

WWF Blue Business Incubator on Lastovo – is a unique combination of small business that contributes to the protection of nature, and at the same time increases the quality of life of the local community. In this way, the World Organization for Nature Protection provides support to the local population in the development of business ideas, from the very beginning to, environmentally and socially responsible, but also economically sustainable business. WWF launched this initiative last year in cooperation with Vertigo Lab from France, the Lastovo Islands Nature Park, the Municipality of Lastovo, the Cooperative for Ethical Financing (ZEF) and the Intrepid Travel Group from Australia. Based on a public tender, a total of 21 business ideas from Lastovo were submitted for their place in the Blue Incubator, and based on a detailed analysis, the organizers decided to develop 7 projects. “WWF’s vision is the concept of nature protection based on the participation of the local community, which bases its economic development on the sustainable use of space and natural resources. In this way, we create the basic precondition for the local community to be the biggest advocate for the preservation of the environment in its own area, “says Fabijan-Hrvatin Peronja, leader of the initiative on behalf of WWF Adria.

At the moment, the Blue Incubator, through feasibility studies, business plans, direct logistical assistance and start-up capital investment, is developing 7 business ideas that include fishing tourism, organic farming, waste recovery and island solarization. The first company to recognize and support the value of sustainable development on the island in the direction of sustainable tourism and protected nature is our global partner VELUX, which in 2020 published its innovative Sustainability Strategy.

“We have agreed on a 20-year partnership with WWF and through joint projects we want to make up for our entire carbon dioxide emissions since its founding in 1941. We will also drastically reduce our future CO2 emissions, ask our suppliers to do the same, and hopefully encourage other companies to become completely carbon-neutral as well. In addition to global projects, we support the cooperation of WWF and the local community of Lastovo in the sustainable development and conservation of the island’s natural resources, “said Vojko Golmajer, Director of VELUX Croatia.

As early as 2021, the results of the first Blue Business Incubator are expected: final products and services that will be proof that nature conservation can go hand in hand with community development.

Source: [wwfadria.org](http://wwfadria.org)