

NATREG team on a site visit through Regional park Mura Drava.



In this issue:

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Dear readers!

Believe it or not, this is already the 4th and the penultimate issue of our project's Newsletter. 24 months have passed since we started with the NATREG project and right now we are just entering the last quarter.

Besides numerous activities that have been implemented since our last encounter, 5th Steering Committee Meeting was held in Graz at the beginning of November and Quality Management Board Meeting was held in Đurđevac in March 2011. As usually at our partner meetings, we combined theory with practice and took a site visit to the surroundings because it is important for all partners to see how NATREG is being implemented in a certain pilot area. In the NATREG project, as you have probably noticed, we take efforts to improve stakeholders' participation in decision making processes for protected areas very seriously. So during the last six months the emphasis was on various workshops and trainings with local stakeholders on which you can read more on the following pages.

To support this process, a training manual People, Parks and Money was published by Austrian partner Klagefurt University which emphasises regional development and stakeholder involvement along with the "life-cycle" of protected areas and has a focus on the European perspective of managing protected areas. The Guidelines on Stakeholder Engagement in Preparation of Integrated Management Plans for Protected Areas which are a part of the Joint Strategy for Integrated Management of Protected Area (JSIMPA), have also just been finalised – the theoretical part was supplemented by a case study of how this approach was used by Slovenian project partners in the PA Pohorje. JSIMPA is – as we speak – getting ready for printing.

Almost every day we are reminded of how close the end of our project is – among other by the arrangements for the Final conference in Novi Sad that had already started.

Till our last reading, develop with nature!
NATREG team

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Tourist resource basis in the Mura-Drava Regional Park in the Koprivnica-Križevci County

Jasenka Kranjčević, Institute for Tourism

Although the relationship between sustainable tourism and protected areas is complex and sometimes unfavourable for the space, tourism is a key component that must be carefully planned.

Tourism as the fastest growing industry increasingly encroaches into the natural area, while on the other hand, nature is more and more becoming a factor for tourism development.

Worn or damaged natural attractions substantially reduce the attractiveness of tourist sites.

Tourist excursions have positive and negative effects on protected areas, however revenues gained from visitors or from other tourist activities in protected areas can contribute to their preservation and development. Tourist revenues can be used to finance less attractive protected areas or those protected areas where visits would significantly endanger the features that were the reasons for which such type area was established.

Plans which integrate nature conservation and tourism development are certainly an important segment of social, economic and cultural development. The Mura-Drava Regional Park as a protected area is a complex ecological system with rich biodiversity, so tourism development must be very carefully planned.

The main intention of this study was to identify and evaluate natural and anthropogenic resources for tourism development in the Mura-Drava Regional Park in the Koprivnica-Križevci County.

The area consisting of ten municipalities along the rivers of Mura and Drava in the Koprivnica-Križevci County is not homogeneous, but tourism could be an area of common interest in the municipality. In the course of history, the rivers Mura and Drava were natural barriers and the development of tourism could become the linking factor.

An analysis of nature protection (State Institute for Nature Protection), general, demographic and traffic characteristics, as well as qualitative and quantitative tourist offer showed that:

- this part of the park is particularly important for it includes parts of the Drava river, along with its immediate surroundings, almost entirely in its natural state;
- a large territory is covered with natural forests and protected areas (Veliki Pažut zoological reserve and Cambina important landscape);

- there is a lack of strong natural attractions, causing currently undeveloped tourism, with the exception of (to a certain degree) bathing (Šoderica), fishing and hunting tourism;
- greater tourist importance is currently given to man-made attractions, primarily to the heritage of naive painting.

Given that no area has designated strict administrative boundaries, this project would not answer its purpose if it did not emphasize the importance of linking/networking the area with a wider river Drava area and other countries. Ecological criteria and sustainable development should be the most important factors for planning tourism development in the Regional Park. Protected natural areas along with authentic cultural attractions are a first-class tourist attraction.

The main proposed projects in the Regional Park are: geothermal wells – Kutnjak, Dravka 1, Molve 32; construction of visitor centres Legrad, Gola, Ferdinandovac; locations for bird watching; cultural path Zrinski; cycle tracks (existing and planned); Drava Museum; Jurassic Park; Aquacity; House Hegedušić; mill paths; wild "pockets" on the Drava; ethnographic collections; construction of pedestrian bridges; paths of the planned settlement on the paths of the old Drava.

The aims of tourism development in the Mura-Drava Regional Park:

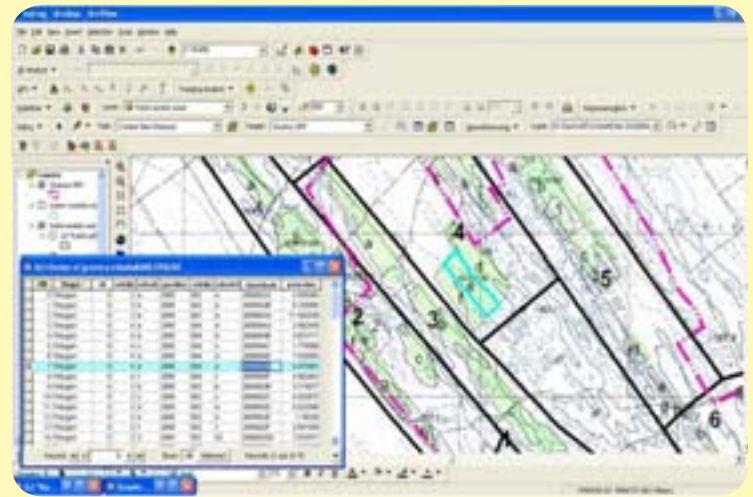
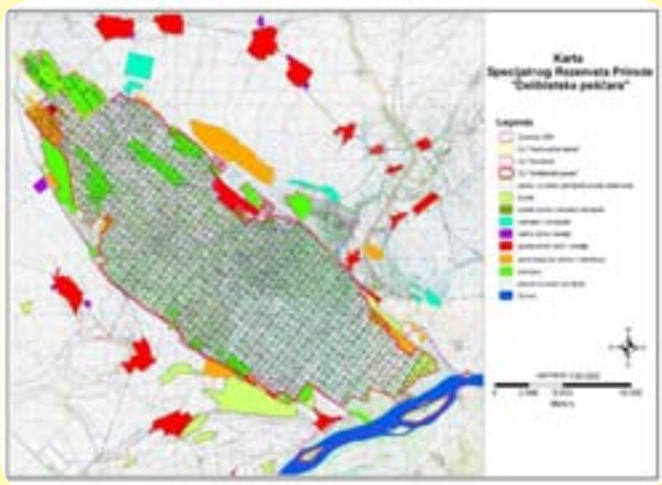
- Eco/sustainable tourism development
- The design and establishment of quality and variety of destinations
- Developing and promoting a recognisable and appealing destination image
- Tourist development of the Regional Park

Vision of the Mura-Drava Regional Park in 2020:

- Ecologically preserved and landscaped area
- Recognisable and attractive tourist brand
- Offer of numerous and varied attractions

Visualisation of the Regional Park Mura-Drava in this project is „Man's life with the river and nature“.

Strategic advantages	Strategic disadvantages
Preserved natural watershed/river area	Undeveloped tourist destinations (only 142 overnights in 2010)
Gentle landscape and biodiversity	Lack of vision for tourism development
Tradition of hunting tourism	Insufficient emphasis on its potential
Tradition in forest and water management	Insufficient knowledge and skills to develop activities in tourism
Potential for health tourism development (geothermal water)	Necessary amendments to the legislation regarding hunting (Hunting Act)
Potential for the development of different tourism products (rural tourism, cycling, religious tourism, cultural tourism, etc.)	Underdeveloped tourism in the whole continental area



The administrative part can be accessed only by persons who have special permission. This part contains encode base and other relevant data. In this part, users adapt the system to their own needs. In the user part, data can be entered and managed by using the manual and reports can be created.

Since it is necessary to have the whole subject area in the digital form in order to enable cartographic representation of output data, digitizing the area of Deliblato sands was also one of the main tasks. The principle of monitoring is based on the following procedure: after field work

and data entering into field manuals, all data is transferred into the software package. In order to present results in the cartographic way, data can be exported into an appropriate Excel or Access base which is then connected with maps by the GISODSEK key.

As a final step of this project, the training of employees was provided in order to educate them to use database software. In this way we have created a model enabling the employees to work independently on these processes of databases management as well as to produce maps and follow all changes in the field after field data collecting.

'Money' supporting stakeholder involvement and regional development in protected areas

Daniel Zollner, Klagenfurt University

One of many great results of the NATREG project is also the handbook "People, Parks and Money", written by Michael Getzner, Michael Jungmeier and Sigrun Lange from the University of Klagenfurt, which breaks new ground in stakeholder involvement and regional development in protected areas.

Even though there are a number of books on the market dealing with protected areas management from different perspectives, there is no book available that emphasises regional development and stakeholder involvement along the 'life-cycle' of protected areas and that additionally has a focus on the European perspective of managing protected areas. Our handbook tries to fill this gap.

This book also serves as a training manual for local and regional PA managers and stakeholders, working in the NATREG network with the aim to set up systems of integrated management of protected areas in Austria, Croatia, Italy, Serbia, and Slovenia.

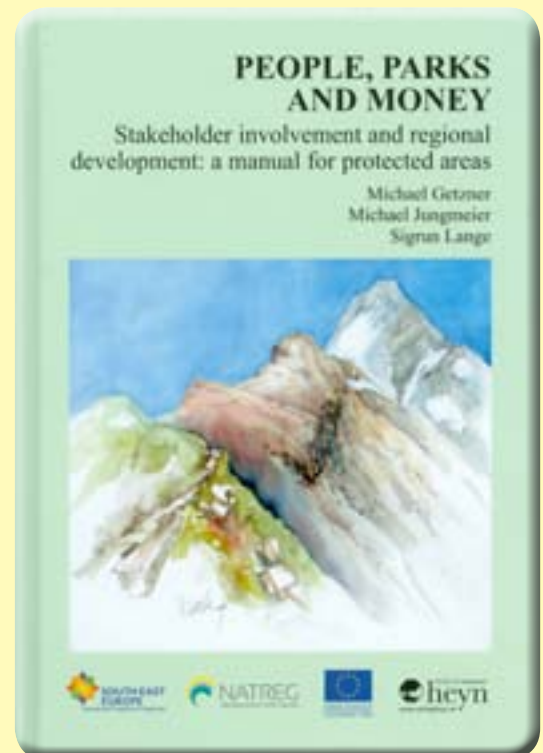
The structure of the book is based on the IPAM-life-cycle concept for protected areas which takes into account its chronological genesis. It is therefore presented following special phases of development and its allocated Fields of Activities (FoA). In all those fields, stakeholders may be involved in different ways by information, consultation and participation in decision-making. The book provides a discussion of each activity, but also of specific aspects of stakeholder involvement, its benefits and costs as well as the connection to regional development.

Specific aims of the handbook are:

- discussion of different Fields of Activity (FoA) over the 'life-cycle' of protected areas and presentation of best-practice approaches in order to facilitate the use of the book also as a 'manual' for practitioners;
- analysis of the importance and operationalisation of stakeholder involvement in each of the working steps according to the FoAs; and
- reference to the potentials on each FoA to support and accompany regional development opportunities and efforts by considering not only ecological but also social and economic impacts of management.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the European and national authorities who made the current research possible, and express our gratitude for the financial support that enabled the making of this publication.

Handbook is available on www.natreg.eu/training-materials.





NATREG
development with nature

POHORJE

Enabling participation 24 hours a day

Because we wanted to make the preparation of the draft management plan for PA Pohorje friendly to stakeholders, we provided web support on the so called 'Pohorje platform' www.natreg.eu/pohorje.

On this webpage, which is in Slovene language, all information for stakeholders is available, from how they can participate in the process to invitations and workshop results. The platform also enables posting of ideas so that everyone interested can see and comment them. The button, that links to this platform, was also posted on homepages of all relevant municipalities in the area.

Objectives and activities for PA Pohorje

Mateja Softić, Alianta Ltd.
Nina Uratarič, REC Slovenia

At the Slovenian NATREG pilot area of Pohorje we continue our efforts to draft the management plan for the Pohorje pilot area which is being prepared in close cooperation with local stakeholders.

We finished last year's stakeholder events with a workshop where we prepared a joint SWOT analysis of the pilot area and defined the elements of the vision for the Pohorje area. Based on these results we prepared the Vision Pohorje 2030 and a proposal of strategic and specific objectives for the pilot area which were presented to the public at three regional events held in Slovenj Gradec, Zreče and Slovenska Bistrica between January and March. The events were organised by the Slovenian Institute for Nature Conservation in cooperation with all three municipalities, the company Alianta and the Ljubljana office of the Regional Environmental Centre.

At the regional workshops we presented the work done so far on the draft management plan and the text of the vision. We then split into groups and revised the proposals of strategic and specific objectives. Together with the stakeholders we supplemented or rewrote the objectives. Most comments were focused on the clarity of the objectives and the terminology used in describing them; according to the participants the objectives should be very specific but easily understandable. However, in general, the opinion was that the objectives were

well prepared and the participants hoped that the objectives would indeed be reached in the future.

The third part of the workshops focused on defining concrete activities which would contribute to reaching the set objectives. The aim of regional workshops was to gather ideas from all three parts of the Pohorje in order to identify common interests and concrete needs of the people living and working in the area. Around 100 people participated at all three events and they proved to have a lot of ideas. Among them we worked out a total of 23 more detailed and concrete proposals for joint projects in the Pohorje area.

All the ideas and people from the entire Pohorje area will be brought together at the joint workshop for the preparation of projects which will be held in the town of Maribor at the end of April.

Together with the stakeholders we will look for synergies between the ideas in order to prepare quality and realistic proposals for joint projects, and define responsible persons or institutions as well as next steps that will lead us to the realisation of the projects.

All ideas for activities are being gathered at the NATREG internet site for the Pohorje which was set up with the aim to connect people and information on and about the Pohorje. The site is available in Slovenian language at www.natreg.eu/Pohorje and will be further sustained also after the official project termination in order to further connect ideas and people, so that they will be able to work together towards joint solutions which will nurture the heritage of the Pohorje inhabitants and nature, as well as provide opportunities for the development and improved quality of life for the locals.





Are we afraid of the Pohorje Park?

Nina Uratarič, REC Slovenia

After two very educational and pleasant excursions with our stakeholders from the Pohorje area that were organised as a part of the Work Package 'training and knowledge management', we decided that the third event would be a consultation titled "Are we afraid of the Pohorje Park?" which took place in the middle of January in the Koroška region.

One of the objectives of nature conservation and protection of the Pohorje, written in the Operational Programme – Programme for managing Natura 2000 sites for the period 2007-2013, is also the establishment of the Pohorje Regional Park. Opinions on this are very different and that is why we wanted to share with stakeholders from the Pohorje area the experience of other Slovenian parks and raise possible issues.

As we were gathered in the beautiful Manor Bukovje in Dravograd, the Mayor of the Municipality of Dravograd Marijana Cigale addressed the crowd. This was followed by really intriguing presentations from the Logarska dolina Park (presenter Marko Slapnik, director of the Center Rinka), Kozjanski park (presenters Mojca Kunst, Head of the Nature Conservation Department in the park, and Dušan Andrej Kocman, the Mayor of the Municipality of Kozje) and Triglav National Park (presenter Martin Šolar, director of TNP).

The participants found the presentations very interesting and useful and had a lot of meaningful questions for the presenters, so a short discussion developed after each lecture.

In the afternoon we conducted a workshop at which we were searching the reasons for and against the establishment of the Pohorje Park. The answers showed that people in general support the park, but are at the same time wondering how will this affect them, their everyday lives and work.

Trainings in Đurđevac

Mladen Matica, M.Sc., Institute for Spatial Planning

On 6 and 15 December 2010, the Institute for Spatial Planning of Koprivnica-Križevci County and the Public Institution for the Management of Protected Natural Values in Koprivnica-Križevci County organised two trainings in Đurđevac.

Fifty experts from spatial planning and nature conservation institutions of northwest Croatia, local decision makers, administrative staff, and NGOs from Koprivnica-Križevci County attended the trainings. On 15 December, Gregor Danev and Jurij Gulič from the IRSCN presented Slovenia's experience in nature conservation and the relationship between nature conservation and agriculture. Irina Zupan from the Croatian Institute for Conservation of Nature presented the studies "Valorisation of water habitats inside the provisionally protected Mura-Drava Regional Park" and "Proposal of protection measures for six oxbows inside the provisionally protected Mura-Drava Regional Park". Biljana Ivičić from the Croatian Institute for Conservation of Nature presented the national ecological network and the proposal NATURA 2000 in Croatia.

Goran Šfarek from Baobab association presented "Veliki Pažut". Mladen Matica presented the achievements and planned results of the pilot area Mura-Drava in Koprivnica-Križevci County. Željka Kolar presented the results of the pilot area that AGNATURE achieved in the project.

After the lecture, a workshop focusing on the topics of nature and spatial planning in Croatia was held.





Trainings and workshops in Deliblato Sands

Ivana Vasić, PE Vojvodinašume

In the previous year, especially towards the end of the year, the Serbian project partner Public enterprise Vojvodinašume (ŠUME) was very active in implementing various project activities which brought many results.

In the beginning of 2010, apart from regular administrative tasks, activities on preparing three management plan supporting studies continued, communication plan was prepared, initial brochure in Serbian language was published and the NATREG project was presented at

events like Novi Sad spring fair, LORIST fair and IUFRO conference. Also, a management plan mission statement workshop was held as well as training for employees of ŠUME.

The workshop entitled "Vision for Special nature reserve (SNR) Deliblato sands" within the process of management plan preparation was held on 29 December in the Educational centre of SNR Deliblato sands (Deliblato-Čardak). The workshop was organised by the NGO Oikos in cooperation with ŠUME and was headed by Duška Dimović, a WCPA member. Participants of the workshop were all interested parties, ŠUME employees, representatives of the Provincial Secretariat for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development, tourist organisations, local communities, NGOs and an IUCN representative. The workshop's aim was to increase capacities of interested parties for the preparation of management plan and to define a vision for the SNR Deliblato sands.

As a part of capacity building activities, the training named "Basic concepts of nature conservation and categorisation of protected areas" was held on 24 December in Novi Sad at the ŠUME premises and was also executed by the NGO Oikos. Training participants were ŠUME employees whose expertise is strategic planning, nature conservation and management of PA. The training goal was to increase capacity of the participants in the harmonisation of planning and programming documents with international recommendations and guidelines as well as to create a possibility for the inclusion of interested parties in the protected area management plan preparation process. Two more capacity building trainings and one workshop for the preparation of management plan are planned for spring 2011.

Regional Workshops in Styria

Martin Wieser, Office of the State Govern. of Styria

From mid October 2010 until the beginning of November 2010 the Styrian NATREG team successfully completed five regional workshops in Upper Styria West (Obersteiermark West), Liezen, Upper Styria East (Obersteiermark Ost), East and Southeast Styria (Ost- und Südoststeiermark), the Central region and Southwest Styria.

The spatial 'definition for habitat networking' is a comparatively recent topic; therefore it is of prime importance to include regional/local experts who contribute with their professional knowledge to a sound demarcation of green zones. After the first results were available, the regional communication process started with the aim of including additional local expert knowledge and at the same time gain acceptance and support for the topic of habitat networking in Styria.

Altogether 53 representatives of relevant regional authorities (nature conservation, hunting, water management, spatial planning, forestry, etc.) and the Styrian state government participated at the workshops.

The implementation of each workshop took (including a short break) three hours. After welcoming and presenting the team members, all participants were asked to classify their knowledge about regional development projects by means of a prepared poster.

Depending on previous knowledge on the topic, a short introduction was presented after which participants

were given the opportunity for discussion. The most discussed topics were relevance and applicability of the results for the experts present and legal implementation of the available results of the study.

The validation, assessing whether the results correspond to the practical requirements, was carried out in a 'Roundtable'. For this purpose the respective regional map was presented, discussed point by point and documented accurately.

The inputs provided by the experts in each workshop were very extensive and extremely valuable for the finalisation of the project. Generally the feedback of the participants on the project and the regional workshops was very positive.





Local stakeholders contributing to the preparation of the interregional strategy for the Po Delta in Veneto and Emilia-Romagna

Marco Meggiolaro, EURIS Srl.

NATREG project partners Veneto Region and ARPA Emilia-Romagna, together with the two Parks, are shaping the interregional strategy for the sustainable development of the Po Delta protected territory that will be further scaled down and tested in a small cross-border pilot area corresponding to the Sacca di Goro lagoon and its surroundings.

Making interregional management plans requires a necessary consultation process with local public and private stakeholders that live and work in the Parks in order to facilitate the ownership of results, approaches and future opportunities. To this end three workshops have been organized in Veneto and Emilia-Romagna over the recent months .

NATREG was presented in November 2010 at GEO-OIKOS, one of the most important showcases in Italy on territorial planning, urbanism and environment. At this event, promoted by Veneto Region and hosted by the Verona Fair, basic information about the application of the NATREG project in the Po Delta area towards the creation of one interregional park, as well as about the transnational strategy carried out by the transnational partnership, were spread out across the wide public. First deliverables of the interregional plan of the Po Delta (i.e. first thematic maps and administrative boundaries of the future park) were presented to the audience. Also the first part of the educational DVD on the interregional strategy for the parks was shown while the stakeholders' opinions regarding the protection of the natural assets through the economic development of the territory addressed some specific local aspects of the strategy.

In January 2011 ARPA organized the workshop "Waterways: tourism along the Po river and coastal areas" (see picture on top); an interregional working session, in which around 80 very diverse stakeholders took part, was dedicated to the NATREG project and its links with the opportunities and perspective of investing in tourism in the Po Delta area. Also five individual meetings with key stakeholders – i.e. with the deputy mayor of Mesola, the representative of the Chamber of Commerce of Ferrara, CNA Tourism associations and the Councillor of Tourism for the Province of Ferrara – were held to discuss some

aspects of the interregional strategy, with particular reference to the connections between spatial planning and ecological conservation, measures to improve waterways in close connection with the waterways on the Veneto side of the Delta and expected impact on river tourism. Finally, on 2 February 2011, ARPA Emilia-Romagna organised in Mesola the third interregional Workshop "Ecological function and land use: the inter-participatory planning in the Po Delta and the role of farmers". The aim of the workshop was to enhance the role of agriculture awareness within the protected area, to involve stakeholders in identifying individual and the whole territory's problems and needs, to develop an overall vision that allows the development of objectives and joint activities to solve problems, and to improve the quality of the 'human habitat.' The discussion was held at the highly professional level as it ranged from state of the art programming of national and regional actions of the Regional Rural Development Plan and its funding to thematic studies relating to the importance of conservation or recovery of high environmental quality and ecological function in fragile areas, such as geomorphologic evolution of an active river delta, also in the perspective of climate change patterns and its effects. The workshop was also intended to highlight the essential contribution that can result from agriculture awareness: the main issues for future work are increased public engagement in a project area of agro-environmental development, increased investment, not just in economic terms, both public and private. Additionally, a debate came up about the definition of roles for an experimental project of sustainable socio-economic development of agro-environment in the Po Delta region, with the possible perspective of developing the potential for the UNESCO MAB Site.



In this issue we present Croatian and Serbian project partners NATREG partners from Croatia are:

• Institute for Spatial Planning of Koprivnica-Križevci County

The Planning Department of the Koprivnica-Križevci County was established in 1995 as one of departments within the Koprivnica-Križevci County. The Institute for Spatial Planning of the Koprivnica-Križevci County as a public institution has been operating from 1 January 2008; today it has seven employees.

Activities of the institute:

- preparing regional spatial plans;
- preparing urban development plans and spatial plans for towns and municipalities;
- creating and monitoring the implementation of zoning documents at the local (regional) level;
- preparing reports on the situation in the Koprivnica-Križevci County area;
- keeping data register within geographical information system of spatial planning;
- issuing opinions on drafting, adopting spatial planning documents in accordance with the law;
- performing professional analytical work in the field of spatial planning.

The institute cooperates with relevant experts and competent scientific and technical institutions, professional associations, legal entities and individuals at home and abroad, the central state administration bodies and regional bodies, local and territorial governments. The institute continues to actively participate in international projects, preparing technical documents for development projects and project ideas; it is introducing the spatial data digital database for the Koprivnica-Križevci County (land use, construction areas, traffic and utility infrastructure, demography, natural and cultural heritage, and social infrastructure).

• Public Institution for the Management of Protected Natural Values in the Koprivnica-Križevci County

The Public Institution for the Management of Protected Natural Values in the Koprivnica-Križevci County began to work in April 1998. Its main activities are protection, maintenance, preservation, promotion and use of specially protected natural values, as follows: strict reserves, regional parks, special reserves, forest parks, significant landscapes, natural monuments, monuments, landscape architecture, and specific geomorphological phenomena, living communities, important plant and animal species or protected natural values under the Nature Protection Act. It also manages areas in the territory of Koprivnica-Križevci County and is an integral part of the ecological network of Croatian protected areas and the Regional Park Mura-Drava.

Activities:

- monitoring the protected natural values;
- implementing security measures, preventing damage or degradation of protected natural values;
- evaluating protected natural values, implementing studies and research of protected natural resources;
- keeping records of relevant information on the protected nature, organising and participating in the organisation of tourist tours in protected areas;
- promoting, organising and coordinating scientific and technical research on the protected natural values of the Koprivnica-Križevci County;
- taking part in organising and implementing trainings on protected natural values of the Koprivnica-Križevci County.

Croatian NATREG team: Blaženka Lukšić, Zlatko Filipović, Marta Lenac, Silvana Premec, Mladen Matica, Željka Kolar, Saša Cestar and Snježana Marković Sirovec.



We are pleased to announce that in February 2011 the NATREG pilot site proposal Regional Park Mura-Drava in the Koprivnica-Križevci County was adopted as a part of the Regional Park Mura-Drava across five counties (including the Koprivnica-Križevci County).

NATREG partners are:



REGIONE del VENETO



agenzia regionale prevenzione e ambiente dell'emilia-romagna



ALPEN-ADRIA UNIVERSITÄT KLAGENFURT



REGIONALNI CENTER ZA OKOLJE Slovenija



NATREG partner from Serbia is:

• Public enterprise Vojvodinašume

Public Enterprise Vojvodinašume (PE ŠUME) is a company for forest management, established in 2002. It integrates administrative and managerial functions and functions related to commercial production in forestry, hunting and other domains; it has the FSC certificate SGS-FM/CoC-005064. Enterprise manages 129,877.84 hectares of state forests and forest land within the territory of the Vojvodina province and has more than 1,500 employees and a variable number of seasonal workers. PE ŠUME is also the manager of 16 protected areas (among which also the Special nature reserve Deliblato sands) and a user of 7 protected areas.

Five employees of the PE Vojvodinašume involved in the implementation of NATREG project: Miljan Velojić, Snežana Kovač, Branislav Seratlić, Ivana Vasić and Marius Oldja.



The importance of the NATREG project for PE Vojvodinašume and for the Special nature reserve (SNR) Deliblato sands as a project pilot area can be seen from several aspects. Namely, this is the first EU project that PE Vojvodinašume is actively participating in. Since many institutions are involved in the project, sharing information and experience will be one of the main benefits. Participating in the project only confirms the potentials of the SNR Deliblato sands and presents a great chance for its promotion. The innovative side of the project is reflected through the participative approach of the protected area management planning process, sustainability of project results, adaptive management and proposed solutions after official project ending.

Announcing NATREG Final Conference

As the project will be coming to an end later this year we would like to announce the NATREG Final Conference, which will take place from Wednesday, June 22nd, to Friday, June 24th, 2011 in Novi Sad in Vojvodina Province in Serbia. We are working with great enthusiasm on this event to offer you a visit you will remember for a long time.

First and second day will be the VIP days in Master Center of Novi Sad Fair with plenty of opportunity to meet strong opinion leaders, decision makers and people from the highest places in a political field; on the first day also a press conference will be held, for which all main media of Serbia already confirmed their participation. At the end of the second day we will move to Delibato sands and continue on the third day with a site visit to the Delibato sands and for the fourth, optional day, we prepared a site visit to Vršac region.

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