

BALATON, THE NATURAL REGION

Balaton Regional Development Strategy, 2007 - 2013
Balaton Flagship Programme (Balaton in the whole year)



BALATON
FEJLESZTÉSI TANÁCS

NATURALLY BALATON!

BALATON DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

VISION: TO MAKE LAKE BALATON AND THE SURROUNDING REGION A UNIQUELY ATTRACTIVE AREA OF EUROPE THAT PROVIDES OUTSTANDING CONDITIONS FOR LIVING, WORKING AND LEISURE BY EMPHASISING ITS UNIQUE NATURAL BEAUTY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE.

The Lake Balaton Region aims to become a sample of naturalness with high standards of living for the Central-European Regions. Building on the unique natural and cultural features of the lake and its surrounding landscape, the region offers European standard, exclusive, attractive living, recreational and working environment.

How should the region of future look like?

The Lake Balaton region should have:

- High quality natural values and constructed environment
- Geographical, social and cultural unity built on regional and sub-regional cooperation
- Defined regional identity
- Outstanding European quality of life for its permanent and temporary residents
- Competitive economy built on natural and scenic features and traditions (“Balaton Trademark”)
- Significant domestic and foreign tourism together with sustained environmental values
- Equal chance for employment for all levels of the society
- No significant territorial, social or economic differences within the region
- High quality health and welfare services and a bustling cultural life.

How can we achieve these goals?

In order to achieve the goals of the vision, the region should abandon a development strategy built on the exclusiveness of tourism and should put quality of life as the focal point of development. In this way, specific areas of the regional economy and society may be assisted that can contribute to the stabilization of the regional economy and help the renewal of tourism, the pivotal sector of the economy. On pursuing the goals, the carrying capacity of the environment (as the upper limit in meeting demands), should be taken into consideration.

An overall goal of regional development is the improvement of the quality of life of the population through improvement of the competitiveness of the Lake Balaton Region without compromising the principles of sustainable development. Achievement of specific goals, which are pursued through development directions, contributes to the achievement of the overall goal. Development goals and directions are built on each other so that the individual developments help the achievement of the goals in a synergistic way.

Specific goals of the development strategy are as follows:

To improve the competitiveness of enterprises

1. Increasing employment and improving the income producing capacity of enterprises

To this end,

- Improvement of year-round employment of permanent residents, renewal of tourism and triggering the modernization of enterprises, and
- Increasing tourism related incomes, and spatial and temporal “spreading” of tourism within the region

should be achieved.

To improve the quality of the environment

2. Restoration of natural values and development of the economy built on these values, as well as the improvement of the built environment

To improve territorial and social cohesion

3. Increasing of employment and development of the economy, particularly tourism in the background communities.
4. Promotion of the cooperation between regional stakeholders (municipal governments, institutions and NGOs) and strengthening the regional identity.

Development directions of the development program of the Lake Balaton Region for the 2007 – 2013 period are as follows:

1. Diversification of the economic structure to strengthen existing enterprises by innovation-oriented development and to establish new enterprises that can increase the number of the permanently employed people. To this end, competitiveness of enterprises building on special local potential, preserving natural values, and particularly those engaged in agricultural and food processing business should be improved and the business environment should be developed. In order to keep people of higher education in the region, and to improve the competitiveness of the region it is important to develop knowledge-based enterprises and promotion of their cooperation with institutions of higher education, research and development in the region.

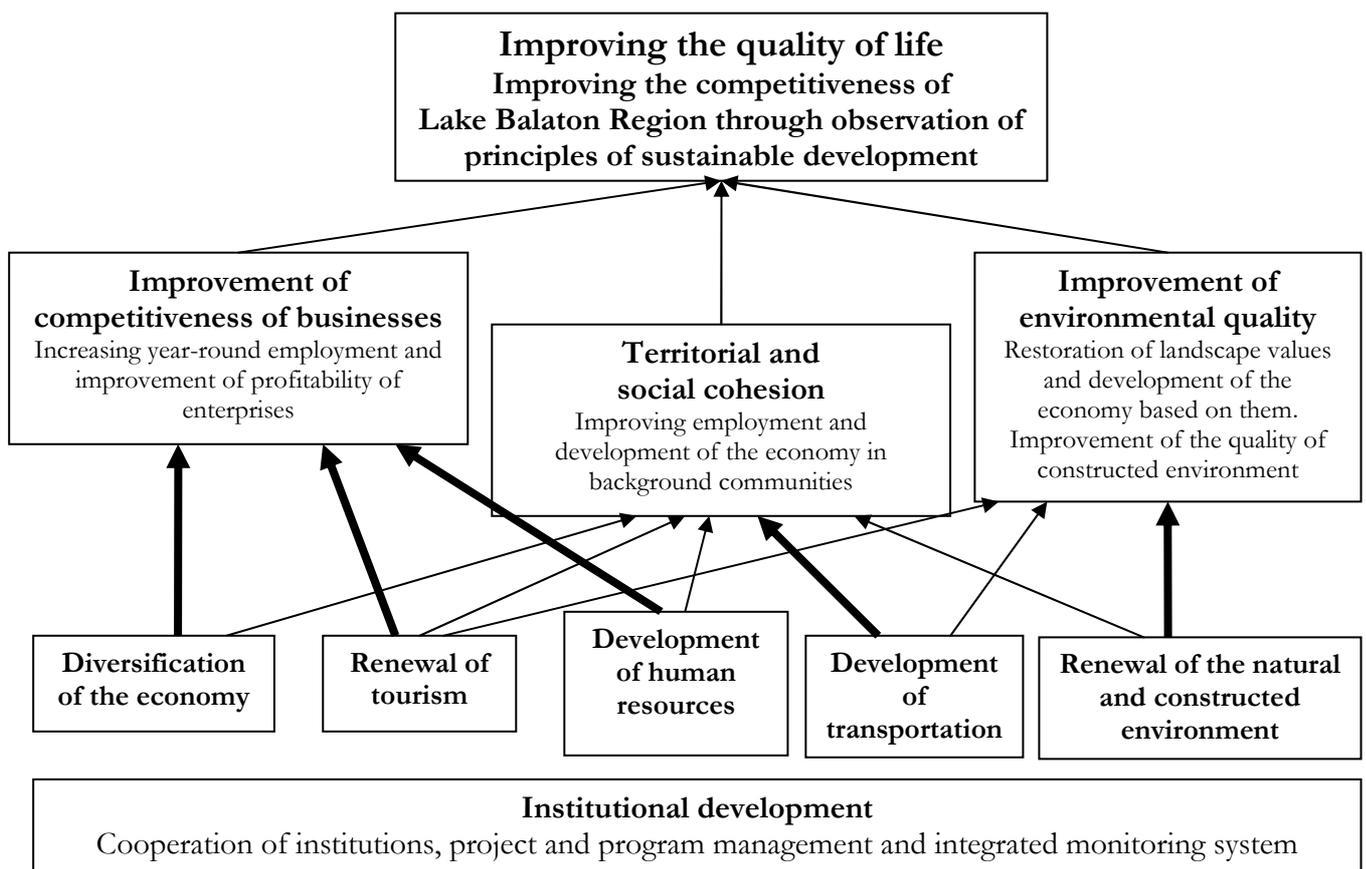
2. Development of tourism and creation of a sustainable and competitive tourism industry that forms a solid basis for the strengthening of social, economic and territorial cohesion of the Lake Balaton Region. For this purpose, improving competitiveness, creation of a unique regional image, creation of the Balaton Trademark, specific development of exclusive tourism, renewal of tourism attractions and building of new ones and improvement of the quality of services should contribute to the temporal and spatial expansion of the tourist season, to the expansion of year-round employment and last, but not least, to sustainable utilization of natural and cultural resources.

3. Renewal of human resources in the key sectors of the economy including, tourism through acquiring higher level knowledge adapted to market demands to improve the competitiveness of enterprises. Expand the sphere of potential employees through employment programs for long-term unemployed and inactive people. Improve the adaptation capacity of local actors through civil initiatives and regional cooperation.

4. Development of transportation, i.e. improvement of the road and railway accessibility of the northern shore and improvement of the quality of air accessibility, to make the region a more attractive destination both for tourists and businesses. In addition, reduction of the environmental load from road traffic by reducing traffic congestion and improvement of the quality of the means of public transportation.

5. Preservation of natural, scenic values and cultural heritage. Improvement of the ecological conditions of the lake, development of the environmental infrastructure, preservation and restoration of natural and built values and utilization of renewable energy resources in order to preserve the outstanding environmental quality of the region and offer an attractive environment not only to the residents of the region but to the actors in the economy as well.

6. Encouragement of regional cooperation and improvement of the capacity and efficiency of the institutions and organizations playing key roles in the development of the region are particularly important in the implementation of programs and projects based on the strategic plan of the region and, eventually, in the more complete achievement of the goals of the strategic plan.



The tool to reach these objectives is the Lake Balaton Flag Ship Programme.

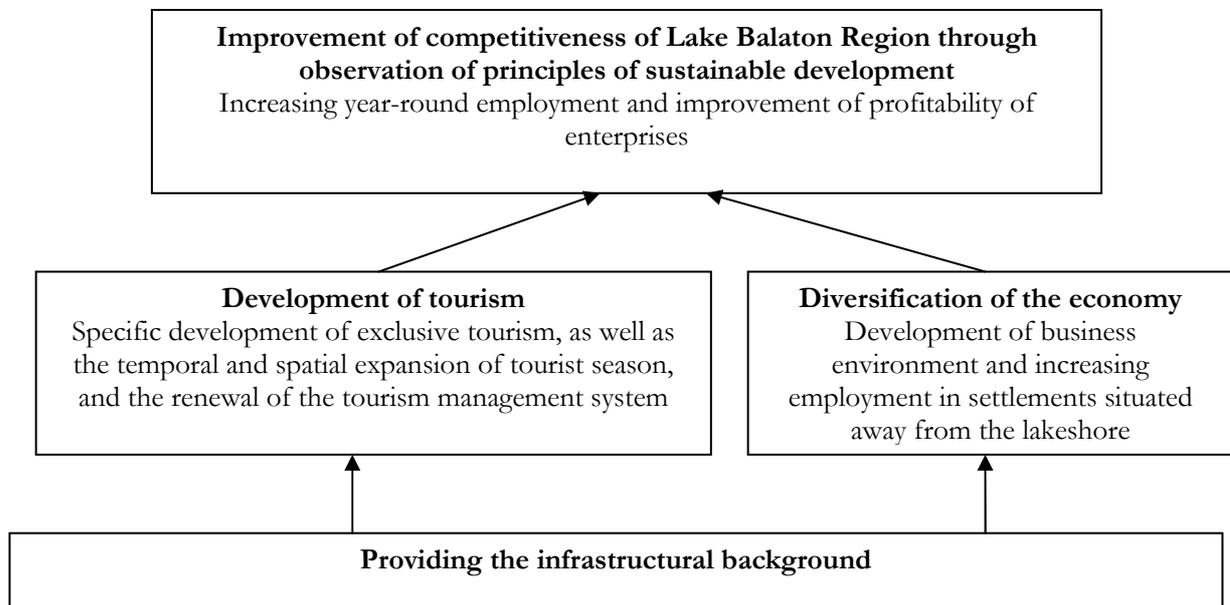
LAKE BALATON FLAG SHIP PROGRAMME

1. THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE PROGRAMME

Vision for the future: *Lake Balaton Region aims to become a sample of naturalness and economic environment with high standards of living for the Central-European Regions.*

Naturally, Lake Balaton! Building on the unique natural and cultural features of the lake and its surrounding landscape, the region offers European standard, exclusive, attractive living, recreational and working environment.

The main objectives:



2. PROGRAMME CONTENTS

The activities listed below are disposed of a separate project-description and an underlying study, or a description appropriate for the requirements of the action plan subsidy proceedings.

I. Improvement of the competitiveness of tourism, and its temporal and spatial expansion

- I.1. **Renewal of the Tourism management system** – Development of the Lake Balaton tourism destination management system (approximately 30 organisations), coordination of the work of these organisations and assistance for tourism marketing
- I.2. **Renewal of tourism, development of tourism products** in accordance with the target groups' needs, improvement of services and supplementary lures on regional base
- **Unique, outstanding tourism features and spectacles.** Encouragement of the establishment of theme parks, adventure parks and other recreational centres (for example: the Helikon project in Keszthely and its surroundings, Siófok-Zamárdi – open-air theme park, and the modernisation of the Zánka Children and Youth Centre)
 - **Development of lake tourism:** development of beaches, improvement of fishing tourism, providing the infrastructural background for sailing and the description of the legacy and values of Lake Balaton
 - **Development of medical tourism related to thermal water** – especially the development of the range and the quality of the services of the existing spas. (for example: Hévíz, Zalakaros, Táska - Csiszta-bath, Tapolca medical-spa – thermal water and medical cave, Marcali, Balatonszemes, Balatonfüred)
 - **Development of tourism related to natural resources** – development of special programmes and establishments introducing the natural resources, improvement of horse and wine tourism, and development of programmes and institutions facilitating the active recreation (ecotourism, hiking, the ecotourism and hiking programmes of the microregions, horse tourism, biking tourism, wine tourism)
 - **Programmes: cultural, sport events, conferences**
- I.3. Modernisation and the development of the quality of the accommodations and tourism services

The development of the quality of the accommodations is crucial for the effective implementation of the product development formulated by this programme. Beside the 4* hotel capacity, the quality of the accommodation of the lower-category hotels must also be developed, and the dilapidated hotels must be renovated.

II. Diversification of the economy

- II.1. Since the improvement of business has an important role in the county, and it satisfies competitiveness needs generally free of regional peculiarities, hereinafter those development requirements will be introduced, which are related to the improvement of business environment. **Development of business infrastructure in order to start new business and luring them into the region**
- **Development of industrial zones, service centres, logistical centres**
 - **Modernisation of the local traditional markets**
 - **Development of incubator houses**
 - **Improvement of the entrepreneurial infrastructure** and services (for example scientific and technological parks)

- Activities for stimulating regional investments

II.2. Infrastructural developments of the competitiveness of field-, fish-, beast-, and forest management companies

II.3. Development of the technology of the traditional professions making „Lake Balaton products” and handicraft, improvement of the cooperation between the businesses, and the implementation of the quality-assurance system for “Lake Balaton” trademark

II.4. Incentive of the settlement of businesses providing cultural services

II.5. Encouragement of businesses

II.6. Management of the Lake Balaton Economic Forum in order to the stimulation of the cooperation between the businesses

II.7. Developments in order to stimulate the spread of the Information Society

II.8. Implementation of the Lake Balaton vocational training programme

II.9. Implementation of training programmes on voluntary base – in order to improve skills and qualification of the residents of the Lake Balaton Region

II.10. Continuation of the Lake Balaton Partnership Programme – which stimulates the communication between the business, institutions and NGO-s from different specialities (environmental protection, international cooperation)

II.11. Public service, and human infrastructural developments in the Lake Balaton Region

III. Infrastructural developments for stimulating the economy

III.1. Environmental and Nature protection

- Sewage diversion and treatment- South Balaton Project, special projects
- Water surface management in the inner and outer areas
- Implementation, restoration of filtration and regulation of the un-cared water flows
- Implementation of the Second Part of the Kis-Balaton Water Protection System based on an existing study
- Implementation of an integrated monitoring, information and decision-support system
- Restoration of the natural environment in the coastal-area of the Lake Balaton-based on rehabilitation studies: rehabilitation of habitat protection in the coastal green area, forestation, environmental-friendly forest management
- Exterminate mosquitoes and lymanthrea
- Restoration of the Sió-Channel – modernisation of the sluice gates, cleaning the water-course, providing the background for shipping
- Defence Programme of the Hévíz Spa
- Elimination of illegal landfills and damages caused by mining-activity

III.2. **Renewal of settlements**

- **Renewal of the centres, and other areas having traditional settlement structure**
– protection of the image and street profile, decrease the traffic, establishment of community squares especially in the most important settlements in respect of tourism
- Where it can be managed cost effectively, the public utilisation of the coastal-areas for touristical reasons, establishment of green areas – based on the rehabilitation study of the Lake Balaton
- Development of the inner roads of the settlements
- Protection of the high-shores that are liable to come-down
- **Implementation of a landscape and settlement rehabilitation fund** – in order to renew the recreational areas out-of use, and expand the green areas and ecological systems
- **Damage rehabilitation of the airport in Sármellék**

III.3. **Utilisation of the renewable energy sources.** Dissemination especially the communal use of biomass, bioethanol, biodiesel, geothermal energy, solar energy

III.4. **Development of the water transportation** – implementation of car ferry between Fonyód and Badacsony on the western shore, road infrastructure must be also implemented

III.5. **Development of the public transportation, especially the railway-transportation** – establishment of the Lake Balaton Transportation Association

III.6. **The following developments are important in respect of the approach of the region. The national infrastructure development programme funds these developments.**

- Widening the main roads, especially the roads 76, 82, 84 and the section between Székesfehérvár-Veszprém of the main road number 8
- Eliminating the narrow cross-sections on the most busiest roads (especially roads 71 and 73)
- Development of the airport and industrial park in Szentkirályszabadja mainly by private investments

III.7. **Stimulation of researches related to the water-quality, and the environmental, social and economic situation of the Lake Balaton**

III.8. **Improvement of the public order and security**