economic sectors and non-economic. Taking into account the synergistic nature of tourism and its multiplied positive impact on the economic and non-economic trends, it is expected that the development of tourism has contributed to the overall “betterment” of the Municipality for a longer period of time. An important role in this process plays and Tourist organization of Vrbas that its promotional appearances should alert the demand. Certain assets promotional mix is already used today, and is planned to be the future development of tourism in the municipality put a special emphasis.

A significant contribution to the development of hunting tourism play traditional events that attract large numbers of tourists. This is also an opportunity for the beside hunting and event tourism is developing. “Food tourism” in recent years has caught the attention of a large number of tourists in Western Europe and Canada. Also, this is opportunity and trade development, because a large number of tourists is interested in purchasing the traditional local products.

In this way, hunting tourism may become the initial “trigger” for the development of a great variety of tourism products, or the development of special interest tourism.

An important role in all beside to the public will play and private sector of the economy, which with its investments can significantly accelerate the development of tourism.

⁵ Predrag Vuković, Svetlana Roljević, Biljana Grujić (2013): „Options for development tourism based on natural and social resources in the area of "Upper Danube Basin“, journal: *Економика, Ниш, Год. LIX, VII-IX 2013, № 3*, p. 155-160.

What is the issue is unresolved legal status of these associations, because they work in the public sector and as such provide far less effect than those that could be expected if there were hunting grounds and private property. In addition to the tax which would be paid, these hunting grounds would be more motivated to promote tourism, not only hunting, but also all other types.

What is positive is that it has formed Tourist Organization Vrbas, which will in the future coordinate tourism activities at the municipal level as a destination, which will create conditions for further development of tourism.

Regard to the intentions which is present in the tourism market is that much attention is paid to ethno features, and suggestion is that hunting lodges would be more provide it in its architecture and interior, in order to increase their attractiveness to tourists.

Conclusion

Municipality Vrbas have been one of the important hunting tourist destinations of AP Vojvodina for many years. Evidently present well-developed hunting tourism infrastructure requires certain investments to be able to serve its purpose. The plan as of the municipality, and the Tourist Organization of Vrbas is that hunting tourism will take a special attention in the future. To this end, the focus of future activities will be to animate those market segments that were in previous years brought significant revenue. In the first stage, the focus is on the domestic market and later by appropriate means of promotional mix to go to the animation of the old traditional markets of Italy, Austria, Germany, France, etc.

What gives special significance is the great enthusiasm that shows a large number of members of hunting associations, as well as their mobility in all hunting activities with which to improve infrastructure to hunting, and hunting tourism

One of suggestion is that with regard to the five hunting associations which exist at the territory of Vrbas it is important to build hunting lodges in ethnic style, which would have appropriate offer of hospitality (hotel and restaurant). This would be significantly increased the attractiveness Vrbas as a tourist destination. In this respect, an important role will be played co-operation with the private sector of the economy. It is important to emphasize that we should improve the quality of the accommodation offer which is currently at a very low level. It can quantitatively respond to increased demand but the question is what kind of quality hospitality services currently provided.

Also, it should work on complementary development of hunting with other forms of tourism, especially the events (manifestation), and then food tourism. On this way, tourism through its synergistic character outright multiplied positive impact on the whole economic life of the municipality. First of all, in order to develop trade and agriculture (having in mind obligations that hunting societies have towards hunting grounds) and traffic. The quality of road transport infrastructure is satisfactory. However, what is missing is a tourist signalization. When it comes to hunting tourism signs for the hunting grounds with objects hunting tourism infrastructure is necessary to establish if in a future relies on development of this type of tourism.

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