

Sara Klarić, M. Econ.

Senior expert assistant for social activities and EU projects
The Municipality of Funtana
E-mail: sara.klaric@funtana.hr

Kristina Afrić Rakitovac, Ph. D.

Assistant Professor
Faculty of Economics and Tourism "Dr. Mijo Mirković"
Juraj Dobrića University of Pula
E-mail: kafric@unipu.hr

Klara Trošt Lesić, Ph. D.

Research Associate
Tourism Department
Institute of Agriculture and Tourism
E-mail: klara.trost@iptpo.hr

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF CROATIAN MARINAS

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Abstract

Marinas are the most important nautical tourism entities, whose competitiveness, business excellence and long-term prospects are not the only features upon which their business operations are based. In the modern business world, the significance of corporate social responsibility (CSR) is increasing. All marina businesses should, therefore, be measured based on their contribution to the economic progress, ecological quality and social capital. The goal of this paper is to provide a theoretical and practical contribution to the understanding of CSR in marinas, while its purpose is to determine the role of CSR in achieving the competitiveness of marinas in the nautical tourism market. The research has shown, considering the relatively low percentage of marinas that responded to the survey questionnaires, insufficient integration of the CSR in the Croatian marina business, as well as their poor interest in the CSR evaluation. Additionally, the implementation of such a practice in the observed marinas is also very recent, leaving considerable room for improvement and progress, which will be manageable only in cooperation with a stimulating environment. The implementation of CSR in the marina business is a great challenge,

but it can result in various benefits for their competitiveness, image and communication and collaboration with various stakeholders.

Key words: sustainable tourism, corporate social responsibility, nautical tourism

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the largest sources of economic activity in the world, due to its size and interconnectedness with all parts of the economy. According to the WTTC research, in 2013 it has generated economic activities representing almost ten percent (i.e. 9,5%) of the total global GDP and nine percent of the overall employment, i.e. over 266 million jobs (WTTC, 2013). Considering its numerous economic, but also social, cultural, environmental and other impacts, it can be one important source of directing the economy (on a regional, national and global level) and the whole society towards sustainable development. The World Tourism Organization defines sustainable tourism as “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities” (UNEP and WTO, 2005, p.11-12). In order to manage tourism in a responsible way, the three pillars of sustainability should be taken into consideration (UNEP and WTO, 2005). The three pillars of sustainability refer to the economic, social and environmental sustainability, which correspond to the three fundamental activities of sustainable tourism management (DCMS, 2006).

Long-term sustainable growth and profitability of tourism companies, in conditions of constant changes of the contemporary world, increasing competitiveness on the global market and pressures of different stakeholders (stockholders, employees, tourists, local community, state, NGOs) demands a different role of the business community. Creating a positive environment for the tourism in the long term will require the entire industry to implement responsible, sustainable practice. Achieving sustainable tourism is a continuous process and it requires constant monitoring of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and/or corrective measures whenever necessary.

So, the implementation of the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) into the business practice is a challenge to the whole tourism industry. According to the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, it can be defined as “the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the local community and society at large (WBCSD, 1998, p.3). The experiences of different companies from tourism industry all over the world show that the implementation of the concept brings many benefits to the company itself and to the social community they operate in.

The implementation of the concept of corporate social responsibility within the tourism industry is vital to the industry's future because it will help ensure thriving, attractive and welcoming destinations that will draw tourists. Socially responsible practice can contribute to maintain a high level of tourist satisfaction and ensure meaningful experience to the tourists, raising awareness about sustainability issues and promoting sustainable tourism practices among them. The paper is focused on nautical tourism, as a very important and one of the most profitable tourist products of Croatian tourism offer. More precisely, it focuses on the implementation of the concept of corporate social responsibility in Croatian marinas.

The goals of the research were determined as follows:

- enable Croatian marinas to objectively evaluate their corporate social responsibility practices and identify business areas in which specific and constructive advances are required and all that in order to achieve their further economic growth and development;
- increase the interest of both the nautical sector and the public for the CSR implementation in Croatia;
- stimulate other tourist companies to join the initiative of implementation of principles of sustainable development and implementation of socially responsible practices.

With regard to the determined goals both the work research hypothesis and ancillary hypotheses by which the research direction is detailed have been defined, namely:

H₁ - CSR is integrated into Croatian marinas business in an unsatisfactory measure;

H_{1.1.} - The issues related to environmental management is a CSR aspect which Croatian marinas understand best, seeing in it a chance for both satisfying their own economic interests and expectations when it comes to social responsibility;

H_{1.2.}- Croatian marinas insufficiently take into consideration interests and needs of various stakeholders of the nautical and tourist destinations, disregarding the fact that an ethical cooperation and a desire to realize mutual benefits represent the marinas' strategic determinants and the only method of achieving their long term sustainability.

The research has shown that the relatively low percentage of marinas that responded to our invitation to complete the survey questionnaires points to the insufficient integration of the CSR in the Croatian marina business, as well as to their poor interest in the CSR evaluation. Additionally, the implementation of such a practice in the marinas which completed the survey questionnaire is also very recent, leaving considerable room for improvement and progress, which will be manageable only in cooperation with a stimulating environment.

2. MARINA AS A NAUTICAL TOURISM BUSINESS ENTITY

The term itself "marina" is of Italian origin and signifies a small harbour for receipt of recreational boats. It is described in professional literature back in 1928 and, according to the American "National Association of Motor and Boat Manufacturers", is defined as a place where yachtsmen can moor their boats adequately, launch them, service them, supply them with fuel and other boating necessities, have a warm shower, have a meal ashore and be near commercial, communicational and traffic infrastructure (Luković & Bilić, 2007, 116).

Marina is a fundamental and best known type of nautical tourism harbour. As opposed to other nautical harbours which offer only boat mooring and storage services, in specially appointed marina areas, they also offer a whole series of other facilities and services which enhance guests' enjoyment, extend the tourist season, increase nautical and tourist expenditure and enrich the entire nautical and tourist offer. The services provided by marinas can be classified as primary, secondary and additional (Šamanović, 2002, 221). The primary service offered by marinas is mooring. Secondary services include electricity and water connections, refuse removal, administrative services, assistance with launching of the boats and lifting them out of water, boat servicing, supply of yachtsmen with spare parts, fuel, foodstuffs, sports equipment and other necessities. Additional services include entertainment, sport and recreational facilities.

Marinas can be classified according to their particular main features or characteristics. As a classification criteria, most frequently used (Luković & Gržetić, 2007, 74-76) in practice are the following: position of offshore area as opposed to the coast (open, semi-enclosed, enclosed and completely enclosed types of marinas), construction type (American, Atlantic and Mediterranean types of marinas), level of equipment (standard, luxurious and recreational marinas), ownership (private, communal and public marinas) and location (sea, lake, river and canal marinas).

Common marina business, through which the entire work process directed to the production of nautical and tourist services is coordinated, is divided and organized according to the field and work scope into ten services (Dulčić, 2002, 278): administration, reception services, business services, sailor services, guard services, investment maintenance and environmental preservation services, maintenance services, yacht service reception services, quality services and agency services. Servicing facilities in marinas are organized in special units or separate companies. They are the following organizational units and services (Dulčić, 2002: 278-279): boat servicing, motor servicing, guarding the boats on land, mooring and boat hire, shops in marinas, travel agency, hospitality business and bookkeeping service.

3. CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN NAUTICAL TOURISM

Corporate social responsibility is a very challenging concept for the business community. The implementation of the concept has its roots in the etymology of the word "company". It is derived from two Latin words *cum* and *panis* meaning "breaking bread together" (Arndt, 2003 in Asongu, 2007: 2). It shows that the idea of the company as a business entity has an important social dimension. The concept of CSR, as a business philosophy, emphasizes the responsibility of the company towards the community in which it operates and on the environment influenced on a direct and indirect manner. Ebner, Baumgartner (2006) recommended using CSR as a social aspect of the sustainable development concept.

The implementation of the concept of corporate social responsibility into the business practice is a challenge to the whole tourism industry. The experience of different companies from the tourism industry all over the world shows that the implementation of the concept brings many benefits to the company itself and to the social community they operate in. It can result in direct financial benefits through reduced costs related to the environment (water, waste energy, etc). Besides, it can enable the creation of the supply system through which companies can stimulate sustainable ways of production and consumption, as well as choose environmentally and socially responsible suppliers.

Socially responsible companies bring, besides the possibility of employment, the possibilities of permanent education of their employees, respecting the rights of each person. They can contribute to the quality of the local community through education and motivation of all employees to behave responsibly towards the environment and the social community in their working places and at their homes, as well as stimulating them to actively participate in different projects organized by the company with other stakeholders, especially NGOs. All these initiatives can contribute to the increased motivation and loyalty of employees. Companies can support development of the local community also through buying products or services from local producers or stimulating tourists to do that. That can contribute to increase the multiplicative influence of tourism and accelerate the development of the whole tourism destination.

The implementation of CSR in nautical tourism is a great challenge for marina management. In that sense, the nautical tourism strategic documents provide considerable support for marina management, on the basis of which implementation of socially responsible marina business is ensured in nautical tourism. At the national level, two strategic documents were adopted, in line with which nautical tourism is managed, namely the Strategy of Tourism Development in the Republic of Croatia until 2020 and the Nautical Tourism Strategy of the Republic of Croatia for the period 2009-2019 (table 1). In the Strategy of Tourism Development in the Republic of Croatia until 2020, nautical tourism is quoted as a dominant tourist product, immediately after "the sun and the sea" and

measures of tourism policy are listed through the action plan of nautical tourism development. In the Nautical Tourism Strategy of the Republic of Croatia for the period 2009-2019, guidelines for nautical tourism management are elaborated in greater detail in line with sustainable development, which refer to responsible management of natural areas and goods, determination of the area carrying capacity and identification of the limits in the growth of new private capacities. Also, the biggest threats to the long-term sustainable development of nautical tourism have been identified as uncontrolled use of naturally shaped space and natural resources, as well as unlimited and undirected development under the pressure of a greater demand for new moorings.

The European Strategy for Coastal and Maritime Tourism contributes to achieving the EU 2020 targets by promoting ecotourism and waste prevention. The strategy can help the sector reduce its environmental impact, which represents one of the three key pillars of sustainable development. Equally, it is interesting that FEDETON, i.e. Federation of Nautical Tourism, is inviting public and private institutions to endorse its objectives through the signature of the European Manifest for Sustainable Nautical Tourism¹. The Manifest was created in December 2012. Istria is the first region in Croatia which joined FEDETON in 2014. With their signatures, 108 persons expressed their support for the Manifest, namely public and private sector representatives from France, Spain, Ireland and Croatia, i.e. representatives of counties, municipalities, regional councils, sports associations, private ports, as well as representatives of the European Parliament. The signatories undertook to carry out a series of activities in order to achieve the following goals (Fedeton, 2012, p. 4-7):

1. to preserve the natural values of the territory and the functionality of coastal ecosystems,
2. to contribute to maintaining the singularities of natural protected areas and the conservation of vulnerable species, applying good environmental practices when carrying out nautical activities,
3. to reduce the consumption of natural resources, the generation of waste and emissions to the soil, water and atmosphere during nautical activities, applying measures to mitigate such impacts,
4. to improve the wealth of local communities by creating development and employment opportunities, facilitating access to and professional engagement in nautical activities,
5. to use nautical activities as a vehicle to convey positive values and to promote education, healthy sporting habits and environmental awareness,
6. to innovate in the marketing of products and services that differentiate themselves by their environmental attributes, leading citizens towards

¹ http://www.nautical-tourism.eu/upload/documents/03_14%20Manifeste%20ANG%2012p.pdf

recreational activities that are more respectful of the environment and increasing their commitment to environmental conservation,

7. to promote the existence of a proper framework for supporting innovation in tourism, creating incentives for businesses that deliver sustainable nautical activities and introducing relevant green procurement practices in public administrations,
8. to make nautical tourism sites compatible with other tourist uses, scaling occupation levels of nautical activities to the carrying capacity of the territory and real tourist demand,
9. to support the construction of an open and participative society, keeping a positive disposition towards dialogue with stakeholders and facilitating their engagement in decision-making processes that affect the coastline,
10. to contribute to the progressive advance of sustainability in nautical destinations, actively participating in the debates facilitated by the European Federation of Nautical Destinations and in the working groups articulated to the end.

Table 1 below shows other strategic documents of nautical tourism development, oriented towards sustainable development, both at the European and national levels.

Table 1.

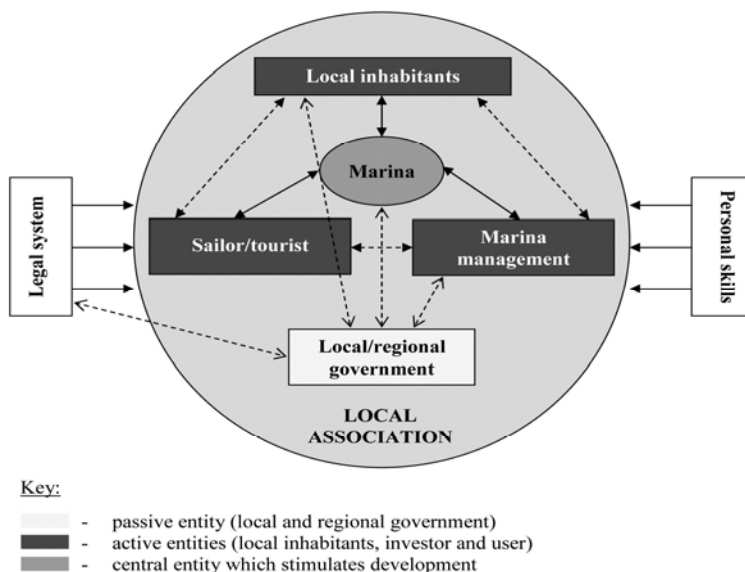
Analysis of nautical tourism strategic documents at the European and national levels

| <i>Strategic document title</i> | <i>Implementation level</i> | <i>Bearers</i> | <i>Year</i> |
|--|-----------------------------|--|-------------|
| <i>The European Strategy for Coastal and Maritime Tourism</i> | <i>European</i> | <i>European Commission</i> | <i>2014</i> |
| <i>Strategy of Tourism Development in the Republic of Croatia until 2020</i> | <i>national</i> | <i>Government of the Republic of Croatia Ministry of Tourism</i> | <i>2013</i> |
| <i>European Manifest for Sustainable Nautical Tourism</i> | <i>European</i> | <i>European Federation of Nautical Tourism Destinations</i> | <i>2012</i> |
| <i>Nautical Tourism Strategy of the Republic of Croatia for the period 2009-2019</i> | <i>national</i> | <i>Government of the Republic of Croatia Ministry of Sea, Transport and Infrastructure</i> | <i>2008</i> |

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Jugović, Kovačić, Hadžić (2011) offered a model of sustainable development for nautical tourism ports whereby they proposed to allocate overall investments as follows: investment in human resources 30%, investment in quality standards 30%, investment in the construction level achieved 20% and investment in technology 20%. They concluded that without investments there can be no development, and without development, growth can only provisionally provide successful operation.

Nautical tourism development affects destination development, which is particularly pronounced through the impacts on the destination economic and ecological sustainability (Jugović, Zubak, Kovačić, 2014). Jugović, Zubak, Kovačić (2014) believe that the most significant economic impacts of nautical tourism on the destination development are frequency of arrivals, length of stay, expenditure and yachtmen's activities in the destination, while, according to them, nautical tourism ecological impacts include the environmental pollution sources, destruction of natural and ambient values, as well as misappropriation of destination cultural property.



Graph 1. Separate and common competences of sustainable development model where marina functions as the local leader of development

Source: Luković, T. (2012): *Nautical Tourism and Its Function in the Economic Development of Europe*, p.417. In: Kasimoglu, M. (ed.) (2012): *Vision for Global Tourism Industry – Creating and Sustaining Competitive Strategies*, available from: <http://www.intechopen.com/books/visions-for-global-tourism-industry-creating-and-sustaining-competitive-strategies/nautical-tourism-in-the-function-of-the-economic-development-of-europe> (25.11.2013)

Luković (2012, 416-417) has created a sustainable development model where a marina is a leader of local and regional development as is quite common in the Mediterranean region (Graph 1). The role of the model is to support and integrate economic, social and environmental aspects of development. One of the main challenges is to involve all relevant stakeholders in order to support long-term sustainable development as a common goal. Their involvement will depend, inter alia, on their knowledge and competencies about sustainable practices and their ability to communicate and collaborate. The differences between those subjects should be determined by means of development of “sustainability competence of the nautical tourism subject” in a specific locality. “Sustainability competence” includes essential, existing and constantly developing competences of employees, economic subject owners and management, inhabitants of a specific area and nautical tourists (Luković and Gržetić, 2007: 252). The functionality of the listed common or collective competences in practice depends on individual skills, which become clear through manifestation actions and processes and individual knowledge, which is evidenced through organizational memory and the legal system.

4. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CSR IN CROATIAN MARINAS – EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Although, through history, most of the research observes marinas based on the statistical indicators of number of moorings, number of yachts, degree of constructed area and other factors, in the last twenty years or so, a systematic approach to development perception, where the concept of sustainable development and CSR become a priority has increasingly been emphasized, thus this paper research was conducted from that very aspect. Implementation of the CSR in marinas represents an essential contribution to the strategy of achievement of sustainable development in their wider environment, i.e. in the entire nautical and tourist destination.

4.1. Research methodology

Given the chosen survey method, the research instrument was a survey questionnaire which was developed and amended on the basis of the questionnaire used in the CR Index Project, criteria and guidelines for marinas with Blue Flag, questionnaire used in the Verde come Vela Project and the literature which deals with topic areas concerning nautical tourism, sustainable development and CSR. The survey questionnaire contains 85 questions, with the following structure: 65 dichotomy type of questions, 15 multiple choice type of questions and 5 open questions. The questionnaire is divided into eight sections, namely: general data on marinas, inclusion of CSR and sustainable development

in marina business strategy, protection of marina environment, marina work environment, relationship between marinas and community, marina commercial relationships, creation and advancement of the marina tourist product and the CRS perspective and sustainable development of Croatian marinas. Marinas' focus on economic sustainability has not been researched due to the premise that, in its business, each marina aims for a stable and continuous profits growth, but also due to the difficulties in the collection of the financial data, which emanated from some marinas' insufficient transparency in reporting their finances.

The survey questionnaire was sent to the whole population, i.e. to all Croatian marinas and the data on marinas was collected from the Republic of Croatia's Ministry of Tourism and the Croatian Marinas Association within the Croatian Chamber of Commerce. Out of the total of 53 Croatian marinas, 30 of them or 56.6% of marinas returned their completed survey questionnaires, which make a non-random sample of this research. The number of returned questionnaires can be deemed as satisfactory and this formed an objective base for making of conclusions on the level of Croatia.

The data were collected within the period of six months in 2011. The survey questionnaire was sent to the email addresses of the marinas and, if no answer came within the following two weeks, the marinas were contacted also by telephone. To have the answers to the questions as complete and accurate as possible, the surveyees were highly ranked marina representatives, namely: members of the marina boards, marina general managers and heads of specific operations in the marina. For the purposes of authenticity of the research collected data and obtained results, the name, surname and position of the person responsible for the accuracy of the content of the questionnaire were required in the first section of the survey questionnaire. All the surveyees were familiarized with the research topic, as the research project was briefly described on the introductory page of the survey questionnaire. Participation was strictly voluntary. The collected data was processed and the analysis and interpretation of the research results was carried out using the method of descriptive statistics.

4.2. Research results

Only partial results of this research will be presented in the paper, represented in total numbers and ratios, which guarantees the marinas' data safety and confidentiality. The research results are of an indicative nature and point to the current situation and a potential direction in which the CSR development will move in Croatian marinas.

By researching the inclusion of CSR and sustainable development in marinas' business strategy, it is established that 30% of the surveyed marinas declare on social responsibility or sustainable development in their vision and also they have a person exclusively in charge of the marina's CSR and sustainable development. In business decision making processes, most marinas, in a systematic and documented

way, consider the impact of those decisions on the environment (56.7%) and employees (40%), while the impact on the local communities and society, health and yachtsmen safety and on suppliers and cooperants, considerably neglected. The defeating fact is that only a mere 13.3% of the marinas possess a certified Control Management System – ISO 9001:2009 and 3.3% of them the Environmental Management System – ISO 14001:2009. Examining the ways in which marinas report on their CSR and sustainable development, it was revealed that 23.3% of them do so by means of occasional publications in media and/or within their Annual reports.

The following research results best confirm the fact that the environmental management issues are the CSR aspect which Croatian marinas understand the most. Namely, the majority of marinas have a relevant strategy for the environment in marinas (80%) and environmental management policies (93.3%). Also, all the marinas state that they blend into the natural and built-up environment; however, 60% of them did not carry out the study of impacts on the environment prior to the beginning of construction of the marina. As many as 66.7% of marinas systematically monitor the impacts of their business on the environment and the results of such measurements and monitoring are most frequently used for the purposes of lowering harmful impacts and for environmental protection, sea quality improvement, securing the Blue flag, planning of future marine capacity extension, as well as for the reasons of inspection supervision and legal acts. 96.7% of marinas have visually clean sea and coastline (without oil, litter, sewage waste or other traces of pollution) and, in order to improve the sea water quality or, at least, keep it at the existing level, marinas carry out analyses of sea water quality in the marina and surrounding areas, most frequently every three to four months (40%). Only 20% of marinas have facilities for pumping out of muddy water and toilets, which is a surprising fact given that 36.7% of marinas have been awarded the Blue flag. Namely, this points to the fact that some marinas, who have been awarded Blue flags, do not have facilities for pumping out of toilets, although this falls into the category of compulsory criteria which marinas have to fulfil in order to merit this award. In the marinas which carry out larger works on boat bodies (drilling, stripping, painting and similar), only 16.7% of them carry out these works in closed premises with filters on ventilation systems. Almost 80% of marinas undertake measures for reduction of water and energy consumption and, most frequently, those shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2.

Marina measures for reduction of water and energy consumption

| <i>Marina measures for reduction of consumption of</i> | |
|--|---|
| <i>water</i> | <i>energy</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>sensor water mixer taps for water</i> • <i>fitting of special accessories on showers</i> • <i>sensor turning on and off of urinal flushing system in toilets</i> • <i>mechanical self-closing vents on toilet flushing systems</i> • <i>weekly water meter control</i> • <i>appealing to the conscience of consumers</i> • <i>contractually obliging marina guests to make maximal savings by means of fitting of adequate accessories</i> • <i>making guests pay for excessive consumption for washing of their boats</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>energy saving light bulbs</i> • <i>automatic photosensitive switches for turning lights on and off</i> • <i>solar panels</i> • <i>reducing water temperature</i> • <i>thermal insulation of space</i> • <i>closing of a part of sanitary area during winter period</i> • <i>fitting of reactive power compensator</i> • <i>using appliances with lowest energy consumption</i> • <i>instructing marina guests on rational use of electrical energy</i> |

Source: Prepared by the authors.

93.3% of marinas have at their disposal a sufficient number of bins and containers for selective collection of reusable waste (for example bottles, cans, paper, plastic, organic materials and similar), as well as adequate, properly marked and separated containers for disposal of technologically dangerous waste (for example paints, solvents, scrapings from boats, batteries, used oil and similar). All marinas have a relevant plan for emergencies and adequate and clearly marked equipment which is used in the event of pollution, fire or other accidents and 90% of them have a posted (posted on notice boards) or in another way published (distributed to boat owners in the form of a leaflet and available on the marina web pages) Book of Regulations pertaining to the behaviour in marinas and towards the marina environment. 76.7% of marinas provide their guests with information about surrounding ecologically sensitive natural areas, as well as on the area of the marina itself, while only 36.7% of them offer to yachtmen and employees a few activities from the field of education about the environment and, most frequently, they are the following: preparation and publication of leaflets, distribution of picture post cards, competition in drawing and exhibition of children's' work on the topic of sea, boats, marina and protection of the environment, tending and maintenance of existing condition of the marina green-belt areas, organization of the action of traditional cleaning of the underwater part of the marina and surrounding areas, demonstration exercise of fire boat performance and fire extinguishing, etc. An interesting fact which

emanated from the research is also that, in the last year, 13.3% of marinas received complaints by the inspection body, other competent bodies or the public regarding the attitude of the marina stakeholders towards the environment.

Studying the marina working environment, it was discovered that marinas do not provide great support to socially endangered or marginalized groups (for example unemployed persons who have been registered with the unemployment office for a year or longer, persons who have just completed their education, persons of over 50 years of age with low level of professional qualifications, mentally or physically challenged persons and similar) who are in an unfavorable position regarding their access to employment. On the other hand, marina employees enjoy various benefits, greater than prescribed by the law and, most often this concerns additional family expenses for exceptional circumstances, such as the birth of a child or a death in the family (53.3%), as well as additional personal expenses, such as use of a vehicle or a mobile telephone (46.7%). Apart from this, 70% of marinas involve their employees in educational programmes, as well as in the activities related to the prevention of health problems and/or injury at work, which are organized or paid for by the marinas themselves. Marinas monitor the organizational climate and staff satisfaction in many different ways, but most often it is done by means of an occasional research as deemed necessary (30%). Numerous internal communication channels also function, but notice boards, the Internet and periodical meetings between board members and staff are most frequent.

Furthermore, relationships between marinas and the local communities were examined by the research. Marinas monitor the relationship of local communities towards them in many ways, out of which occasional meetings with local authorities and other respectable institutions (86.7%) and responding to invitations to take part in local events (70%) are certainly most used. Activities of almost all marinas are coordinated with other activities in their environment (for example, mariculture, bathing places, recreation and similar), as well as with social, economic and cultural values of the areas which surround them. In the last three years, 80% of marinas provided certain financial donations, as well as a form of non-financial donation (lending of their equipment, education programmes, grants, voluntary work and other) and the main areas of their donations are linked with the mission and/or business strategy in 64% of marinas. A mere 50% of marinas participate in partnership projects with public institutions or associations and 83.3% of them offer their sponsorships and that mostly for the following activities: sport, environmental protection and culture. It is also important to emphasize that 33.3% of marinas were awarded a prize, award or a special mark of recognition for their contribution to tourism development at the level of the local community, region or state.

Whether marinas take into account the interests and needs of other nautical and tourist destination stakeholders has also been examined through the section of the survey questionnaire which related to marinas' market relationships. In this way it was established that only 43.3% of marinas have a written policy which regulates their relationships with suppliers, but, at the same time, 56.7% of them require from the suppliers to have a quality policy and 20% the policy of environmental management.

In their marketing communications, only 26.7% of marinas use their own or another ethical advertising codex and the codex with corporate management principles exist within 56.7% of marinas. Only 3.3% of marinas have a written policy which regulates their attitudes towards their competition.

In order to research the attitude of marinas towards yachtsmen and other users of nautical services through the level of quality of offer they provide, the creativity and advancement of the marina tourist product were studied. On the basis of the collected data, it was revealed that as many as 90% of marinas systematically measure boatmen's satisfaction with specific elements of their nautical and tourist offer in order to adjust their services to their modern needs and wishes. Accordingly, with the aim of realizing their guests' full satisfaction, almost all marinas have continually been working on raising the level of staff hospitality and creation of a climate of welcome, as well as on enrichment and improvement of the quality of their nautical and tourist offer, which, coupled with their usual nautical services, most often also include some of the following facilities: laundry services, nautical equipment shop, charter companies' services and Internet centre. In 76.7% of marinas there also exist facilities for disabled persons (parking, sanitary points, access ramps, boating facilities, activities, etc.).

The research ended with an examination of the perspectives of the CSR and sustainable development of Croatian marinas. Namely, the surveyees were asked their personal opinions about the current position and future development of the CSR and sustainable development of the Republic of Croatia's marinas. It was discovered that 46.7% of surveyees deem that the level of implementation of the CSR and sustainable development practice in Croatian marinas is moderate and that the factors which will, in the future, affect most the increased implementation of the CSR and sustainable development practice in Croatian marinas, in their opinion, are preservation of natural beauty as a basic attraction for boatmen, stimulating environment which will validate the marinas' CSR and sustainable development, as well as implementation of new laws and Books of Regulations, compulsory for all marina stakeholders. It was also established that, according to the surveyees, the subjects who will have the key role in ensuring stimulating measures related to the CSR and sustainable development of Croatian marinas are nautical tourism harbours, the Republic of Croatia Ministry of Sea, Traffic and infrastructure and the local and regional self-government.

Following the completion of the survey questionnaires, 66.7% of marinas declared that they wanted to be informed about the generated research results, which points to a moderate level of interest by marinas in the objective evaluation of their corporate socially responsible practice.

4.3. Research limitations

Looking at the research results, this research limitations should also be borne in mind. The first limitation concerns the fact that not all surveyees replied to several questions from the survey questionnaire. Given that, under such

circumstances, the research sample was lower than 50% of the whole population, the interpretability of the results has been impaired, the results thus being suitable only for making indicative conclusions. The authors presume that marinas did not wish to declare themselves on certain questions due to their desire not to reveal specific business secrets to a wider public, which is not in line with the social responsibility principle, which, in recent years, has become an imperative in business, and that is transparency. Namely, marinas should, in a clear, precise and full manner, up to a reasonable and sufficient level, disclose policies, decisions and activities for which they are accountable, including known and potential impacts on the society and the environment.

The second limitation of this research emanates from the fact that some marinas form part of the same group, thus being subject to the same rules and standards which are in force for all the marinas within that particular group. It should, however, be mentioned that all the marinas are not located in the same nautical and tourist destination and, regardless of the sustainable development policy which has been implemented at the level of the entire group, each marina adjusts to the plans and decisions of the local self-government where it is situated.

The last limitation is associated with the lack of previous research with which the conducted research results could be compared. The attention of both foreign and domestic authors, such as Nord, from 2006, Henderson, from 2007, Holcomb et al., from 2007, Golja, from 2009 and Kicosev et al. from 2011 has mainly been focused on corporate socially responsible management of hotel companies, while other tourist business subjects have been neglected. Accordingly, the research result interpretation is impaired due to the impossibility to compare the results and deduce the conclusion based on their comparison, but, at the same time, this paper makes a fundamental contribution to the literature dealing with the concept of sustainable development and CSR in tourism.

It is necessary to emphasize that the research was carried out in 2011, which is a limitation to this research.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CROATIAN MARINAS

Implementation of the concept of the CSR and sustainable development in the marina business practice is a long term and complex process. In accordance with the current conditions of Croatian marina business, recommendations for undertaking of activities by which marinas can, in a more specific way and in greater detail, shape their operations in the CSR field are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3.

Recommendations to Croatian marinas for the CSR development

| <i>Marinas' activities</i> |
|---|
| <i>certify the Quality Management System (ISO 9001:2009) and the Environmental Management System (ISO 14001:2009), by which the monitoring of the quality level of the nautical and tourist services of a specific marina would be simplified, ensuring the control of impacts on the environment</i> |
| <i>start the CSR integration processes with methodologies, such as participation in applications for the CSR Index award, implementation of the ISO 26000 and similar</i> |
| <i>publish reports on the CSR, which can be available on marinas' web pages or printed on ecologically produced paper and use the GRI Guidelines for sustainability reporting</i> |
| <i>conduct research on impact of marina business on the environment, in order to avoid emergence of unsuitable locations with different facilities, non-adequate traffic solutions, disproportional tourist capacities in relation to realistic possibilities and other similar problems which can directly endanger some areas</i> |
| <i>ensure that marina users are well informed and educated about ecological systems and sensitivity of the area which surrounds them and motivate them to get familiar with that area and enjoy being there in a responsible manner</i> |
| <i>for marina staff, ensure and create as many as possible educational programmes, further education courses and various courses which relate to sustainable development and the CSR, to enable them to implement the acquired knowledge into marina business.</i> |
| <i>provide greater support to socially deprived and marginalized groups which are in a disadvantaged position regarding their access to employment</i> |
| <i>intensify dialogues and partnerships with the local community for the purposes of development of various programmes and initiation of interesting projects with mutual benefits</i> |
| <i>tend to develop long term and partner relationships with the suppliers, founded on mutual trust and consideration, as well as on an open conversation and information exchange</i> |
| <i>use the ethical codex in advertising by which the following elements are built into the marinas' marketing communications: application of the practice of truthfulness in advertising, not be-littling competitive companies and products, promotion of socially positive projects and consumer education on specific marina service and product characteristics which affect or may affect their health</i> |
| <i>introduce the codex of corporate management, whose fundamental principles should be: business transparency, clearly developed procedures for the work of the management and other marina services which make important decisions, avoidance of conflicts of interest, efficient internal control and effective responsibility system</i> |
| <i>prepare written policies which regulate the attitudes of marinas towards their competitors in order to avoid undermining of the free competition by means of corruption, unethical data collection and spreading of false information about their competitors and by other unfair forms of behavior by marinas</i> |
| <i>qualitatively shape and enrich the entire offer in marinas by various facilities, given that current, forever growing yachtsmen education considerably increases their expectations and a critical attitude towards the product and service quality provided, bringing the possibility of manipulation and covering up of shortcomings to the minimum</i> |

Source: Prepared by the authors.

It is important that marinas have the CSR principles integrated into all business segments and relationships towards all stakeholders. In that way, they demonstrate that, in business decision making, they do not take into account only the business activity economic profitability, but also their social and ecological responsibility, both in local and global plans.

6. CONCLUSION

Corporate social responsibility is a condition sine qua non for today and future competitiveness of marinas and nautical and tourist destinations in which they operate. Namely, by this paper it is confirmed that, in the strategy of marina business, all guidelines of social responsibility need to be implemented, as only with their emphasizing and constant adjustment and innovativeness is it possible to survive among competitive marinas in the market.

The contribution of this paper is visible through the conducted research results. A picture of the current position in Croatian marinas has been obtained, from which emanate problems within their business and the best directions for further development of the CSR.

The low percentage of marinas who responded to our invitation to complete the survey questionnaires points to insufficient integration of the CSR in Croatian marina business, as well as to their poor interest in the CSR evaluation. Additionally, implementation of such a practice in the marinas which completed the survey questionnaire is also very recent, leaving considerable room for improvement and progress, which will be manageable only in cooperation with a stimulating environment. According to the above, it was concluded that the work research hypothesis (H_1) is not rejected.

The first ancillary research hypothesis ($H_{1.1}$) is also not rejected as the largest percentage of answers, as well as the best results, were obtained from the questions in the section of the survey questionnaire which pertained to the marina environmental protection. Given that the comparative advantages in the development of the nautical tourism in Croatia's natural beauty, picturesque landscapes and preserved environment, the problem area of the environmental management is the CSR aspect which Croatian marinas understand best. Namely, marinas have realized that responsible management of natural areas and assets, i.e. nature and environment protection for the purposes of its preservation, represents an imperative in the business of all nautical harbours, including themselves.

Croatian marinas respect in a satisfactory measure the interests and needs of different stakeholders of the nautical and tourist destination, especially marina employees, local communities and boatmen, thus the second research ancillary hypothesis ($H_{1.2}$) is rejected. In the years to come, however, marina

business should be more directed towards all the key stakeholders, as through a two-way and partnership cooperation with them, marinas will not only responsibly influence their future business and realization of their business and desired positions, but they will also contribute with quality to the further development of their partners, to the boatmen's satisfaction, community prosperity and a better life for people.

Comparing all the benefits which the implementation of the CSR brings with the efforts and costs that the introduction and implementation of such a practice in marinas requires, it was concluded that the CSR is the correct choice for their future.

Further research of this topic area should point to the need to establish a dialogue and exchange opinions, raise the level of conscience and establish social frameworks within which corporate social responsibility in Croatia will become an essential occurrence and not an exception.

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Sara Klarić, mag. oec.

Viša stručna suradnica za društvene djelatnosti i EU projekte
Općina Funtana
E-mail: sara.klaric@funtana.hr

Dr. sc. Kristina Afrić Rakitovac

Docent
Fakultet ekonomije i turizma "Dr. Mijo Mirković"
Sveučilište Jurja Dobrile, Pula
E-mail: kafric@unipu.hr

Dr. sc. Klara Trošt Lesić

Znanstveni suradnik
Zavod za turizam
Institut za poljoprivredu i turizam Poreč
E-mail: klara.trost@iptpo.hr

DRUŠTVENO ODGOVORNO POSLOVANJE HRVATSKIH MARINA

Sažetak

Najvažniji poslovni subjekti nautičkog turizma su marine, kod kojih dugoročnost, konkurentnost i poslovna izvrsnost nisu jedine postavke na kojima se zasniva poslovanje. U suvremenom poslovnom svijetu sve veći značaj poprima i društveno odgovorno poslovanje (DOP). Ukupno se djelovanje marina zbog toga treba mjeriti na temelju njihovog doprinosa ekonomskom napretku, ekološkoj kvaliteti i društvenom kapitalu. U skladu sa spomenutim, cilj ovog rada bio je dati teorijski i praktični doprinos razumijevanju DOP-a marina, a svrha rada utvrditi ulogu DOP-a u postizanju konkurentnosti marina na nautičko-turističkom tržištu. S obzirom na relativno mali broj marina koje su dale svoje odgovore na anketne upitnike, istraživanje pokazuje nedostatnu integriranost DOP-a u poslovanje hrvatskih marina, kao i slabo zanimanje za evaluaciju po kriterijima DOP-a. Povrh toga, implementacija jedne takve prakse u promatranim marinama je također nešto što je tek nedavno uvedeno i što ostavlja dosta prostora za poboljšanja i napredak, a što će se jedino moći postići u suradnji sa stimilirajućim okruženjem. Implementacija DOP-a u poslovanju marina predstavlja veliki izazov, ali može rezultirati velikim pogodnostima za njihovu konkurentnost, imidž i suradnju s raznim dionicima.

Ključne riječi: održivi turizam, društveno odgovorno poslovanje, nautički turizam

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