

# Sustainable Wine Tourism Eco-systems through Co-opetition

## Ecosistemas de Enoturismo sustentáveis via Coopetição

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**Resumo** | O sistema de enoturismo, aqui definido como 'ecossistema de negócios', consiste em redes de organizações que se estendem por diversas escalas espaciais e setoriais, conectando vários tipos de atores que possuem valores, papéis, interesses, capacidades, práticas, recursos e ideias. Para atingir um desenvolvimento sustentável do território vitivinícola, mediante uma aposta no turismo, todos os *stakeholders* devem harmonizar os seus próprios objetivos de negócio com as necessidades de desenvolvimento do território, aplicando estratégias de criação de valor em redes de coopetição. Assim, as estratégias de coopetição no Turismo de Vinho são capazes de proporcionar aos *stakeholders* do Enoturismo a capacidade e as ferramentas para gerir os seus negócios com eficácia e eficiência; permitem orientações responsáveis e sustentáveis com base no contexto e necessidades locais; promovem experiências/ produtos e serviços turísticos de qualidade que encorajem abordagens responsáveis e colaborativas entre todos os atores; ajudam a definir projetos prioritários para o desenvolvimento de um Enoturismo inovador e competitivo e potenciam oportunidades estratégicas para o crescimento económico e a criação de emprego dentro das regiões. Este trabalho pretende, baseado numa análise de documentos e literatura diversa, sugerir um modelo do 'Ecosistema Enoturístico' que ilustra a complexa interconectividade entre *stakeholders* e recursos em territórios com uma forte identidade cultural. Aponta, igualmente, orientações para um desenvolvimento de negócios e territórios enoturísticos competitivos e sustentáveis, através de redes de coopetição visando a criação de valor superior.

**Palavras-chave** | Enoturismo, sustentabilidade, coopetição, criação de valor, ecossistema enoturístico

**Abstract** | The wine tourism system consists of organizational networks stretching across several different spatial and sectorial scales, connecting several types of stakeholders with different values, roles, interests, skills, practices, resources and ideas. To achieve sustainable territory development through tourism in wine regions, all stakeholders must match their own business goals with the territory's needs of development, applying value creation strategies and co-opetitive networks. Thereby, Wine Tourism co-opetition strategies are able to: enhance Wine tourism stakeholders' capacity and tools to manage

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their business with effectiveness and efficiency; provide sustainably-yielding guidelines based on the local context and needs; promote quality tourism experiences/ products and services that encourage accountable and cooperative approaches among all stakeholders; help define priority projects for innovative and competitive wine tourism development; and identify strategic opportunities for economic growth and job creation inside the regions. The literature review intends to analyse the complex relational interconnectivity between stakeholders within the Wine Tourism ecosystem, in territories with a strong cultural identity. It also highlights the link between the development of competitive wine and wine tourism businesses and sustainable wine-tourism territories through networks of co-opetition yielding superior value-creation in diverse fields.

**Keywords** | Wine tourism, sustainability, co-opetition, value-creation, wine tourism ecosystem

## 1. Introduction

Wine as a cultural product has become the main theme of tourism development in most of the 14 wine regions in Portugal. Wine tourism can be viewed as a regional development tool, allowing the integration of the primary (agriculture), secondary (wine industry) and tertiary (tourism) sectors, highlighting the respective wine territory's landscape attributes and uniqueness of the regional "touristic terroir" (Hall & Mitchell, 2002). Hall (1996) defines wine tourism as travel with the purpose of visiting vineyards, wineries, wine festivals and wine shows, while major tourist motivating factors are wine tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of a wine region. After a brief methodological section on the literature review undertaken (section 2), the current study presents, in section 3, the results of this review regarding, firstly, the wine tourism concept, its definition, dimensions and main related issues, as studied in the tourism and regional development literature. In the second part of this section the concept of 'business eco-system' is discussed and applied to the wine tourism sector. This is described as composed by a set of interconnected, interdependent and interacting stakeholders, influenced by and influencing the external environment, and secured by mutual benefits of management networks. Com-

bining the debates from both wine tourism studies and the business eco-system's approach, in Section 4 a model of the co-opetitive wine tourism eco-system yielding value co-creation in this complex domain is suggested, sustained on three pillars, namely 1) Wine Culture, 2) Territory and 3) Tourism. This model highlights the connections and possible synergies between the different stakeholders inside each geographical space, potentially enhancing sustainable business and territorial development. According to Frase and Alonso (2006, in Carlsen & Charters, 2006, p.19) "the wine industry is increasingly identified with natural symbiotic partners", giving uniqueness to the tourism experience, since each region has its own identity. To accomplish business success and territorial development, a win-win relationship strategy between all stakeholders will be necessary (Dodd, 1995; Hall et al., 1997; Getz et al., 1999; Beverland et al., 1998), anchored on co-opetitive networks and value creation. The here presented debate as well as the Coopetitive Wine Tourism Ecosystem model suggested adds to the discussion on sustainable wine tourism development, within a value co-creation perspective (Saarijarvi, Kannan & Kususela, 2013), underlining the importance of actors' diversity, the complexity of the phenomenon and its potential development. The results suggest that the wine tourism ecosystem is a small world

in which all stakeholders, both public and private, are related, through networks, linkages and interactions between organizations, institutions, communities, landscapes, geographical areas, cultural identities, whose ultimate output, for tourists, is the production and diffusion of unique and exciting wine and tourist experiences, for wine businesses and territories important and sustainable development perspectives. We suggest a model accentuating the main elements of this ecosystem, as well as a framework of conditioning factors as well as potential consequences of its collaborative functioning. The resulting synergy stimulates the implementation of innovative, distinctive and competitive management strategies; promotes unique tourist experiences/products; harmonizes all stakeholders' interests in regional development and contributes to both the businesses' and the territory's sustainability.

## 2. Methodology of model development- the literature review

The research proposition guiding this study suggests:

Assuming that wine tourism is based on a complex, highly fragmented ecosystem (Goeldner and Ritchie, 2006), composed of supply, demand, processes, activities, and resources, its actors should reveal a complex relational interconnectivity, with diversity of points of view regarding these spaces' development strategies and a rich variety of unique resources and skills that may produce co-opetitive business frameworks permitting the co-creation of exciting tourist experiences and stimulation of business and territorial sustainability. Stakeholders should be made aware of both material/immaterial heritage and the social construction/preservation process, fostering new relations within a world of old traditions in order to create exciting tourist experiences and achieve territorial sustainability.

To justify this proposition, the authors used an extensive literature on wine tourism, co-opetition, regional development of wine-producing territories and business eco-systems. This review was based on scientific documents obtained from the search engine *b-on*. The research used the following keywords: "wine tourism" or "enotourism" and "co-opetition" and "regional development" and "sustainability", involving academic journals with peer review, in a date range from 2000-2016, which was realized between 1st December 2016 and 21st December 2016. After the paper selection a number of thematic clusters were identified within this field of research. Adapted from themes suggested by Mitchell and Hall (2006, p.312), the following main issues were found: Wine tourism territory and landscape experience; Wine Tourism as Cultural Product and Social Practice; Marketing strategy and Consumer segmentation; Wine tourism and Regional development and Wine tourism networks and co-opetition, that will be detailed in section 3. The literature review analyses the main wine tourism issues and reveal the complex relational interconnectivity between stakeholders within the Wine Tourism ecosystem, in territories with a strong cultural identity.

To support the study's main proposition, a model of the co-opetitive Wine Tourism Eco-systems sustained on 3 interdependent pillar or sub-systems is suggested: i) Wine Culture, ii) Territory /Landscape and iii) Tourism. The model presents the main wine stakeholders and the critical factors of success for a co-opetitive wine tourism strategy, articulated between the Wine Tourism Eco-systems' stakeholders, yielding value-creation and sustainable development of wine and tourism businesses as well as of respective territories. This Wine Tourism Eco-system thereby integrates actors of supply and demand (of the three sub-systems), territorial and community resources, cultural identities and a multifunctional rural landscape, in which the co-created tourist experience stands out as the most important value-creating

factor. This model will be used to facilitate institutional and policy reform processes by accounting for and often incorporating the needs of those who have an interest in such improvements.

### 3. Wine Tourism

#### 3.1. Wine tourism perspectives

The European Charter on Oenotourism (2006, p.2) defines wine tourism as *“the development of all tourist and spare time activities, dedicated to the discovery and to the cultural appreciation of the vine, the wine and its soil”*. Wine Tourism can be seen in different perspectives, linked with territory, heritage, marketing, regional development and co-opetition networks, as presented next.

##### 3.1.1. Wine tourism territory and landscape experience

As suggested by Asero and Patti (2009), wine, like many regionally typical products, can be defined as a “territorial intensive products” (TIPs) since it contains a strong reference to the identity of the territory in which it is produced. Williams and Kelly (2001, p.9) claim that *“Enotourism involves more than visiting wineries and buying wine. It is the culmination of a number of unique experiences: ambience, the surrounding environment, regional culture and gastronomy, the styles and varieties of local wines”*. Hall and Mitchell (2002) use the term *“touristic terroir”* to illustrate the combination of physical, cultural and natural elements that give each region its distinctive appeal, drawing a parallel between tourism regions and the vineyards. Cavaco and Fonseca (2001) believe in the association of wine tourism with the promotion of the cultural landscape, giving rise to

a new logic of development of the territories, with multidimensional impacts, involving processes of structural change, building on a significant social dimensions, promoting a more balanced redistribution of wealth, increasing income, improving living conditions and rising expectations especially of disadvantaged social groups.

Rural wine territories are being sold as a rural paradise in which leisure, cuisine, scenery and outdoor activities provide unique tourist experiences, emphasizing the rural lifestyles and landscape. The concept of “landscape” has multiple meanings and is intrinsically holistic, including landscape as territory, as perception, as heritage and as tourism rural experience (Carneiro, Lima & Silva, 2015). The European Landscape Convention, approved by the Council of Europe in July 2000, defines the concept of Landscape as *“... a basic component of the European natural and cultural heritage”; “an area as perceived by people whose character is the result of action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”*. Consequently, territory, landscape and heritage become inseparable concepts suggesting the simultaneous use of all the physical, biological and cultural components making up the landscape. We may thus consider landscape as the footprint of society on nature and previous landscapes and as the physically visible social conscience and awareness of the territory by the people living there, which implies as well the next dimension.

##### 3.1.2. Wine tourism as cultural product and social practice

Hall, et al. (2002) suggest that the wine tourism experience is a combination of the attributes, motivations and practices of the wine tourist and the specificity of the enotourism product. They highlight the fact that the wine tourism product is a confluence between the tourism and wine industries, within the wider context of the wine region and the wine landscape. As such, the

product is not only delivered from the winery, its staff and setting but it is connected with regional cultural heritage. European Landscape Convention (2000) considers cultural heritage as a human group's cultural expression that retrieves memories, ritualized sociability (people identity) and transmit legacy to future generations. Hall and Mitchell (2008) stress the complexity and enigmatic nature of the wine product, being simultaneously: a provider of sustenance and luxury; associated with healthy living, while in excess it leading to illness and even death; a symbol of status and a peasant's drink; of immense religious and cultural significance as well as associated with hedonism; a fashion item, experience and commodity all in one. Brown and Getz (2005) argue that wine tourism refers to wine consumption as a social practice, being based on the desire to visit wine regions where travellers are induced to taste the regional wine, while travelling for other reasons. Wine and food festivals are, in this context, an important component of the wine tourism product, a significant catalyst for cultural socialization.

### 3.1.3 Marketing strategy and consumer segmentation

Mitchel and Hall (2006) list a ranking of wine tourism motivations, such as tasting wine, buying wine, socializing, learning about wine, relaxation, winery tour, meeting winemaker, eating at winery, picnics, entertainment, sightseeing rural setting. There are many studies that have attempted to qualify wine tourists in terms of numbers of visitors, profile and economic value of the market (e.g. Skinner, 2000, Macionis & Cambourne, 2000, and Mitchel, 2005). Demographic details such as gender, age, income, and place of origin all provide a useful insight into the profile of the wine tourist, while also research on his/ her motivation is highly relevant. Getz and Brown (2006) argue the interest in analysing wine tourism

both from the perspective of consumer behaviour in tourism and as a strategy by which territories develop for both wine and tourism promotion, i.e. for marketing wine-related destination attractions and imagery, and for wineries to educate and sell their products directly to consumers. Charters and Ali-Knight (2002), inspired by Hall's (1996) segmentation study of wine tourists surveying wine tourists regarding their motivation and behaviour, based on interest in wine. They argue that the wine tourism experience encompasses many dimensions, including a lifestyle experience, education, links to art, wine and food, wine tasting and direct sales, winery tours, incorporation with the tourism-destination image and a marketing opportunity which enhances the economic, social and cultural values of a territory. Most of these studies were quantitative providing only a small insight into the nature of the experience. O'Neill, Palmer and Charters (2002) adapted the SERVQUAL instrument to measure the performance of a range of winery attributes in order to develop improved service quality for enhanced marketing strategy of wineries.

### 3.1.4. Wine tourism and regional development

Morris and King (1997) suggest that the wine industry is one of a very few industries that is concentrated outside metropolitan areas, playing a vital role in regional development, employment generation, business growth, tourism and corporate investment. Getz (2000) maintains that wine tourism has the potential to provide a competitive advantage to regions with a grape and wine industry as well as to generate business for wineries and other related products. Hall, Johnson and Mitchel (2000) suggest that wine tourism has the potential to contribute to regional development in rural areas and has increased in importance in recent years. Simultaneously there is a perceived need to

retain or attract people in many rural areas, especially those witnessing rural exodus due to decline of the role of agriculture, to maintain aspects of traditional rural lifestyles and agricultural production and conserve the rural landscape (Eusébio, Kastenholtz & Breda, 2016). Wine-related tourism is a significant factor in rural development, through the creation of jobs, the sale of local products, improvement of the regional tourism infrastructures and promotion of investment in multiple fields.

### 3.1.5. Wine tourism networks and co-opetition

Asero and Patti (2009) discuss the idea that wine assumes different territorial functions by playing a predominant, complementary, marginal, or exclusive role in a destination's tourism supply, but it should be recognized, in all cases, as a factor of competitiveness for a destination. They suggest that wine destinations must build a system of relations between wineries, organizations and wine associations to be successful. Hall, Johnson and Mitchel (2000) suggest networks as there is a need to create linkages between businesses and Hall, et al. (1997) said that the key component of any network was cooperation and resource sharing between businesses that would normally be seen as competitors. Wine tourism network development will benefit from integration, in a both horizontal (within the wine or tourism industry to increase market share) and vertical manner (between the two industries to control various stages of production of their business). Today, the new best practice for travel and tourism suppliers is diagonal integration, thereby connecting many tightly-related services catering to a well-identified target market. Poon (1993) coined the term of diagonal integration in tourism to explain the process whereby firms use their information technology platforms to get closer to their, carefully chosen, target-customers and to systemati-

cally combine a range of services required to satisfy them. However, Schreiber (2004) found a number of constraints to network development between the wine and tourism industries, including a lack of communication between the industries and problems with boundaries (physical and political). On the other hand, Telfer (2001, p.30) found, for the case of Niagara/ Canada, an extensive level of collaboration, identifying not only clustering behaviour between wine and tourism organizations, but also with other clusters including agriculture and food; organizations such as wine councils, marketing committees and a visitor bureau; as well as government and research bodies. Some research gaps were found: scarce literature about community-involvement, destination articulation in wine tourism, wine tourism business models and stakeholder's co-opetition models. With this article we address the last two gaps.

## 3.2. The Business Ecosystem model and system models in Tourism

### 3.2.1. The Business Ecosystem

Brandenburger & Nalebuff, (1996), Begalli, Capitello & Codurri (2014) and other authors the fields of economic and managerial studies have recently emphasized the importance of analyzing and questioning the dichotomy between competition and cooperation. Zineldin (2004, p.780) defines co-opetition as *"business situation in which independent parties cooperate and coordinate their activities, thus helping to achieve mutual goals, but at the same time competing with each other as well as with other companies"*. According to Gnyawali, Ha and Madhavan (2008), co-opetition strategies could lead firms to focus successively on competition and then on cooperation. The co-opetition strategy, in which firms simultaneously cooperate and compete (Brandenburger &

Nalebuff, 1996), allows the adoption of complex relationships among several partners (Dagnino & Padula, 2002). These may occur amongst five different kinds of players: the firm, its customers, its competitors, its suppliers and its complementors. Brandenburger and Nalebuff (1996) suggest the term *complementors* to refer to organizations that sell products that enhance the value of another firms' products, collaborating through strategic alliances to enhance the value of their products to customers. All these actors are involved in a complex business system. Dagnino and Padula (2002) highlight the complex nature of co-opetition. Gnyawali et al. (2008) argue that firms are likely to experience the benefits and costs of co-opetition differently, because of differences in their structural position. Businesses that occupy more central positions in the network, with superior levels of structural autonomy and high market diversity, undertake more diverse competitive actions and seem to reap more benefits from the co-opetitive network. According to Gnyawali et al. (2008), firms vary in systematic ways in their ability to extract benefits from their co-opetitive networks and companies that achieve superior network positions in a co-opetitive network are better able to develop their competitive capabilities through a network of ties and increased competitive advantage. According to Ackoff (1981), a system is a set of two or more elements that must fulfil three conditions: i) the behaviour of each element affects the behaviour of the whole group of elements; ii) the behaviour of the elements and their effects on the whole are symbiotic; and iii) each group behaviour is not independent, spreading some effect onto others.

The term 'eco-system' derives from biology, referring to the complex, interdependent biological environment, where the genetic information, recorded on DNA molecules is the basis of life. In the economic environment, the technological and business information registered in books, research, scientific journals, databases and held, sometimes

as tacit knowledge, by millions of individuals, is the source of life of the economy. Following this idea, Tansley (1935) suggested a survival phenomenon, shaped by competition and cooperation between individuals inside this type of complex and evolutionary systems (the eco-systems). Another approach to business ecosystem was due by Moore (1993) who argued that a firm is not just a member of a single industry but a part of a business ecosystem, which crosses a variety of industries, involving a set of innovative microeconomic ideas, in constant coevolution, covering a wide variety of industries and distribution channels, where stakeholders' relationships and strategies have a strong impact on the competitiveness of all partners. Moore (1993) considered three levels inside an ecosystem: the Core Business (direct suppliers and intermediaries), the Extended Enterprise (indirect Suppliers, complementary suppliers, direct customers) and the Business Ecosystem (government agents, investors, shareholders, trade unions, communities, competitors, business networks). So, Tourism Ecosystems are a complex whole addressing the satisfaction of tourist needs and consisting of organizations' networks stretching across several different spatial scales / industries/ activities, connecting several types of stakeholders and contributing with different values, functions,, interests, capabilities, practices, resources and ideas, distinctly shaped for distinct type of tourism products/ destinations, such as wine tourism.

### 3.2.2. System models in tourism

Tourism is generally recognized as a highly complex business, best described as a system (Leiper, 1979). Tourism companies have integrated both horizontally (to increase market share) and vertically (to control various stages of production of their business) and even diversified their operations to optimize their production processes and increase profits. Competition in the new

tourism context will not be dominated by full capacity utilization, cost cutting, price-cutting and mark-downs, but marked by using a diagonal integration strategy, making use of new information technologies to logically and efficiently connect stakeholders and combine services, which should result in highest customer value and most profits (Poon, 1993). Through diagonal integration firms use their information technology platforms to get close to their partners and to systematically combine a range of services required by their carefully-identified target customers. One of the key arguments in favour of diagonal integration is the lower costs of production that comes with it. This is made possible through the synergies and economies of scope through these integrative, co-competitive strategies. The importance of local-value enhancing connection between all local stakeholders and resources has particularly been stressed for the co-creation of appealing, competitive and sustainable rural tourist experiences (Kastenholz, Carneiro & Marques, 2012; Carvalho, Lima, Kastenholz & Sousa, 2016; Kastenholz & Lima, 2013). These principles should be particularly relevant for wine producing territories, where the connection between diverse territorial assets and activities should be understood as key attractors for the respective destination, providing unique experience opportunities (Kastenholz, Marques, Carneiro & Lima, 2016)

#### **4. Developing a wine tourism eco-system model**

Wine tourism is a complex ecosystem highly fragmented, with a complex relational interconnectivity among business actors. It also involves a wide diversity of points of view about territory multifunctionality of rural landscapes and special development strategies. The stakeholder theory works as a normative tool in tourism planning

that may be used to promote cooperation between the fundamental parties involved in the planning process. According Roberts and Simpson (2000) stakeholder interaction has emphasized the importance of the resource of partnerships, as a way to mobilize the different groups of intervening bodies and coordinate effectively the interests of each.

The territory strategies adopted by any destination should consider the desires and expectations of all stakeholders, such as the resident population, entrepreneurs and investors, tourists, tour operators, intermediaries and other interest groups Buhalis (2000) states that tourist destination is the combination of products, services and experiences offered in a certain well-defined geographical area that allows perception of the impacts of tourism, as well as management of the demand and supply, in a way that maximizes the benefits of all stakeholders. This author refer that one of the major difficulties is to assure the usage of public assets like natural resources or cultural heritage for the benefit of all stakeholders and at the same time preserve those resources for forthcoming generations. Conflicts often arise, especially if the stakeholders intend to benefit from the existing resources in a short-term perspective.

##### **4.1. Competitiveness in wine tourism businesses and regions**

The here proposed wine tourism eco-system model merges cooperation and competition to represent a new kind of synergetic dynamic between stakeholders acting in the wine production and wine tourism context with clear strategic interdependence, giving rise to a co-competitive system of value-creation, enhancing both the quality tourist experience and regional development. When multiple industry players collaborate with each other via bilateral and multilateral agreements, a network of co-competitive relationships begins to emerge. Co-opetition strategy concerns interfirm strategy



which allows stakeholders involved to harmonize convergent interests and goals, to create value by means of a co-opetitive advantage (Zineldin (2004, p.785). The convergent interests and harmony of goals are the basics of this “co-opetitive system of value creation”.

Begalli, Capitello and Codurri (2014) investigated the strategic dynamics of wineries that operate in a wide homogeneous territorial system in Italy, resulting in a relational space. According to these authors, the wine tourism cluster includes a large range of partners and subcontractors, but also complementary actors, competitors, customers, and potential collaborator companies, as well as public bodies, local incubators, investors, and even research institutes and universities. They found that “natural, tangible and intangible resources” were the engine of the cluster, through elements such as parks, and places of historical and/or cultural significance. They argued that external relationships were primarily maintained with other cooperatives for commercial purposes (in both the production-supply and the sales chain). Regarding the role given to territorial linkages, the companies revealed two approaches: (i) maintaining close relationships with social stakeholders, including for investing resources in local development initiatives; or (ii) reducing participation in collective initiatives to concentrate their financial resources on self-promotion. With regards to territorial resources and identity, they identified weaknesses including the tendency for a behaviour-oriented business to be a “user” rather than a “promoter” of territorial resources, and the lack of a consciously shared identity for the local wine cluster, which reduces the potential visibility of the territorial system.

When considering Brandenburg and Nalebuff's (1996) complementors, TP (2015) suggests that wine managers do not consider them enough for their own strategy, about how to cooperate and negotiate with other stakeholders in a win-win manner. There seems to be consensus regarding the

importance of cooperation and competition between local stakeholders, for developing common strategies in order to improve their territories and competitiveness of their common offer through a diversified and differentiated product that will reflect their unique cultural identity (TP, 2015). Especially, in the field of wine tourism, the territory of wine production, its landscape and cultural heritage, play an outstanding role, implying an emphasis on the setting into value of the region of wine production, which in turn also adds to the perceived value of the wine produce, i.e. leading to increased regional competitiveness. Regional competitiveness is often emphasized as the comparative advantage of a well inter-connected region in a particular country.

According to the OECD Programme on Technology and the Economy (1992), competitiveness may be defined as the degree to which, under open market conditions, a country can produce goods and services that meet the test of foreign competition while simultaneously maintaining and expanding domestic real income. The European Commission (2002, p.2-3) defines a concept of regional competitiveness as the ability to optimise its indigenous assets to compete and prosper in national and global markets and to adapt to change in these markets. Meyer-Stamer (2008) defined competitiveness of a territory as the ability of a locality or region to generate high and rising incomes and improve the livelihoods of the people living there. Similarly Dijkstra, Annoni and Kozovska (2011) propose that regional competitiveness leads to an attractive and sustainable environment for firms and residents to live and work. So, the regional competitiveness concept focuses on making domestic stakeholders more competitive and emphasising on regional "assets" as the source of firm's competitiveness, not only physical infrastructure but also other "soft" or less tangible factors, as cultural heritage, landscape and tourism resources/ attractions.

For an effective integration between business

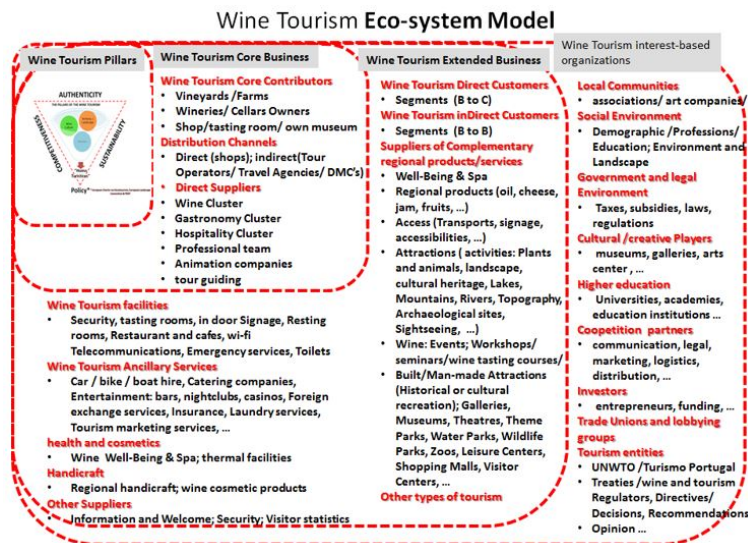
wineries' interests, tourism objectives and regional development, all stakeholders must build a common vision and mission, considering: an interpretation and implementation of business and development plans that embrace sustainable wine tourism; integrate national, regional and local policies and frameworks that recognize the sector as an important vehicle for managing the cultural, social and natural heritage; commit all stakeholders to sustainable development; introduce a sense of pride and responsibility to local communities regarding their identity and singular heritage values; promote a large, participative stakeholder supporting regional planning; promote quality tourism products and services that encourage responsible behaviour among all stakeholders; set priority projects for developing innovative wine tourism products/services; identify strategic opportunities for economic growth and job creation inside regions.

#### **4.2. The wine tourism eco-system model**

The here presented wine tourism co-opetition model follows Moore (1997) in its main structure considering a large range of stakeholder typologies

and central assets and conditions. This is a conceptual model. According to Fulton et al. (2012), in conceptual models the main drivers of a system are highlighted for subsequent representation as components of the full-system model. It results in a diagram summarizing our understanding of how the system works, in order to understand system functioning, comprehend causal relations and train specific skills and develop useful learning attitudes. The wine tourism ecosystem involves several components: key stakeholders (those involved in the wine tourism business cluster), added values (what each player brings to the overall business), rules (existence, functioning and flexibility of alliance rules), tactics (used by businesses), and scope (geographic and thematic breadth an expansion potential). To transform a wine region into an important tourism destination, it should be necessary to build a strong business concentration strategy, develop company synergies and improve co-opetition networks, within both the wine producing and wine tourism providing businesses and central regional partners adding value to the system.

So, the proposed Wine Tourism Eco-system Model considers four levels (image 1):



**Figure 1 | The Competitive Wine Tourism Eco-system Model**  
Source: Own elaboration based on Moore (1997) and Deloitte (2005).

(i) The first level, “Wine Tourism Pillars”, is the ecosystem genesis, supported by European, National and Regional Policies (such as PENT (2013), European Wine Tourism Chart). This model is sustained by three pillars, namely Wine Culture, Territory/ Landscape, and Tourism, which bring together all stakeholders’ different interests. This model will allow the creation of innovative tourism products (adding competitiveness), and the development of activities and experiences that promote the discovery and interpretation of the cultural wine landscape (delivering authenticity), in order to increase profit in business and promote regional sustainable development.

(ii) The second level, “Wine Tourism Core Business”, shows the Wine Tourism Core Contributors (vineyards /farms; wineries/ cellars owners; shops/tasting rooms/ museums), Distribution Channels [direct channels (online/offline wine boutiques or specialist stores) and indirect channels (chain of intermediaries, such as tour operators/ travel agencies/ DMC’s, through which wine tourism offers are made available for pur-

chase by consumers)] and Direct Suppliers (wine industry or enotourism specialized products/service suppliers - wine clusters; gastronomy clusters; hospitality clusters; professional teams; animation companies; tour guides);

(iii) The third level, “Wine Tourism Extended Business”, includes the “extended enterprise” with Business-to-Business (B2B) partnerships (referring to a situation where one business makes a commercial transaction with another in order to expand their marketplace); Business-to-Consumer (B2C) online platforms (developing marketing one-to-one transactions conducted directly between a company and the end-users of its products or services, through e-commerce); Suppliers of complementary regional products/services [e.g. well-being & spa; regional products (oil, cheese, jam, fruits, ...); Accessibilities (transports, signage, ...); Attractions (activities: fauna and flora, landscape, cultural heritage, lakes, mountains, rivers, topography, archaeological sites, sightseeing...); Events (workshops/ seminars/wine tasting courses); Built/man-made attractions (his-

torical or cultural recreation)]; Wine tourism facilities (security, tasting rooms, indoor signs, lounges, restaurants and cafés, Wi-Fi telecommunications, emergency services, toilets); Wine tourism ancillary services [car / bike / boat hire, catering, entertainment (bars, nightclubs, casinos), foreign exchange services, insurance, laundry services, tourism marketing services, ...]; Health and cosmetics (wine well-being & spa; thermal facilities); Handicraft (regional handicraft; wine cosmetic products); Other suppliers (information and welcoming services; visitor statistics);

(iv) The fourth level, “Wine Tourism interest-based organizations”, considers Local Communities (and their associations), Social Environment (demographic /professional/ educational; environment and landscape), Government (taxes, subsidies, regulators); Cultural Players (museums, galleries, art centres and companies, theatres, theme parks, water parks, wildlife parks, zoos, leisure centres, shopping malls, visitor centres); Higher Education (universities, academies, research institutions), Co-operation partners (communication, law, marketing, logistics, distribution), Investors (entrepreneurs, funding), Trade Unions and lobbying groups, Tourism Entities (UNWTO /Turismo Portugal, treaties & agreements, wine and tourism regulators, sector directives and decisions, opinion leaders, non-profit organizations, civil society members, users/consumers), Environment and Wildlife Organizations.

Thus, the following objectives can be achieved:

- highlighting regional specialization so as to enhance value-creation for both wine businesses and region development;

encouraging wine tourism companies to invest in innovation creating unique tourism experience programs;

- investing in staff qualification, training, farm infrastructures and services to achieve hospitality excellence levels;
- establishing high quality standards in order to deliver uniqueness through wine tourism experiences;
- reinforcing territorial identity dynamics to keep local authenticity alive;
- and reorganizing Wine Routes in accordance with the European Charter of wine tourism principles to promote harmony among all stakeholders.

It is therefore necessary to identify the critical success factors of these co-opetition forms in tourism ecosystem. The application of the model to several real cases will take place, in order to verify their strength and feasibility

## 5. Conclusion

Wine, as a cultural product, has become the main concern of tourism development in most wine regions. Wine tourism can be conceived as a complex ecosystem based on a well-articulated synthesis of actors and values related to territory, tourism and wine culture. It clearly involves more than visiting vineyards, wineries/cellars or buying wine, and yields an overcoming of highly fragmented supply and demand structures. This aim is not easy to achieve and would benefit from systematic and continuous research, well-articulated stakeholder participation schemes and a sound development of professional tourism skills, in order to permit the delivery of exciting tourism experience based on the combined value of diverse, outstanding regional resources and skills. As systemic

phenomenon, wine tourism can be seen as a regional development asset, combining different sectors. In this context, stakeholders' value-creation may be continuously improved, anchored on endogenous regional resources, allowing a fine integration of the primary (agriculture), secondary (wine industry) and tertiary sector (tourism). Our main scientific concern regarding the Competitive Wine Tourism Eco-system Model, is to develop an intense stakeholder's echo about social construction/ preservation processes, fostering new relations within a world of old traditions and creating exciting tourist experiences. The focus is to identify, understand, build and transfer best enotourism practices and knowledge, which could help/guide policy makers, entrepreneurs and tourism/heritage managers, to match the interests of all stakeholders, shape the community identity and develop innovative authentic wine tourism territories. Further in field initiatives of our study aim to encourage responsible behavior among all stakeholders, guarantee a balanced approach between site-conservation/ promotion and identify strategic opportunities for economic growth and job creation.

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