

TO DO! 2003
Contest Socially Responsible Tourism

Award Winner

BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK

**A Network for Tourism and Regional Development
in México**

represented by:

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and

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Rationale for the Award

by

Klaus Betz

1. INTRODUCTION

Investigations into the candidacy of the BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK have been carried out between December 2nd and 15th, 2003 in Mexico. At the request of the Studienkreis für Tourismus und Entwicklung (Institute for Tourism and Development) the data concerning the concept and objectives of the project as stated in the contest documents could be verified in situ without any problem.

The authorised appraiser proposes that the BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK be awarded the TO DO! price at the ITB 2004.

2. BACKGROUND

With its gross domestic product of 637 billion US dollars (2002) and a population of 100 million people Mexico is considered to be the biggest national economy in Latin America. There are 100 million inhabitants, among them ten million indigenous people (Indígenas) with 62 ethnic tribes and more than 80 different languages or idioms living there. The United States of Mexico are more than five times the size of Germany and are made up of 31 federal states and the federal district Mexico DF (Mexico City).

As one of the most important export nation in the region Mexico has meanwhile reached place 8 in worldwide ranking. The most important economic sectors of the country are: Oil and gas industry, petrochemistry, steel and car production, also important are the processing assembly industry (low-wage level in comparison to the USA) and of course tourism. Among the tourism destination countries Mexico ranks "top 12" in the world. Thanks to just about 20 million foreign visitors annually (among whom 240,000 Germans) more than nine billion US dollars are gained in foreign exchange according to a statement of the Mexican Central Bank. The remittances of Mexican foreign workers mainly in the USA are also of crucial importance; with some 12 billion US dollars annually they correspond to about 70 percent of the income from the oil industry.

According to the "Country Information" issued by the German Foreign Office the unbalanced income distribution leading to a poverty rate of over 40 percent is quite a problem. The same goes for the environmental situation. The uncontrolled development of urban industrial centres, above all the area around Mexico City with its 22 million people, severely affects the sectors concerning waste, sewage and airborne emission, while at the same time poverty in the underdeveloped rural areas is causing the destruction of natural means of livelihood.

People travelling from the North, or from Mexico City, towards the south or east of the country gradually discovers the whole diversity of the country. But the major part of the tourists - apart from study tours or organised tours by bus - concentrate on destinations well known abroad, such as Cancun and Playa del Carmen (Caribbean) or Acapulco (Pacific coast). In doing so one does not only miss the ancient cultural places of the Aztecs, Toltecs, Mayas or Zapotecs. What is even more regrettable is that people outside Mexico have no idea that this country offers a wide range of possibilities in the sector of nature tourism: bike tours through the highlands, extended hikes or trekking tours on horseback to mountainous villages situated at an altitude of 2,500 and 3,400 m. En route the traveller passes through old and architecturally enchanting colonial towns. The visitor discovers Indian markets and within a few hours the coastline unfolds before the traveller again. Mexico offers almost all climate zones, from the tropical humid heat of the coasts to the dry cold of the high mountains.

Off the beaten track and away from tourist centres one can see and experience the extremely different development phases the country is passing through, with the south-eastern states of Veracruz, but also in Oaxaca and Chiapas being a particularly significant case-in-point. On the one hand one is travelling in an industrialised, modern and highly mobile country (Mexico

boasts a well developed, cheap, efficient and punctual (!) bus system covering the whole country), on the other hand one encounters, mainly in the “oriente” (in the east and south-east) the traditional structure of the campesinos or day labourers with a daily wage of 50 to 60 Pesos (between 5 and 6 Euro). These are, in a nutshell, the framework conditions in which the activities of BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK are taking place and which will be described and evaluated below.

3. THE TOURISM AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT: BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK

The term BIOPLANETA stands for a network of networks, it is a major “brand”, a non-profit organisation, mouth-piece, think tank, agency and lobbyist for several different but holistically related fields of activities and business sectors. BIOPLANETA has its administrative headquarters in Mexico City, it focuses - distributed over 58 communes in 13 Mexican federal states - on agro ecology/organic agriculture, processed products, handicraft, fair trade and last but not least ecotourism. The transition between these fields of work is often smooth, yet only a certain part of the communes involved is active in tourism. Under the roof of BIOPLANETA these communities form the BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK. The emphasis is on ecotourism and regional development in rural areas. The partners or members of the BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK are either organised in cooperatives or they are communally owned.

3.1 PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES

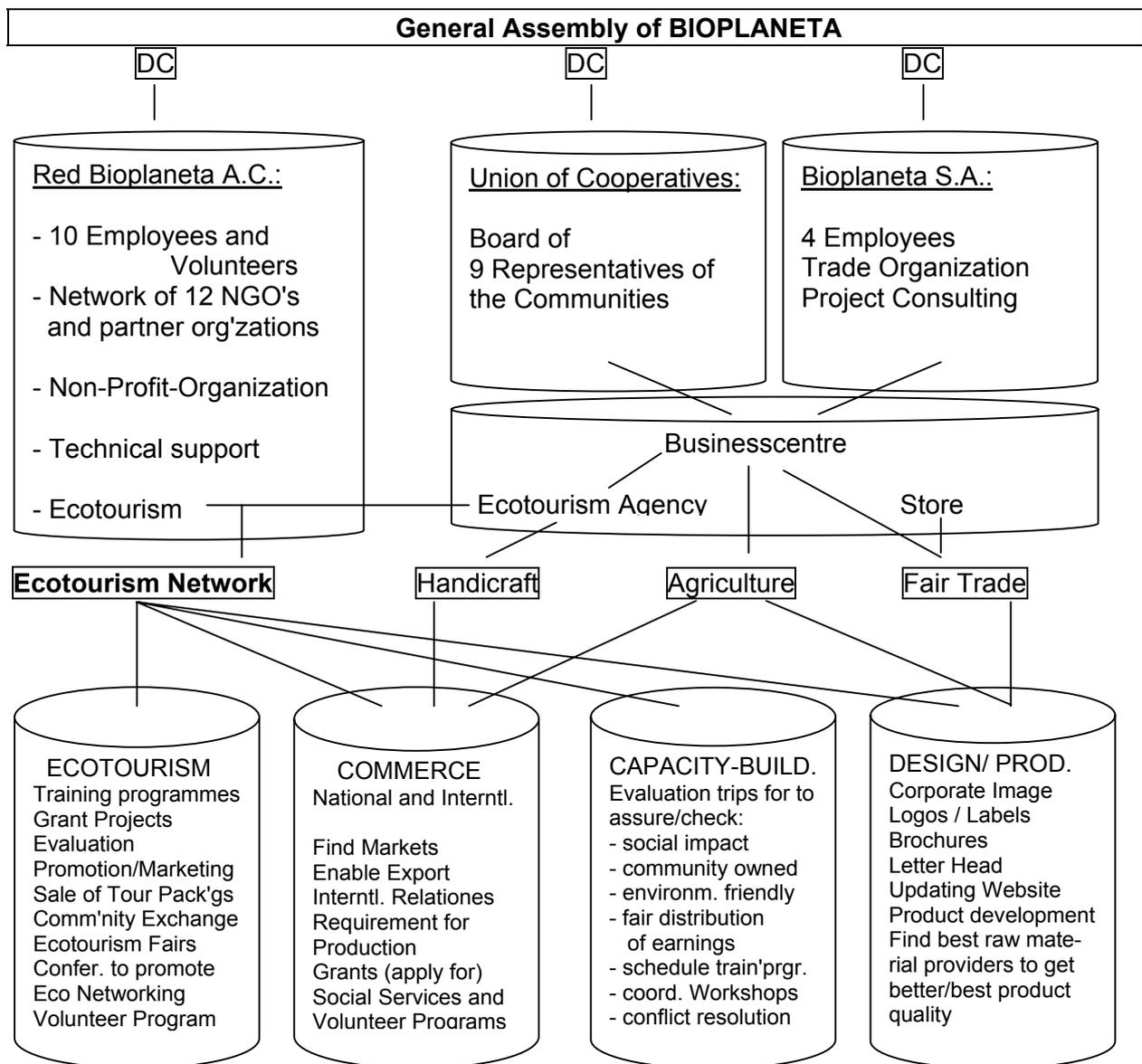
Since BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK has its place under the roof of BIOPLANETA, the philosophy and objectives are identical. BIOPLANETA has its origins in the environment and social movement in Mexico which had started in the early or mid eighties. It sees itself as a national network of rural and independent cooperatives. Special attention is given to the indigenous village communities. BIOPLANETA supports an exchange of experience and know-how and also a feeling of solidarity among the projects involved (mutual financial support, joint marketing of products). Related to the various fields of action this will strengthen the independence of all the participants within the framework of a sustainable development.

The work of BIOPLANETA enhances the co-existence of different cultures, communities, peoples (whites, mestizo, indigenous) and their institutions. Emphasis is put on the respect of regional values, the maintenance and (where necessary) the restoration of a natural environment and the safeguard of natural resources as well as of socio-cultural traditions. This goes primarily for the national level, but BIOPLANETA is already in touch with similar organisations in other countries of Latin America and pursues, in the long run, the aim of developing an integrated eco-social network for all of Latin America.

3.2 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND TASKS

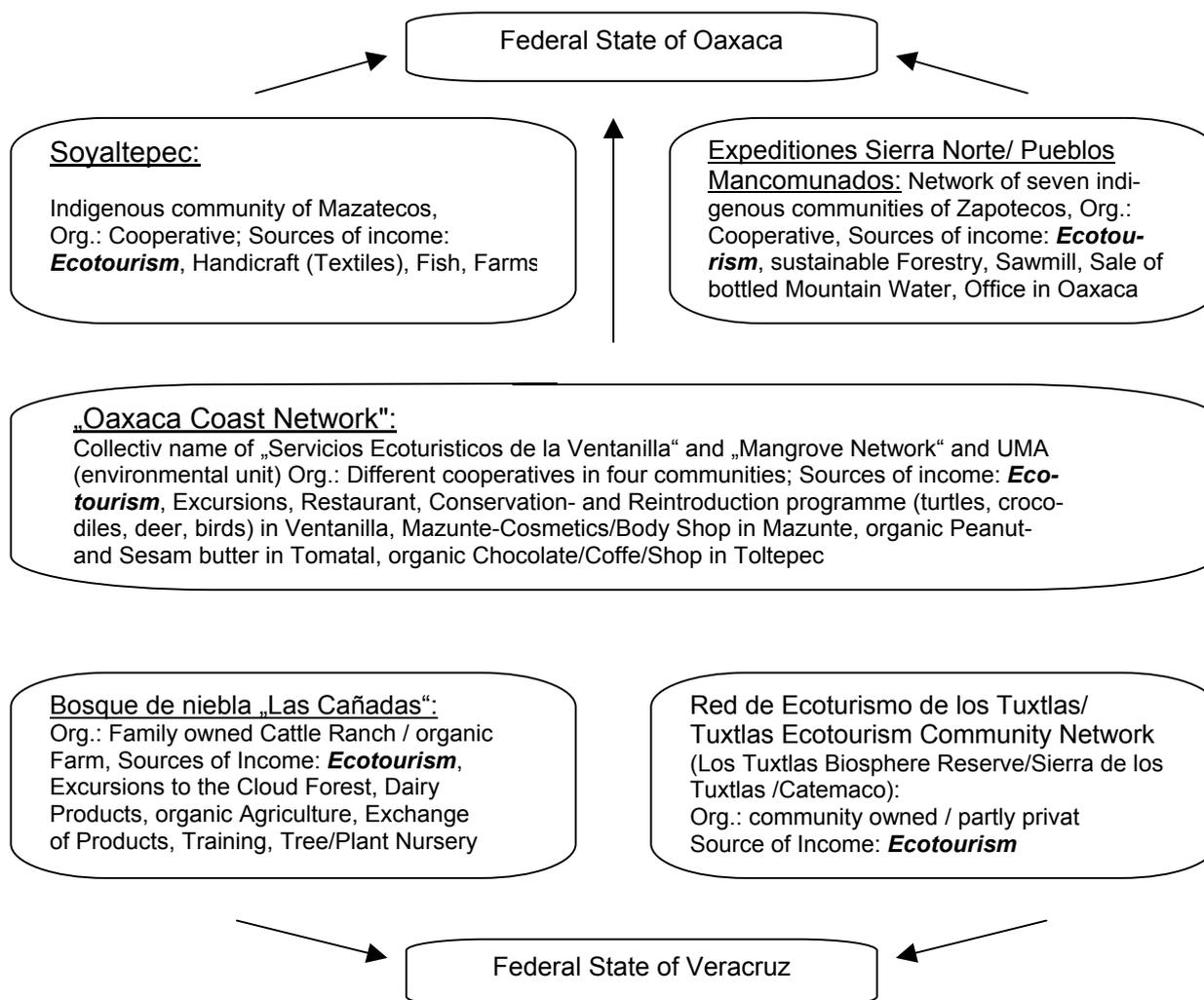
If one wanted to visit all the projects related to BIOPLANETA one would have to travel through Mexico for two months without any break. Day and night. Therefore, the two weeks of research were limited to the most important tourism-relevant projects of the federal states of Oaxaca and Veracruz because they are good examples for the concept and practical work of BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK. In the outline on page 7 these projects are underlined.

The highest body of BIOPLANETA is the General Assembly representing all of the 58 communes or projects involved. Three so-called directing committees are elected and formed through the GA with the aim of overseeing all further activities and businesses of the subordinate three pillars of the entire network.



3.3 TOURISM PROJECTS AND OFFERS

Among the well established and successful tourism projects offered by BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK there are roughly 16 business or tourism projects with several affiliated projects. They are mainly situated in rural areas, or villages all over the federal states of Oaxaca and Veracruz (see below). Overnight stays are mainly in "Cabanas" (typical style of house for the region) with excellent meals. Apart from the "Tuxtlas Ecotourism Community Network" mentioned on the right below, all of the following projects/networks and affiliated projects of the networks could be visited and evaluated during the research. The individual tourism offers and activities are described through the examples given from p. 8 (4. Assessment).



In order to illustrate the concept of BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK and its claim to be an ecologically and socially oriented tourism and regional development network, one can take as a case in point - and in pars pro toto - Ventanilla and Oaxaca Coast Network, respectively. It comprises several communities between the tourist centres of Puerto Escondido and Huatulco at the Pacific coast. This project started in 1995 with the establishment of a very small and unknown cosmetics factory by the name of “Mazunte Natural cosmetics” named after the location, a place that is mainly visited by a lot of individually travelling tourists and so-called “backpackers”.

This co-operative firm belongs to 12 women and three men working there. During the start-up phase “Mazunte Cosmetics” was supported by Anita Roddick (the founder of the Body Shop), by the Canadian Embassy, US AID and by “Ecosolar” (the fore-runner organisation of BIOPLANETA). Today “Mazunte Natural Cosmetics” is the leading business within the “Oaxaca Coast Networks”. Due to the many tourists shopping there, the now well-renowned cosmetics firm has a weekly turnover of 50,000 Pesos (some 5,000 Euro) during high season and is represented with its range of products in a lot of Mexican hotels and cosmetics shops in the major towns. Conversely one can find almost all eco-products of other BIOPLANETA members in the factory outlet which is well frequented by holiday makers (eco chocolate, Café organico, wooden toys, soaps, natural dyes, jams, peanut butter etc.).

What is quite important is that the co-operatively organised cosmetics company has financially supported the second leading business in its founding phase through profits gained (in addition to the Canadian Embassy, the Mexican Government, BIOPLANETA and other NGOs). At any rate the village community of Ventanilla succeeded in establishing the co-operative tourism business "Servicios Ecoturísticos de la Ventanilla" (construction of an excellent restaurant at the beach, excursions to mangroves, construction of cabañas, measures related to animal protection, resettlement and environment protection). It was well worth having invested roughly 780,000 Pesos (just about 80,000 Euro). During high season Ventanilla has up to 3,500 tourists per month and earns profits accordingly. After all, the small village has a population of only 125 people or 25 families (who own all this as a cooperative) and it has meanwhile become one of the most successful projects within BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK, apart from Mazunte Cosmetics.

This success has again made it possible for Ventanilla to support the cooperative of the ecological peanut growers of Tomatal, a coastal village further north (in addition to: Canadian Embassy and a private Austrian sponsor), and finally all three of them, i.e. Mazunte, Ventanilla and Tomatal have started to support the fourth community within the Oaxaca Coastal Networks (plus the Mexican government and private Austrian sponsor): The eco-coffee and eco-cocoa growing community of Toltepec, a cooperative situated in the hinterland.

At almost all levels of BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK an unrelenting form of solidarity can be noticed. The waitresses, for instance, wear uniforms made of skilfully embroidered folklore textiles, produced by the women's cooperative of Soyaltepec (see chart above). At the Eco-Ranch "Las Cañadas" one can buy Mazunte cosmetics or eco-cocoa from Toltepec and at the BIOPLANETA shop in Mexico city almost all the products from all the members of the network are offered for sale.

4. APPRAISAL

The comparison of the activities of BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK with the TO DO! criteria for socially responsible tourism results in the following assessment:

Contest criterion:

Taking into account the different interests and needs of the local population through participation

BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK is based on the idea that the individual members of the network must be in a position to determine their development on their own. This is the case with all the afore mentioned projects because the procedures and structures of the network (see organisational chart of the Network, p. 4) are from the beginning geared towards participation in all fields of development, i.e. the communities involved decide on their own. Either through the cooperatives formed by them or through the communal organs (both with regard to the political and financial implementation of the respective measures). Therefore there is no traditional scenario of an investor coming from outside. When the appraiser visited tourism business and regional development initiatives and discussed with the people responsible they convinced him of this approach.

Therefore, BIOPLANETA is more of a transmission belt and know-how supplier rather than the actual impulse provider or determining motor. Without the villages' own initiative, without their financial participation (which is quite hard in view of the small income in the beginning), the different measures would not have been possible and could not have been realised. Due to the

fact that the individual people in these villages do not have enough capital on their own, almost all members or member firms/initiatives of BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK are organised as cooperatives. Members of the cooperatives are the inhabitants of the village (in the final analysis: the families). The interests and needs of the local people are therefore met through their participation during all the phases of development.

A good case in point are the indigenous communities of the “Pueblos Mancomunados”. This is an association of seven mountainous villages in the Sierra Norte (at a distance of one and a half hours from Oaxaca City). In this beautiful high mountain region which is rich in forests and abounding in water, the Zapotecos villages established the agency “Expediciones Sierra Norte”. Related to this is a communally marked net for hiking trails of one day or more, horse trekking and bike tours. In each location there are clean and neat houses (where the guest can either do his own cooking or go to a village restaurant). In Oaxaca City the villages community runs its own agency offering interested holiday makers programme options, organising their stay, reserving accommodation, coordinating tour guides in the villages and organising transport (partly with its own busses) or bike rental. At last the Mexican market has meanwhile opened up for these villages which have been absolutely unknown some years ago. Each of these villages hosts around 150 hiking or biking tourists per month. The profit gained is evenly spread among the villages involved with a population of between 200 and 600. The means invested in the realisation of “Expediciones Sierra Norte” by the people of the villages from their own resources (some 1,148 million Pesos or 120,000 Euro) amount to almost 50 percent. The route up to this stage, i.e. up to the “finished product” has all along been accompanied by BIOPLANETA through its know-how.

Similar examples with the objective to increase the quality of life and to have a social and environmental benefit could be seen in all the other projects visited.

Contest criterion:

Strengthening the awareness among the local people with regard to the chances and risks of tourism development in their everyday economic, social and cultural life

Since the actors involved at the communal and cooperative level are for the most part acting independently, the risk of a development determined from outside (e.g. through a foreign investor) and against the declared will of the local population is relatively low. Nevertheless, the issue of “chances and risks” remains on the agenda in workshops and seminars organised by BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK. A wide range of aspects are tackled within the framework of capacity building activities, particularly with a bias on tourism. Such as hospitality, restaurant management, programmes and activities, but also the “do’s and “don’ts” for visitors. For this purpose “Regulations of Community Ecotourism” are available (in printed form) which BIOPLANETA has worked out in cooperation with the projects and which are brought to the attention of the visitors. These “Regulations” can now be found in the rooms of the Cabañas of Soyaltepec and in the cabins of Llano Grande.

Contest criterion:

Participation of a broad local population strata in the positive, economic, social and cultural impact of tourism

As described above the communal and cooperatively organised structures form the backbone of the individual projects. It is only through these structures that the villages and communities have the possibility of meeting the above criterion. This can clearly be seen in the project “Servicios Ecoturísticos de la Ventanilla”.

The small coastal village near the beach has 25 families with a total population of 125 inhabi-

tants. From among this group of inhabitants 20 women and men, i.e. almost one from each family, have founded the cooperative and are employed in their own enterprise, in full-time employment that is, in view of the 3,500 tourists per month (during high season). An employment of this kind safeguards the livelihood for the entire family of normally 4 to 5 persons.

In order to create jobs for women the beach restaurant “El Maiz Azul” was established (as always in communal work). It is managed by six women. They have all been trained in “food and beverage” and are now managing (cooking, service, management) the flourishing restaurant. They are members of the cooperative and are also practising a kind of job-sharing. Thirteen men are in charge of eco-tourism activities (boat tours through the mangrove swamps, rehabilitation programme for animals, environmental measures, waste disposal, compost toilettes, mangrove nurseries). In addition and depending on the season, up to eight men have been trained and are employed as guides. Those wanting to become a member of the cooperative must work in the project for six months and must prove themselves suitable.

The same, under different conditions, could be said for Mazunte Cosmetics, for the cocoa producers of Toltepec (cafeteria and cocoa trail being developed) or for the indigenous mountain village community in the Sierra Norte. In the latter community they have over the last few years realised that one can earn money from available “products” in their natural surrounding (hiking, trekking tours, biking in an intact mountainous environment, overnight cabins). A typical approach can be observed in the highly frequented mountain village “Benito Juarez” (580 inhabitants, 2,800 m altitude, 1,800 guests per year) where practically the entire tourism infrastructure is in the ownership of the indigenous community, where the workers are from the village and where the profits from tourism activities remain in the location (and, as a consequence, where money is available for the school, road construction and workers etc.). The tourism infrastructure is arranged as follows.

- Tourism office/organisation communal: 4 employees
- Tour guides: 4 employees
- Transport busses, communal: 2 employees
- shop, communal: in licence to 1 family
- excursions on horse back: 4 Particulares (self-employed)
- Cabaña locations (three houses, 32 beds, communal): 4 employees
- Restaurant (communal): 4 employees
- Private accommodation: 10 families
- Trout sale, communal: in licence to 1 family

In addition, the families in the mountainous villages of the Sierra Norte gain an income through the cultivation of maize, vegetable, tomatoes, chilli, pumpkins and potatoes (for their own consumption and for sale). Even now they hold on to the tradition of “trueque”, i.e. the barter trade, and the barter of products with other villages.

Contest criterion:

Guarantee of the attractiveness of jobs in tourism for the local people by improving working conditions in relation to payment, social security, working hours, education and further training

A wide range of income sources have opened up for the members of the BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK due to the consequent implementation of an eco-social development concept, leading at times to amazing results. While the daily wage in Oaxaca-City amounts to a minimum of 50 Pesos (5 Euro), a guide in the remote Llano Grande earns a minimum of 120 Pesos (12 Euro) per day for hiking tours through the forests in the Sierra Norte. Still, this criterion is only partly applicable because many of those involved (either communally or cooperatively organised) are also the founders, co-owners and employees of their own product. What matters here is - leaving behind the subsistence economy - to create a sustainable

form of livelihood in the first place. In the cocoa cooperative of Toluquepec for instance, all the members relinquish their claim to the profits. The profits are re-invested into their own firm immediately in order to place further investments. For instance for a cafeteria (opening date April 04) so that visitors to the cooperative may find an adequate setting (next to the direct sale of the products). As is the case with Mazunte Cosmetics or the cooperatively owned restaurant in Ventanilla. Only then can actual profits be earned and is it possible to guarantee a fair pay for the work done. A genuine voice in this context is that of Adolfo Luiz Martinez (co-ordinator for the eco-tourism programmes in Llano Grande) who says: "If we continue making good progress our children won't have to emigrate to the USA in order to find jobs."

Contest criterion:

Enhancing local culture as well as the cultural identity of those living in tourism destination areas

A small signboard is hung up in front of the guest pavilion in Ventanilla with the inscription: "La Cultura no es una Formula de Esquela, sino una Obra de Vida." (meaning: Culture is not just a formula we learn in school but a commitment for life). In his research the appraiser has mainly encountered self-confident people who - due to their own success story - have preserved or regained their identity. This could also be seen in the indigenous communes (Soyaltepec: Mazatecos, Sierra Norte: Zapotecos). Presumably this is a merit that can hardly be measured but one that is owed to BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK whose concept is based on solidarity. It offers a roof for "brethren in the same spirit". The philosophy and the objectives of the network explicitly claim (see p.5): Respect of regional values, co-existence of different cultures, communities and peoples (whites, mestizo, indigenous). Another look at the organisational structure of the entire network (p.6) corroborates the fact that almost all the measures are decided with and by the people involved and not for them.

Contest criterion:

Avoidance or minimization of social and cultural damage caused by tourism in destination areas

Since all the projects have developed according to the wishes of the people involved, since they are adjusted to the respective habitat, since they have taken shape in a manageable way and within their own "power structures", the danger of social and cultural damage through tourism is minimal. All the more so as tourism in the projects under review is developing on a manageable scale. With the exception of the small coastal village of Ventanilla with 125 inhabitants. As mentioned earlier some 3,500 tourists find their way to Ventanilla per month during high season (spending their time on the beach, day tours/boat excursions to the mangrove woods), a fact that entails a two-fold effect. A very high number of visitors and an enormous income potential. For this reason investigations are made into the carrying capacity of the village and the surrounding nature. Presently, Ventanilla has commissioned a master plan for further development.

Contest criterion:

Projects and measures entered for the contest must be in line with the principles of environmental compatibility

Practically each project is conceived on the principle of sustainability and friendliness to the environment. The long-standing experience of BIOPLANETA (the former "Ecosolar") experts plays an important role in this context. Mention must also be made of the innate readiness of all the cooperatives and communes involved to preserve available resources. In other words: Thanks to the BIOPLANETA know-how the tourism sector was launched while at the same time

precautions were taken preventing these measures from being detrimental to the environment. Starting from local architecture, to an ecologically oriented agriculture, all the measures embrace the use of alternative environment technologies. As is the case with the use and consumption of water, or the installation of properly functioning and clean dry or compost toilets. Even small things matter in this context: The boats on their tours through the mangrove forests of Ventanilla are of course rowed or punted silently, there are no fast-revving boat engines as is often the case in other areas.

Fifteen years ago it was the parent generation of today's young managers which determined the pace. At that time tortoises were caught, slaughtered and their eggs collected and sold. Today, village life is completely different: The vast beach, the mangrove and palm forest covering 54 hectares and the animals living their (crocodiles, tortoises, silk herons, pelicans, deer, racoons, iguanas), all have become sacrosanct because "after we learned to use the natural wealth in another way it has become a sustainable source of income to us", says the chairman of the cooperative, the 29 year old Perfecto Escamilla Martinez.

The BIOPLANETA leading firm, when it comes to environmental protection, is the Eco-Ranch by the name of "Las Cañades" (meaning: "small, narrow gorges") near Huatusco in the federal state of Veracruz. The ranch with a size of 306 hectares is one of the few member firms within the BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK which is privately owned. The ranch has belonged to the young Ricardo Romero Gonzales who wanted to allow himself and others an eco-vision for the last 15 years. Today, the large estate situated in a cloudy and pluvial region, originally used for cattle breeding, is an agro-business led on the principles of extensive ecological agriculture. Ricardo Romero (studies in animal science/economy) decided to use only one tenth of the land for the agricultural business. Thirty hectares for the cattle and 7 hectares for an ecological nursery/vegetable farm, a scheme any university for ecological farming would turn green with envy. The largest tract of the estate, i.e. 260 hectares, were completely left to nature. Through purposeful reforestation Ricardo Romero succeeded in regenerating an extended cloud forest within a period of ten years (a so-called Bosque de Nieblo).

From a tourism point of view "Las Cañadas" is used on the basis of a clear and astounding concept. A stay at the Eco-Ranch - with a view of the "Pico de Orizabe", with its 5,160 m the highest peak in Mexico - can only be booked for two week-ends in a month and only in the form of a package for 225 US dollars per person, including overnight stay, guided tours and meals. (Separate dates are available for regional school classes or interested local people. The same goes for workshops with themes such as "cheese production" or "ecological farming"). Visitors are housed in small cabins which seem to originate from another world, they look like a small "hobbit village" with six houses nestled against one of these "small, narrow gorges" in the midst of the forest. With this complex the architect - who might just as well have been inspired by Gaudi and Hundertwasser - created a setting where the tourist can actually experience what it is like to live without electricity, TV and outside influences, considering ecologically-friendly criteria, in the middle of the forest, in the middle of nature.

Criterion to safeguard the future:

Which measures/mechanisms assure the economic and institutional sustainability of the project?

The appraiser is of the opinion that the member firms of BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK are on solid grounds with regard to economic and institutional sustainability. On the one hand this is owed to the fact that the income from tourism activities is not the only source, and on the other hand to the high level of solidarity within the network. Another factor is the rather slow development of the projects on the basis of cooperatives, adjusted to prevailing conditions, and the fact that all the projects have from their very inception not been subjected to

the classical monetary cycle (bank financed start-up, repayment of expensive investment credits etc.).

On the other side the administrative centre of BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK in Mexico-City, as a non-profit-organisation, continues to be dependent on donations, funding and financial support for individual projects. Therefore, the appraiser considers it to be quite appropriate to create a commercial pillar belonging to the network in the form of a "Business Centre". This Service Centre and Incoming Agency is urgently needed – if the clients in question are not Mexicans. A European tourism or travel agency will very much appreciate dealing with only one contact person for the organisation of a tour (bookings, tickets, car hire etc.) to the member firms of BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

With regard to the village community of Soyaltepec the boat connection to this beautiful and neat Mazatecos village should definitely be improved. The community situated on the hill of an island above a huge reservoir named "Miguel Aleman", and surrounded by hundreds of small islands, could be more appealing to tourists if the cooperative itself was in charge of the boat transport/transfer, adjusted to the bus connections from and to Temascal or Tierra Blanca. Also, the community has not yet elaborated well thought-out visitors programmes. It is not the foreign visitors who should be asked what they want to do or look at - because as new-comers they would not know it anyway - but it should be the other way round. Visitors should be presented with concrete proposals, be it fishing, canoeing, walking around the island, etc. The nicely built and equipped cabins with a spectacular panoramic view over the lake would thus have more bookings and the village and its hospitable people do indeed deserve more visitors.

6. CONCLUSION

The BIOPLANETA ECOTOURISM NETWORK with its complexity has so far been the biggest, politically well-thought-out network the appraiser has ever seen. On a world-wide tourism scale it can of course not be measured against the industrially oriented tourism developments with millions of investments, but it clearly shows that and to what extent tourism is able to contribute to a socially responsible regional development and through it also to poverty reduction. This is because the individual measures have been adjusted to the prevailing conditions and decided and implemented together with the people involved. It is with this approach that a high level of identification with and a matching commitment to the respective project can be achieved.