



STRATEGIC PAPER CROSS-BORDER ECOLOGICAL NETWORK

Implemented by:







CROSS-BORDER ECOLOGICAL NETWORK

BORN - BORderless Nature. Biodiversity protection and development of Prokletije and Bjeshkët e Nemuna Natural Parks

"This publication has been produced with the assistance of the European Union Office in Kosovo.

The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of Trentino con il Kossovo and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European

An EU funded project managed
By the European Union Office in Kosovo







Contents

CROSS-BORDER ECOLOGICAL NETWORK	3
Introduction	3
About BorN project	
• •	
What is an ecological network?	د
Cross-Border Ecological Network Kosovo - Montenegro	4











CROSS-BORDER ECOLOGICAL NETWORK

Introduction

This document is redacted in order to describe synthetically the structure, the conclusions and the management needs of the ecological cross-border network Kosovo-Montenegro, which has been identified within the project BORN (Borderless Nature. Biodiversity protection and development of Bjeshkët e Nemuna and Prokletije Natural Parks)

About BorN project

The overall objectives of the project BORN - BORderless Nature. Biodiversity protection and development of Prokletije and Bjeshkët e Nemuna Natural Parks, are to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the project area and in specific the Natural Parks of Prokletije (MN) and Bjeshkët e Nemuna (KS), fostering the sustainable socio-economic development through cross-border cooperation among institutions, CSOs and population, since biodiversity both in Kosovo and Montenegro is in danger, due to illegal activities of timber trade, overuse of medicinal plant species and uncontrolled land development during the conflict of the '90s, and logging, fires, illegal constructions nowadays, cooperation in environmental protection is among both countries priorities.

What is an ecological network?

An ecological network is an interconnectional system of settlements (habitats) which aims to the protection of the biodiversity in a geographic area.

An ecological network as an objective, protects, strengthens and creates a system of connections and exchanges between isolated areas and natural elements, by fighting in this way the fragmentation and negative effects on the biodiversity.









An ecological network consists of various elements such as:

- **The central zone**: Many natural and outdoor areas which are, or may be, protected as a park or reserve quality;
- **The zone spaces**: located around the central areas to protect the integrity;
- **The connecting corridors**: linear structures which link the central areas between each other and with the surrounding territory, representing the main element of ecological networks, which also enable movement of species;
- The gathering zones: small areas which receive species in transit or where specific microenvironments could be created;

Cross-Border Ecological Network Kosovo - Montenegro

BORN is a project coordinated as a cross-border between Kosovo and Montenegro for the management of the protected areas and economic development in the agro-agriculture and tourism sectors, including institutional, economic and research subjects in Kosovo, Montenegro and Trentino (Italy).

Based on the BORN project, it was preceded with the activity by finding a cross-border ecological network, focused in two protected areas of Prokletije in Montenegro and Bjeshkët e Nemuna, Kosovo. This cross-border ecological network is developing itself in the "bottom-up" way thanks to the active cooperation between stakeholders in Kosovo and Montenegro who have started a process called "participatory designing", giving a social value to this network.

Which are the proposed objectives by the cross-border ecological network

The cross-border ecological network proposes:

- Maintaining, as far as possible the increase of the biodiversity heritage within the habitats, animals and vegetation that characterize the border area between Kosovo and Montenegro;
- The growth of scientific knowledge on geographic districts in which it takes place, through systematic data collection and by archiving them as well;
- Growth and support of all social and economic activities that are in balance with the natural environment, agriculture, livestock, handicraft and sustainable tourism;
- Favouring the social use of natural goods;
- Increasing the level of awareness of the local communities about the importance and value of the natural environment in which they live;
- Improvement of the situations in case of environmental degradation.









Which are the elements that constitute a cross-border ecological network

Cross-border ecological network consists of the following elements:

- The central zones: which are present in the territory of both national parks, Bjeshkët e Nemuna (Kosovo) and Prokletije (Montenegro);
- **Points of particular importance**: within two national parks and the surrounding areas have been defined several areas of great value where there is an increase of species of animals and vegetation. These points are represented by:
- The mountain meadows,
- The meadows in valleys,
- The chestnut forest formations (Castanea sativa),
- The streams of water characterized by an elevated degree of the nature of water quality,
- Caves.

Besides the two last categories, all typologies of the other points of particular importance consist of semi-natural habitat whose existence depends on human activity, agriculture, livestock, forestry, which have set a valuable balance to the natural environment;

A special category of the points of particular importance is also the definition inside the town of Peja which coincides with some of the key areas of the green urban areas, and it is in direct connection with the ecological corridor represented by the River Lumbardhi in Peja.

The connecting corridors: They are the so-called "ecological corridors" that enable the connection between the central areas of the surrounding territory. They have a special importance, especially in the Dukagjin Region in Kosovo. These connectivity corridors are of two types:

Linear ecological corridors, characterized by streams of water and by compresses limited vegetation;

Ecological corridors in mosaic forms formed by extensive compresses villages, fields and rich pastures with natural and environmental elements, such as with flora and fauna, fences, trees, forests, streams of water, stone walls etc.

Areas of environmental restoration, which as a result of the economic activity or the great attendance of tourists, become sources of pollution and environmental degradation.

Elements of environmental distribution, characterized by visits which will be made concrete by the recreational and didactical functions which a cross-border ecological network must have.

How to manage the cross-border ecological network;

Më poshtë janë të shënuara të gjitha elementet e qëndrueshme dhe të dobëta të cilat karakterizojnë rrjetin ekologjik ndërkufitar, si dhe mënyrat përmes së cilave rritet qëndrueshmëria dhe shmangen dobësitë. Këto elemente dalin në pah falë analizës SWOT (S – Qëndrueshmëria; W – Dobësitë; O – Mundësitë; T – Rreziqet), të realizuar nga grupe të interesit të Kosovës dhe Malit të Zi.







Positive elements	How to increase them
Elevated level of biodiversity	Inside the network There should be a policy of active and passive conservation of the diverse number of species of animals and vegetation that make this area unique.
The presence of endangered species of fauna, such as the Balkan lynx (Lynx lynx balcanica), the brown bear (Ursus arctos arctos) and the Eurasian wolf (Canis lupus)	In the territory network, are present small and important population of these species of high scientific and conservation value, which will be given a special importance to those, in order for them to protect and multiply themselves.
The presence of medicinal plants	Among many plants there are curative plants from which it is possible to prepare medical compounds. It is a precious resource which seeks attention.
Landscapes and natural monuments	The landscape of mountain ranges that divides the border between Kosovo and Montenegro has an absolute value, as well as many other natural elements that characterize them, such as, caves, waterfalls and streams of water, mountain lakes and valleys, trees etc. It is talked about natural emergencies, which thanks to a prudent growth, could become didactic points for visits and / or recreation, also as a result and a funding source for local communities.
Water resources	The great wealth of water which characterizes the mountains between Kosovo and Montenegro could become an important source of important resources for the local communities, if used prudently. Lakes, springs and rivers give life to the beautiful landscape and natural value. The rich amount of water, also, supplies water to the network of irrigation canals for agricultural fields in valleys and plains. These waterways deserve attention, not only because of an agricultural importance, but also as a representative of precious habitats of many species of animals and vegetation.
National Parks	The existence of two national parks, Bjeshkët e Nemuna, in Kosovo, and Prokletije in Montenegro, facilitates the implementation of the policies for the environmental protection and sustainable development.
The possibilities of creating corridors between Kosovo and Montenegro	The presence of a territory with a high natural value, just near the border that separates the three countries, could represent a pretext towards a concerted dialogue to finalize the development of the nature protection policy and sustainable development.







	Wortenegro - Rosovo
European Green Belt	The European Green Belt is a cross-border natural corridor which follows the so-called "iron curtain", from the Scandinavian peninsula from the north to south in the Balkans.
	European Green Belt aims of nature conservation and sustainable development of a trans-national viewpoint, by harmonizing human activities with the natural environment and increase opportunities for socio-economic development for the local communities.
	The spirit with which the concept of European Green Belt is developed under the slogan "Borders divide, and nature unites", complies with the concept of the project BORN, especially when one of the balkan ways of the European Green Belt follows the boundary between Kosovo, Monteneg and Albania.
	Having clear that the cross-border ecological network represents the best concrete overlapping concepts that the European Green Belt countains, and as such it should be contiguous with other realities which become part of the European Green Belt.
Environmental laws	The territory of the network can become a privileged area in which to experiment the application of environmental laws codified in the Kosovo and Montenegro legislations.
The lack of infrastructure	The lack of an important infrastructure in most of the territory of the network, proves the high level of the wild environment.
	What at first glance could seem as a handicap to the territory, it could be turned into an advantage for the development of the green tourism.
	Outside the network
	The existing of a network and of management needs may
Fundraisings	constitute opportunities of access to specific funding,
The cooperation between institutions	nationally and also internationally. Thanks to the various public institutional networks, which have competence in different areas in the territory, could be provide dialogues and cooperation.
The empowerment of the Non-Governmental Organizations	A proper network management is done through cooperation between public institutions and NGOs operating in the territory. The importance of the role of the NGOs is an important factor to increase their awareness regarding the capabilities and opportunities.
The awareness of the local residents	The awareness that local communities have about some important values that the territory, in which they live, represents a so-called "intangible good" and which should be developed.
	The network, however, can be in the best way developed, only through full acceptance by the residents.







Awareness campaign	The network must be transformed into a real opportunity to develop awareness campaigns on nature conservation, sustainable social and economic development, directed by public and private institutions.
Environmental education in schools	New generations represent the main element on which to invest, in order to achieve the conservation of nature in a longer term. The network, habitats, plants and animals can turn into valuable pretexts for projects and environmental didactics, which could be inserted organically into school curricula.
"Green Corridors"	The network territory does not include the general amount of interest of the environmental areas, this means, even beyond it there are natural environments of particular importance. The places where these areas are present are connected to the network through the identification of suitable connectivity corridors (green corridors). These links of corridors have a great importance in maintaining the ecological permeability of the territory and should be the object of particular attention in the phase of urban planning, in order to avoid expansions of residential areas, construction of new roads and the breeding of agricultural cultivations which may alter these features.
W aste M anagement	The management and the processing of waste generated by human activity should have special attention. In this issues, should be applied the best, modern practices in order to eliminate them, trying to limit as much as possible the waste production, and in the other hand, trying to promote the waste classification, the collection of the energy and materials (important and not important) and the recycling in order to avoid as much waste dumping in the collecting points of it.









Rrjeti duhet të shndërrohet në një laborator të cilit i jepet përparësi që ku do të eksperimentohen format shpikjeje në puqje mes dy E-jave të mëdha (Ekonomi dhe Ekologji).

Local Economic Development

Rrjeti donë të tregojë se si zhvillimi shoqëror, por mbi të gjitha ai ekonomik dhe mbrojtja e natyrës, nuk janë koncepte kundërthënëse. Përkundrazi, një zhvillim socio-ekonomik i qëndrueshëm është plotësisht në përputhje me konservimin e natyrës. Për të arritur një rezultat të tillë, në rrjet, duhet t'u jepet përparësi aktiviteteve të eko-turizmit, turizmit rural, promovimit të prodhimeve lokale dhe natyrore. Territori i rrjetit, në të vërtet, posedon një sërë të mundësive të cilat duhet të shprehen në mënyrën më të duhur. Për të arritur këtë rezultat është i nevojshëm një planifikim dhe zbatimi i kujdesshëm i politikave ekonomike lokale, dhe të njëjtat duhet të ndahen në mesin e komunitetit në rrjetin në të cilin ata jetojnë.

Ambientet e vetë- qëndrueshmërisë

NEGATIVE ELEMENTS	HOW TO NEUTRALIZE THEM
	Inside the Network
Waste	The problem of waste disposal in the environment, which is observed in the eyes of the visitors of the network, must be addressed and resolved. In this point, we must consider the collection and management of such waste so that such behavior, namely waste disposal, won't come from local residents nor visitors.
	Special attention should be paid to the points where current public premises are located, where this phenomenon is the biggest issue.
Inadequate treatment of sewage (wastewater)	Within waste treatment, special attention is given parts occurred in the valleys of watercourses, where different sources of pollution are present, that harm the quality of water which would otherwise be of an excellent quality.
Ineffective management of protected areas	The staff in charge of the management of the protected areas has no needed capabability in order to develop in the best way possible a sensetive activity which starts from the observation of the territory up to poaching illegal cutting of trees, then escorting visitors to the mountains, to give lessons on nature, and neither monitoring the fauna and flora. To avoid these shortcomings, it is necessary to foresee the implementation of training courses and professional activities.



Trentino con il Kossovo





Differences between local and central government bodies	The existence of different visions and overlapping competencies are causing misunderstandings and problems that hinder the implementation of a proper management of the network territory. It is necessary to overcome these differences in a constructive way by the entities involved.
The lack of a strategic vision	A correct management of the network is based on the existence of a long term vision in time and space (cross-border) which lays down, the principles according to which the policies of the conservation of nature and sustainable socio-economic development should be inspired.
	To avoid this absences, it is necessary to develop strategic plans and documents.
Illegal constructions and lack of urban planning	The construction and the engineering changes outside the legal laws and regulations, is a problem. The solution may be required in a private territorial construction planning, according to their clear and defined norms in order to avoid the "anarchy in constructions", as well as the surveillance and detention of abusive constructions.
	It could be appropriate for the realization, for the benefit of the project designers, a number of constructions, in order to avoid the realization of dissonant constructions.
Poaching	Illegal killing of animals is a detrimental practice to biodiversity conservation.
	The elimination of this phenomenon can be done by increasing surveillance of the territory and punish illegal behavior, but also by promoting a gradual growth process of local hunting seasons.
Deforestation and degradation of vegetative landscape	Forest management, if done properly and according to their so-called "natural afforestation", does not conflict with the protection of biodiversity. The situation, however, change if we have a forest management associated only with economic and finalize terms to achieve the maximum benefit from the cutting and sale of trees. In the second case the negative consequences will be seen towards animals, the vegetation and the landscape.
	To avoid this condition it is necessary for the realization of professional courses and activities for the staff who has to deal with the forest management, together with a proper observation of the territory to prevent the illegal logging phenomenon.
Outside the Network	
Lack of funds	The existence of networks and its management measures should become an important push to attract the necessary funds through which they put into practice.









Lack of institutional collaborations	Read as said above about the differences between local and central government bodies.
Non appliance of the laws	It is a problem which is related to the cultural growth of the society in general, in order to understand the real needs of the laws and regulations adopted to protect the nature.
	In addition, all those who are forced to obey the laws should be informed about the importance of respecting the norms which protect nature.
Hydroelectric power development	Hydroelectric power falls in the domain of renewable and "clean" forms of energy and as a result it also could be used in that way. However, the realization of a hydroelectric plant, even in the modest dimensions, can cause permanent damage to aquatic ecosystems.
	This reflection relates especially to the case of the territory of the network, where water bodies not only represent very important elements of the natural heritage, but also represent tourist attractions. And that is the opportunity for the existing plants to apply compensation procedures and minimizing the negative effects.
	Regarding the plants in ongoing projection, it should develop a thorough evaluation of the report "environmental cost - economic benefits", which can be accessed always taking into account the inevitable negative effects on watercourses.
Extinction of species due to hunting	If developed according to modern methods and animals that can carry the pressure of hunting season, the hunting is not inconsistent with the conservation of biodiversity.
	But, hunting in the form of "extortion" is a way of exploitation of the territory that is in stark contradiction to the proper management of the network. A thorough survey of the territory to counter illegal hunting and implementation, in coordination with local hunting stages, modalities lasting benefits of hunting season can be an alternative for solving this problem.
	The territory of the network contains several species of particular scientific value and conservation that in the
The risk of extinction of rare species	current situation are rare. To enable their survival necessary
	monitoring projects which make possible the collection of data on the presence and the distribution of these species
	necessary for designing and realize effective protection plans.









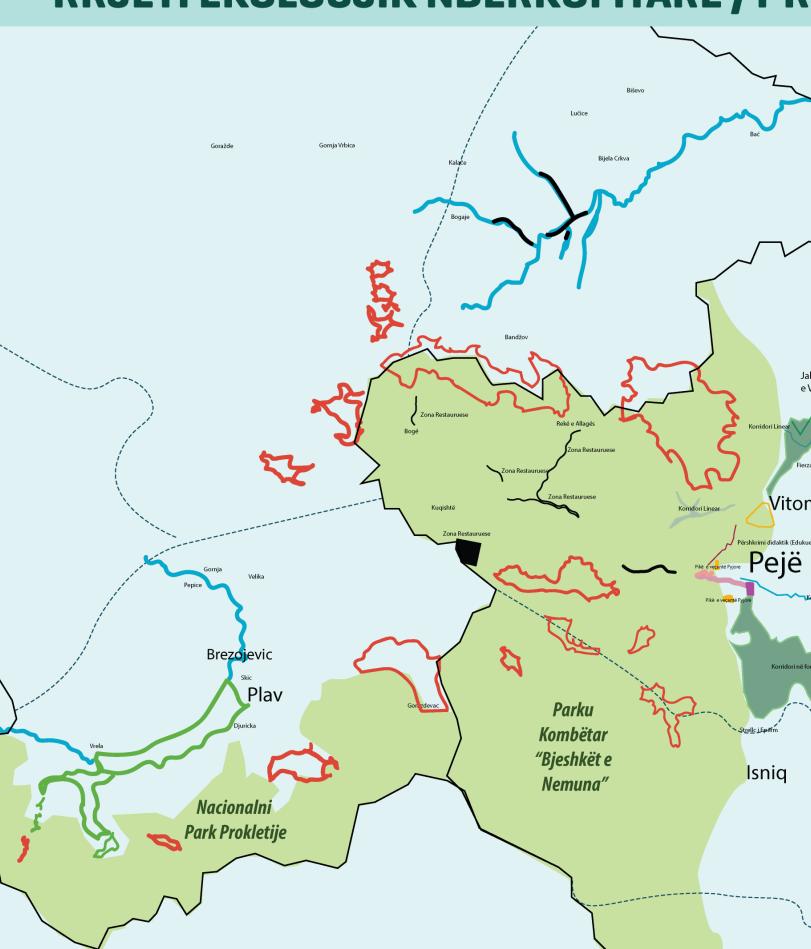








RRJETI EKOLOGJIK NDËRKUFITARË / PR



REKOGRANIČNA EKOLOŠKA MREŽA

