

12th Edition of the AIC Forum

It will be held in Brindisi (6th-8th June 2012) in collaboration with the Brindisi Chamber of Commerce

The 12th Edition of the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce, organised in collaboration with the Brindisi Chamber of Commerce, will take place from 6th to 8th June 2012 in Brindisi. The event will be organized on three days. The opening day of the forum will be devoted to the meeting of the Forum organs, the meeting of the workgroup on EU project management and the welcoming of guests. The second day will see the meetings of the AIC Forum thematic workgroups (environment, agriculture, women's entrepreneurship, fisheries and aquaculture, transport and tourism), while the third day will be devoted to the main topic of the event, i.e. the role played by the AIC Forum in the establishment of the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion. The event will see the participation of representatives from European institutions, Italian and foreign partnership networks, the Permanent Secretariat for the Adriatic Ionian Initiative, local institutions in addition to representatives from bodies, associations and consultants on the matters of the Forum workgroups.



View of the city of Brindisi (copyright: Damiano Tasco Reporter)

Project management activity: state of the art

A highly dynamic 2011 for the AIC Forum project management activities thanks to the work of the Workgroup on EU Project Management

2011 has drawn to a close and it is now possible to take stock of the situation concerning the projects financed with European, national and regional funds and involving the Forum and its members as partners. It should be first pointed out that the vast majority of the projects implemented in 2011 is the result of the work of the Workgroup on EU Project Management, which was set up in 2010 following the decision by the AIC Forum Board of Governors, which precisely aimed at achieving coordination of the project management activity of the chambers member to the network and directly involving the AIC Forum in the projects as partner or lead partner, whenever possible. The Workgroup on EU Project Management takes advantage of the professional skills of some member chambers that are particularly expert and active

in the field of EU project management with specific reference to territorial cooperation programmes, as well as of the active collaboration with some minor chambers, which pay special attention to the search for funds and support programmes for countries that are candidates and potential candidates to access the EU. The collaboration established between the AIC Forum and other networks in 2011 has also proven to be particularly significant. The AIC Forum had signed agreement protocols in the past and institutional relations were already established with them (e.g. Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities and Towns, ASCAME, INCE – Central European Initiative, NECSTour), yet only since 2011 have these relations been effectively turned into tangible projects and real opportunities to obtain extraordinary financial resources from the European Union. *follows on page 5*



PERMANENT SECRETARIAT

Adriatic and Ionian Initiative

Workshop on SMEs “Sharing the best practises and experiences on financing SMEs in the all states”

Belgrade, Serbia, was the venue of an important meeting between representatives of the Ministries for Foreign Affairs of the countries member to the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Slovenia, Serbia and Montenegro) on 3rd October 2011. Participants discussed the best practices and experiences for financing SMEs in All countries.

The Forum of the Chambers of Commerce of the Adriatic and Ionian Area was invited to participate and was present with a representative of the Croatian Chamber of the Economy. Participants were illustrated the activities carried out by the Adriatic and Ionian International Court and the benefits that resorting to this prestigious body will bring to entrepreneurs acting in the

Adriatic and Ionian area.

On 4th October the Ministry for the economy and regional development furthermore organized a conference in Belgrade on the same topic.

The presence of a delegation of the AIC Forum in Belgrade on 3rd October created the occasion of a meeting between the AIC Forum President Ms. Jadranka Radovanić and the President of the Serbian Chamber of Commerce Mr. Miloš Bugarin. The Chamber of Commerce of Serbia has recently joined the AIC Forum as supporting member and submitted the Board of Governors some proposals of collaborations on initiatives to be carried out in Serbia in the course of 2012. The meeting enabled the two presidents to focus on possible future forms of collaboration.

Views of Belgrade (Serbia)



Open Days 2011

Brussels:
the AIC Forum participates
to the event on Adriatic-
Ionian networks

The President of the Forum of the Chambers of Commerce of the Adriatic and Ionian Area Ms. Jadranka Radovanić took part in the event “Adriatic-Ionian networks: Universities and UNIADRION, Adriatic Euroregion and SeeNet, SMEs and TISAF, enlargement and ALDA”, which was organised by the Marche Region within the framework of the Open Days and took place on 12th October in Brussels. This was the occasion for the President to highlight the AIC Forum project management activity together with partners from the area, as well as the role that the Association will be called upon to play within the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion that is about to be set up.



Meeting with Ambassador Fabio Pigliapoco

A meeting between the President of the Ancona Chamber of Commerce Mr. Rodolfo Giampieri and the Secretary General of the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative Mr. Fabio Pigliapoco was organised on 6th October 2011. The meeting focussed on the strategy concerning the Adriatic and Ionian Macroregion, which is about to be set up, as well as on the prospects of the Forum in this context. The hope is that the project of the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion contributes to the tangible application of the concept of territorial cohesion, which should be implemented in the topics of environmental protection and sustainable economic. In this respect, the Forum proposes itself as a useful tool to support the European Union in the process of integration of the entire Adriatic-Ionian basin.

6th Congress Women Enterprises

More than 100 women enterprises of the Adriatic and Ionian area promote "networking" in Split



The participants to the 6th women enterprises congress (Split 3rd and 4th november 2011)

A few weeks after the positive opinion expressed on the strategy for the setting up of the future Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion by the European Committee of the Regions in Brussels, on 3rd and 4th November 2011 the 6th Congress of the Women's Enterprises of the Adriatic and Ionian Area took place in Split (Croatia). The Congress was organised by the Chamber of the Economy in collaboration with the Forum of the Chambers of Commerce of the Adriatic and Ionian Area through its Secretariat and the Workgroup on Women Entrepreneurship. The event, which saw the participation of over one hundred enterprises run by women from Adriatic Ionian countries and was granted the patronage of the President of the Republic of Croatia Mr. Ivo Josipović, was organised also thanks to the support of the Ministry for the Economy, Employment and Enterprises of Croatia and with the collaboration of the Association of Croatian Women Entrepreneurs "Krug". The exchange of ideas and opinions and the proposals put forward during the Congress confirmed the need, which has now become more pressing than ever, for women enterprises to resort to networking. This tool is indeed flexible, up with the times and above all

a major driving engine for the processes of development and growth involving women. This alternative working method represents a transnational network that goes beyond territories and frontiers, thereby guaranteeing individual competences and specificities. As the AIC Forum President Jadranka Radovanić pointed out, the AIC Forum is the operational arm of the Macroregion, which will be hopefully recognized as soon as possible, on economic issues related to the development of small and medium-sized enterprises that constitute the backbone of the European economy. In this respect, networking, i.e. the topic of the congress, acquires a particularly significant value when synergy and networking become the essential practices for a new transnational governance of the Adriatic-Ionian basin. Women entrepreneurs stressed once again the need to continue with this working method in the organization of future congresses to promote the identification and exchange of best practices, networking, as well as the promotion and strengthening of role of women in the entrepreneurial world. The venue of the 2012 Congress will be selected based on the proposals to be submitted to the AIC Forum Secretariat.

Conference "Invest for the future: women driving economic growth".



Within the framework of the Workgroup for Women Entrepreneurship, from 24th to 26th October the Workgroup President participated in the conference under the title "Invest for the future: Women Driving Economic Growth", which was organized in Zagreb by the US State Department in collaboration with the Zagreb School of Economics and Management. The conference, which focussed on dialogue and was organized in interactive sessions for women entrepreneurs, aimed at improving women's practical abilities to gain better access to the markets, networks, financial services, technology and training. Furthermore, several speakers representing institutions present at the conference presented women entrepreneurs from South-East Europe with innovative strategies to reinforce their participation and their contribution to the growth and development of the area. During the conference, the AIC Forum President took the opportunity to illustrate the activities carried out by the Workgroup for Women Entrepreneurship for the development of women enterprises in the Adriatic-Ionian area. The President furthermore participated in the annual meeting of the Barcelona based Association of Organizations of Mediterranean Businesswomen, which was held from 21st to 25th November in Barcelona. The meeting was an opportunity to exchange views and ideas with several women entrepreneurs and institutional representatives from the Mediterranean area.



13th edition of the Forum of Adriatic and Ionian cities

The 13th plenary session of the Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities, which was held in Ancona at the Ridotto of the Muse Theatre, ended on 16th December 2011. The Marche Region paved the way towards the creation of the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion, which is considered an innovative way to promote and organize territorial cooperation at inter-regional and transnational level, thereby providing for a rational use of financial resources and enhancing the role and potential of regional bodies and local communities. Along this pathway, the 2011 edition was focussed on the "Role and contribution by local governments and networks towards the setting up of the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion".

"The AIC Forum: availability to contribute to the realization of projects for the Macroregion creation."

The AIC Forum provided its contribution to the event in its capacity of major player active in the area. A first contribution was given by Ms. Luciana Frontini on 14th December and a second speech was held by the President of the Ancona Chamber of Commerce and Vice-President of the AIC Forum Mr. Rodolfo Giamperi on the role of the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion within the European Union on 15th December 2011. The AIC Forum expressed its willingness to contribute to the implementation of joint projects and initiatives to promote forms of enhanced and convinced collaboration and above all to make the communities concerned by the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion aware of the many undiscussed benefits that can be derived from its establishment. Alongside with the works of the institutional representatives, the 1st Forum of the youth and schools from both shores was also held.



Network of European Regions for
a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism

NECSTouR

AIC Forum at 9th ed. of Euromeeting

New opportunities for the tourist promotion
of the Adriatic and Ionian area



Florence: Old Bridge

On 14th December 2011 the secretary of the Workgroup for Tourism, acting on behalf of the Forum of the Chambers of Commerce of the Adriatic and Ionian Area, participated in the 9th edition of Euromeeting in Florence (Italy).

This is the annual appointment organized by the Tuscan Region in collaboration with the Necstour network devoted to the regional policies to be implemented for sustainable and competitive European tourism. During the meeting, Ms Francesca Tudini, Head of Unit for Tourism Policy Development of the DG Enterprises of the European Commission, illustrated in a video-message the current and future guidelines of the European tourism policy, thereby focussing on both the calls for proposals that will be published in 2012 and on the opportunities to identify new European cultural routes.

The Florence meeting was furthermo-

re the occasion for the AIC Forum to establish new collaborations in 2012, specifically the future collaboration with the Odyssey network dealing with the sustainable development of forms of tourism concerning ports, and with the partners meeting with subjects, which are potentially interested in applying for the call for proposals on cultural routes that the European Union is expected to publish in 2012.

Within this context, the AIC Forum will specifically have the chance to apply as a network to identify a cultural route in the Adriatic-Ionian area, thereby promoting a crossborder theme-specific tourist product as a useful tool for the development of sustainable competitive tourism, as identified by the Council of Europe in its study presented on 28th June 2011 in Brussels under the title: "Impact of European Cultural Routes on SMEs' innovation and competitiveness".

FOR INFORMATION AND FURTHER DETAILS ON PRESENTED PROJECTS CONTACT WORKGROUP ON EU PROJECT MANAGEMENT

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AdrionTour Project

Concluded the project's activities in 2011: important gained results and outputs



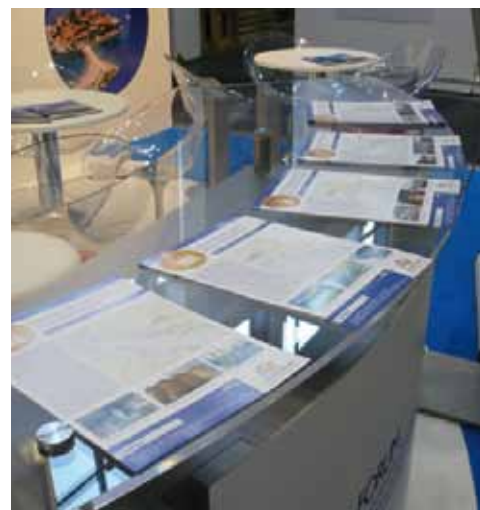
Above: booth of AIC Forum's Tourism Workgroup at ITB Berlin Fair, 10th-14th March 2010

On the right: promotional material on Adrion's tourist packages

Below: AdrionTour's seminar at Podgorica (January 2009, Montenegro)

All AIC Forum members should be informed of the fact that the ADRION Tour project, co-financed by the Marche Region within the framework of the Marche Regional Law no. 9/2002, was finalized in 2011. The initiative saw the operational involvement of the AIC Forum acting as project partner, as well as of many of its member chambers. In spite of the limited budget available for this initiative, some of the main results obtained thanks to the engagement of all partners and the Lead Partner (Ancona Chamber of Commerce) are worth mentioning:

- participation in the ITB International tourism fair in Berlin (10th-14th March 2010);
- organization of 3 training courses for tourist operators in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro and Albania (24th-31st January 2010);
- creation of 10 integrated multicountry tourist packages;
- creation of a promotional brochure of the ADRION brand;
- organization of 1 educational tour involving 2 representatives of renowned international trade magazines and 1 representative of the European network for sustainable tourism (NECSTouR) (23rd-28th February 2011).



Ongoing Projects



Adriatic economic cluster club (Code: 189/09)

This 36-month-long project is co-financed within the framework of the IPA CBC Crossborder Adriatic community programme and was started on 1st March 2011. Although the AIC Forum is not directly involved in the management of the activities and its contribution is only indirectly limited to the dissemination and diffusion of the project main results, several members to the AIC Forum participate as partners.

"The projects supports the creation of clusters within shipbuilding and boating sectors".

The project concerns the development of the cluster concept in the Adriatic-Ionian area, with special attention to the boating and shipbuilding sectors. AIC Forum members involved in the project as partners include Unioncamere Veneto (acting as Lead Partner), the Ancona Chamber of Commerce, the Campobasso Chamber of Commerce, the Brindisi Chamber of Commerce, the Rijeka Chamber of the Economy (Croatia) and the Tirana Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Albania). The initiative was promoted by Unioncamere Veneto and was started also thanks to the coordination of all partners involved, which is to be attributed to the support provided by the Italian national Unioncamere as well as by the AIC Forum. The project is aiming to support creation or reinforcement of clusters in nautical sector and shipbuilding industry. B to B and B to Credit meetings, participation to exhibitions and market research are the most important activities planned.

The tourist supply chain: cooperation among Emilia Romagna and Marche regions, Albania, Croazia and Montenegro

This 18-month-long project is coordinated by the Special Agency of the Modena Chamber of Commerce Promec and was finally approved by the Ministry for Economic Development through the national Unioncamere within the framework of Italian law no. 84/2001 in 2011. The AIC Forum participates as partner. The project intends to promote an exchange of best practices for the creation of first quality tourist pathways aimed at supporting the growth of tourist flows in low season periods. On 17th October 2011 a first coordination meeting was held in Rome between Unioncamere and the Italian Ministry to discuss the start of the approved proposals. Besides the AIC Forum, the project directly involves also other chambers member to the association: the Rijeka Chamber of the Economy (Croatia), the Montenegro Chamber of the Economy (Montenegro) and the Durres Chamber of Commerce (Albania). The first project activities will be carried out in 2012, starting from the initiative kick-off meeting scheduled for the first quarter of the 2012.

"The project intends to promote the exchange of best practices for the creation of first quality tourist pathways aimed at supporting the growth of tourists flows in low season periods".

Clusters and networks of SMEs for the development of the food and fish supply chains

This 18-month-long initiative is promoted by the Fermo Chamber of Commerce (Italy) and was finally approved by the Ministry for Economic Development through the national Unioncamere within the framework of Italian law no. 84/2001.

The project intend to promote agreements of technical-productive and commercial collaboration and joint-ventures between SMEs from the Marche region and SMEs from countries of Eastern Adriatic sea active in the fish and food supply chain.

The AIC Forum is not directly involved, however the following member chambers are participating as project partners thanks to the coordination of the Workgroup on EU Project Management: Ancona Chamber of Commerce, Croatian Chamber of the Economy of Dubrovnik (Croatia) and Montenegro Chamber of the Economy (Montenegro). The project intends to promote agreements of technical-productive and commercial collaboration and joint ventures between SMEs from the Marche Region and SMEs from target countries active in the food and fish supply chain through technical assistance and training activities aimed at favouring and speeding up the process for the project addressees to adapt to European norms and quality standards for produce and food and agricultural products given the future full membership of these countries in the EU. The project first activities will start in 2012.

New Projects

2011 was characterized by a high degree of dynamism in terms of new projects financed with resources from various European financing programmes. The Workgroup on EU Project Management provided for ideal coordination and managed to optimize and guide the project resources needed for initiatives that have been jointly conceived and drafted at the level of the various chambers of commerce without any waste or duplication of efforts. Many of these projects are still awaiting application approval, yet it should be undoubtedly highlighted that a major effort has been made to achieve coordination, both within the network and with other networks, like ASCAME, NECSTouR, the Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities and Towns and INCE, and that a large number of proposals has been submitted. It is furthermore worth highlighting that the visibility of the AIC Forum has increased, also thanks to the projects carried out so far and thanks to the coordination activity of the Workgroup on EU Project Management. In some cases, this has led to the request to participate in projects as associate partner or the request by various institutions and bodies to collaborate on already financed projects, within which the AIC Forum might be called upon to act for the implementation of some specific actions foreseen by the same projects.



IPA CBC Programme

(Second call deadline 02/11/2011)

BRAND - Business relations for Adriatic koiné as a New Touristic Destination

The project was presented by the Istria Region acting as Lead Partner and sees the direct participation of the AIC Forum as partner together with other chambers of commerce member to the network. The initiative, which is indeed a re-modulation of the project presented in October and financed with resources made available within the 1st Call of the IPA CBC Programme, aims at promoting the Adriatic-Ionian tourist area as a single destination, thereby

promoting the common historical and cultural heritage identified in the Adriatic Koinè. Project partners include Unioncamere Veneto, the Teramo Chamber of Commerce, the Croatian Chamber of the Economy of Split, the Montenegro Chamber of the Economy and the Chamber of the Economy of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The project is currently being assessed.

NACE - Network of Adriatic Creative Enterprises

The project was presented by the Marche Region sees the participation of the AIC Forum acting as project partner. The aim of the initiative is to promote creative enterprises of the Adriatic-Ionian Area. Partners include the Chamber of Commerce of Durres (Albania), which is a member to the AIC Forum. The project is currently being assessed.

WELLFOOD - Promoting Food Innovation for Wellness in Adriatic

The project was presented by the Province of Forlì-Cesena and sees the participation of the AIC Forum acting as project associate partner. The initiative aims at promoting the innovative ability of Adriatic regions in the agrofood sector, thereby fostering relations between producer companies and research centres. Partners involve the Chamber of Commerce of Montenegro (Montenegro). The project is currently being assessed.

PRESA - Promoting Energy economy and Saving in the Adriatic

The project was presented by the Campobasso Chamber of Commerce acting as Lead Partner. It involves the Ancona, Trieste and Ravenna Chambers of Commerce, the Croatian Chamber of the Economy and the Chamber of Commerce of Serbia. The presentation of the project was possible thanks to the coordination of the Italian national Unioncamere, as well as to the relations between the various project partners, some of them actively participating in the activities of the

Workgroup on EU Project Management of the AIC Forum. This initiative intends to promote the use of renewable sources of energy between small and medium-sized enterprises through measures of awareness-raising and technical support on the use of the incentives available in each single Adriatic country. The project is currently being assessed.

DG Enterprises & Industry call

Trans-national promotion of thematic tourist products as means of sustainable tourism development

ARMACHULE - Arsenal and maritime Cultural Heritage: landmarks of sustainable tourism

The project was presented by the Veneto Region on 1st July 2011 and intends to create and subsequently a virtual network of arsenals in the Adriatic area. The AIC Forum is involved as a partner thanks to the activities carried out by the Workgroup for tourism. The project is currently being assessed.

Trans-national cooperation projects in European cultural routes

TECH-TOUR - Technology and Tourism: augmented reality for the promotion of the Roman and Bizantine itineraries

The project was presented by the Euro Info Centre of Veneto (acting as Lead Partner) on 5th October 2011 and aims at implementing a map of two cultural routes linking Venice to Aquileia and Croatia to Slovenia based on the historical and cultural Roman and Byzantine legacy applying the innovative mapping technologies. The AIC Forum is participating as a partner thanks to the activities carried out within the thematic Workgroup for tourism. The project is currently being assessed.

New Projects



ENPI CBC MED Programme

MEDDIET - Mediterranean Diet and enhancement of traditional products

This strategic project is coordinated by the Italian Chamber of Commerce network of Ascame. This project sees the participation of the Italian partner AIC Forum as "adjoining region". If the project is approved, the participation of the AIC Forum will be limited to the dissemination of the project results and the exchange of good practices. This is nonetheless a first

"The project aims at raising awareness of schools and local bodies on the advantages of a Mediterranean diet".

operational collaboration on European projects between the AIC Forum and ASCAME. The project aims at raising the awareness of schools and local bodies on the advantages that can be obtained with the Mediterranean diet, especially for young consumers. The project will furthermore support chambers of commerce and professional associations to help business players in the promotion of the Mediterranean diet. Project partners include Italian national Unioncamere (acting as Lead Partner), Cagliari Chamber of Commerce, Association of Olive Oil Cities and Towns, Mediterranean Diet Foundation (Spain), Tunis Chamber of Commerce (Tunisia), "Streets of olive trees" (Greece), Messina Chamber of Commerce (Greece), AEMO (Spain), ASCAME, CEEBA (Egypt); INRAT (Tunisia), Beirut Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Agriculture and Handicraft (Lebanon). The project is currently being assessed.



South East Europe Programme (SEE)

BARSnet - Ballast Waters Network

The project was presented on 2nd November 2011 by the Marche Region and sees the participation of the AIC Forum acting as project associate partner. Project partners include Ancona office of the National Research Council (CNR), Trieste Oceanographic Institute, Italian National Institute for environmental protection of Rome, National Biology Institute (Slovenia), National Research and Development Institute (Romania), Oceanographic Institute (Bulgaria), Greek Centre for Marine Research of Athens (Greece), Split Oceanographic Institute, Institute for Maritime Research of the University of Dubrovnik (Croatia), Centre for Maritime Research of Rovinj (Croatia), Laboratory of Aquaculture and Fisheries (Albania), School of Sciences of Mostar (Bosnia-Herzegovina), Institute for Marine Biology of Kotor (Montenegro). The project is currently being assessed.

CORE - Cultural Business Energies

The project was presented on 25-11-2011 by the Ancona Chamber of Commerce. Thanks to the coordination activity of the Workgroup on EU Project Management it involves several chambers of commerce member to the Forum, specifically: Chamber of Economy of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Chamber of Economy of Montenegro and national Chamber of Commerce of Serbia. The aim of the project is to support the establishment of new enterprises or strengthen enterprises in their start-up phase, which are active in the creative industry and the production of goods and/or services of cultural nature or related to the cultural sphere. The project is currently being assessed.

Possible collaborations

MACHER – Material Culture Heritage of European Renaissance

The project was presented within the framework of the 2007/2013 CULTURA Programme and it includes the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Cities as one of its partners. In view of a mutual coordination at networks level, if the project is approved, the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce could act as a subject that implements activities which schedule involvement of enterprises that are potentially interested in the protection, recovery and promotion of cultural heritage. The initiative is perfectly in line with the aims and the objectives of the AIC Forum thematic Workgroup for tourism and would be a first example of collaboration between the two networks on projects financed by the EU. The project is currently being assessed.



ARCHEO.S

The AIC Forum received a collaboration proposal by the partners of the ARCHEO.S. project.

The Public Theatre of Apulia acting as Lead Partner proposed a collaboration to the AIC Forum on some specific activities: identifying priority topics related to the artistic and cultural assets of the areas concerned by the project, which can be developed through ad hoc parallel initiatives within the programme of cultural events; providing contents suitable to integrate the Governance Plan, which relates to the setting up of an ideal structure for the management and organization of cultural assets; the planning of a Master Course on EU Project Management on the topics dealt with by the project.

The partnership of this project include several municipalities (Municipality of Fier, Albania; Municipality of Pazin, Croatia; Municipality of Igoumenitsa, Greece). The project activities will be developed in the course of 2012.

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