

Tourism sector ready for cooperation with agriculture and nature conservation

Projected water shortage in the Verdon catchment increases pressure on tourism managers to develop joint strategies. In the EU funded project “MASSIF”, scenarios on the future development of tourism and its relation to biodiversity were assessed.

1.5 Mio tourists visit the area each year dramatically increasing traffic and water consumption. While the livelihoods of 3500 people depend on the flow of visitors, relations with locals are tense. Traditional landscape uses are threatened by the climatic, environmental and economic consequences of globalization.

Contradictory attitudes in the farming community reflect the emotional complexity of the issue:

“Under no circumstances do I want to have anything to do with tourism” underlines sheep-farmer Armand de la Montagne. Pierre du Plateau, head of the local farmers association, is motivated to join forces with other sectors to maintain and develop common ‘patrimone’.

Head of the regional tourism board Mme du Soleil stresses the necessity for entering a dialogue of mutual respect and understanding with farmers and conservationists: “To ensure a sustainable future, we all have to work together.”