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## **Creating new cultural visitor experiences on islands: Challenges and opportunities**

**John S. Hull and Ulrike Sassenberg**

### **Abstract**

Cultural tourism is increasingly recognized as an important motivation for international travelers in search of experiencing the cultural heritage, arts, philosophy and institutions of another region or country. The UNWTO reports that 37% of all international trips include a cultural component and that cultural tourism is growing at 15% annually. Creative tourism, a subset of cultural tourism, is one of these new forms of tourism. While cultural tourism is considered a passive observation of things of the past such as artifacts, creative tourism is the transfer of the past into the present and the future via communication between locals and visitors. This interest in participatory experiences is creating many challenges and opportunities for island destinations who have had to focus on their uniqueness to 'create' attractions that attract visitors. On the island of Newfoundland, Canada, the French Shore Historical Society are developing new creative tourism products through local craft traditions in an effort to make connections on an emotional, physical and intellectual level with visitors. On Pašman Island, Croatia, the support of international tourism consultants is resulting in the development of four traditional, theme-based villages that will offer an authentic and traditional visitor experience that represents the Mediterranean way of life. This article will explore the challenges and opportunities in island destinations of planning and promoting creative tourism using participatory action research. Results will illustrate the important role of the public sector in providing assistance to creative tourism development, and the importance of island residents in taking advantage of local cultural and natural resources to generate local benefits that foster sustainability. For both the Island of Newfoundland and Pašman Island, creative tourism is providing a potential opportunity for a win-win-situation for local residents, if it is planned and developed properly.

**Keywords:** Canada, Croatia, cultural tourism, creative tourism, crafts, island destinations

### **Introduction**

Cultural tourism – people visiting or participating in living cultures, contemporary art and music or other elements of modern culture (Timothy 2012, p. 4) – is increasingly recognized as one of the most important resources upon which global travel is based. Two factors influencing travelers' growing interest in cultural pursuits include the rapid pace of modernization, which has resulted in a nostalgic yearning for the simpler life of the past and second, an increasingly aging global population with more leisure time and money to travel to cultural destinations (Timothy, 2012; Dwyer et al. 2007; Timothy and Boyd, 2003). The UNWTO reports that 37% of all international trips include a cultural component and that cultural tourism is growing at 15% annually (UNWTO, 2011). In Europe, the Association for Tourism and Leisure Education (ATLAS) Cultural Tourism Survey (2005) ascertains that the proportion of tourists on cultural holiday has increased from 17% in 1997 to 31% in 2006. In North America, the Travel Activities and Motivation Survey of Canadian Heritage Enthusiasts

(TAMS) (2003) determined that 32% of cultural travelers add extra time to their trip, because of cultural, art, historic or heritage experiences. Timothy (2012, p. 15) argues, “hundreds of millions travel worldwide each year to seek out and experience places of historical significance” that include both tangible elements such as buildings, rural landscapes, cities, art collections, artifacts, historic gardens, handicrafts and antiques as well as intangible elements such as music, dance, beliefs, ceremonies, rituals, and folklore.

With the increasing interest in intangible heritage, Richards and Wilson (2006) argue that creative tourism, a subset of cultural tourism, is a newly emerging form of cultural tourism. While cultural tourism is considered a passive observation of things of the past, creative tourism is the transfer of the past into the present and the future via communication between locals and visitors (Table 1). The main assets of creative tourism are manifested through local cultural traditions. These assets are organized into visitor attractions and experiences that promote active skill development and participatory opportunities between hosts and guests. As a result, local inhabitants are motivated to share their history and culture with visiting tourists preserving the originality of a place (Richards, 2011).

**Table 1. Cultural vs. Creative Tourism**

Type of tourism	Time	Cultural Focus	Consumption	Learning
Cultural tourism	Past and present	High culture, popular culture	Product, Process	Passive
Creative tourism	Past, present, future	Creative process	Experience, co-production between tourist and local	Interactive, Active skill development

**Source:** Richards and Wilson (2006)

This growth in creative tourism represents a shift in the tourism sector away from a focus on the tangible resources such as the built and material heritage to more intangible resources focused on the local traditions. This movement is creating many challenges and opportunities for destinations, which are focusing on their cultural uniqueness to increase creative content and the creative performance role in tourism to attract visitors (Richards, 2011; Richards and Wilson, 2006).

The purpose of this article is to explore the opportunities and challenges of two culturally unique island destinations in North America and Europe where the authors are conducting research with local rural island destinations that have both independently embraced the development of 'creative' tourism products as part of their strategic tourism planning and development (FSHS, 2010; Dream Resorts Factory, THR International Consultants, 2008). As creative tourism involves the participation of tourists and locals in the co-production of the visitor experience, the authors have adopted participatory action research: to produce knowledge and action directly useful to the local island residents [and]; to empower these local residents at a second and deeper level through the process of constructing and using their own knowledge for creative tourism development (Walter, 2009; Reason, 1998 p. 71).

Action research is aimed at problem solving, collaboration with the community to produce practical outcomes, and the commitment of the community to access community understanding, knowledge and collective memory (Walter, 2009). It is about the co-production of research between the researcher and local residents in an effort to engage in transformative research that empowers local residents based on understanding local opportunities and challenges (Ozanne and Saatcioglu, 2008). Dodds (2007) also argues that that there is a need for participatory and open working methods that include an analysis of island space that integrates specific action plans and a working programme to advance environmental and social sustainability (Prayag, 2011).

The first section of this paper will present a number of key opportunities and challenges that both island destinations in this study are confronting in developing creative tourism policy. The second section will then summarize the specific destinations, the action based research process employed to engage and increase local capacity in advancing tourism development, as well as the process to date in building local creative capacities. Finally the last section will summarize the results of the research in terms of demonstrating the different possibilities and challenges of implementing creative tourism and to illustrate how two destinations are making use of cultural assets to attract tourists, generate new jobs and local income for their island communities.

### **Key Opportunities and Challenges for Creative Tourism**

Tourism is a driver of creativity in terms of both consumption and production (Richards, 2011). Island destinations are acknowledged as attractive destinations that hold fascination and mystique for attracting cultural travelers who have more time and money to spend on their holidays (Timothy, 2012; Carlsen and Butler, 2011; Baum, 1997). Recent global changes in market demand indicate that there are growing numbers of cultural travelers who

are going on holidays in search of experiences that offer opportunities for creative self-development. These heritage tourists tend to be between 30 and 50 years of age, are college or university graduates with 70% occupying professional or managerial positions of employment. Education is regarded as a stimulus for increasing heritage tourists' interest in experiencing historic places and cultural events (Timothy, 2012).

Florida (2002) also argues that the rise of a 'creative class' signals the rise of the creative traveler. The creative class is knowledge-based, labor-intensive, and paid for creating something new (performing arts, crafts, film, sport, publishing, architecture, software). This creative tourist is traveling to engage in new experiences that are an extension of everyday life and work (Stylianou-Lambert, 2011). They are looking for destinations that offer the option of personal development (Florida, 2002). Islands offer authentic cultural and natural experiences in unique settings where living cultures and traditional ways of life provide numerous opportunities for creative visitor experiences (Carlsen and Butler, 2011). These experiences are crucial for competitive positioning in a crowded marketplace (Richards, 2011; Evans, 2003).

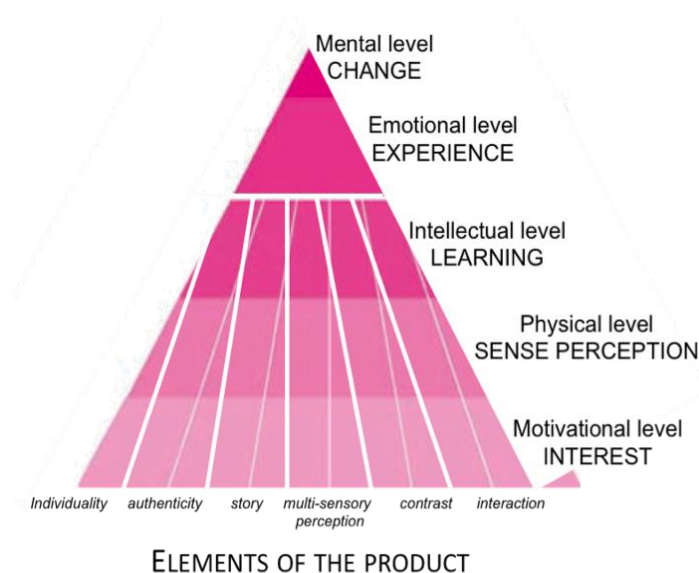
In response to growing market demand, policymakers globally are proposing a number of development approaches that are assisting island destinations in fostering creative development as part of the new experience economy (Pine and Gilmore, 1999). Based on the book *Creative tourism – a global conversation*, Wurzbarger *et al.* (2010) argue that the following five steps are needed to support creative tourism development at a destination:

- Engage visitors in constructing the experience of a destination.
- Develop public programming: courses, conferences, workshops, etc.
- Provide opportunities to learn about a subject during stay and after departure (via website or social media).
- Provide a range of experiences with different levels of participation. Visitors choose level of participation.
- Integrate retail, dining and entertainment (RDE) as part of creative cultural district.

In addition, The Research Center of Expertise for the Experience Industry in Finland has developed a twofold approach for creating a meaningful visitor experience (Figure 1). In their framework, they argue that the following elements -- individuality, authenticity, story, multi-sensory perception, contrast, and interaction -- need to be integrated into a tourism activity or experience to make it meaningful for the visitor. The more elements that are included, the more intense the perception of the experience will be, and the higher the interest from the

visitor in participating in the experience. As a result, the learning curve of customers will be higher and the emotional connection and potential behavioral change will be greater (LCEEI, 2008).

**Figure 1:** Creating Meaningful Visitor Experiences



**Source:** LCEEI (2008)

In general, these approaches support the argument that the functional development of creativity for tourism must consider the '4Ps' of creativity: the creative person, the creative process, the creative product and the creative environment (Richards, 2011; Rhodes, 1961). Current research indicates that the development of creative activities also requires a holistic, multi-sectoral approach that integrates experiential programming, the use of Internet communication technologies (ICT) and visitor engagement. Success requires partnering with people working in the creative industries to foster innovative approaches that provide credibility and quality service in terms of new visitor experiences and products (Richards, 2011; Wurzbürger *et al*, 2010; LCEEI, 2008). As Richards argues (2011, p. 1227) creativity is a strategy to be followed by cities and regions in a search for growth, as well as a strategy for promoting innovation and individual skill development." For island destinations, the challenge for policymakers is how to adopt these practices with the numerous challenges they face with sustainable development.

Even though many island destinations, with their distinct identities, have an opportunity to transform their creative resources into creative assets for tourism, there are significant structural weaknesses to tourism planning and development that have been well documented (See Table 2) (Carlsen and Butler, 2011; Shareff, Hoti and McAleer, 2008; Gossling, 2003; Gayle and Goodrich, 1993).

**Table 2:** Challenges facing small island tourism

Economies small in size	Features of small island economies	Large proportion of earnings spent on imports to sustain tourism
Small populations	Island nature	Enclave developments
Delicate/fragile ecosystems	Poverty prevalence	Far from major trade and commerce centres
Reliance on international tourism for economic development	Distinct political characteristics	High cost of transportation
Small geographic size	Economic vulnerability	Diversification of economic activity non - existent
Lack of access to international capital markets	Transport and communications problems	Services are majority of economy
Narrow productive base	Unfavourable climatic conditions	
Limited diversification of economic activity	Earnings from tourism account for 39% of total export earnings	

**Source:** Sharreff, Hoti and McAleer (2008)

Researchers argue that factors such as isolation, limited resources, weak economies, poor accessibility, inadequate infrastructure, and dependency on external forces include a number of the barriers to development (Carlsen and Butler, 2011; Robinson, 2004; Ioannides *et al*, 2001). Global trends however, reveal that the good news is that market demand is increasing for island destinations (Carlsen and Butler, 2011) and that creative tourism has the potential to provide an engaged and authentic experience with participative learning, providing a connection with the living culture of island residents (UNESCO, 2006). The following section describes the opportunities and challenges facing two island destinations in their efforts to adopt creative tourism strategies.

### Island Destinations

Both of these island destinations – the French Shore on the Island of Newfoundland in eastern Canada and Pašman Island in Croatia in the Adriatic Sea in eastern Europe – have, over time, lost their main income source, which was based on primary resources linked to fishing and agriculture (Baum, 1999; Jordan, 2000). In the 21<sup>st</sup> century they are in search of new revenues through economic restructuring that on the one hand will fit into their culture and on the other hand create new jobs through the development of the service sector.

The first island destination provides an example where the researcher was working with local residents to assist in the further development of an innovative handicraft programme initiated by a group of fishermen's wives in the community. The small-scale handicraft programme has resulted in an active change by local residents in promoting for visitors a creative experience around intangible local traditions. In the second island destination, the participation of a research team of international tourism consultants, policymakers, and

island residents is resulting in the development of tangible assets through the creation of four traditional villages linked to a resort development. These theme-based villages will provide recreational opportunities and meaningful experiences for visitors that celebrate the local culture through creative industries on the island.

### **The Island of Newfoundland's French Shore**

In February 2000 the French Shore Historical Society (FSHS) in Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada was formed as a volunteer based non-profit organization. Its initial objective was to preserve, interpret, and protect the cultural resources linked to the historic French Shore, a remote summer outpost for French cod fishermen for nearly 400 years from the 16th to the early 20th century (FSHS, 2010).

Even though the French ended their fishing and use of these harbours, there are still many signs of their cultural presence, which today is the basis for a small-scale tourism industry in the communities of Conche, Croque, Grandois and Main Brook on the tip of the Great Northern Peninsula, on the Island of Newfoundland, Canada (Figure 2). The FSHS is part of the Nordic Economic Development region of the province and presently supports a population of approximately 8,845 residents scattered across 24 small coastal communities (FSHS, 2010).

Over the last five years, local women in the communities have embroidered a 222-foot long tapestry that documents the region's heritage that is now on display in the French Shore Interpretation Centre (FSIC). The tapestry uses the local Bayeux stitch, an Anglo-Saxon variation of an ancient technique known as laidwork. As a result of the work of the local women, there is new creative tourism programming being offered that teaches visitors the local Bayeux stitch. Once they learn the stitch, tourists can then work with the local women to embroider their own images of the region's heritage by purchasing a kit that is for sale in the giftshop (French Shore Tapestry, 2011).

The FSIC, where the workshops are offered, have also organized a number of different creative packages such as bread making in an original French bread oven, photography, canvas mat making, general art and painting. There are also community guided tours and archaeological excavations (FSHS, 2010). As interest has grown in the tapestry, visitation has slowly increased. Over the last three years the researcher has visited the community three times and worked with the staff of the FSHS to first, assist them in organizing and administering a visitor survey to profile visitors to the FSIC and secondly to complete a five-

year business plan funded by the Canadian federal and provincial governments, *Investing in the Future* (FSHS, 2010) to assist with future planning and management.

**Figure 2.** Map of destination site:  
Northern Peninsula of Newfoundland, Canada



**Source:** Courtesy of Stephen Engle (2010)

In spring of 2009, FSHS staff contacted the researcher requesting assistance in developing a preliminary visitor survey, to be administered in the summer by the staff of the FSIC, with the main aim of gathering demographic and psychographic characteristics of visitors and to measure their level of satisfaction with the FSIC visitor experience.

Out of the 2000 visitors that travelled to the FSIC in 2009, 100 tourists participated in the departure survey providing a low 5% response rate. These data will be supplemented with two additional years of visitor data to generate a more rigorous data set for analysis by 2013. The main results of the preliminary survey indicate that the majority of visitors to the FSIC are tourists from Canada, with a mean age of 52. The majority of travelers have advanced degrees with an average income of \$70,000CAD. They are travelling in couples, and primarily coming to the region to sightsee, hike, shop and experience the culture (Table 2).

For approximately one third of visitors, the main source of information was motivated by word of mouth (29%), followed by television (19.5%), guidebooks (15.6%), and radio (10.4%). In addition, the main reason for visiting the communities was to see the tapestry (53.1%), to view the museum exhibits (26.5%) and to meet local staff (12.2%).

**Table 3:** Preliminary French Shore Interpretation Center Visitor Characteristics

Visitor	Characteristic
Non-resident Origin	Ontario (36%), Maritimes (26%), Rest of Canada (18%), USA (12%), Int'l (8%)
Motivation	Pleasure, meeting friends/relatives, business
Mean age	52
Travel	90% Couples
Education	55% University education
Income	62% CAD\$70
Activities	Sightseeing, hiking, shopping, visiting historic sites

The results of the survey show that visitors to the French Shore are similar to Canadian heritage enthusiasts, who are living in adult only households, and affluent with high levels of formal education. These travelers also participate in multiple heritage-related activities and are interested in the outdoors (TAMS, 2003). In addition, they also are interested in destinations with beautiful scenery where there are things to see and do (TAMS, 2003 p.5). The FSHS is focusing on tourism products that target these heritage enthusiasts.

In 2010, the FSHS commissioned a business plan (FSHS, 2010) to address financial investment in the FSIC and its programming that was completed by the researcher and a staff member from a regional non-profit organisation, the Quebec-Labrador Foundation. In an effort to empower local residents, there were two visits to the FSIC to interview staff and solicit feedback for the writing of the business plan. The results of the interviews presented a number of challenges for promoting creative tourism at the site. First, there is a need for a more permanent source of funding to employ staff on a permanent basis. Results revealed that the Executive Director and the staff are hired on a seasonal basis through government grants. Second, the community of Conche is also located approximately 20 kilometers down a dirt road making accessibility a major concern for future growth. There is a need to upgrade the road to increase access. Third, the tapestry is presently on display in a small room of the FSIC. There is a need to build a proper exhibit space for the tapestry. Finally,

a more formal workshop space for creative programming is needed. At present, visitors work in a small space in the basement of the building. Even though there are presently site limitations, provincial policymakers are reporting many positive trends in visitation and strategic planning that are supporting the FSHS's efforts.

Table 3 indicates that the province of Newfoundland and Labrador is attracting an increasing number of non-resident visitors. In 2010, the province welcomed over 500,000 visitors. This growth in visitation is the result of an award winning national marketing campaign that focuses on the natural beauty and unique local culture (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2010). This campaign is positively impacting visitation to the French Shore communities.

**Table 4:** Summary of Estimates of Non-Resident Tourism Visitation Newfoundland and Labrador 2006 – 2010

Non-Resident Tourism Visitation Newfoundland and Labrador	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
	496,600	490,100	480,100	483,200	518,500

**Source:** Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (2010)

The growth of the Center's activities are in line with the new ten year provincial tourism strategy, *Uncommon Potential*, that is responding to the growing interest of travelers in products and experiences that evolve from a unique culture and heritage off the beaten track. To achieve the desired outcome, the province is also supporting six additional goals to: develop public/private leadership; a sustainable transport network; market intelligence; tourism technology; marketing of the provincial brand and; development of the local workforce (Uncommon Potential, 2011).

In addition, the government has also implemented a cultural tourism strategy, *Creative Newfoundland and Labrador: Blueprint for Development and Investment in Culture* (2003). The strategy acknowledges that the culture and creativity of the province is not isolated or self-contained. The report (Creative Newfoundland and Labrador, 2003, 11) states:

The creations, activities and productions of professional artists and other cultural workers, cultural industries and businesses, and cultural organizations and institutions altogether generate an extensive web of economic activity... producing (sic) approximately \$289 million in output, accounting for 2% of provincial Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The strategy identifies that the main cultural assets are linked to the province's unique culture and traditions, and the local people and their willingness to work with tourists and to invite them to participate in their culture. The willingness of the local women at the FSIC to work with tourists is an important consideration for the development of creative programming. At the Centre, it has been observed that the local women working on handicrafts are not used to working with international visitors. At first a number of the local women had to be convinced that their traditional work and knowledge was of interest to tourists. In addition, because the creative programming is a new product still being developed, tourists coming to see the tapestry are also uncertain of what to expect in terms of an experience. So far, the encounters have resulted in positive experiences on both sides, but staff training is necessary to make the women more confident in sharing their culture with visitors and in formalizing the programming on site.

The provincial government has also identified a number of additional unmet challenges for the cultural sector in the province that are critical issues for the FSIC and the future success of its programming. They include: the weakening of some elements of traditional culture; the financial instability of cultural organizations; the impacts of globalization; insufficient capital investment; a small local market; underdeveloped cultural export; lack of accessibility; an inadequate support system for the creative process; and a shortage of cultural infrastructure (Creative Newfoundland and Labrador, 2003).

Through greater long-term investment in human resources, programming and infrastructure at the FSIC and at the provincial level, the FSHS can continue to nurture the creative talent of the community's residents, and improve access for travelers interested in experiencing the history and culture of Newfoundland's French Shore.

### **Pašman Resort, Croatia**

Pašman Island is located at the center of the Dalmatian coast, about 25 km from the center of Zadar and very close to the Kornati National Park (Figure 3). The island of Pašman is very well connected to the mainland towns of Biograd and Zadar via ferries that run daily. Major industries in the region include tourism, traffic, maritime trade, agriculture, fishing and fish farming activities, metal manufacturing and mechanical engineering industry, chemicals and non-metal industry and banking. When referring to small villages such as Pašman, the majority of the population lives from fishing and farming. Pašman offers a very high quality environment, but lacks infrastructure and economic sustainability. At present, there are 508 tourist accommodation units with 1.826 beds (Ministry of Tourism Republic of Croatia, 2007). Pensions and apartments on the island are mainly of medium to low quality with simple

infrastructure. There are limited tourism attractions and activities largely based on maritime activities (Infohub, 2007). The hotel and residential market caters to the low-budget family market. Furthermore, the branding of the area is currently underdeveloped.

**Figure 3.** Map of destination site:

Pašman Island, Croatia



**Source:** Courtesy of Dream Resorts Factory (2008)

All of Pašman's 11 villages are located on the east of the island. The proposed master plan is a site situated at the southern part of the island, spanning over 14km of the coast-line that overlooks the Kornati National Park. It consists of about 600 hectares, with a landscape distinguished by a small number of moderate sized hills, reaching a maximum height of 127m. Table 5 (below) summarizes the physical characteristics. The vegetation of the area is typically Adriatic with dense scrubs, grass, herbaceous plants and dotted pine trees. The area is rocky. A number of stone walls and terraces slope down to the waterfront. This side of the island is sparsely populated, but has a long history of cultivation extending back over 3,000 years. Culturally, the region offers traditional Mediterranean agricultural practices that include wine, olive oil and cheese making. The landscape is attractive and unspoiled due to the low density of development and the protected areas in the region. For those who come to visit, ecotourism activities, including climbing, fishing, bird watching, horseback riding, diving and sailing, has been the primary motivations for tourists.

**Table 5:** Physical characteristics of Pašman

Total land surface	600 Hectares
Km coast line	14 kilometres
Cloudy days	79 days
Clear days	86 days
Annual average temperature	15.9 °Celsius
Precipitation	1.195 millimetres

**Source:** TZ Zadarska županija (2007)

Today the families living at Pašman are not able to sustain a livelihood from fishing and there are few tourists visiting the villages. Consequently young people are leaving and moving to larger industrial centers. That is why there is a need to identify new prospects and employment opportunities for the local population. The government therefore decided to inventory the natural and cultural assets of the island to focus on the development of the tourism industry by hiring an international consulting company with expertise in tourism planning and development.

In January 2008 a selected team of marketers and local policy makers from the island met at Pašman Island, analyzed and evaluated the given conditions. The results of the study led to the development of an innovative creative tourism concept and a programme that responds to identified market needs and gaps in the current situation. The key to the success addresses a range of factors, including:

- Identification of key theme and principles for the resort
- Respect natural and cultural environment and build on its strengths
- Complement local architectural style(s) and urban design features
- Developing a wide range of experiences that focus on the resort theme and principles
- Integrate key stakeholders and community into the planning and maintenance of the resort
- Appropriate phasing of the development
- Long-term maintenance
- Flexibility of tourism offer and use of spaces

The decision was to create “Pašman Resort” with the aim to construct a series of theme based local villages that promote a sense of community as part of an international first class cultural experience on the island. The challenges are to build a series of four authentic villages for tourists that are based on the existing culture. These villages will be developed

around specific themes that will immerse visitors into the local culture without commercializing the region.

The decision was taken to divide the resort into four distinct village areas and one recreational zone. Each one of these villages will have its particular personality and programme highlights, but they will share the same concept of promoting the natural purity and cultural heritage of the region.

Village A with its exclusiveness will be the epitome of a small paradise. Village B will welcome visitors to live out the Mediterranean lifestyle. Village C will develop a reputation for first class cuisine and Village D will be embedded in lavish Mediterranean vegetation, proposing renewal and growth. The last area (E) is dedicated to a world of leisure and recreational activities.

An international team of engineers, planners and visionaries developed together with local experts and decision makers a strategy of incorporating energy-saving technologies and environmentally friendly construction techniques in the resort to ensure a medium to long-term sustainability. New technologies appearing on the market will be integrated in a timely manner. From an investor's point of view, this efficiency is translated into better economic performance and a higher positioning vis-à-vis other potential competitors.

In terms of the physical construction of the houses and buildings a group of architects, designer and local constructors decided to incorporate a combination of the modern and the traditional aspects, considering using local materials and building techniques. Proposed culinary offerings will reflect the local lifestyle and represent the traditions of the Mediterranean, Croatian way of life.

A close partnership with local people is the basis for a successful outcome. The boundaries between residents and visitors will merge through creative, interactive programming that offers visitors an opportunity to meet locals and experience the local culture. However, instead of observing the culture, the focus is on inviting visitors to participate in it. The idea is to offer activities involving visitors in the everyday life of the locals by offering theme based "edutainment" experiences such as:

- The Pašman Charitable Foundation: Adopt a piece of land and ensure its sustainability. Plan its upkeep together with Croatian farmer/ranger, build birds houses and beetle boxes.
- The Wine of the Land: Learn how to make your wine and enjoy a glass while doing it.
- Make your own Olive Oil: Produce your own branded oil with local olives and herbs and take it home.
- Seasonal Gourmet Workshops: Learn how to cook a traditional seasonal Pašman dish.
- Experience Mediterranean Lifestyle: Participation in traditional harvesting, including the subsequent festival with traditional Mediterranean folklore and food.

The overall promotional objective is to fit the Pašman Resort into the marketing strategy of the country and make it the epitome of the Mediterranean as it once was. Focus will be on creating an authentic and traditional visitor experience that represents the Mediterranean way of life. The resort development will assist in maintaining a sense of community, which prospers not only economically, but also socially and environmentally (Dream Resorts Factory, a firm of THR International Tourism Consultants, 2008).

As a 4<sup>th</sup> generation resort, Pašman will provide a user friendly environment, but with a high level of control. Services and procedures will be administered by a highly experienced management team that will incorporate quality customer service standards to achieve higher efficiency and thus profitability – together with guest satisfaction.

Croatia is an emerging market and a growing destination for international second home owners. As a result of the country's economic and political stability, together with its geographic proximity to large urban centers in Europe and astonishing natural sites, the resort on Pašman Island has great potential to attract investors and operators alike and hence give the island population new employment opportunities that are grounded in the traditional cultural heritage of the region (Choufany and Leemann, 2006). However, the resort concept is presently only a concept, based on the interactivity between locals and the visitors, and will ultimately depend on the support of the islanders.

## **Conclusions**

In summarizing the findings from the two island destinations, the results illustrate the important role of the public sector in providing technical and financial assistance for future development to small tourist attractions such as the FSIC and large resort developments such as Pašman Resort. In many cases the public sector provides funding to support employment and plays a dominant role in the development process of island regions (Zulfa

and Carlsen, 2011). In the case of the FSIC, the Canadian federal and provincial governments funded a business plan for future planning and development while in Croatia the national government paid for a regional tourism master plan for Pašman Island.

In general it is difficult to attract outside investment to support small and medium tourism attractions/enterprises and regional development in such insular societies. There are limited opportunities for new tourism attractions/businesses to establish themselves due to their remote, isolated locations. Local development challenges include: a small and very limited productive base, insignificant domestic markets, non-existing diversification in the production of export goods, the limited capacity of the private sector, reliance on international trade and lack of access. All these circumstances limit the chances for economic development suggesting that there is a need for cooperation that involves local actors in tourism development as well as through broader regional partnerships (Ruggieri, 2011).

In addition, Shareef *et al.* (2008) in their book, *The Economics of Small Island Tourism*, identify numerous challenges facing small island economies. Even with all these potential difficulties, the two island destinations illustrate how local residents can enter the tourism industry and take advantage of local cultural and natural resources to generate benefits that foster sustainability. Researchers argue that there is a need for strategies and policy measures to help develop island tourism sustainably (Kokkranikal and Baum, 2011; Leslie-Ann, 2007; Twinning-Ward and Butler, 2002). For both the Island of Newfoundland and Pašman Island, creative tourism is providing a potential opportunity for a win-win-situation for local residents, if it is planned and developed properly.

The two destinations also illustrate that the main assets for creative tourism products are the unique cultural assets, human resources, and characteristics of residents living on islands. These cultural assets are serving as the basis for new programmes and activities that involve the co-production of experiences between locals and tourists in both destinations. One of the major challenges for the future success of creative tourism will depend on training local residents so that they do not feel inadequate to talk and work with visitors as they share their knowledge. Due to a potential lack of familiarity and interaction with outsiders, locals need to gain an understanding of the benefits of cross cultural experiences linked to tourism that can increase local pride and prosperity for their communities and to build a highly flexible, skilled labour force (Kakazu, 2011).

At the same time the creative tourist has expectations that they will participate in interactive activities with locals. In general, the creative traveler is in search of experiential forms of

consumption that are authentic and unique. As part of this experience they seek opportunities for personal and self-development such as what is proposed on Pašman Island. One of the main advantages for the development of creative tourism is that expectations of tourists are not fully defined yet. This fact provides space for experimentation and allows for the incorporation of new ideas and experiences that may not yet be offered. Hence an island asset analysis is the basis for the proper development of creative products. There is a need as Ismail *et al* (2011, p. 100) argues for further research “focused on cross cultural exchanges between hosts and guests in ... island settings and how cultural differences affect their behaviour and perceptions of tourism development” to promote more creative forms of tourism.

Finally, one of the main differences of the two destinations is, that in the case of the French Shore in Newfoundland, the local residents had the idea how to interact with the tourists and to share their traditions which in turn was improved through external technical and financial assistance. On Pašman Island in Croatia, the development of the master plan was driven by external experts, who integrated input from local residents and policymakers, to suggest how creative tourism could promote sustainable forms of tourism. As Richards (2011) argues, every location has the potential to provide unique, creative activities and attractions. Discovering the potential to develop the intangible assets to make a meaningful experience for the tourist requires the involvement of creative people and an openness of local residents at the destination and flexibility of visiting tourists to experiment with new ideas.

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