

**ENTREPRENEURIAL LEARNING EXCHANGE INITIATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE
HOSPITALITY SMEs IN THE BALKAN-MEDITERRANEAN REGION**

Subsidy Contract No. BMP1/1.3/2616/2017

Company name: Theasis Igloo

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Country/region of operation: Greece/ Region of Epirus/Arta

Sustainability dimension: social, economic, environmental

Description of the enterprise/initiative:

The property is situated in Sigena, Ktistades, Arta, where nature meets history and tradition. The igloo houses are built with harmony and respect to the environment. They are situated at the foot of the mountain range Tzoumerka in a wild area that remains untouched by light pollution. This gives the opportunity to the visitors to use a 10 inch Sky Watcher and observe the stars, planets and celestial bodies in the sky.

Social/ community impact:

The igloo houses are built with harmony and respect to the environment bringing the guests closer to nature and the history of the areas since it was influenced by the old round agricultural houses situated on the mountain range of Tzoumerka.

Stakeholders: Guests

Approach applied:

Eco-tourism approach, energy efficiency

Innovation applied:

For the construction of the igloo houses, natural materials have been used, such as wood and stone, which can be found in the region, Arta and throughout Epirus. The guests have the opportunity to observe the moon, the planets and various other celestial bodies with the help of the 10 inch Sky Watcher telescope. The houses are round and pyramidal for the appropriate flow of energy in the space while they have a glass roof that overlooks the sky.

Sustainability of the business model:

The eco-touristic model adopted by the hotel can help improving competitiveness and financial benefits (cost savings, marketing), competitive advantage, legitimation (complying with regulations, regulatory or social compliance), environmental responsibility and enhancing image (Margaryan & Stensland, 2017; Geerts, 2014).

Key success factors: Firm infrastructure and management, development of innovative activities, relations with relevant groups (including connection with local communities and resources), management of tourist attitude and behaviour, capacity for marketing activities (Lee et al, 2011).

Challenges and problems: Usual challenges are the difficulty in accessing investment capital due to seasonality, lack of development in human resources, slow response to technological change and offering more competitive products on a global market (Prince & Ioannides, 2017). Additionally, the examination of the travel experiences and the satisfaction of ecotourists is crucial for the long-term success as ecotourists usually base their preference to their personal experiences (Catsellanos-Verdugo et al, 2016).

Year when the enterprise was created: 2008

References (web-site, intent links, video, etc.):

<http://www.theasis-igloo.com/en/>

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