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Report of the International Workshop for CEE Countries

**“Tourism in Mountain Areas and the
Convention on Biological Diversity”**



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“Tourism in Mountain Areas and the Convention on Biological Diversity”

1st - 5th October, 2002
Sucha Beskidzka,
Babia Gora National Park, Poland

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INTRODUCTION

In the year 2002, the International Year of Ecotourism and International Year of Mountains, October 1st-5th, 29 participants from 9 countries met at the International Workshop for CEE Countries "Tourism in Mountain Areas and the Convention on Biological Diversity" in Sucha Beskidzka, Poland. The main goal of the workshop was to initiate an information exchange about current developments under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) which are considered relevant to sustainable tourism management, as well as about the practices and tools for the implementation of sustainable tourism in Central and Eastern European Countries, especially mountain areas.

The participants discussed methodological approaches of selected protected areas with consideration of the CBD-Guidelines for sustainable tourism and the Ecosystem Approach. Different case studies prepared by the participants formed the basis of the identification of problem areas in the sustainable use of ecosystems, especially the tourism use. The outcome of the workshop was the elaboration of conclusions and statements about the current situation of tourism and biodiversity in the CEE-Countries and about the potential implementation of the CBD-Guidelines in the CEE-Countries.

The results of the different working groups were taken up in the preparation of the "Declaration on Sustainable Tourism Development in Mountain Areas" during the final plenary session (see ITEM 1).

A Background

Workshop Background:

The background for the workshop came from several significant international processes that link tourism, sustainable development and biodiversity:

- UN Declaration of the "International Year of Ecotourism" (IYE) 2002 and UN Declaration on the "International Year of Mountains" (IYM) 2002
- Convention on Biological Diversity
- Commission for Sustainable Development
- Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS)
- Millennium Ecosystem Assessment Initiative

This Workshop was convened to provide a forum for:

Reflection on and discussion of international processes and decisions on tourism, biological diversity and sustainable development

Formulation of statements on the proposed CBD Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism and Biodiversity

Discussion of possible strategies for the implementation of sustainable tourism in the CEE Countries considering the ecosystem approach and the Seville+5 strategy of the MAB-Program.

For this reason the following documents were delivered to the participants as background information:

Ad 1:

- The European Charter for sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas.

- Quebec Declaration on Ecotourism

Ad 2:

- Biological Diversity and Tourism: Development of guidelines for Sustainable Tourism in Vulnerable Ecosystems
- International Conference for CEE Countries "Tourism towards Sustainability"
- CBD-Guidelines for sustainable Tourism in Vulnerable Ecosystems

Ad 3:

- The Ecosystem Approach and its components in relation to tourism
- Description of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment Initiative
- Seville Strategy of the MAB-Program

B Attendance

Participants / invitees were representatives of governmental organisations, of NGOs and of administrations for protected areas (Biosphere Reserves and National Parks) and intergovernmental organisations working in the field of nature and biodiversity protection and management as well as sustainable tourism and international policies.

The participants attended the workshop from the following countries: Poland, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Croatia, Serbia, Ukraine, Hungary, Switzerland and Germany.

Representatives of the following non-governmental, governmental and intergovernmental organisations participated in the Workshop

Non-governmental organisation/ protected areas: Nature Park Biokovo, Croatia; Sjeverni Velebit National Park, Croatia; Velebit Nature Park, Croatia; Sumava Biosphere Reserve, Czech Republic; CEE-WEB - Central and East European Working Group For the Enhancement of Biodiversity, Hungary; Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve, Hungary; Babia Gora National Park, Poland; Carpathian Heritage Society, Poland; Academy of Physical Education, Institute of Tourism, Poland; Polish Environmental Partnership Foundation, Poland; Slovak Academy of Science; Center for Responsible and Sustainable Tourism Development, Serbia; Polana Biosphere Reserve, Slovak Republic; SOSNA, Slovak Republic; Amber Trail, Slovak Republic; Banska Stiavnica Sustainable Tourism Project, Slovak Republic; The Crimea Institute of Ecology and Projecting Ltd. (CrIEP); Ecological Tourism in Europe, Germany; University of Greifswald, Department of Geography, Germany.

Governmental organisations: Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape protection of the Czech Republic; Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, Germany; BGPAN-Advisory Board, Instytut Ochrony Przyrody PAN, Poland; State Council for Nature Conservation, Poland; Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic;

Intergovernmental organisations: United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)

Other invitees who were unable to attend were from Belarus, Bulgaria, Russia and Romania.

ITEM 1:

Babia Gora Declaration on Sustainable Tourism Development in Mountain Areas

The participants of the International Workshop for CEE Countries "Tourism in Mountain Areas and the Convention on Biological Diversity", held in Sucha Beskidzka, Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve, Poland, from 1 to 5 October 2002, from the countries as follows: Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, Ukraine and the intergovernmental organisations UNEP and UNESCO agreed on the following declaration:

Acknowledging the United Nations General Assembly Resolutions that declare the year 2002 as the International Year of Mountains (A/RES/53/24) and International Year of Ecotourism (A/RES/53/200), thus drawing the world's attention to the need to foster sustainable tourism in mountain areas;

Considering the Quebec Declaration on Ecotourism adopted at the World Ecotourism Summit, held in Québec City, March 2002, and the plan of implementation adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg, September 2002;

Considering the Draft International CBD Guidelines for Activities Related to Sustainable Tourism Development in Vulnerable Terrestrial, Marine and Coastal Ecosystems and Habitats of Major Importance for Biological Diversity and Protected Areas, including Fragile Riparian and Mountain Ecosystems prepared at the Workshop on Biological Diversity and Tourism held in Santo Domingo, in June 2001 under the Convention of Biological Diversity, and taking into account the process of reviewing the guidelines;

Welcoming the development of a framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable management of the Carpathians, to enhance sustainable mountain development and protection, by promoting sustainable tourism on a regional basis, providing benefits to local communities;

Recognising that mountains have unique value and special features that include the rapidly changing Earth dynamics, mountain habitats and climate, Earth history records, water catchment areas that are essential to downstream regions, high endemism of flora and fauna, mountain crops, dramatic landscapes, heritage value including inspirational, spiritual and sacred, and isolated mountain communities as stipulated in Agenda 21, Chapter 13;

Considering the growing interest of people in travelling to natural areas in mountain regions which are the second largest tourist destination world wide;

Stating that good governance within each country and at the international level is essential for sustainable tourism development. At the domestic level, sound environmental, social and economic policies, democratic institutions responsive to the needs of the people, the rule of law, anti-corruption measures, gender equality and an enabling environment for investment are the basis for sustainable tourism development;

Being aware of the fact that efforts to protect, maintain, and sustainably manage the natural and cultural resources of the mountains cannot be achieved by one country alone, and require regional co-operation;

Emphasising that capacity building and institutional strengthening, as well as specific activities in the field of education, public participation and environmental awareness are essential requirements of sustainable tourism development;

Taking into consideration the Declaration on Tourism and Biodiversity adopted in Berlin 1997, and the wording of the following declarations on sustainable mountain development: Declaration on Environment and Sustainable Development in the Carpathian and Danube Region 2001; Tokyo Declaration 2002 for the International Year of Mountains; Kinabalu Declaration 2002 on Sustainable Mountain Development.

We agreed on the following recommendations to be the nucleus of a strategy consisting of two sections:

"Recommendations for the Implementation of Sustainable Tourism in CEE Countries"

and

"Recommendations for the Use of the 'Draft International CBD Guidelines for Activities Related to Sustainable Tourism Development in Vulnerable Terrestrial, Marine and Coastal Ecosystems and Habitats of Major Importance for Biological Diversity and Protected Areas, including Fragile Riparian and Mountain Ecosystems (hereinafter called the 'CBD Tourism Guidelines') in the CEE Countries" to meet the challenges faced by mountain ecosystems and mountain communities in Central and Eastern Europe:

Recommendations for the Implementation of Sustainable Tourism in Central and Eastern European Countries

General:

1. The implementation of sustainable tourism should be based on long term strategies.
2. There is a need of capacity building of all stakeholders, especially authorities at all horizontal and vertical levels.
3. Local model projects should receive full support at the relevant local, national and/or international levels.
4. With regard to the distribution of information, there should be information exchange at all horizontal and vertical levels.
5. To achieve sustainable tourism, it is essential to develop and use indicators, to set up monitoring systems and promote research on carrying capacity.
6. Technical assistance should be provided by scientists/experts to local research and monitoring, as well as feasibility studies should be supported and promoted.

7. The external costs of tourism activities should be internalised in tourism prices at the local level, based on regional co-operation agreements.
8. Effective synergies between the Convention of Biological Diversity and other multilateral environmental agreements, inter alia, should be encouraged through the development of joint plans and programs, with due regard to their respective mandates, regarding common responsibilities and concerns.
9. The Convention on Biological Diversity and its provisions, including the active follow-up of its work programs and decisions made through national action programs, should be integrated into the programs and policies, in particular of the economic sectors of the countries, including initiatives which promote community-based sustainable use of biological diversity, and their integration into relevant cross-sectoral strategies, programs and policies should be strengthened.
10. The conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, promotion and support of initiatives for hot spot areas and other areas essential for biodiversity conservation, and the promotion of the development of national and regional ecological networks and corridors should be strengthened.
11. Tourism activities and development should respect the ecological characteristics and capacity of the local environment in which they take place and should be restricted or prohibited in ecologically sensitive areas.

Local level:

12. A strong support is required to include local goods and services into offers provided to tourists.
13. Revenues created by functioning financial mechanisms (e.g. entrance fees) should be reinvested for the development of sustainable tourism at the same local level.

Local and national level:

14. For the involvement of all stakeholders (especially business, NGOs and public sectors), it is essential (a) to establish partnerships through e.g. round tables, agreements, steering/co-ordination committees, with a special focus on transboundary co-operation, and (b) to integrate local knowledge, heritage and values in all development initiatives;
15. For raising public awareness at national and local levels, it is necessary to support public awareness campaigns and to establish information centres.
16. Education, especially on ecotourism and conservation of biodiversity, should be strengthened at local and national levels.
17. National guidelines (principles, standards, etc.) and financial support should be provided to develop and maintain ecologically sound infrastructure (i.e. trails, waste management, waste water treatment, housing, etc.).
18. Socio-economic incentives should be provided to support sustainable tourism investments and activities.
19. National and local codes of ethics (based on the Global Code of Ethics on Tourism) should be developed.

20. Sustainable principles should be incorporated into planning and the design of transportation systems, and encourage tour operators and the travelling public to make soft mobility choices;
21. To further educate tourists and influence their behaviour at destinations, collaboration among outbound tour operators, incoming operators, other service providers and NGOs should be promoted at the destinations;

National level:

22. Certification systems, labelling and contests should be developed in order to support good practices in sustainable tourism at local level.
23. For an efficient management of sustainable tourism and for securing the maintenance of biodiversity a legal framework should be developed and strengthened.
24. A database of financial resources for sustainable tourism should exist at the national level and should be accessible to public.
25. Special financial schemes should be established by governmental authorities to support sustainable tourism.

International level:

26. Ways and means, within international regulations, should be found to support local production of goods and services, such as agricultural products, to conserve the traditional ways of land use and improve economic situation of local communities.
27. The CBD Tourism Guidelines should be generally adopted at the international level.
28. Lobbying for special funds to be used for the implementation of the sustainable tourism concept should take place at the international level.

Recommendations for the Use of the CBD Tourism Guidelines in the Central and Eastern European Countries

General remarks:

1. It is essential to realise that the quality of life on the Earth depends on biological as well as social and cultural diversity. Therefore, the visions and general directions of human activity as well as the scales of values should respect the fact that there is no chance to survive without biodiversity.
2. The unfavourable economic situation in some mountain areas of the CEE Countries (e.g. high unemployment rate, poverty) is pushing the decision making towards unsustainable development of tourism that is more promising in terms of acquiring quick financial benefits.
3. The understanding and knowledge of the notion of sustainability is missing and therefore public awareness of the need of sustainable development is not on an appropriate level.
4. Corruption and a low level of law enforcement belong among the major barriers of an effective implementation of sustainable development in CEE Countries.

5. Despite some obstacles, the guidelines are seen as a feasible tool for sustainable tourism development in the CEE Countries, and they are applicable in the everyday work of tourism management.

Perception of the CBD Tourism Guidelines:

6. The title of the CBD Tourism Guidelines should be shortened and better understandable.
7. Pilot projects should be introduced to gain practical skills as well as feedback on the use of the CBD Tourism Guidelines.
8. The interpretation of the CBD Tourism Guidelines at National levels should be one of the first steps of the implementation so that the National, Regional or Local specifics are reflected.
9. Glossary and definitions of terms used in the CBD Tourism Guidelines should be provided.

Policy making:

10. Civil society should be motivated to become more active in fostering effective policy making in the direction of sustainable tourism development.
11. A higher involvement of women in decision-making authorities should be ensured.
12. Each country should develop a national strategy and action plan for tourism, which includes a management framework and timeframe for the implementation of the guidelines.
13. Policies should be adjusted considering the results of impact assessments, including the assessment of potential risks.

Public awareness, education and communication:

14. The communication structures of the public and decision-making authorities have to be improved.
15. The lobby for the implementation of the CBD Tourism Guidelines should be strengthened.
16. The awareness of the CBD Tourism Guidelines in the tourist sector and among other stakeholders should be increased.
17. Information exchange between the CEE Countries should be supported.
18. The employees of administration bodies should be educated in nature conservation and sustainable tourism, with a special regard to the CBD Tourism Guidelines in order to accelerate the process of understanding.
19. The awareness of the accessibility to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) results and their legally binding status should be improved (at various levels).

International level:

20. International organisations, especially funding organisations, have to be informed about the concept of the CBD Tourism Guidelines, for example by the Conference of Parties of the CBD.
21. International organisations should provide technical and financial assistance for the implementation of the CBD Tourism Guidelines.

22. International organisations should pay special regard to the CBD Tourism Guidelines when preparing, approving and funding tourism development projects.

We recommend that people and governments of the Central and Eastern European countries consider ways and means, through local, national and international co-ordination and co-operation, to implement the actions included in this Declaration so that sustainable tourism development of mountains and enhanced well-being of mountain communities are achieved.

ITEM 2: Opening of the meeting

The Workshop officially opened at 09.00 hrs on Tuesday, 2nd October 2002.

Introductory remarks were made by

1. Mr Andrzej Pajak (Mayor of Sucha Beskidzka District);
2. Dipl. ing. Jozef Omylak (Director of Babia Gora National Park - BGPN),
3. Dr. Baranowska-Janota (State Council for Nature Conservation, Institute of Physical Planning and Municipal Economy);
4. Dr. Borkowski (Director of High school for Tourism and Ecology, Sucha Beskidzka);
5. Dr. Mochka, (Institute of Tourism, Academy of Physical Education, Krakow);
6. Prof. Liptowski (BGPN-Advisory Board, Instytut Ochrony Przyrody PAN); and by
7. Mr. Meyer (E.T.E, Germany).

Welcoming the participants, Mr. Andrzej Pajak, stressed the importance of tourism in the Babia Gora Area. He added that the importance of tourism development is driven by the problematic economical situation in Poland, which is characterised by a high unemployment rate of 18 %. The region of Sucha Beskidzka faces an unemployment rate of 12 %. One positive factor in the region is the high level of education due to the high number of schools and colleges there. The main tourist attraction of the territory is the Babia Gora National Park. Its protected status makes sustainable approach to tourism development necessary. Therefore the inclusion of guidelines into the regional tourism strategy is very important.

Mr. Dipl. ing. Jozef Omylak thanked Mr. Meyer for organising this workshop in the Babia Gora Region. The National Park is a well known and popular destination for Polish Tourists and is visited by a growing number of foreign tourists as well. The average number of tourists per year is 60.000 visitors. The protection authority of the National Park faces the challenge of managing the increasing number of visitors while keeping the statutory goal of the administration based on nature conservation.

Mrs. Baranowska - Janota welcomed the participants on behalf of the Polish Ministry for the Environment. The State Council for Nature Conservation is responsible for the protection goals and strategies of National Parks and Landscape Parks. Because of the unique landscape and nature, tourism is an important issue for this work. For this reason Mrs. Baranowska - Janota expresses her wish for a good result from this workshop for the relationship between protected mountain areas and tourism.

On behalf of the High School for Tourism and Ecology, Mr. Borkowski thanked Mr. Meyer for organising this important workshop in this location. He wished the participants fruitful discussions and stressed the important educating role of the school on sustainable aspects of tourism development. Because of this role teachers and students are fundamentally interested in the results of this workshop.

Dr. Mochka emphasised the high level of interest of the Institute of Tourism in tourism in mountain areas and appreciated the aims of this workshop. The institute examines various aspects of mountain tourism especially issues of environmental protection in mountain areas which are exposed to tourism.

Dr. Liptowski stressed the importance of this workshop because of the new type of tourism development which can be seen as a major challenge for protected mountain areas. The Babia Gora Mountains contribute to the biological diversity of the Carpathian Mountains and for this reason there is a need for high protection. At the same time=development pressure, e.g. for downhill skiing, is extremely high endangering the area because of the harmful effects on the local ecology. Strategies are needed to manage tourism and biodiversity in a harmonic way without adversely affecting the natural resources. This workshop has to be seen against the background of the two International UN Years "International Year of Ecotourism" and "International Year of Mountains". In Dr.Liptowski's opinion ecotourism has the potential to inspire people by, and raise their awareness of, nature. In this context he expresses his wish that the workshop will give forward-looking direction on the management of tourism in mountain areas in a sustainable way.

Mr. Michael Meyer welcomed the participants and thanked Mr. Dabrowski who organised the workshop. He thanked the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation and German Ministry for the Environment for their generous support to this workshop, enabling participants to be prepared for the addressed topics. Further he explained to the participants the goals and expected outcomes of this workshop, firstly to create an information exchange by discussing different problems and approaches and secondly to elaborate on recommendations on how to implement a strategy for sustainable tourism development in the CEE Countries. The International Years of Ecotourism and Mountains will end this year; but this workshop has major potential to influence other international processes, such as the CBD and CSD, by forwarding the results of this workshop. He wished all participants a fruitful discussion and looked forward to the results of the workshop.

ITEM 3: Organisation of work

3.1 Agenda

The Workshop adopted the following agenda on the basis of the provisional agenda and preparatory material that had been circulated to all participants prior to the workshop.

1. Presentation and discussion about the methodological approaches of selected protected areas with consideration of the CBD-Guidelines, the Ecosystem Approach and the Seville⁺⁵ Strategy of UNESCO/MAB Programme
2. Discussion about potential instruments for the implementation of sustainable tourism and the use of the CBD-Guidelines in the CEE-Countries
3. Elaboration of conclusions and statements relating to the CBD Guidelines and the ecosystem approach, regarding the implementation of sustainable tourism with reference to the current situation of tourism and biodiversity in the CEE-Countries
4. Final edition and adoption of the statements
5. Closure of the meeting.

3.2 Facilitators

At the opening session of the workshop, on October 1st, Prof. Zbigniew Witkowski (Poland), was presented and accepted as chairman for the first day. He handed over this duty to Mr Piotr Dabrowski (Poland), Academy of Physical Education, Institute of Tourism for the following days. An additional task force was responsible for the recording of both, plenary and working groups. Responsible for introductory and closing comments for each day and the workshop as a whole and overall management of the workshop was Michael Meyer as workshop co-ordinator, Ecological Tourism in Europe.

The following participants were presented and accepted as coaches or facilitators of the various sessions of the workshop:

For sessions on day 1st pertaining to Agenda item 1

1. Mr. Peter Straka Ministry of the Environment (Slovak Republic)
2. Mrs. Birgit Nolte Department of Geography, University of Greifswald, (Germany)
3. Mr. Jan Rohac Amber Trail, (Slovak Republic),
4. Mrs. Christine Garbe E.T.E, (Germany)
5. Mrs. Zsuzsa Tolnay Head of tourism department, Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve, (Hungary)

For sessions on day 2nd pertaining to Agenda items 2 and 3

6. Mr.: Michael Meyer E.T.E., (Germany)
7. Mrs. Christine Garbe, E.T.E., (Germany)
8. Mrs. Silvia Herianova, Tourism Manager, Banska Stiavnica Sustainable Tourism Project, (Slovak Republic)

9. Mrs. Birgit Nolte, Department of Geography, University of Greifswald (Germany)
10. Mrs. Jindriska Stankova Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection (Czech Republic)

For session on day 3rd pertaining to Agenda item 4 and 5:

11. Mr. Michael Meyer, E.T.E., (Germany)
12. Mrs. Christine Garbe, E.T.E., (Germany)

3.3 Organisation of work

The methodology was based mainly on working groups proposed by E.T.E and adopted by the participants. The results of the different working groups were presented and discussed in evening plenary sessions. Minutes of the proceedings of each day were prepared by a task force and presented for ratification the following day.

The following working groups took place during the workshop:

1. The Ecosystem approach and Mountains (day 1st)
2. The International Year of Ecotourism and the International Year of Mountains and the CBD-Guidelines (day 1st)
3. Man and Biosphere Programme (Seville Strategy) and the European Charter (day 1st)
4. Potential instruments for the implementation of sustainable tourism in CEE Countries (day 2nd)
5. Use of the CBD-Guidelines and the ecosystem approach (day 2nd)

The work at workshop day II was introduced with the presentation of the following case studies (see contact addresses in the list of participants for further information).

Aggtelek, Hungary	Zusza Tolnay
Polana, Slovak Republic	Dr. Magdalena Sorokova
Sumava, Czech Republic	Vladimir Silowsky, Jindriska Stankova
Goljia Studenica, Serbia	Jovan Popesku
Babia Gora, Poland	Piotr Dabrowski

On workshop day III the participants formulated the Babia Góra Declaration on the basis of the results of the previous working groups in a plenary session. Each sentence was adopted by consensus.

Item 4: Discussion of the methodological approaches in selected protected areas with consideration of the CBD-Guidelines, the Ecosystem Approach and the Seville⁺⁵ Strategy

4.1 CBD - Guidelines related discussion

The Workshop took up agenda item 1 in the 2nd working group of the meeting, on 2nd October 2002. The basis for discussion was the draft guidelines prepared in Santo Domingo titled "Draft International guidelines for activities related to sustainable tourism development and biological diversity in vulnerable terrestrial, marine and mountain ecosystems" (UNEP/CBD/WS-Tourism/2)

Introducing the CBD-Guidelines, Mr. Michael Meyer explained the terms of reference of the CBD Guidelines which should apply for all ecosystems.

Further he described the process which had led to the development of the CBD-Guidelines by the Commission on Sustainable Development which invited the Convention on Biological Diversity in order to elaborate a framework for comprehensive management of tourism and biodiversity, beginning with COP-4 in Bratislava (1998), CSD-7 in New York (1999), COP-5 in Nairobi (2000), and resulting in the Workshop in Santo Domingo (2001) which elaborated the draft Guidelines.

Also he invited the participants to pay special attention to the information document from the Santo Domingo workshop, the "Compilation and Analysis of existing international documents" related to tourism, which is presented at this workshop as an exhibition.

At the COP-6, 2002 in The Hague, the parties decided to transmit the guidelines to World Summit / CSD 10 (09/2002) and to review the Guidelines through two open consultations launched by the Secretariat of the CBD. This process is still continuing and the results will be discussed at the next meeting of SBSTTA in March 2003. One recommendation of several parties is to develop a "users' manual" which should give a description of each management step based on practical experiences.

After this introduction Mr. Jano Rohac led the participants step by step through the CBD Guidelines and the related discussion.

Discussion notes / concerns raised by participants

- The Guidelines are seen as a very important checklist for the work of biodiversity and tourism managers, decision makers and other stakeholders. Therefore the whole set of guidelines should be implemented in the CEE Countries because they can support and strengthen the management in protected areas. One critical issue was the fact that the Guidelines will not have the same binding status as other elements of the CBD like the Biosafety Protocol.
- Because of the importance of the guidelines, strategies should be developed to make them more easily understood and to deliver them to the relevant experts and users. The participants considered users manuals as very helpful for the work with the CBD Guidelines. They saw an urgent need for the development of additional users' manuals in participating countries reflecting the specific situation. One main precondition for the development of a national user's manual is capacity building. The user's

manual should function as a description of each management step as well as a basis for decision-making, therefore good practices should be integrated.

- One perceived crucial point of the Guidelines was the principle of co-operation and communication between different organisations, institutions and stakeholder as a basis for co-ordinated management of tourism and biodiversity. This principle is missing in the actual work of the different decisional institutions in the CEE Countries.
- The collection of baseline information was reflected by the participants as difficult due to lack of personnel and financial resources. Another perceived problem was the fact that there is no general awareness that public information is available based in law without additional costs.
- In the experience of participants a general vision for tourism development in consideration of biodiversity is missing. As a result measurable and adjustable objectives do not exist.
- In general there is a high need for the review of legislation and control because laws regarding tourism and biodiversity are missing and effective control instruments do not exist due to a lack of personnel resources (e.g. lack of rangers in protection authorities) and lack of interest.
- The participants saw it as a crucial element in the Guidelines that impact assessment should include "positive impacts" and the impacts of plans and projects. These elements play a small role in the actual practice. Impact management is seen as a precondition for tourism management in the framework of conservation goals but the state protection authorities normally have no responsibilities for impact management.
- Under the current situation the decision processes are not transparent although a formal mechanism on decision making and participation exists. In this case NGOs play an important role in making these deficiencies transparent and demanding a change. The control measures for decisions are not well developed.

4.2 Ecosystem Approach related discussion

Mr. Peter Straka gave a short introduction on the international process of the Convention of Biological Diversity and the main results. The ecosystem approach (EA) forms the general principle for the practical management of activities in protected areas. It can be seen as a political consensus among many interests of various representatives from various countries. The participants went through each principle of the ecosystem approach and reflected them carefully with their experiences.

Discussion notes / concerns raised by the participants

- The participants considered the EA as important specifically in mountain ecosystems and tourism development areas, especially given the fact that human activities, and cultural diversity, are considered in the document as an integral component of many ecosystems.
- For this reason the whole concept of the EA should be applied. The participants stressed a central issue that National governments may intend to consider only those principles that seem convenient to their policy making. However in the view of the participants the implementation process should be compatible with the individual legislative and institutional framework of each country.

- The mainly economically-minded short term approach of politicians is considered as contradictory regarding the EA. A rapid commercial effect is only short-term, therefore the concept of sustainable tourism development is beneficial to nature as well as to human economic activity. The ecosystem approach could be a good basis because it requires long-term planning and the consideration of all components, activities and interests.
- For implementation a ranking list of priorities and recognition of the different levels (national, regional and local level) was seen as crucial, i.e. a definition of objectives regarding particular activities in special areas. In this case they stressed the importance of finding a balance between national and local interests, although the national government should be responsible for defining the general strategies and priorities (e.g. societal choice).
- The EA in mountain areas should reflect the fragility and sensitivity of the mountain ecosystems and therefore it should be based on broad scale thinking and permanent scientific research (including monitoring). For this reason the EA should consider "ecosystems" without national or regional boundaries.
- The EA aims for a balance between economical and nature protection objectives; it is seen as crucial that the traditional land use in mountain areas should be conserved to maintain the landscape with its biological and aesthetic values and diversity. The carrying capacity of mountain ecosystems needs to be defined as a binding limit for human and commercial activities. The aspect of carrying capacity should be considered for inclusion as a tool for the maintenance of ecological stability (limit of ecological functioning), along with the social carrying capacity. The issue of nature restoration should be considered in the EA, because of the sometimes high need to deal with the restoration of damaged areas.
- The internalisation of costs and benefits in a given ecosystem would be particularly important, including long-term and unexpected (potential) costs.
- The participants stressed the importance to provide explanations of particular principles using simple language (user's manual) and to educate scientists and biodiversity managers to increase the common understanding. The comprehensibility of the ecosystem approach could be improved by giving some guiding examples of the practical use of the ecosystem approach.

4.3 Seville+5 related discussion

The Seville+5 Strategy formed the basis and subject of working group III on October 2nd. The working group concentrated on three topics at national (N1, N4, N10) and three at site level (N3, N4, N10), selected by the participants according to their priority. (N = Numbers in the Seville +5 document)

Mrs Zsuzsa Tolnay gave a short overview of the UNESCO MAB Program and its structure. The development in biosphere reserves should follow the objectives of the Seville Strategy. In 2000 the participants of an expert meeting, regarding the implementation of the Seville Strategy, developed recommendations on how to manage biosphere reserves. The result of this meeting - the Seville +5 Strategy - is structured as goals and related objectives which are supported by guidelines or recommended actions at different levels (international, national, individual biosphere reserve).

Discussion notes / concerns raised by participants

- Although the MAB Secretariat developed a common structure for biosphere reserves, the CEE Countries are using different approaches. In general there is no legislation background for the designation and management of biosphere reserves in most of the CEE Countries. Especially in the case of bi- and multilateral biosphere reserves there is a lack of international legislation.
- The participants stressed the fact that there is a lack of knowledge about the designation procedure regarding biosphere reserves. Better information should be delivered by the National MAB committees to the different stakeholders.
- In general they noted that there is a lack of good examples of how biosphere reserves can work and of tools for managing biosphere reserves. The National MAB Committees are in a weak position. A management structure and an institutional framework are missing. In summary there is a high need for responsible institutional framework / structure/ management/co-ordination.
- Generally it was noted that the strategy consists of many helpful recommendations. Reference the implementation of the Seville Strategy the participants developed the following recommendations regarding the national level and individual biosphere reserves:

National level recommendations

1. Certain sampling and research methods should be excluded from biosphere reserves.
2. Special regulations should be prepared for site authorities. These regulations result in the involvement of local stakeholders in the planning and decision making process.
3. The principle of subsidiarity should be the focus in the process of regional planning.
4. National authorities should develop a system of collecting data and use social studies to utilise the local cultural heritage in the management of biosphere reserves.
5. Surveys on present status should be completed to provide the fundamental information of the monitoring process.
6. Aspects of Nature conservation and biosphere reserve management should be integrated not only into regional planning but into all sectors.
7. Guidelines should be reshaped to fit each biosphere reserve.
8. Seminars and information exchanges on sustainable tourism should meet the local requirements of each region where biosphere reserves are located.
9. National MAB committees should actively share their activities with local organisations and promote development of sustainable tourism in the area.

Recommendations on individual biosphere reserves

1. Co-operation of the biosphere reserves co-ordinator responsible for Natura 2000 and organic farming should be supported; maintaining traditional agriculture could support agro-tourism activities.
2. Co-ordinator should involve local communities and NGOs to implement projects.
3. Permanent plots should be established; proposal for data collection and monitoring should be made in detail by the national co-ordinator.
4. Translation of materials and better information on the local level should be achieved.
5. Financial and legislative tools for participation of local communities and NGOs should be produced.
6. Good examples and local traditional information exchange should be used as a model for a community decision making process.
7. Harmonisation on local and regional (conservation and landscape) planning has to be achieved.
8. Allocation of funds by national authority for communication and information as necessary.
9. Site authorities should identify methods for increasing the social benefits.

Item 5: Conclusions about potential instruments for the implementation of sustainable tourism

At the second workshop day the participants discussed potential instruments for the implementation of sustainable tourism in CEE Countries. The case studies delivered before the workshop and presented at the second workshop day formed the basis of discussion. Mrs. Birgit Nolte together with Mrs. Jindriska Stankova asked the participants to list possible and needed instruments at different levels (local, national and international level). This "shopping list" was discussed and examples added and it was presented in the evening plenary session. After plenary the facilitators of the group formulated wording for the final edition and adoption at the third workshop day. The adopted text is included in the final declaration of the workshop called "Babia Gora Declaration on sustainable tourism in mountain areas" (Item I).

Item 6: Conclusions about the use of the ecosystem approach and the CBD - guidelines in CEE countries

At the second workshop day the participants continued their discussion and work on the CBD Guidelines and the ecosystem approach. First Mr. Meyer gave another short introduction to the process and the contents of both strategies. The results and concerns of the working groups at the first workshop day were reflected by Mrs. Christine Garbe and Mrs. Silvia Herianova. Then Mr. Meyer and Mrs. Garbe asked the participants first to list potential barriers and obstacles regarding the implementation of the CBD Guidelines and the ecosystem approach in the CBD Countries. Afterwards they discussed potential and recommended actions to minimise the obstacles and foster the implementation of the Guidelines. The results

were presented in the evening plenary session. After this the facilitators of the group formulated draft sentences for the final edition and adoption at the third workshop day. The adopted text is included in the final declaration of the workshop called "Babia Góra Declaration on sustainable tourism in mountain areas".

Item 7: Final edition and adoption of the statements

At the third workshop day Mr. Meyer presented the draft recommendations of both working groups sentence by sentence. Each concern and addition was discussed and after finding a common agreement it was included in the documents. The participants agreed not to separate the three outcomes (see day III) of the workshop but to combine it in one document, the declaration.

The preamble of the draft "Sucha Declaration" - delivered to the participants before the workshop - was discussed and changed partially. Some of the recommendations were accepted as important additions to the elaborated documents. The title of the declaration was changed to "Babia Góra Declaration".

The "Babia Góra Declaration" was adopted by the participants on Saturday, 5th. October 2002.

Item 8: Closure of the meeting

Following the customary exchange of courtesies and acknowledgement of the efforts of participants and organisers to make the workshop a success, the workshop closed at 12.00 a.m. on Saturday, 5th October 2002.

ANNEX I

List of participants

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International Workshop "Tourism in Mountain Areas and the Convention on Biological Diversity
Babia Gora Biosphere Reserve, Sucha Beskidzka / Poland, 1-5 October 2002

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20.	Stanislava Busovska Polana Biosphere Reserve	J.M. Hurbana 20 96001 Zvolen Tel.: +421-45-5334834 Email: slavik@sopsr.sk	Slovak Repub- lic
21.	Dr. Magdalena Sorokova Centre for Scientific Tourism at the Insti- tute of Forest Ecology SAS, Zvolen	Sturova 2 960 53 Zvolen Tel.: +421-45-6941189 Fax: +421-45-5479485 Email: sorokova@vsld.tuzvo.sk	Slovak Repu- blic

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29.	Natalija Kornilova Yalta Mountain-Forest Nature Reserve NGO "Ecology and Peace" (YALTA)	Nikita 5-5 Yalta Crimea UKRAINE 98612 TEL.: (0654) 38-69-46 FAX: (0654) 32-30-43 Email: criep@yalta.crimea.ua	Ukraine

External participants:

1. Mr Andrzej Sasula - vice Marshal of the Malopolska Voivodship
2. Mr Andrzej Pajak - the head of Sucha Beskidzka district (powiat)
3. Dr. Krzysztof Borkowski - Dean of the High School of Tourism and Ecology in Sucha Beskidzka.
4. Dr. Adam Mrocza - Institute of Tourism, Academy of Physical Education.
5. Dipl. ing. Jozef Omylak - Director, Babia Gora National Park
6. Ing. Jozef Trnka - Director, Protected Landscape Area "Horna Orava" (Slovakia)

Employees of Babia Góra National Park participated as technical staff:

1. Maciej Mażul,
2. Jacek Płaza,
3. Agnieszka Urbaniec,
4. Tomasz Urbaniec.

External participants, who were present during the excursion (October 04).

A. Przystół's school.

Name	Function	Organisation	
Stanisław Wilk	Member of the board	Association for Sustainable Development of Przystół	NGO

B. Museum - The Orava Ethnographic Park.

Name	Function	Organisation	
Małgorzata Karaś	Vice-director	Babia Góra Nationalpark	Institution
Magdalena Kostrzewa-Smreczak	President	The Society of the Friends of the Orava	NGO
Dr. Emil Kowalczyk	Chairman	Gmina council of Lipnica Wielka	Self-government
Marian Kulawiak	President	Association of the Friends of the Babia Góra	NGO
Roman Latoń	Forest inspector	State Forests, Nowy Targ Division	Enterprise
Mariusz Murzyński	Head of Community	Gmina of Lipnica Wielka	Self-government
Józef Omylak	Director	Babia Góra National Park	Institution
Emilia Rutkowska	Director	Museum - The Orava Ethnographic Park	Institution
Robert Trnka	Director	Protected Landscape Area Horna Orava, Slovakia	Institution
Dr. Antoni Wontorczyk	Head of Community	Gmina of Jablonka	Self-government

ANNEX II

WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

Tuesday 1st October	Arrival of Participants
17.00 - 19.00	• Registration
19.30	• Reception and Potlach • Organisers Welcoming Remarks

Wednesday 2nd October	Workshop Day I
07.30 - 08.30	Breakfast
09.30 - 09.45	Host country's Introductory Remarks: Tourism in Babia Gora
09.45 - 10.10	Organising Partner's Introductory Remarks: Use of the CBD-Guidelines and the ecosystem approach Workshop goal, Programme, Expected outcomes, Introduction of Participants
10.00 - 10.30	Break
10.30 - 12.30	Planning for the working groups 1. Intention and reason for WG Themes 2. Background Documents 3. Discussion of work tasks and expected results
12.30 - 14.00	Lunch and Presentation of local initiatives for sustainable development
14.00 - 16.00	Theme: Tools for the implementation of sustainable tourism in the CEE Countries Working Group I: The Ecosystem Approach and Mountains
	Working Group II: The International Year of Ecotourism and the International Year of Mountains (Quebec Declaration, Declarations IYM) and the CBD Guidelines
	Working Group III: Man and Biosphere Programme (Seville Strategy) and the European Charter
16.00 - 16.30	Coffee break
16.30 - 18.00	Continuation of working groups
18.00 - 19.00	Presentation of results of the working groups
19.30	Dinner

Thursday, 3rd October	Workshop Day II
07.30 - 08.30	Breakfast
08:30 - 08.45	Short Resume of the first workshop day Programme, goals and tasks of today: discussion and detailed work on potential strategies
08:45 - 10.15	Presentation of case studies and discussion
	- Aggtelek
	- Polana
	- Sumava
10:15 - 10:45	Break
10:45 - 11:45	Presentation of case studies and discussion
	- Babia Gora
	- Golija Studenica
11:45 - 12:30	Planning for the working groups 1. Intention and reason for WG Themes 2. Background Documents 3. Discussion of work tasks and expected results
12.30 -14.00	Lunch
14.00 - 15:30	Working Group I: Potential instruments for the implementation of sustainable tourism in CEE
	Working Group II: Use of the CBD-Guidelines and the ecosystem approach
15:30 - 16:00	Break
16:00 - 18:00	Continuation of working groups
18:00 - 19:00	Presentation of results of the working groups
	Discussion
19.30	Dinner

Friday, 4th October	Workshop Day III
7.30 - 8.30	Breakfast
8:45 - 16.00	Excursion including lunch
16:30 - 18.00	Discussion of recommendation and results in two working groups (continuation of Thursday)
	Working Group I: Strategies for the implementation of sustainable tourism in CEE (workshop day first)
	Working Group II: Recommendations for the implementation of the guidelines
18:00 - 18:30	Break
18:30 - 20.00	Discussion, final editing and adoption of three documents: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategies for the implementation of sustainable tourism in CEE 2. Recommendations for the implementation of the guidelines 3. Declaration IYM and IYE (draft version distributed)
20:00	Dinner

Saturday, 5th October	Workshop Day IV
7.30 - 8.30	Breakfast
9.00	Final Meeting
10.00	Reimbursement of travel expenses
	Departure

ANNEX III

Case Studies Summary

The authors of the case studies of the biosphere reserves Aggtelek, Babia Gora, Polana, Sumava and others (Berezinsky, Crimea, Golija Studenica) were asked to use a proposed common structure for their table of content. The addresses of the authors are listed in the list of participants.

Each case study includes a general description of the area (ecosystems, flora and fauna and geographical borders) and the human dimension i.e. description of different positive/negative human impacts and tourist activities. Besides they give an explanation of the management structure and existing or planned tourism and biodiversity strategies as well as a brief description of the institutional and legal framework. At the end appears a list of references and some additional information (photo material, maps) The following pages give a short overview about the main aspects of each case study.

Aggtelek National Park - Hungary

Title: Tourism potentials and impacts in protected mountain areas

Authors: Judit Sándor & Zsuzsa Tolnay

1. Geographical borders

The Aggtelek National Park is situated in the northern part of Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county. It mainly covers the region of the Aggtelek-Rudabánya Mountains (19 947 hectares altogether). The National Park consists of two parts. One are the Aggtelek Mountains, having a 57-km-long common border with the Slovak Karst National Park (2002). The other part includes the Rudabánya Mountains and the SW-NE striking range of the Szalonna Mountains with the Peak of Esztramos near their northern edge.

2. Description of ecosystems

The vegetation of the Aggtelek National Park can be divided into two parts situated on the two sides of the Aggtelek-Teresztenye-Perkupa line of villages. North of this borderline a specific karst-flora and a calciphilous vegetation of limestone-hills are found, while to the south of it a gravelly layer covers the limestone base sediment where plant associations similar to the West European heathlands live on acidic soil.

77% of the total area of the ANP is covered by forests and the majority belong to the Hornbeam-Sessile oak association. Due to the transitional position of the region (it is in the overlap of several different biogeographical influences), the microclimatic characteristics of the karstic relief, have resulted in an extremely high habitat and species diversity.

3. Main human impact

Active forest management is present on less than 50 % of the NP area, and it is likely to be further reduced. The main principle of the forest management is to conserve the natural ecosystems, vegetation, flora and fauna of the karst area, and to develop and manage semi-natural forests of indigenous species.

The hunting activity is seasonal in the region, it is active during belling and beatings. The infrastructural accessories of hunting, having impact on nature include: salt grounds, feed troughs and high stands.

The karst area was covered by forests till the Middle Age, when extensive farming began spreading, which led to the formation of a cultural landscape with mosaic structure. But the traditional sustainable land use methods have almost disappeared by today.

4. Tourism impact

Tourism is concentrated in time and space, most people come during summer, and they usually visit the most frequented sites. The positive influences include enhancement of the environmental awareness in the region, infrastructural development, etc. Involvement of local people - as e.g. tourist guides - into the work of the National Park Directorate is essential.

5. Main problems

The uneven tourist distribution leads to the overloading of the carrying capacity of certain villages, while the tourism potential of other sites remains unexploited. Negative impacts of tourism are e.g. increased air and water pollution, harms made to the natural assets, flora and fauna and erosion. As well there are disturbances of certain areas, like excessive mushroom picking and a growing network of dust roads.

Another problem is the very high unemployment rate and a lack of environmental education and high qualification of local people, so that a great number of people from other parts of the country are employed.

Uncontrolled hunting and the disappearance of traditional agricultural methods are also threats to the biodiversity.

6. Main solutions/planning

The park has compiled a visitor management plan which is based on the nature conservation management plan and the nature conservation zoning system and also aimed at including the immediate surroundings of the NP and the biosphere reserve.

Objectives of nature conservation management are for example the establishment of an outer buffer zone and extension of the protected area, the realisation of zonal management (based on vegetation mapping), maintaining of the traditional agriculture and stopping hunting as a sport activity.

Babia Góra National Park / Biosphere Reserve - Poland

Title: Tourism and its impacts on biodiversity

Authors: Tomasz Lamorski & Piotr Dabrowski

1. Geographical borders

The Babia Góra range is situated between the Jalowicka pass and the Polgórzanka Valley to the west, the Lipnicka pass (the Krowiarki pass) at 1012 m a.s.l and the valley of the Syhleć Stream to the east, and the valleys of the Skawica River and its tributary (the Jaworzynka) to the north. The south limit of Babia Góra is not distinct, and is marked out by the level of 800 m a.s.l., on the basis of an agreement.

2. Description of ecosystems

There are mixed mountain and highland ecosystems with complex zonation. The forest covers 95% of the total area of the national park. The core area is characterised of primeval forests and alpine meadows, the

buffer area of near natural forest and the transition area of meadows, pastures, production forest and near natural forest.

3. Main human impact

The zonation of the biosphere reserve reflects different degrees of human influence. While the core area is excluded from human impact, in the transition zone woods and forests are a key public asset as a source of widely used renewable raw materials and significantly contribute to the development prospects of the vicinity of the national park.

The area of traditional extensive land use decreases steadily, which usually leads to the conversion of the land into forest. The living standard in the region is much lower than the national average and unemployment is high (over 20%).

4. Tourism impact

The characteristic feature of tourism here is its seasonality having its peak during summer months. Positive impact of tourism on protection of biodiversity is rarely noticed directly during tourists' visit in protected areas because they do not actively take part in protective activities and the time of their visit is limited. However, in the long run, the impact made on local societies is positive and conditions the course of changes which take place in the period of economic transformation.

5. Main problems

Babia Góra is subject to uncontrolled tourism activities that are aggravated by the fact that the legal and institutional frameworks do not provide enough support for biodiversity objectives in relation to tourism development, as well as the lack of coherent tourism development strategies and co-ordination among different stakeholders. Local people are not well informed about sustainable tourism, but show an interest in increased tourism development. The cessation of the traditional land cultivation results in extinction of many species and in decreasing of biodiversity.

6. Main solutions/planning

Since 2001 exists the "Project of Nature Conservation Plan" for the Babia Góra National Park and the strategy of biodiversity conservation is based on applying methods of protection of a specified area. To control the tourist activities, they introduced 2001 the regulations of the BGNP accessibility for tourist activities.

Furthermore, active protection measures are introduced in order to stimulate traditional agricultural land use.

Pol'ana Protected Landscape Area - Biosphere Reserve - Slovakia

Title: The Tourism Potentials and Impacts in Protected Mountain Areas

Authors: Magdalena Sorokova, Ph.D. & Viliam Pichler, Ph.D.

1. Geographical borders

The project area is located in Central Slovakia and it belongs to the Central Slovakian Volcanic Mountain System of the Western Carpathians. The geographical co-ordinates of middle point are 48 degrees 39' northern latitude, 19 degrees 29' eastern latitude. The Pol'ana PLA/BR covers administrative borders of following districts: Zvolen, Detva, Banská Bystrica and Brezno and following villages: Cierny Balog, Detva, Dúbravy, Hrinová, Hrochoť, Hronec, L'ubietová, Ocová, Poniky, Povrazník, Sihla, Strelníky, and Valaská. The project area is identical with borders of the Pol'ana PLA/BR.

2. Description of ecosystems

Pol'ana Biosphere Reserve is characterised by a blend of thermophilous and mountain plant species. Nearly 90% of the area is covered by forest reaching from the 2. to the 7. forest vegetation zone with the majority of conifers. The ecosystems of mires, springs and waterlogged floodplains along mountain streams are shrinking, and their plant species belong to the most valuable and endangered biota.

3. Main human impact

85% of the area is forested, that includes management forests, protection forests and forests with special purposes.

The PLA/BR has an almost identical boundary with Pol'ana Protected Hunting Reserve. There is an annual hunting season for 3 or 4 specimens of the brown bear.

The agriculture in the project area has a long tradition; in the 18th century it represented the main way of living. At the end of the 18th century typical scattered settlements - *lazy* (phonetically resembling word "les" meaning "forest" in Slovak) - were created. Even if these settlements were built up on deforested areas they represent a positive synergetic relation between man and nature. The arable land was gradually compartmentalised into texture of terraces-like fields. The whole area is sparsely populated and it belongs among the less urbanized protected areas in Slovakia.

4. Tourism impact

Mountain biking is actually the main recreational/tourism activity in the reserve. But tourism isn't the major activity of the project area and it is only a supplementary activity, although the potential is very high.

5. Main problems

Logging is the main threat to biodiversity in the reserve. The major problem relating to tourism is cycling. Although it is permitted only on marked cycling trails, cyclists often do not keep to these marked trails and they enter the area of Nature Reserves or National Nature Reserve with the highest degree of protection.

Poor interest in agricultural land by local people arises problems: the arable land loses its value and at the same time there is a threat that the picturesque and scenic view of the landscape, which is often a destination object of many tourists, will disappear.

It is also necessary to solve completely the problem of land ownership, as most of the land is without ownership ranking.

6. Main solutions/planning

At present, there are no visitor management plans or local agenda 21 existing for the Pol'ana PLA/BR, but a visitor management plan is under preparation.

There is co-operation with NGOs and voluntary organisations e.g. KOZA, which promotes sustainable way of farming that helps to protect the biodiversity or support environmental education of local inhabitants.

There is also an IUCN Project "Biodiversity Protection in the Protected Landscape Area - Biosphere Reserve Pol'ana and Management of its Grasslands" and an "Action Plan for Pol'ana Biosphere Reserve for 2001 - 2002" aimed at recognition of problems in the field of biodiversity protection, environmental education, management and regional planning.

Šumava Biosphere Reserve - Czech Republic

Title: The Tourism Potentials and Impacts in Protected Mountain Areas

Authors: Vladimir Silovsky; Martin Cihar, Viktor Trebicky, Jindriska Stankova

1. Geographical borders

The Šumava Biosphere Reserve includes a substantial part of the north-east-facing amount of Bohemian Forest, a large Hercynian middle-mountain range to the north of the Alps, almost at the geographical centre of Europe. The main mountain ridge, barely apparent in places, straddles the border between Czech Republic and Germany or, in the southernmost part, Austria.

2. Description of ecosystems

The area of Šumava and Bavarian Forest is the most extensive continuous forest complex of Central Europe with well preserved natural and semi-natural ecosystems including highly valuable biotopes for endangered species and communities. Important habitat types are represented by mountain and valley peatbogs and natural, or 'almost' natural mountain forests.

3. Main human impact

Because forest ecosystems cover 80% of the total area of the NP, forestry represents the main activity from many points of view. The utmost goal of the management of forests within the Šumava NP is the conservation of ecosystems including the conservation of natural processes.

Commercial hunting was cancelled in Šumava NP in 1995 and complete hunting management has been done as non-profitable by NP's staff since that time.

Breeding of animals without milk production for market has brought a new system of agriculture to the mountains. The land is used more extensively now and the pressures on landscape have decreased substantially. Now we can speak more about landscape maintenance than about agricultural production. The Šumava's pastures and meadows were created completely by man and they have contributed to the picturesque impression of local landscape.

4. Tourism impact

The number of tourists has increased rapidly and their interest caused the development of accompanying services. The opening of the border has brought new form of cross-border tourism using the territory of both neighbours to common presentation of the region. Winter season plays an important role for local tourism business.

Many regional projects are focused to revive feasts and old traditions to strengthen the culture-historical aspect of the region and fulfil a gap in local tourism market.

5. Main problems

There is no official planning and management structure for the Šumava BR, and no special paid staff. The reserve has also problems with overcrowded tourist locations at sites with high biodiversity values.

The reserve, and the included National Park suffer from privatisation in favour of mass tourism infrastructure development, such as downhill- skiing areas with substantive negative impacts on valuable forest ecosystems, including in the core zone of the reserve. This has resulted in decreasing of the park size and conservation objectives. The low level of communication often prevents from finding better solutions contributing to the sustainable life in the region.

6. Main solutions/planning

By the end of the year 2002 the district governments will be cancelled and most of the powers will be taken over by local municipalities. The regional development agency together with regional governments and international programs are expected to bring know-how, new skills, experience and money.

Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve - Belarus

Title: Ecotourism in Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve

Author: Sergey Babitsky

1. Geographical borders

Located in European-Siberian region of Palearctics the reserve now occupies an area of 1140 sq. km. Berezinsky reserve is a part of the Berezina, the Dnieper's tributary basin, and partially of the river Esa basin, which is a tributary of the Ula that runs to the Western Dvina. Thus, the reserve is situated at the watershed of the Baltic and the Black seas.

2. Description of ecosystems

The reserve is characterised by river and lake ecosystems as well as forest ecosystems.

All types of forest swamps can be found here. Nowhere in Western Europe can one see swamp systems with vegetation as varied as here. The richness of the virgin flora is due to the long-term protection. There are about 800 species of vascular plants, 216 species of moss, 198 species of lichen, 463 species of fungi in the reserve.

3. Main human impact

A forestry organisation exists since 1928. Unfortunately due to the lack of financing the reserve had to turn down the proposal to implement a complex forestry organisation of the reserve.

Hunting is of great importance in the Berezinsky biosphere reserve. Due to the enlargement of the hunting ground in 1998, the area now is 29.3 thousand hectares, and the organisation of a new hunting ground Berezina (34.2 thousand) in 2001 increased the potential of hunting tourism significantly.

4. Tourism impact

Hunting tourism has been practised since 1982 and is the main tourism activity in the biosphere reserve. Due to new contracts signed with Western European hunting agencies since 1999, its economic importance is increasing in recent years, while ecotourism still plays a minor role in the reserve. The organisation of hunting tourism remains for the reserve to be most economically viable compared to other forms of tourism.

5. Main problems

One of the main problems is the lack of financial resources, what is shown e.g. in poor infrastructure. Another problem is the absence of comprehensive management plans as well as a lack of legal frameworks. Low professionalism of people involved in tourism and weak communication with local population is also to notice.

The ecological department of the reserve participates in the organisation of seminars and workshops. This work as well as ecological propaganda in the media needs improvement.

6. Main solutions/planning

Alongside with nature protection and scientific research, ecological education is considered as a priority in the activities of the reserve.

There are guidelines for information exchange and advertisement, which include for example the collection and co-ordination of specific ecologically oriented information.

Yalta Mountain - Wood Natural Reserve - Ukraine

Title: Results and prospects of development of ecological tourism in
Crimea

**by the example of the Yalta mountain - wood natural reserve
and other objects of natural-reserved fund of Ukraine**

Authors: Natalija Kornilova & Yuri Rasin -
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1. Geographical borders

The Crimean territory is a southern Black Sea region of Ukraine. The northern border of the Yalta mountain - Forest Nature Reserve (YMFNR) passes Aj-Petry, Yalta and Nikita yajlass. The eastern border goes downwards to the sea on a southern macroslope of mountains in area of Gurzuf, western at Foros. The southern border of the reserve passes above a circle motorway Sevastopol - Simferopol to the sea.

2. Description of ecosystems

The Crimean region has coastal and mountain ecosystems. The forest ecosystem of the YMFNR has 3 altitudinal belts: Starting from the seashore - 400/450 m large areas of original rocky oak forest can be

found. A wide belt of the Crimean pine forest occupies altitudes from 400 m till 900 m. The third group of the forest belts of 900 - 1200 m is forming on table lands by Koch pine, common pine and typical beech forest. The tops are dominated by specific meadow steppes.

3. Main human impact

The reserve is located in a dense populated area of Crimea with numerous settlements, developed systems of roads and tracks, in an environment of farmland (vineyards, tobacco and plantations).

4. Tourism impact

The Crimean area has one of the highest concentration of ecotourism development in the country. Besides there is an increasing demand of the population to rest in natural wood areas.

5. Main problems

One main problem is, that at the seaside and mountain parts of Crimea, which are one of the most attractive and vulnerable areas at the same time, the maximal carrying capacity is attained. Besides, at administrative level the concept of ecological sound tourism which would generate the basic tourism development framework is still not accepted.

The most significant factor of negative anthropogenic influence on protected ecosystems are forest fires. Further problems are the absence of a buffer zone, which protects the reserve area against trans-boundary negative influences, relative easy access to the reserve and a dense populated area.

6. Main solutions/planning

To protect the reserve against forest fires, the goal is the organisation of a fire-prevention protection service of woods and their protection against wreckers and illnesses.

The use of the territory of the reserve has to stay within the carrying capacity which is annually elaborated by the Ministry of ecology and natural resources of Ukraine. A new direction of nature protection activity is the development of scientific substantiations of criteria for limits on tourism. One supposed measure is the carrying out of ecological educational work, including for the purposes of ecological tourism.

"Golija-Studenica" Biosphere Reserve - Serbia

Title: The tourism potentials and impacts in protected mountain areas

Author: Jovan Popesku

1. Description of ecosystems

Golija Nature Park is a complex mosaic of different ecosystems (lake, aquatic, forests, shrubs, meadows, marshes, bogs) forming a unified entity of closely related habitats, communities, populations, entire ecosystems and numerous transitional types.

2. Main human impact

Local population cleared forests through centuries, transforming woodland into large pastures, meadows and some fields. This land use is still practised in the region.

The core area is completely protected and only devoted for monitoring and research.

The principal land use in the buffer zone has been forestry, pasturing and collecting secondary forest products. Major activities in the transition area are forestry, hunting, extensive livestock rearing and agriculture. The dispersed rural communities of the transition zone show an ongoing process of depopulation.

3. Tourism impact

Tourism is in its initial stage of development. Although tourism potentials are high, they are very little used and there is a lack of infrastructure.

4. Main problems

The major problem for the area is the non-existence of co-ordination in the various fields of sustainable development, the lack of legal frameworks and management plans and the poor environmental education of local people.

A further problem is the bad economic situation and a lack of investments in the region, which is also shown in poor infrastructure.

5. Main solutions/planning

A management plan for the reserve is under development in order to improve the situation. To promote a sustainable tourism development it is essential to carry out educational measures for the local population.