

THE TOURIST OFFER LINKED TO THE AREAS OF SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE NATIONAL PARKS OF CASTILLA-LA MANCHA: TABLAS DE DAIMIEL AND CABAÑEROS

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The creation of new Protected Natural Areas (PNA) in our geography, associated to the social demand for protection of natural resources, has increased considerably in the last thirty years. However, this process and the limited progress made in integrating local populations into space conservation have not succeeded in overcoming residents' perception of being marginalized in decision-making with respect to their territories, mainly, due to the lack of information. Consequently, it is important to carry out a territorial planning that encourage the possibilities of the local development and minimize the restrictive measures to take, making the local population part and co-responsible of the project (Heras Hernández, 2001). The conservation of the outstanding elements of the area and the biodiversity values of the space can be perfectly in accordance with their use from leisure and an aesthetic perspective (Antón Clavé, Blay Boqué et al., 2008).

The changes in the touristic demand and the need for the territories themselves to diversify their productive structure, improving the opportunities for employment and the creation of wealth for the rural population, have turned nature tourism and rural tourism into a very important field for the socio-economic development of most of the (PNA's) (Pulido Fernández, 2007a, 2007b, 2008, Puertas Cañaverl, 2008). Therefore, it is necessary to face a new stage that is characterized by a proactive approach in the treatment of tourism by the promoters of natural spaces, making possible the conservation - development binomial. However, this requires the confluence of various circumstances. First, it is necessary that these managers (directors-curators, governing bodies, management bodies, etc.) take over the values of tourism as an instrument for development, and even for the conservation of these natural spaces (Fernández Tabales and Santos Pavón, 2010). Secondly, it is necessary to have specialists in tourism who can assume this management. In any case, the application of product design techniques for the management of tourist destinations

can allow the conservation of its environmental resources, value its attributes and provide the natural space with territorial competitiveness (Antón Clavé, Blay Boqué et al., 2008).

I. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The declaration of a new PNA, especially if this declaration is the most important aspect of protection that the national legislation (National Park) includes, this supposes an economic revulsion for the Areas of Socioeconomic Influence (ASI) in which they are located, among other factors, so they becoming, in some cases, a complement to local economies dominated mainly by agriculture and livestock. The two regions present in the investigation, the ASI of the National Park of Tablas de Daimiel and the ASI of the National Park of Cabañeros, respond to two well-differentiated socio-economic profiles. In essence, they constitute two regions and two territories with very different demographic, social and economic factors, where the impetus of the PNA has been perceived as an increasingly necessary complement of local incomes.

This paper shows that rural tourism and nature tourism have become an indispensable tool for the social and economic development of protected areas, because of the value that they can generate in these natural spaces (Daimiel and Cabañeros), although it is neither the universal panacea nor it represents the final solution to some of the problems presented by the rural world. For this purpose, we have analyzed the main patrimonial elements, both natural and cultural, considered of tourist interest and that for the sake of the implementation of local development policies can be considered key pieces in the design of economic development alternatives that complement the incomes of their inhabitants, so as to carry out a comparative study of the basic accommodation offers and complementary restoration in each of these two regions.

We have used different sources and methodologies. After a thorough bibliographical search and consultation of various restaurants and accommodation guides of the municipalities of ASI, we examined the information obtained in specialized webs on Conservation and in the main webs pages of the local, provincial and regional administrations as well as of Rural Development Groups.

II. SITUATION OF TOURISM IN THE NATIONAL PARK OF THE TIMES OF DAIMIEL AND THE NATIONAL PARK OF CABAÑEROS.

On a regional scale, La Mancha, where the ASI of Tablas de Daimiel National Park is located, appears as a young and timidly emerging destination. The different types of tourism present in the area (rural, cultural, sports, ecotourism, hunting, thermal, oenological, etc.) have in the historical areas (Almagro, Villanueva de los Infantes, etc.) and in the nature the territorial supports for its practice. The territory of Tables of Daimiel has a great number of natural and cultural resources of great quality and variety. However, although many of them have been recovered and preserved, few have become potential elements for marketing. The Don Quijote route, the Wetlands and the Wine Route are the star products of the region, together with many interpretation centers, theme museums, popular anthropological festivals, historical sites and Goods of Cultural Interest (GCI's).

From our point of view, it would be necessary to continue to encourage those actions aimed at creating tourism products with the aim of improving, expanding and diversifying the existing supply.

Regarding the territory that occupies the National Park of Cabañeros, it can be said that it is characterized by being a domestic destination associated to the presence of a NPA that brings identity to it. Thus, under the protection of this designation various tourism products related to gastronomy that complement the product of nature tourism have been developing, consequently it is the main reason for most of the trips to this region. Almost all the tourist products present in the regional territory are due to nature and the environment. After an exhaustive study of the importance of the tourist accommodation and gastronomic infrastructures in Cabañeros and Tablas de Daimiel and their spatial distribution, we have analyzed the companies that offer their products and services to a potential demand for rural tourism in The ASI: handicrafts, typical products, trekking, active tourism companies, etc.

III. CONCLUSIONS

Undoubtedly, tourism in rural areas has become a dynamic element of agricultural income as shown especially in the region of Cabañeros. It should not be forgotten that the declaration of an ecosystem as PNA generates a greater volume of visitors attracted by the quality label that supposes this new image of brand, making it recognizable and turning it into a potential ecotourism destination (Pulido Fernández, 2008: 63-64). Generally, this leads to an increase in the supply and demand of accommodation and gastronomic services, associated not only in the vicinity of the PNA itself, but also in the whole of the ASI and, indirectly, to the entire region that benefits from the arrival of tourists to the territory .

In our case, we are faced with two regions and two territories with very different demographic, social and economic factors where the activities generated by the PNA have been an increasingly necessary complement of local incomes, especially in the Cabañeros territory with a predominant agro-forestry economy while the region of Daimiel has suffered other conflicts to survive as a protected ecosystem (problems related to water supplies due to the social and economic interests of the territory). The analysis of the tourist offer of the ASI of the Tablas gives more interesting and very different information than the one of Cabañeros. On the one hand, the most traditional hotel accommodation (hostels, hotels, pensions) predominates and, on the other hand, the classic accommodation and gastronomic offer is shared between two municipalities, Daimiel and Villarrubia; in the first predominates the hotel accommodation offer, while in the second one the predominant offer is restoration. Furthermore, Villarrubia municipality has taken advantage of the National Park to open new establishments.

The increase in supply and demand for accommodation and gastronomic services in Cabañeros has been more evident, but in some cases it may present a double problem (Troitiño Vinuesa et al., 2006: 257). On the one hand, the spatial concentration of the visits and on the other hand, the strong seasonality of those visits, mainly in the spring months (April and May) and the autumn months (September and October), these last ones motivated by the phenomenon of “Bellow “ in the National Park. This has caused

the clear commitment from the direction of the Park for the diversification of the offer and the modernization of the service. With the declaration of National Park, the space receives a mark of quality that increases its notoriety. The Park itself with its subsidies, added to the ones coming from European aid, becomes an element of dynamization of the territory, although the local initiative in rural territories like Cabañeros has difficulties in the investment and risk, so that in some cases, they prefer the salary or agricultural subsidy which is “easier” to obtain (Rodríguez Chumillas, et al., 2004), avoiding the risks and complications involved in starting a business. In spite of that, according to some authors (Caro, et al., 2009), since the National Park was set up, more than 316 direct jobs have been created: 50% of the total corresponds to people who work in the Park (guides, checkpoints, nursery, etc.), and 37% belongs to the branch of gastronomy and accommodation, specifically to rural and extra-hotel accommodations (rural houses, bungalows, camping and so on). In the region of Daimiel the hotel accommodation predominates.