



2020 TOP 100 GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Title of the Story: GRATITUD PALLARS. This is our chance to repay nature for all it gives us

Destination Name: *(include any state, province or region)*

Comarca del Pallars Jussà - Catalonia

Country: Spain

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Position: Tourism Department technical coordinator

Nomination Category: *(Please check the boxes that indicate the focus of your story)*

- Culture & Communities
- Environment & Climate
- Nature & Ecotourism
- Islands & Seaside
- Immediate responses in dealing with the COVID -19
- Post COVID -19 recovery
- One of the 17 SDGs* *(if yes, which one)* GOAL 15: Life on Land

*The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. The 17 SDGs are integrated—that is, they recognize that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability. What are the Sustainable Development Goals? <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals.html>

For further information on Tourism for SDGs: <http://tourism4sdgs.org/>

Find detailed instructions for submitting good practices [here](#)



DESCRIBE YOUR GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Address each aspect of your good practice story in the different sections being specific including relevant quantitative and qualitative information.

Issues faced

“Human activity on the planet is in part responsible of what is happening with the climate change, the loss of biodiversity and the deterioration of the environment and landscapes. But now we have the opportunity to change the relationship between humans and the planet for a new one: a bidirectional and gratitude relationship with nature, where we give and not only take. Where everybody participates in taking care of the landscape”.
The project Gracitud Pallars contributes to climate change mitigation in an innovative way, empowering tourism enterprises, local people and visitors to conserve and enhance rural natural and cultural heritage, and creating mechanisms to minimize our impact. A local and transferable model based on public and private collaboration, that calls to action awakening consciousness.

The project was born thanks to:

- Marques de Pastor (MP), a NGO which is made up of small tourist businesses that work together to create responsible tourism products in the Pallars area of Catalonia. With their own words: We began looking for innovative ways to reach potential visitors who share our commitment to respect and care for the area we love around us – its nature, its distinctive places, and the heritage left here by our ancestors. This led to the centrepiece of our work to date – El Cinquè Llac, a walking (or cycling) journey that links several “casa rurals” in six different rural settlements via historical pastoral pathways.
- The Consorci Leader Pirineu Occidental (CLPO) is the local action group (LAG) that has been running the EU LEADER Programme in the counties of Pallars Jussà, Pallars Sobirà, Alta Ribagorça and Val d’Aran since 2009. The objective of the CLPO is to improve the socio-economic situation of the region via two main lines of work, Leader grants and cooperation projects.

Methods, steps and tools applied

The methodology implemented is based on the visitor payback technique that involves the voluntary process of visitors choosing to give money (or other help) to assist in the conservation or management of places they visit. The project has developed the website www.gracitudpallars.cat to connect causes and people, with 4 specific tools based on crowdfunding, sponsorship, volunteering and offsetting the carbon footprint.

- Sponsor a path! –crowdfunding causes for the recovery and preservation of dry-stone walls and paths
- Become a volunteer! –voluntary causes like the “Volunteer Week” of “El Cinquè Llac”
- Offset your carbon footprint! – A calculator (online software) allows to calculate the carbon footprint and offset it directly with local micro-reserves in order to favour the biodiversity of the surroundings.
- Appreciate nature! – crowdfunding causes of micro-reserves, created to favour the biodiversity

Other actions we are developing within the framework of the project are:

- Become tied to nature! • Conferences • Online and offline communication • Manual of best practice

Gracitud Pallars has been run as a LEADER Strategic Cooperation Project since 2017. Funding is applied for annually: 90% LEADER (43% EAFRD, 57% DARP Regional contribution) and 10% Private Funds (AMP).



Key success factors

- The cross-sector cooperation between public bodies, businesses, landowners, the local population and visitors is crucially important to address global issues successfully at the local level.
- Intensive local networking that raises the awareness and participation in the project, including the design of landowner stewardship agreements for the micro-reserves that create a sense of ownership, local control and responsibility.
- Consolidated local stakeholders from private (AMP) and public (CLPO) sectors empowering the project.
- An extensive preparatory and ongoing financing work required from the technical aspects to the design of the website, crowdfunding tools, and CO2 off-set calculator, developed in cooperation with professionals, locals and other projects as ENFOCC.
- The clear and honest message about how Gratiud Pallars aims to improve the relationship between humans and nature.
- Certainly, all what is done until now is the result of an Intensive local networking: the cooperation of AMP, the LAG CLPO, with 31 local members, all the volunteers, participants, owners and partners, among others. As an example, the Consell Comarcal del Pallars Jussà has supported the project in some of the actions developed from the beginning

Lessons learned

- It is clear that this type of project requires ongoing promotion and networking at local, national and European levels. Building the relevant capacity of the local actors is thereby key to ensuring its longterm duration. As a strategic cooperation project, the LAG receives the funds for developing the Gratiud Pallars, whereby LAG staff can actively work with AMP in the project implementation.
- Transferring the generated tools and the acquired experience with the development of the project to those entities and agents interested in the initiatives and values promoted in the project is one of the main goals of the project, in order to create synergies and a large network with other entities or territories facing the same issues.
- Strong relationships and commitments with the landowners and farmers is a basic aspect to develop, as the landowner stewardship agreements for the micro-reserves demonstrate.

Results, achievements and recognitions

- Regarding results, this is what is expected to be achieved through the action of the project:
 - A working methodology of social responsibility to be applied to tourist projects and others with similar characteristics and the participation of visitors, companies, local entities and population in the annual proposal of crowdfunding related to the recovery and preservation of paths and drystone heritage, together with other proposals.
 - A higher awareness from the general population about the value of the natural and cultural rural heritage and a high number of visitors who get tied with the area and offset their footprint with local projects.
 - Restoration of traditional paths and recovery of the dry-stone walls and the natural and cultural rural heritage and the good conditions of all micro-reserves that join “El Cinquè Llac” route and the Pallars area, favouring the preservation of local biodiversity.
- Indicators for the monitoring (oct. 2019):
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1lxWQuYYTyApAjqJUK1eiO7NXuvbKoBi1/view?usp=sharing>
- Recognitions:
 - The project Gratiud Pallars has received the 2019 Environment Award given by the Government of Catalonia, in the modality of Initiatives for the protection and improvement of the environment.
 - In addition, the project from which the idea arises, El Cinquè Llac has received several awards in Catalonia and the Spanish state. It was also a finalist at the 2018 WTM Responsible Tourism Awards.



Additional references

- Website: <https://www.gratitudpallars.cat/en/>

- Social media:

<https://www.instagram.com/gratitudpallars/>

<https://www.facebook.com/GratitudPallars/>

<https://twitter.com/gratitudpallars>

- Gratitud Pallars video: <https://youtu.be/vWXd5b6ONFU>

- SUMA'TI INVOLUCRA'T 2017-18_ Gratitud_Pallars initial project

- GRATITUD PALLARS. Social and Tourist Responsibility 2018_2019 project

- GRATITUD PALLARS. Social and Tourist Responsibility 2020 project

- GRATITUD PALLARS. Social and Tourist Responsibility 2021 project

-2019 Environment Award

http://mediambient.gencat.cat/ca/05_ambits_dactuacio/educacio_i_sostenibilitat/premis/premi_medi_ambient/convocatoria-medi-ambient/

- LEADER case study "A Smart approach to cultural and natural heritage improvement"

https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/enrd/files/enrd_publications/s12_leader_case-study_es_smart-approach-heritage.pdf

- El Cinquè Llac online brochure https://issuu.com/elcinquellac/docs/english_brochure_1

- Pictures and news

<http://www.elcinquellac.com/en/instants/> (regrettably not updated)

- Responsible Tourism Awards. Finalist in the category Best for Local Economic Benefit

<https://hub.wtm.com/world-responsible-tourism-awards-2018/>

https://issuu.com/elcinquellac/docs/local_economic_benefit_application_el_cinque_llac_

- Summary of the LAG's Local Development Strategy:

http://www.desenvolupamentrural.cat/system/uploads/attachment/nv_asset/2973/consorci_leader_pirineu_angl.pdf

<http://www.desenvolupamentrural.cat/en/gals/4>

