

CROATIA CONSIDERS NEW ENVIRONMENTAL TOURIST TAX



Next year, Croatia may introduce a new environmental tourist tax. This is in response to the negative impact of tourism on the local ecosystem. The tax revenue would be utilized for environmental protection efforts.

Preserving Croatia's natural beauty through balanced taxation that would not be overly burdensome for the Eastern European country is a step towards preserving Croatia's renowned crystal-clear waters and stunning coastlines.

Despite its small population of 4 million, **Croatia welcomed 20.6 million tourists last year, a 9% increase from the previous year.** While this influx benefits the local economy, it also threatens the environment and the population, with Croatian homes often overcrowded during the high season.

Croatia's infrastructure is not well-equipped to handle the large number of tourists visiting the country. One of the main problems is that the pipes are not connected to the public system, causing wastewater to be discharged directly into the sea. Neven Iveša, a professor and researcher in marine biology at the University of Pula, explains that some popular tourist towns on the west coast of Istria, such as Poreč and Rovinj, are working on upgrading their pipes to improve wastewater management.

However, this modernization effort is deemed "not sustainable" by the researcher, as it negatively impacts the quality of the Adriatic Sea's waters and harms marine flora. Additionally, nautical tourism contributes to detrimental effects on the local fauna.

At the local level, there are increasing initiatives to combat overtourism, that does not adequately respect the environment. For example, in August 2023, Kelly Craighead, CEO of CLIA, and Mato Franković, **the city's mayor, signed a regulation on cruises in Dubrovnik.**

In addition, the "Respect the City" campaign is being implemented in Dubrovnik. This management project includes a series of short-, medium-, and long-term measures and activities aimed at positioning Dubrovnik as a leader in sustainable and responsible tourism in the Mediterranean, as stated on the official website."

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