

Stakeholders Involvement Plan in the Republic of North Macedonian protected areas - Pelister NP and Lake Prespa NM as examples

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2. Summary

This plan is introducing ways of communication with stakeholders. It is written for protected area managers and other nature conservation authorities. Open Approach is emphasized in all communication, and stakeholders are encouraged and invited to participate in discussions. Open Approach in protected area management is a good tool in three main processes: 1) planning development of the protected area, 2) in maintaining regular contacts with - at least - the key stakeholders, and 3) in producing information material of the protected area.

When increasing communication with stakeholders, a gradual change in attitudes will take place within the administration as well as among stakeholders. That will lower the threshold for the stakeholders and visitors to approach protected areas and the staff. If successful, it brings stronger local acceptance for the national parks and other protected areas and facilitates designing of the new Natura 2000 sites' network in the country. It is expected that increasing acceptance means also increasing resources for meeting the expectations of protected areas.

The methods presented here are useful in early phases of designing new Natura 2000 sites, as well as in contacts of already established national parks and protected areas with its stakeholders. The main scheme in this paper is the methods to advance from early communication to co-operation, sometimes perhaps up to joint management of protected areas.

Identifying stakeholders and analysing them have a role in the process. In business life grid analysis (figure 1) is used, and it clarifies situation in analysing and prioritizing stakeholders of a protected area. Methods for communication with stakeholders are described in detail. Building trust may not be forgotten, and the protected area manager should have skills to avoid conflicts. However, if facing conflicts, he or she must have skills to manage them.

In demanding projects, a participation plan gives support in planning the communication process. Results from the participation should be carefully documented and the results available for anybody. Activation of stakeholders is important, it can be done e.g. through media and social media. Without investing in activation of people the whole method is rather useless.

Public meeting is a basic method often used. In this paper, detailed instructions are given how to succeed in arranging public meetings with stakeholders. But it is not enough with one public meeting, many meetings and workshops are needed when aiming at committing stakeholders in a permanent co-operation. Several ways to co-operate are presented.

Lack of resources, both human and material, is familiar for protected area managers. Prioritizing work and utilizing resources from all possible projects with external funding can give some help. However, in the long run fighting disagreements and conflicts take more time than creating good atmosphere for co-operation.

In the Case study 1, designing new Natura 2000 sites is considered from the point of view of when and how to involve stakeholders in that preparation process. Methods for participation are the same as described in this paper, but right timing is challenging. Should the stakeholders be informed and invited in the beginning of field inventories? Or would it be better to wait till draft preparing? Or anyway, is the latest moment the right choice, while preparing the national proposal is already in process?

In another report (Case study 2), results from the interviews of 33 stakeholder groups and three protected area managers are presented. Each interview covered five main topics: contacts with protected areas, experience and participation in earlier management planning processes, knowledge

about Natura 2000 program, views and expectations about co-operation with the target areas of this project, and interest in training of management planning and implementing of Natura 2000 program.

The interviews give a good view to the grassroots level. Three recommendations are given based on the interviews: both the expertise of stakeholder and scientific councils and NGOs are resources that should be utilized in management planning and in implementing of Natura 2000, stakeholders should be taken in close collaboration through more active work of the councils and investments in public awareness is needed.

In the Case study 3, is described, how the stakeholder involvement is meant to implement with the project activities. There is also shown the connection between three activities: involvement of stakeholders, management planning process and training. In figure 2 a number of stakeholders are located - as an example - in the workshops that are working with the seven management programs essential in management planning.

By the end of this report, a summary table is drawn up where proposals and recommendations for implementing this plan are gathered and shortly presented. The table also shows linkage in proposals between this report and the Training Plan produced by this Twinning project. In the table the activities are grouped into four groups as follows:

- 1) Continuous co-operation of PA administration and key stakeholders → Public participation on decision making
- 2) Developing communication tools → Public access to information; open dialogue with the society
- 3) Joint implementation of management programs; organising events / activities / projects
- 4) Co-operation with local livelihoods/economy

3. Introduction

One can raise a question “Should we as protected area managers take contact, be active with stakeholders around us”? Would it save time and make work easier if avoiding too many discussions and disputes? Anyway, aren’t we the best experts to decide alone how this part of our natural heritage should be managed? Or - has the time for this already passed? Could we gain better result, improve management and get more friends instead of disagreements if we invest more in Open Approach with the society surrounding us?

National park directors everywhere in Europe have certainly lots of experience in stakeholder co-operation and involvement. Definitely, most of them have been participating in meetings with local people, where the new draft management plan has been presented. Usually there are several kinds of memories from these events: whether no comments have been given by the participants - or the comments available have shown that the message behind the plans has not been understood. Even worse: proposed views about the outlook for the national park are not acceptable to local stakeholders. But sometimes it may happen other way round, the national park staff has been positively surprised by good and constructive discussions where the planner has received several good questions, some useful information of local circumstances and feasible proposals for amendments to the management plan. And the participants have left the meeting venue smilingly and satisfied.

But how to do it? How to find the way to a successful and constructive co-operation with the stakeholders of a protected area? How to get acceptance for the existence of a protected area? And how get them interested in participating actively in the management of a protected area?

The purpose of this plan is to describe the ways how a nature conservation authority or protected area manager should work with stakeholders, and how to get stakeholders along in constructive and positive communication. In preparing this paper, earlier experiences from some European countries are analyzed. In addition, local experiences from Pelister National Park and Lake Prespa Nature Monument have been utilized. However, the methods and recommendations are to be used anywhere in the Republic of North Macedonia, whether it is question of establishing a new Natura 2000 site or developing management of an existing protected area. The aims and goals of the plan are:

- to convince that it is possible, even essential to work together with stakeholders
- to encourage to take in use Open Approach in communication
- to give qualifications for work with stakeholders in designing Natura 2000 sites
- to describe how to identify stakeholders and make a stakeholder analysis
- to recognize stakeholders needs and interests in protected area management
- to build trust
- to avoid conflicts - and to manage them
- to show options for continuous and permanent co-operation and dialogue
- to give support in assessing the resources needed in co-operation with stakeholders

This plan can be used as a toolbox for protected area managers in the Republic of North Macedonia. It is worth of noticing that existing problems shall be discussed, not avoided, even if knowing that all of them can seldom be solved. Everything will not change in one night, tools from the manager's box can be taken in use one by one and test how well they work.

Good communication with the stakeholders takes time, meetings in the evening and events during weekends, all the year around. Hopefully, the protected area managers in the Republic of North Macedonia can be provided with sufficient resources to take care of good co-operation with their stakeholders.

4. Participatory planning and Open Approach

Open Approach in stakeholder co-operation is a method that emphasizes willingness to invite stakeholders along and implements openness and transparency in all communication.

Many of the problems with stakeholders can be avoided or settled with Open Approach and open communication. The protected area manager can have lack of resources and limited possibilities to affect the protected area policy of the government, but good and open communication with stakeholders is an approach always available for him or her.

People are more and more interested in what is happening in their neighbourhood. National parks and protected areas attract also national and even international interest, they are representing a part of the nation's natural and cultural heritage and reflect the image of a country.

The traditional, already old-fashioned practice in land use planning has been: "As authorities we design the plans, we have access to information, we are professional, and we know what is best for

everybody. Informing the public can take place only when the plan is ready.” - But this is not enough today, people want to participate in the process and have an influence over the plans and development of our common property.

When?

Particularly, Open Approach together with transparency in protected area management is a good tool in three main processes: 1) planning development of the protected area, 2) in maintaining regular contacts with - at least - the key stakeholders, and 3) in producing information material of the protected area..

Preparing management plan is a long process where there are good chances to involve people and their organizations in co-operation. But also preparation of spatial plan or detail plans include elements interesting for stakeholders.

The park director, as well as other officials can and should keep regular contacts with stakeholders. These contacts can be accidental - or they can be on regular basis. Already a lunch together now and then gives good chance for informing key stakeholders or ordinary partners of the latest news. This kind of networking is a part of officials normal work.

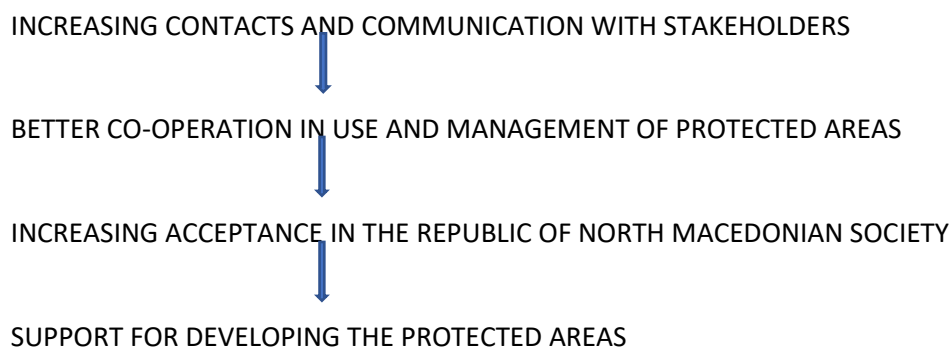
Especially large protected areas with plenty of visitors should have their visitor information at high level and always well updated. The web pages of the protected area is here a good instrument, and they give a good impression of the management of the area.

Why?

In the the Republic of North Macedonian society, the development of nature conservation needs considerable support, both at national and local level. Support is needed from decision makers and local communities. This support is crucial when the next big challenges as revision of Law on Nature Conservation, implementation of Habitats and Bird Directives including creation of Natura 2000 network are to be carried through.

One of the guiding principles in this Twinning project is implementing of Open Approach in the protected area administration and management. This view is a part of modern way of nature conservation and stress is put on Open Approach also in the “Training Plan” prepared during the project.

When increasing contacts and communication with stakeholders, a gradual change in attitudes will take place within the administration as well as among stakeholders. That will lower the threshold for the stakeholders and visitors to approach protected areas and the staff. If successful, it brings stronger local acceptance for the national parks and other protected areas, and facilitates designing of the new Natura 2000 sites’ network in the country. It is expected that increasing acceptance means also increasing resources for meeting the expectations. This process, a gradual change following use of Open Approach in administration, can be described as follows:



Listening

There are always different views among people. By listening to the outlooks, showing consideration and taking into account reasonable points in these opinions, the planner can win a lot. It takes more time and patience, but the plan will be better and, at the same time, the conflicts have been tackled at an early stage.

Participatory planning is a method, where the stakeholders are carefully listened and where they have real role and opportunities to participate in planning procedure. This inspires confidence, and further confidence makes a good foundation for permanent and useful co-operation even after the planning process with everyday management of protected area.

Taking people along in the planning process is the only way to avoid problems, bad feelings among people, long-lasting disagreements or even hostilities. Participatory planning makes it possible to settle and resolve most of the problems occurring. With Open Approach the trust of people can be won, and that opens the way to acceptance of the protected area. Without common acceptance it might be difficult to reach the goals and objectives set for the protected area. That is also in line with the requirements the Habitats and Birds Directives will be set for the Republic of North Macedonia and its Natura 2000 network.

Legal background

The idea of democratic participation in decision making is written in the Lisbon Treaty of European Union (Article 21). Thus, it is expected to follow this principle in implementing the Habitats and Birds Directives in this country. The Habitats Directive itself, unlike other European Directives, does not state any obligation or procedure for public participation in the establishment of the Natura 2000 network, during the development of management plans or whilst implementing management measures. However, the European Commission underlined in the Declaration of El Teide (2002) that the participation of local people and landowners is essential for the successful introduction of Natura 2000. The Habitats Directive does state that “the measures taken pursuant to this Directive shall take account of economic, social and cultural requirements and regional and local characteristics” (Article 2).

At national level, the principle of public participation (public access to information and public participation in decision making processes related to issues on nature protection) is not yet included in the Republic of North Macedonian Law on Nature Protection. Hopefully, rules and regulations of this could be included in the new legislation. At law level orders will certainly have general character, and they can be precised by, for example, a rulebook on Open Approach.

This paper is a plan for implementing those proclamations and outlines from European and national level.

5. Who are our stakeholders?

It is commonly known that support from stakeholders and surrounding society is of vital importance for successful management of protected areas. But who are our stakeholders? In terms of nature protection, a stakeholder can be defined as follows:

A person, group, organization or authority that has interest or concern in nature protection within and around our protected area is our stakeholder.

In that way, a stakeholder does not need to have a legal connection with the protected area, but an interest to get information, to participate and to have a chance to influence on decision making by expressing own views and experiences. That means that the stakeholders are numerous and they may have many different roles.

Stakeholders can affect or be affected by the protected area manager's actions, objectives and policies. Some examples of the versatile field of key stakeholders can be mentioned: e.g. tourist entrepreneurs, farmers' associations, mountaineering clubs, berry pickers, fishermen, municipalities, associations for environment protection, forest authorities, associations of rural development and so on. All of them, most probably, have at least some interest in the protected areas nearby. The protected area manager shall open doors and offer floor for communication.

In practical terms, in the field of nature protection there are numerous opportunities for involvement, beginning from the time of designing new protected areas and Natura 2000 network. In existing protected areas, the Scientific Council and Stakeholders' Council, that usually operate in connection with the larger Macedonian protected areas, are good forums. But the councils are not enough. In order to reach more people around, use of media, general meetings and workshops should be added in the toolbox.

What are the benefits of a stakeholder analysis?

If you want to work with stakeholders, you should identify and know them. A stakeholder analysis can give support for planning procedures but it can also serve as a tool in everyday management of protected areas. An analysis of our stakeholders improves our knowledge and awareness, we know more about:

- The interests of all stakeholders, who may positively or negatively affect or be affected by the decisions in planning process
- Potential issues that could disrupt the process
- Key people for information distribution during the procedure and after it
- Groups that should be encouraged to participate in different stages of the management work
- Ways to reduce potential negative impacts and to manage negative stakeholders

How to identify our stakeholders?

Start by brainstorming: who are the stakeholders of our protected area. As part of this, think of all the people who are affected by your work, who have influence or power over it, or have an interest in its successful or unsuccessful conclusion.

The following list identifies some of the groups that might keep inside a number of stakeholders in the activities of our protected area, it is not fully covering the stakeholders but giving some shape on them:

- People living within or close to the protected area
- Landowners within the protected area
- People who use to enjoy nature in the protected area
- People who use the protected area for traditional use as berry/mushroom/herb picking, grazing or other livelihoods, or otherwise based on lease agreements
- Ministries with connection with the territory or activities there
- All the Public Enterprises with interest
- Municipalities and local government with various departments

- Local schools
- Scientific bodies at universities and other institutes
- NGOs for environment and/or public awareness at national or regional level
- Local action groups and other NGOs for sustainable development or/and developing livelihoods
- Farmers and farmers' associations
- Hikers, mountaineering clubs
- Hunting clubs
- Fishermen's organizations
- Rescue organizations
- Tourist enterprises (tour operators, hotels, guide services etc.)
- Companies working with energy and/or communications

Within the groups above, local and regional actors should be identified, and more local names are to be added. Stakeholders can be both organizations and people, but ultimately, we are always communicating with people. So, be sure to identify the correct individual stakeholders within a stakeholder group or organization.

6. Analysing our stakeholders

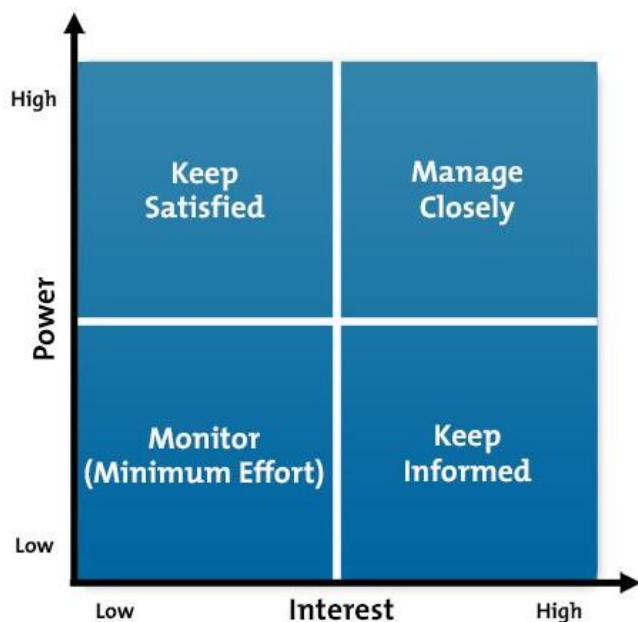
Stakeholder analysis is a process where qualitative information is collected systematically in order to determine who might be important partners when developing a protected area or the national network of protected areas. It gives also answers to how to work with them. Analyzing the stakeholders can help in understanding their views and wishes. Stakeholders' views are never fully equal. E.g. a farmer with sheep grazing in a national park can have different interest in how forest management is carried out in the park than a hiking club or a hydro power company running business by a river nearby.

Prioritizing our stakeholders

We may now have a list of people and organizations that are affected by our work (Chapter 5. Who are our stakeholders?). Some of these may have the power either to block our work or to advance it. Some may be interested in what we are doing, while others may not care, so we need to work out which stakeholder we need to prioritize.

The stakeholders can be mapped out, and classified by using two factors: how high is their interest to the protected area, and how much they have power to affect decision making? The analysis can be done on a grid analysis (Power/Interest Grid - see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Power/Interest Grid for Stakeholder Prioritization



Each of the stakeholders in our list can be allocated on the grid. The position to which we place a stakeholder on the grid shows us the approach and actions we need to take with them:

- High power, highly interested people (Manage Closely): you must fully engage these people, and make the greatest efforts to fulfill their expectations.
- High power, less interested people (Keep Satisfied): put enough work in with these people to keep them satisfied, but not so much that they become bored with your message.
- Low power, highly interested people (Keep Informed): adequately inform these people, and talk to them to ensure that no major issues are arising. People in this category can often be very helpful with the detail of your project.
- Low power, less interested people (Monitor): monitor these people, but don't bore them with excessive communication.

The municipality, for example, in most cases has high power over the development of the protected area and high interest in it. On the other hand, local NGO working for environmental issues has certainly high level of interest but low level of power.

Filling the Power/Interest Grid and accomplishing the analysis is an excellent task for a workshop. It can be done by group consisting local authorities, NGO representatives and local entrepreneurs, invited by the protected area management team. Another option is to organize it together with the protected area staff and the MoEPP representatives. The analysis can cover management planning, but it can also be applied in separate cases where co-operation with stakeholders is relevant.

Another tool for analyzing the stakeholders is to make a matrix, where the potential stakeholders are described one by one on rows and the questions on columns. It can be done by searching answers to questions as:

- The impact of the stakeholder on our work (high, medium, low)?
- How much influence the stakeholder has over our work (high, medium, low)?
- What is important for this stakeholder or stakeholder group?

- How could the stakeholder contribute to our work?
- How could the stakeholder block our work?
- Strategy for engaging the stakeholder?

Stakeholders are not a solid group, but consisting of a variety of opinions, knowledge and interests. For a protected area manager, it is of vital importance to learn to know his or her stakeholders and their motivations.

Key stakeholders and all the others

These two tools for analyzing stakeholders give the protected area manager information for identifying the key stakeholders, those who have the highest interest and greatest power. He or she shall keep in mind that the position of stakeholders shall be considered case by case, because the power and interest are changing. But recognizing the key stakeholders is no reason to neglect the other ones. In the contrary, underestimating some of the stakeholders can lead to problems. In particular, in sharing information it is necessary to remember all the stakeholders. That is the minimum requirement.

However, it is a reality that the key stakeholders need more attention from the protected area manager's side. But how to engage them with our protected area? First of all, you should know the interests of your key stakeholders. Building trust could be the first step, followed by regular communication and invitation to any meeting or workshop. It would be great if ideas for common projects could be recognized and developed further.

It is not enough to know the key stakeholders. We should also be able to identify what are their interests towards the protected area, and whether we share the same goals. Or is there maybe some contradictions between our goals? It is not uncommon that some stakeholder among the most powerful and most interested stakeholders want to change something that the protected area manager wants to keep - or other way round. Communication skills and knowledge of own toolbox are needed!

7. Building trust

We need each other, protected area managers and stakeholders. Large protected areas need more contacts and communication, but each protected area is and has to be a part of the society around it. When building up good communication, trust is needed. For both sides it means that all information is reliable and timely. There are some general rules, based on experience from protected areas abroad. The next five points are essential in building trust:

- 1) Build personal relationships. Experience suggests that interacting with stakeholders at a personal level can be an effective way to let people know that their interests are being heard and understood. Even a one person can make an impressive effort to know personally everyone around the protected area. His or her ability and willingness to invest the time to develop individual relationships with people of all points of view may result in favourable climate to discuss any kind of issues.
- 2) Establish ground rules for communication. They are likely to create trust among the stakeholders. In meetings designed for gathering input from stakeholders, these can include:
 - asking everyone to be respectful of the other people in the meetings, to assume that everyone's interests are valid and worth listening to; and

- promising that everyone's input will be considered.

In a negotiation process, ask participants to:

- assume that they can leave the process, but only after agreeing to explain their problem(s) to the whole group and seeing if the problem(s) can be addressed by the group;
 - give the same priority to solving the problems of others in the group as you give to solving your own;
 - try to craft a package of solutions that addresses everyone's interests, while recognizing that each stakeholder may not agree with all aspects of the package. In other words, participants may be asked to live with the total package, assuming that it is balanced and addresses some of the interests of each group;
 - be mindful of the impacts of their public and private statements on the climate for the process;
 - refrain from making statements to the news media during the conflict resolution process, or, alternatively, agree to use a spokesperson(s) to make those statements; and
 - agree to advocate for any agreed upon resolution to the conflict.
- 3) Start with small issues that are easily settled. This works when there is a number of different issues at stake in the conflict, and when some of them are easier to resolve than others. By tackling, and resolving, some of the easier issues early in the process, stakeholders may begin to develop a sense of trust in the process and in each other. In discussion, remember that people often have the need to start with the sharp or extreme comments, and soon after that, more tolerant views can be heard.
 - 4) Never lose your temper, whatever you hear or see. Regardless of how justified your reaction would be, you will always miss something if you show your bad feelings. Keep smiling!
 - 5) Stand by agreements that are made. There is nothing like a broken promise to make other stakeholders lose trust.

8. Communication with stakeholders

A protected area manager needs skills for communication in different situations. In national parks and other large protected areas with regular visitors, the main part of communication is addressed to visitors: how to get to the protected area, how to find interesting places and sights there, how to behave and so on. From outside, less visible is such communication where discussion takes place with the stakeholders, mainly about how the protected area should be developed, but also other issues may be relevant.

Traditional way of communication is one-way traffic, dealing information from an authority to stakeholders. The traditional way is old-fashioned and should be replaced with many modern methods including participation. However, the need for participation should be weighted up case by case.

In important plans or discrepancies where the communication is demanding, the objectives have to be set high enough, real dialogue is worth of aiming at.

The tools for communication with stakeholders are rather simple and applicable in any kind project, the tools can also be combined and mixed whenever needed:

- Letter, e-mail contact, phone calls
- Messages in info boards at the gates of the protected area
- Web site of the protected area, informing through Facebook and other modern channels
- News in media, expert articles in newspapers
- Public events for stakeholders, for anyone interested
- Workshops for stakeholders
- Organized events in the protected area, exhibitions
- Asking for official statements or written comments

Among these, especially the public events, workshops and organized events offer an opportunity to meet stakeholders face to face, and to create a dialogue. To make sure the dialogue will be successful, it is useful to prepare a plan for the more demanding events with stakeholders.

Do we need plan for participation?

As a part of any larger project, it is useful to sit down and to draft a participation plan. The desired results are easier to reach when the planning situation has firstly been determined, the objectives have been clarified and participation methods based on these have been chosen. By applying the following guidelines, it is also possible to outline a plan for a small-scale project. In fact, in such a case it might be sufficient for the planner to review the main points in his or her mind, make a couple of phone calls and write down a few essential points. Depending on the project, the participation plan should be only as detailed as necessary.

Simple guidelines for a participation plan - or a checklist for us:

- Objectives for the participation, what do we want to get out of it?
- Steering group or stakeholder council - do we have it or do we need it?
- Stakeholders to be invited (see stakeholder analysis!)
- How to activate our stakeholders to participate?
- Methods to be used, the whole process
- Materials and funds to be needed
- How to gather public input, how to make the documentation of comments and proposals

After the participation process, it would be good to analyze our success. Did the participation meet the objectives? Did we get useful input and what do we know about the stakeholders' attitudes after the process?

Public meetings

Public meetings are events where the protected area manager, or preferably the whole staff, has an opportunity to meet all the interested stakeholders. Usually, public meetings are arranged when the preparing or updating a management plan for the protected area, or when there is a need to discuss any other plan or management issue with the stakeholders. There are certainly many kind of public meeting, here we mention two of them: public meeting with invited stakeholders (or anyone who was reached by the information) and public hearings where invited organizations/authorities to express their official statements. Sometimes the difference between these two are not clear.

Public meetings can attract tens if not hundred persons or more, when the topic is interesting. Unexpected high number of participants can create problems for us, but it would be worse if our stakeholders, for some reason, were not interested at all. Successful arrangements, including raising interest, are of crucial importance for the protected area manager. It is question of our image: do we

want to give an open and co-operative picture of ourselves - or do we have to be content with some other kind of outward appearance.

Before starting preparations, it might be useful to consider the objectives we want to set for a public meeting. Informing people, of course, but as an objective it is too general. The objectives can be seen both from the point of view of participants and planner.

At the end of a public meeting,

- the participants should know what the planning is aimed at,
- what are the outlines and where to get information of the details,
- how to participate in the planning,
- what the planning alternatives are, and
- how the decision will be made.

On the opposite side, at the end of the meeting, the planner should know

- what issues are important to the participants,
- what is the public's attitude towards the planning,
- how the public wants to participate in the future, and
- who participated in this meeting.

To reach this kind of objectives, there are several things to keep in mind when preparing a public meeting.

Careful preparation. This includes at least: choosing right time suitable for as many as possible, finding a good venue (large enough, neutral location, audiovisual equipment etc.), sending invitations at least two weeks in advance, using media in activation in advance (if the topic makes it possible), deciding whether refreshments are to be served, selecting the chairperson and speakers, and preparing press release (to be published at the time of the meeting).

Two public meetings, at least, are recommended when dealing with an important plan. The first one in the beginning of the work when discussing the goals and contents of it, and the second one when presenting the draft plan for comments.

Practical arrangements include, just before the event, setting up signs, defining roles of different persons (who is welcoming people at the entrance, who is guiding people in, who is responsible of technical equipment or refreshments etc.), making sure that list of participants will circulate and documentation of comments and proposals will work.

Chairperson makes the public meeting successful

Every public meeting needs a good chairperson. He or she should be a neutral person - preferably not the protected area director - and have good communicative skills. In the beginning, the chair introduces himself and wishes all the participants warmly welcome. After that the representatives of the arrangers are introduced, the agenda and background of the meeting are presented. If there is big number of participants present, it is not reasonable to ask all the participants to present themselves. Already here, the chairperson gives the whole event a positive and open atmosphere.

Before the main topic, the presentation of a plan or other issue, the chair can inform about the rules to be followed:

- questions and comments from the public are highly desired,
- everyone should start his or her turn to speak by presenting himself or herself,
- only one person speaks at a time,
- the speaker keeps the subject and the speech brief, and
- none gets personal.

The chair can also tell how documentation of the views will take place and where the forms for written comments are available.

Besides the chairperson, also the key-note speaker, the person who is presenting the plan, is very important. His or her presentation may not exceed 30 minutes, the main points must be clearly emphasized and, hopefully, the speaker has some alternatives to present to the public. If there are several presentations, the other ones shall be shorter. The whole event with all discussions would optimally be over in two hours, but it seldom goes that way. It is good to include a break in the program. Refreshments are served, and protected area staff and planners have chance for informal discussions with the participants. But when the active participation with the break exceeds three hours, people get tired and no refreshment gives help.

The behaviour of the participants depends to a large extent on how the meeting is facilitated. As long as the participants consider the chairperson's actions reasonable and fair, everything will probably go smoothly. The participants should perceive the event as their own. The attitudes of the participants are already greatly influenced by the way the organizers dress, how they talk, and what kind of material they choose to present.

On the other hand, a chairperson who speaks down to the participants and shows he or she does not really care about their views probably causes irritation. And if the meeting is not led effectively, the participants might perceive it as just a waste of time. However, there might be persons among the participants who are irritated or angry for other reasons. Regardless of the reason, the chairperson must be prepared and able to handle irritated persons in a polite but tough way. Otherwise, only one person can spoil the event from other participants.

The chair should talk clearly, understandable and avoiding the use of jargon. Using professional terminology or speaking abstractly can lead to misunderstandings. He or she should not normally air own views, nor does he or she answer issue related questions, but forwards such questions to experts present. The experts again, supply only the necessary knowledge on the subject and refrain from criticizing the points brought out or the opinions given by the participants. The experts should never argue with the participants, only focus on the defined matter and be understandable. The chairperson should ensure that the answers given are sufficient.

Documentation of received input

While working with important plans involving our stakeholders - and especially then - we should avoid giving an impression of an arrogant authority. All the inputs received shall be taken seriously, whether they are constructive and useful or critical or useless. All the comments should be put together, analyzed and answered. A good way to do this is to compile a table following the topics of the plan.

The compilation table can be made up so consisting of four columns:

- name of person/organization given the comment,
- what the subject of given comment is (issue, part of the text),
- received comment /in shortened form or summarized if needed)
- answer to the comment given by the planner

In the answer it is important to include how the text/issue is going to be changed due to the received comment - or why it will not be changed. When doing this way, we show that the comments are appreciated, even if they not always lead to changes. The compilation table shall be sent to all stakeholders, or, at least, be available for everyone.

9. Conflict management

Despite all efforts, sometimes open communication is not leading to peaceful co-operation. Contradictions in the background can raise disagreements between stakeholders or between stakeholders and protected area managers. Often a real conflict emerges from a dispute that escalates in terms of a gradual change from a disagreement to a conflict between people and/or groups - although every quarrel or disagreement cannot be seen as a real conflict. Thus, if not solved in time, a minor disagreement may become a serious conflict.

Protected area managers meet often contradictions and conflicts in their work, and they are used to work with and resolve conflicts. They are likely to find themselves occupying a variety of roles in conflicts that affect protected areas on their responsibility: they may be mediators, negotiators, experts or decisionmakers. Regardless of the roles, they can be critical players in conflicts and may be in a position to help finding a resolution.

Different views use to arise when new protected areas are to be designed (e.g. when introducing new Natura sites) and old disagreements can come up again. This is also common during management planning process of an existing protected area. Thus, it is worth of emphasizing that most important is to work for avoiding conflict, if this is not possible, you shall invest in solving them. In and around protected areas there are two major reasons for conflicts, almost all of them relate to

- 1) lack of attention from the authority's side to involving local people and others who care about the protected area, and/or
- 2) people or businesses in nearby communities having needs to use the protected area (e.g. for grazing land, firewood, picking berries and mushrooms, hunting, collecting fodder or medical plants or planning of resorts or even hydro power plants etc.) find the protected area threaten their traditional ways to utilize natural resources.

It's important to recognize that a conflict is not necessarily bad issue as itself. Conflicts, that are properly addressed can be opportunities for problems to be identified and solved, and progress achieved. A constructive process can even be a promising start for co-operation between local people and protected area manager. Many conflicts, however, can become counterproductive and destructive, leading to detrimental results and hostile relationships.

How to handle a conflict, small and easy - or big and difficult?

There is a lot of recommendations and guidebooks about conflict management. Some of them present case studies from conflicts, also violent ones from protected areas around the world. Protected area network is still developing in the Republic of North Macedonia, and disagreements seldom occur as conflicts in this country.

In case of disagreements between stakeholders and protected area managers, it is useful to have a tool for analyzing the situation, and planning measures to alleviate consequences or resolve the problem. Following tool is recommended in a conflict analysis:

- 1) Early warning. Listen to weak signals perhaps revealing problems before they are developed to conflicts. Good ears are needed, particularly, when working with plans for protected areas concerning lots of people with many interests. React immediately by taking contact, listening and taking the warning seriously. Provide the stakeholders with right information so that you can be sure that lacking information is not causing problems or conflicts. On the other hand, neglect listening and taking the opportunity may worsen the situation.

- 2) Reason for the conflict. Analyze what is behind the conflict, where is the reason for it? Focus on underlying interests! When dealing with conflicts, it is essential to know the background and origin of the conflict.
- 3) Stakeholder analysis. As mentioned above, in a common stakeholder analysis we need knowledge about the stakeholders involved or potentially involved in the conflict. Who might be suffering, who would be winning in a conflict, and who could have power to alleviate consequences or resolve the conflict?
- 4) Assessment of own capacity. What are the resources of protected area manager for searching solutions: Does he or she have time, personnel or material resources to put in the conflict management? Who has authorization in making a compromise if needed? Does the protected area manager need support from other governmental or municipal authorities to solve the conflict? How to get help?
- 5) Direct discussions with the parties, face to face and separately, if necessary. Even in a conflict situation it is important to keep the communication channels open. Discussions may open eyes, too, to see the conflict from the opposite side.
- 6) Alternative solutions. Mapping the alternatives, making a list of realistic and less realistic options can clarify the situation. It gives support in finding the solution. In table format, each of the alternative can be provided with advantages and disadvantages, winners and losers. Mapping can be followed by exclusion of alternatives that are not possible for some reasons.

If a minor discrepancy - that use to be rather common in a planning process - tends to develop towards a conflict, it is necessary to react, grab on it and take actions so that it may not destroy possibilities for development of the protected area.

In addition, it's good to realize that every disagreement or conflict cannot be resolved, despite any efforts. Sometimes support or solutions can be received from national authorities, sometimes the peace is not in their hands, either.

Time heals all wounds. While waiting for progress in one problematic issue, work shall go on with others.

10. Towards permanent co-operation with stakeholders

Stakeholders should be seen rather as resource for a protected area than a burden for its staff. As emphasized earlier in this paper, Open Approach and good communication prepare ground for developing co-operation resulting in involvement with mutual benefits. For the protected area administration, change from the role of a distant Public Institution to an organization seeking co-operation with stakeholders, will not take place in one night. Readiness is needed on all parts, and it can be developed step by step, training and capacity building is needed in introducing new ways of thinking. The way to co-operation is worth of walking, because in the long run it produces results: better management, mutual trust and local acceptance.

Ideas and methods for permanent co-operation between stakeholders and protected area managers

There are many ways to establish co-operation. An essential prerequisite of successful progress is Open Approach and good communication. In the following, the two first options describe the situation when a new Natura 2000 Site or protected area is in planning process, the rest of them are

available mostly in existing protected areas with staff taking care of management and communication.

Early informing. Consultation with stakeholders is important and necessary, but what would be the right moment? When a non-protected area is under valorization process where the natural and cultural values are assessed, it would be advisable to inform at least the landowner and/or those farmers who utilize the territory in their livelihoods. However, this recommendation can be considered as a double-edged sword: it can start a good local co-operation - or it can raise doubts and resistance already in an early stage. Implementing should be assessed case by case.

Workshops with stakeholders. Be aware, that establishment of a new protected area is the critical moment! There you have the first chance to create good connections between protected area authorities and stakeholders - or you can miss it! Inviting stakeholders among and setting up a working party or workshop to prepare establishment is a good start for co-operation and alleviation of possible problems.



Council of Stakeholder and Scientific Council. According to Macedonian Law on Nature Protection, Council of Stakeholders and Scientific Council are to be established to work in connection with national parks (and other important protected areas). These councils have a character of advisory body for the protected area administration, they are not decision making operative decisions. However, they are very important tools in developing co-operation with the stakeholders. There is only little experience of the work of these councils in this country. Special attention should be paid to the selection of council members so that the council is representative, but not too large for fluent working. Merging scientific and stakeholders' councils is also worth of considering, it would save resources and improve co-operation between organizations and individuals. Some important points are useful to note:

- 1) Clarifying the role of councils as important tools for co-operation. Clarification is needed for the roles of council members, who are representing their organization / local people, and have the obligation to bring messages to the council and, other way round, bring information to their background communities. And does it belong to the role of the council to express its views of any kind of issues or projects, and independently contact other authorities, if reason for that exists?
- 2) Technical rules for defining what kind of issues are discussed and how decisions are made within the councils, how issues are prepared on the agenda

- 3) Need of resources for the work of councils. Organizing meetings and preparing agenda for large groups of participants takes resources.

There are good chances that the councils find their role as well-working mediators between the protected area personnel and local people, scientific institutes and other stakeholders. Later, combining these two councils would be worth of considering. Discussing also scientific issues together with other stakeholders could increase understanding and knowledge, to both directions.

Participatory planning in protected areas. This approach is more and more commonly accepted as part of modern administration in all countries. It follows the principle of bottom-up approach. The issue is rather large, and methods for participatory planning are presented separately in Chaptres 4 - 6.

Involving young people in co-operation. There are good examples in the Republic of North Macedonia, as well as in many other countries, how opportunities for young people to work in national parks have been organized. Working in a protected area, as apprentice, student preparing thesis for university degree, assistant for a researcher, participant in voluntary campaign etc. is, from the point of view of area manager, a good investment in future. Through working experience young people can not only learn by working but get knowledge and absorb some of the values on which nature protection is lying.

One example of similar long-term investment is from a European national park where once a year, every May the seventh class of each three schools were invited to have, each separately, a whole day excursion in the national park. Results have been excellent, both children and teachers have been satisfied. Children have brought positive message home, and now, after 30 years' experience, most local people know at least something about why nature is protected, and, in addition, local attitudes have become more positive.

Junior Rangers. In some European countries Junior Ranger activity has been implemented after model developed in the US by the National Park Service. There the "Junior Ranger Programs" are activities prepared especially for 5- to 12-year-old visitors to the properties of the National Park Service. There, children and their families participate in the program by completing prepared activity books which direct children to areas they might otherwise miss, or to things of special interest to the age group.

The EUROPARC Junior Ranger Program was launched in 2002 as a pilot project embracing four partner parks. The network has grown ever since. Being part of an extended European Junior Ranger network enables young people to connect with their peers across Europe. The EUROPARC Federation Junior Ranger Program is aimed at young people aged 12-18 who are living within or close to the protected area. In 2016, the program involves around 80 Protected Areas across 19 different European countries, working with about 5000 youths every year. More information on <http://www.europarc.org/nature/young-people/junior-ranger-programme/>.

Voluntary camps. In some national parks, there are good examples of voluntary camps, organized together with some NGO or other organization and the national park staff. It can be management of the biotope of some threatened species, constructing walking boards and other visitor facilities or gathering litter along popular routes. Voluntary camps can be organized for the young, but more often the participants represent all ages. And it is not only hard work, but some hiking, nature watching or short lectures of flora and fauna can be combined in the program. Often a lot of interest

is shown by people from local and distant places to participate, and some organizations have their favourite projects where they work a week in summer, year by year.

Friends of parks. In some national parks and other protected areas active nature lovers have established associations or clubs under the title “Friends of our (national) park” or something of this kind. A friendship association is aiming at building support for the park manager in several ways: organizing voluntary work, raising fund for nature conservation projects, raising awareness, making reports of the natural or cultural heritage, disseminating information, defending the interest of the national park in public etc. In some large national parks in the US and Canada, the Friends of parks have tens of thousands of members, and in several parks the association is running visitor centers, selling products and raising significant amount funds for useful activities.

This kind of park friend activity is usually growing with years, perhaps long-term work for good trust, communication and open attitude might be needed before it is time for starting an association. Or - why not earlier, there are already now lots of friends around some of the famous Macedonian national parks or natural monuments!

Partnership. Responsibilities in organizing tourism can be - and should be - shared with the administration and tourist enterprises. In tourism development partnership between local tourist enterprises and some attractive national park is an approach that has been successfully implemented in many European countries. Charter for Sustainable Tourism, developed and maintained by Europarc Federation is a good example of well-working partnership program. Partnership means co-operation where local enterprises can reach the status of a national park partner when they fulfil certain criteria of sustainable tourism. This co-operation is fruitful for both sides: the company receives a quality label and favourable working conditions within the park, while the national park gets a liable partner which is sharing positive information of the park.

Joint management. Working together with our stakeholders can get shape in many ways. Nowadays there is plenty of project organizers approaching protected area managers and proposing co-operation at some level. Sometimes the protected area manager can take the initiative and propose a project. Also some of the Local Action Groups in the EU funded Leader program can build up a project proposal and approach the park administration. There is no lack of work to be done in any protected area, if someone is able to organize hands to do it - plus some tools and materials. Plans and supervision for the work is naturally coming from the protected area administration.

Today there are many active international donors in Balkan area preparing project proposals or looking for subjects for new projects. Developing stakeholder co-operation and joint management of national parks - or some other protected areas - would certainly be an attractive proposal from the Republic of North Macedonian side.

Common projects, working together, learning to know each other and the first successful project - that can be the way how stakeholders are little by little involved in the protected area management.

Co-management. An approach called co-management has been applied in some developing countries. There is a significant difference between these two concepts: joint management and co-management. The latter one comprises shared decision making, partners/stakeholders take part in all decision making in the protected area. Experiences of this approach are contradictory, and the Republic of North Macedonian legislation do not allow that.

Open-door policy (also known as Open House). National Park Day is a common concept successfully implemented in many national parks. Europarc Federation has made national parks internationally known with a concept of European Day of Parks, usually taking place in May. Guided trips, short lectures, some music, hot drinks in nature and park staff and nature experts available for anyone to approach. There are numerous ways to open the doors of the national park for local people,

stakeholders and other authorities e.g. organising Natura 2000 Day celebration in May, or International Biodiversity Day in May, too.

Where to take resources for stakeholder co-operation?

Stakeholders take our time! Protected area managers in this country work all the time with very scanty resources: there is neither enough staff to do all the duties nor funding for organizing public events. Days and evenings are full of work without initiatives towards new activities. How to find time for time-consuming discussions and meetings?

There are two answers: prioritizing work and utilizing resources from all possible projects with external funding.

But close co-operation with stakeholders is modern way of planning, sharing information and working. People in villages and towns are active, they want to know how our national heritage is managed, they want to have an influence on it. The whole society is moving towards active participation, the development cannot be stopped. So, why not to come along?

It is not only to guard oneself against disagreements and conflicts that take time, too. Stakeholders have a lot to give to nature protection. Those people around us have a lot of skills and knowledge useful for protected area managers. Some elderly people know about the history of the territory, among villagers can be found many skilful carpenters or designers of nice drawings. Hunters have followed wildlife through whole life. A tourist entrepreneur or hotel owner nearby would like to arrange guided tours to the national park. And so on.

This human capital is very useful for the protected area manager. Inspiring attitude in all contacts, appreciation of local views will create a climate where everybody can see the investment in stakeholder co-operation very productive.



11. Case study 1: Open Approach in designing Natura 2000 Sites

Due to the accession of the Republic of North Macedonia into the European Union, designing a network of Natura 2000 Sites is a relevant nature conservation project in the country. In that process, the Open Approach described in this paper can, and should, be used. Experiences from other European countries show, that a poorly organized process leads to conflicts, that have negative influence on acceptance of nature conservation.

Preparatory process

Designing the network advances in a process conducted by the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning and, in many cases, operated by consultants. The main phases - with small variations - in the process are:

- Identification of potential Natura 2000 Sites, selection of areas for field work and inventories.
- Valorization of areas, carrying out inventories of natural heritage based on species and habitats.
- Selection of sites for further preparation.
- Preparing drafts of each area, consisting of general description, lists of species and habitats mentioned in Birds and Habitats Directives, transforming the results in Standard Data Forms (SDT), defining borders and assessing the state of nature.
- Preparing a national proposal of the SPA and SAC network, submitting the proposal to EU Commission.
- Confirmation of the national proposal by the EU Commission, nomination of the sites
- Implementation of the legislation for Natura 2000 Sites

In each phase of the process, the ministry, or organization having the operative responsibility, has to be ready for assessing how to approach stakeholders: who are relevant stakeholders (stakeholder analysis to be done when needed), what should be the right time of informing them.

In the Republic of North Macedonia there are many areas to be assessed in this procedure, and some of them are large with high biodiversity, while some are small with only few nature values. Preparatory process has different character in large and small areas. But in general, inclusion of an area in the network has hardly any significant influence on current or traditional livelihoods or land use. However, it may have consequences to future plans to develop livelihoods or to take in use new activities - in case there might be risk of doing harm for nature values. That is something that local people certainly want to hear more about.

The ministry must take stand on how early the stakeholders of a certain potential Natura 2000 Site should be informed. In practice, there are three possibilities: 1) should it be in the beginning of field inventories (valorization), 2) should you wait till draft preparing or 3) will it be done - at latest moment - while preparing national proposal? If not informing stakeholders before the confirmation of the EU Commission, you are late. Then it is not anymore question of Open Approach.

Early informing can be positive and create good communication. Nevertheless, it can also lead to negative reactions regardless of how the aim of preparatory process is described. In early contacts it can be difficult to justify the process, especially if the level of baseline data is thin. But working in secret, making inventories without informing people nearby, can create more irritation than Open

Approach from the beginning. Groundless rumors can be spread and they might be difficult to fight in social media. Thus, informing and participating stakeholders is challenging.

In addition, the Ministry should decide which methods will be used in informing (see Chapter 8 Communication with stakeholders). In many cases, public meeting is a good option to start. If there is need for deeper communication, a workshop can be invited. The process will show whether something should be added in the toolbox.

Message and questions

The content of the relevant directives and the Natura 2000 program is rather complicated with plenty of details and names of plants, animals and habitats. It is impossible to give a man on the street a comprehensive picture of the whole system. You must choose what to tell, what is important for each target public. The message should be simplified and understandable. Guidelines in the message could be following:

- This area has high biodiversity values, it is worth of being proud of - and worth of saving
- The area can be used in traditional ways, but the valuable habitats and species shall be preserved
- New projects within and around with influence on the values shall be assessed after nomination
- Restrictions for harmful land use are possible
- There are positive expectations, too. Support for management of the nature can be received, preservation of large areas with attractive characteristics can give significant support for tourism development nearby. Preservation might be a better guarantee for traditional livelihoods than the alternatives
- Will there be compensations of the restrictions is not yet clear

This message will lead to a number of questions. The responsible organization must be able to answer such questions as:

- How the values of this area are defined and by whom?
- What will be the restrictions?
- What is harmful and what is not?
- How new projects within or around will be assessed and by whom?
- Do we get compensation of the restrictions?
- How the area can be utilized now and in future?
- How about starting my new project now, before the decisions?
- Can you move the border here or there, in some corner of the area?

Everything goes well when you have the answers and people feel them fair and acceptable. During the first contacts, you should make sure how to maintain the contacts. Common rule is, that absorbing a new thing takes time, perhaps years. And understanding will start among the young. When it is question of a large and important area, you should be prepared to use several methods of participation - and repeat the message time to time. In particularly, if you want to win trust.

In the beginning, you can never be sure how warm the welcome can be. Sometime the discussion can pass the target, and the public meeting focuses on the general opinions and constrains of the European Union instead of speaking about one particular proposed Natura 2000 Site and possible benefits of it nomination to be part of the network.

If the information has reached the stakeholders too late, or no official information has been available, the situation may lead to conflict. Angry stakeholders can claim that there are no such valuable species or habitats you say or other values you have presented as justification. Your credibility is in test. In worst case, someone can intentionally try to destroy the values or some of them, e.g. by legal or illegal cutting - or by removing certain rare species in order to protect his or her own interests.

Thus, the crucial decisions, to be made, problems to be solved case by case, are:

- When it is right time to involve the stakeholders?
- How to arrange involving, which methods to be used?
- Do we have answers to all important questions to be expected?
- How to shed light on the positive influence of preservation?

12. Case study 2: About stakeholders around Pelister National Park and Lake Prespa Nature Monument

While preparing this Stakeholders' involvement plan, stakeholders were interviewed around the two target areas of the project, Pelister National Park and Lake Prespa Nature Monument (and proposed Natura 2000 site). In addition, some national authorities, scientists and NGOs were interviewed in Skopje. The most important goals in arranging all the many interviews were:

- To get useful information for 1) preparation of the Stakeholders' involvement plan, 2) for incoming management planning of the target areas, and 3) for preparing a training plan for nature conservation
- To learn to know people in key positions among the stakeholders and the social environment where these protected areas are working
- To find ideas for improving communication and co-operation
- To understand all sides of those difficulties and problems that the protected area managers meet in implementing nature conservation

Method in use

Altogether 36 interviews were carried out mainly using the method of free discussion around certain topics. The questions were presented verbally, they were not exactly the same in all interviews and no measurable data was collected.

The topics in the interviews were:

- Contacts of the organization with protected areas, especially in the target areas
- Experience and participation in earlier management planning processes
- Knowledge about Natura 2000 program
- Views and expectations about development of the target areas and about co-operation with them
- Interest in incoming training concerning management planning and implementing Natura 2000 program

Unfortunately, practical reasons did not enable to interview all the known stakeholders. At local level there are identified almost one hundred stakeholders of different kind. The choice of persons/organizations to be interviewed was done in three stages:

- A list of known stakeholders was requested both from the Pelister National Park administration and the Municipality of Resen, that has the responsibility of the management of Nature Park Ezerani and Prespa lake Nature Monument. In addition, a list of authorities, scientific institutes and NGOs at national level was compiled.
- About ten names were chosen from each of these three lists (consisting of 50 names from Pelister, 43 from Prespa and some tens at national level) representing governmental and municipal authorities, NGOs working with environmental issues, private enterprises, scientific bodies, organizations promoting livelihoods and donors funding nature conservation projects in the Republic of North Macedonia. The choice was made by desktop research, database of previous project research, or experience of RTA Assistant and personal recommendations from active NGOs.
- Unfortunately, some of the chosen organizations were not available at the time, and had to be replaced by some other organization with similar profile.

The administrations of the target areas were also interviewed, and more than once each. The interviews were carried out between Jan. 30 and Apr. 16, 2018. Each discussion took between one and two hours. Several of the organizations interviewed were represented by more than one person. However, the views received were more or less personal opinions, partially due to the method where questions were neither available in advance nor in written form.

The interviews were carried out by Jouko Högmander, in many cases supported by Ruta Baskyte and Arto Ahokumpu. In most discussions, Macedonian - English interpretation by Biljana Stevanovska or Natasha Aleksovska was in use. The former one made a great work in preparing all the meetings with the stakeholders.

The stakeholders were divided in groups as follows:

Groups	Organizations interviewed	Number of persons present
National level organizations	10	23
Local organizations around the Pelister National Park	14	27
Local organizations around Lake Prespa Nature Monument	12	31
Altogether	36	81

The distribution between backgrounds of the organizations in each group were following:

	Altogether	National level organization	Stakeholders of Pelister NP	Stakeholders of Lake Prespa NM
Governmental	8	2	5	1
Municipal	8	1	2	5
Administration of protected area	3	1	1	1
Private enterprise	9	0	6	3
Scientific body	2	1	0	1
Promotion of livelihoods	3	0	1	2
NGOs	10	5	2	3
Donors	2	1	0	1
Altogether*	45	11	17	17

* Notice that the due to the character of some of the stakeholders, the organization can be located in two boxes

The organizations interviewed are listed in the end of this chapter.

Results of the interviews

The atmosphere in all discussion varied between positive and neutral. The persons who participated were flexible and helpful making interviewers' work easier. Some good ideas were recognized and, hopefully, the process could contribute to mutual understanding.

In the discussion topics, the three first ones cover experiences until these days (contacts, management and Natura 2000 knowledge) and the two following look forward (expectations and training interests).

When considering the results, one may not generalize the results too far, because the sample size was too small on group level and the choice of organizations was not fully random.

In analysis below, the protected area managers, Public Enterprise Pelister National Park and Environment Sector in the Municipality of Resen, have been excluded. They have their professional knowledge of the issues discussed.

After accomplishing all the interviews, the grid analysis presented in Chapter 6, was tested separately with the director of Environment Sector in Resen Municipality and Administration of Pelister National park together with two other officers. The test showed that the analysis is subjective, different persons locate stakeholders different. Another observation was that this method, developed for business enterprises, is working also in administration.

Contacts with protected areas. Privat enterprises around Pelister seem to have good level of contacts with the national park administration, because they need support and licenses for their work from the protected area manager. Some critical views and wishes about practical arrangements came up. In the contrary, the enterprises around Lake Prespa had lower level of contacts, most probably because they are not directly using the lake (or the Ezerani Nature Park) for their activities. However, tourist enterprises attract customers to come and enjoy the lake, but activities take place mainly on their own land. NGOs seem to have lot of contacts with these two target areas and governmental organizations have their normal working contacts.

Experience and participation in earlier management planning. There was very little experience of co-operation in management planning with almost any of the organizations. Reasons to that may be following: both in Pelister National Park and in Ezerani Nature Park more than ten years have gone since the latest management planning procedure, and in Resen the recently made planning of the Nature Monument of Lake Prespa was probably not very interesting for stakeholders. Only the NGOs included in this study, were rather well aware of what has happened in the planning procedures.

Knowledge about Natura 2000. This European network of protected areas is a new thing in the Republic of North Macedonia, and not well known. In addition, the ideas included in the Birds and Habitats Directives are very complicated, in details they are difficult to be absorbed.

Very few of the persons interviewed - seven out of 81 - had participated in events or promotions about Natura 2000. Beyond them, the knowledge of it was almost nonexistent. Even the name was strange for most of the local people. But some of the NGOs seem to have fairly good understanding of the directives mentioned, and implementing of them.

Expectations about development and co-operation. In discussions many wishes, expectations and problems were raised up. From the viewpoint of this paper, most important are the views about stakeholder co-operation.

General impression is that NGOs and those authorities and private entrepreneurs that have direct contacts with the protected area territories want to keep good relations and even improve co-operation with the protected area managers. Authorities dealing with forestry, pastures and water

management want closer contact with Pelister National Park, as the Bitola municipality does, too. That is positive from the point of view of developing methods for participatory planning. NGOs are concerned about preservation of biodiversity, and they hereby express their wish to be actively involved in the planning procedures. Management planning of the target areas, all plans for improving services and constructions, and forestry activities are interesting for the same groups of stakeholders.

In some stakeholder comments the management plan was seen as a big chunk impossible to realize with too few links with the real life, where constant lack of resources is blocking any good ideas and initiatives. Despite that, each management plan should include more investments in developing sustainable tourism, according to many stakeholders. At present, they do not see tourism bring risks for sustainable use on the territory. Tourist entrepreneurs are worried about the water quality and peacefulness of Lake Prespa. Both there and around Pelister National Park, many stakeholders are worried about illegal activities, such as littering and refuse dumps in Ezerani Nature Park. In some discussions also littering problem in Pelister National Park was mentioned, mainly referring to berry pickers. The pickers again wanted to have better control of picking without permission, one of them expressed a wish about co-ordinated berry picking. Many of the stakeholders who are familiar with the target areas, are deeply worried about the territorial integrity of protected areas: especially expansion of orchards and new hydropower plants have been identified as threats for protected areas.

Low level of public awareness in environmental issues is a serious problem. Two schools in Resen are working with awareness raising, partially using the protected areas as targets and examples. But they are suffering of lack of elementary resources for that.

Several wishes concerned the entrance fee to Pelister National Park: even if it is low, it is hampering tourism development. Hotel Molika, working within the borders of Pelister National Park, was interested in getting statistics of the number of visitors in the park, and seasonal changes in it.

These questions have been discussed with the protected area managers both in Bitola and Pelister. They are familiar for the authorities and efforts have been made to solve problems. Lack of resources, both human and material ones is restricting their work. Several stakeholders consider the current situation intolerable, when the park administration in Pelister has to cut forest within the park borders to get funding for all activities.

Interest in training concerning management planning and Natura 2000. There is interest among stakeholders to know more about what European Union would bring in nature conservation. Those stakeholders who are utilizing the protected areas showed some interest to know more about the consequences of introducing Birds and Habitats Directives. They who already know something usually want to know more - or they want to get information to their organizations. But the whole issue is considered complicated. They want to have information with practical examples near to their everyday life, and they would appreciate information in simple form.

Discussion about the results

The interviews gave a good and versatile picture of groups of stakeholders, with whom the protected areas work in Bitola and Resen. As a conclusion some observation:

- Co-operation between stakeholders and protected area staff is active already now, but it can still be improved and widened.
- The legislation EU will bring in nature conservation is bringing a challenge, but absorbing of information has already started. The message in training and stakeholder co-operation must be understandable having connections with real places and problems.

- Another challenge is how to activate all stakeholders around, and especially how to attract the most important ones (powerful and interested) along.
- Among the groups interviewed, the donors and NGOs represent highest knowledge of nature conservation.
- Three recommendations are given based on the interviews:
 - 1) both the expertise of stakeholder and scientific councils, established relating to the two protected areas, and NGOs are resources that should be utilized in management planning and in implementing of Natura 2000,
 - 2) stakeholders should be taken in close collaboration through more active work of the councils where effective training around different subjects, including Natura 2000, can be combined.
 - 3) in the long run, investing in public awareness will give positive results. Littering is a serious problem to begin with. And when stakeholders fully realize the valuable environments around (Pelister, Prespa, Galichica, other protected sites), the protected areas will win with increasing “local ownership”.

All the results from the interviews cannot be reported in this paper, but the discussions produced good material for management planning of Lake Prespa Natural Monument and Pelister National Park. In addition, they will be used in training of protected area staff and stakeholders.

List of stakeholders and protected area administrations interviewed in this work

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy

Local unit of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy, Bitola and Resen

Public Enterprise of Pastures

Public Enterprise of Pelister National Park

Centre for Public Health, Bitola

Water Management Company “Ztrezevo”

Municipality of Resen, Environment sector and inspection

Municipality of Bitola, Environment sector

Monitoring station of Lake Prespa

Primary School “Goce Delchev”, Resen

Secondary School “Car Samoil”, Resen

House of Culture “Dragi Tozija”, Resen

City of Skopje, Environment sector

Local Action Group “Prespa”, Resen

Association of Nature Conservation

NGO “CNVP”

NGO “Ekosvest”

NGO “Front 21/42”

NGO “Centre of Climate Change”

NGO "Akcija Plus", Resen
Fruit producers Association Blagoja A Kotlarovski", Resen
Mountaineering Club "Dimitar Ilievski Murato", Bitola
Mountain sports club "Pelister", Bitola
UN Environment, Skopje
UNDP, Resen
Faculty of Forestry, St. Cyril and Methodius University
Travel agency "Balojani DMC", Bitola
Hotel "Riva", Stenje
Beach "Konekt", Slivinica
Hotel "Lake View", Oteshevo
Hotel "Sumski Feneri, Trnovo
Hotel "Molika", Pelister
Berry picker Mende Stojanovski
Berry picker Goce Velovski
Electricity Powerplant Rek, Bitola
Farm "Agro VA-NI", Trnovo



13. Case study 3: Involving stakeholders in the activities of this project

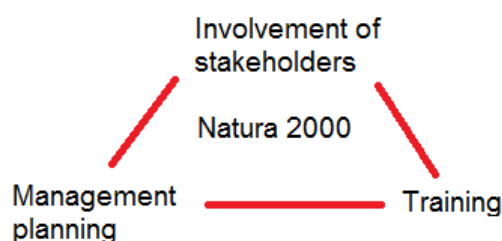
Working together and co-operation between the Member State county expert and beneficiary country professionals are the main thread in EU Twinning projects. Working together is not only restricted to the work between officials, but it should be applied also towards all stakeholders related to the topic of Twinning project. Co-operation and involving of stakeholders is included in all four components of this Twinning project “Strengthening the capacities for effective implementation of the acquis in the field of nature protection”.

On one hand the involvement can be seen as a mandatory result with corresponding benchmark. In Component 1, there is Activity 1.4. “Holding minimum 2 public consultation workshops for presenting the two draft management plans” with benchmarks B8: First public consultation workshops organized and report presented and B9: Second public consultation workshops organized and report presented. The aim is that the first public consultation workshop is related to the study for valorization of nature values (Activity 2.3.) and the second one to the management planning (Activity 1.1.).

Component 3 is dealing with development of monitoring methodology and there is Activity 3.5. “Holding of minimum of two public consultation workshops for presenting the draft methodology and for preparing the draft monitoring program” with benchmarks B21: First public consultation workshops organized and reported and B22: Second public consultation workshops organized and reported. These consultation workshops are targeted to the researchers and key specialists. The aim is in the first round (Benchmark 21) to organize a series of small thematic workshop with specialists based on species groups and in the second round (Benchmark 22) have a joint meeting presenting the whole set of monitoring protocols and draft monitoring program.

On the other hand, stakeholder involvement can and should be seen as a working method which is integrated into all activities and working processes throughout the whole project, as it should be integrated into daily protected area management. Within this project stakeholder involvement should also be seen as a training opportunity as regards the implementation of Habitat and Bird Directives. It is recommended to integrate the information delivery to stakeholders on Natura 2000 in all meetings with them and tie the message to the topic which really interest the recipient. Especially this is true when preparing management plans for the pilot sites as shown in the figure below.

Figure 2:



Stakeholder involvement in Management planning and in Study for Valorization of Nature Values

In the interviews of the stakeholders, described above in the Case study 2, clear interest to cooperate with the park administrations could be noticed. Stakeholders can and should have an important role while preparing management plans. We have lot of examples of planning where higher quality and local acceptance can be reached through stakeholders' support. This project gives an opportunity to test Open Approach methods in the preparation process. This approach in management planning will be putting into practice with the activities 1.1, 1.2, 1.4 and 2.3 in this project.

But how to involve? Stakeholder councils of Pelister National Park and Lake Pelister - Ezerani nature reserves are excellent forums for deeper involving. Councils should work as a steering group throughout the whole process discussing the key steps in the planning process. According the rulebooks for management planning (MP) and study for valorization of nature value (SVN) the following key steps can be identified:

- Article 5 (SVN): The assessment of the site
- Article 6 (SVN) Article 5 (MP): The strategy: vision, objectives and zones
- Article 5, 6, 7 (MP): Management programs and operational plans
- Article 5, 6, 7 (MP): Management programs for Management, governance, financing and administration

At least all these four steps should be discussed with the Stakeholders' Council, management programs perhaps require more than one round with the Council.

The preparation of management programs offers a good platform for deeper involvement and discussions with key stakeholder groups. In the rulebook for management plans, there are (in Article 5) defined eight programs for the activities of protected areas, taking into consideration the category and purpose of each protected area. They are (at topic level):

- 1) Preservation and monitoring of the natural heritage
- 2) Sustainable use of natural resources
- 3) Management of forest habitats and ecosystems
- 4) Management of cultural heritage
- 5) Development of sustainable tourism and recreation
- 6) Local development
- 7) Informing, raising public awareness and providing education
- 8) Management, governance, financing and administration.

The last one, (Management, governance, financing and administration), is the only program, which is not very suitable for wider stakeholder involvement, but it should be handled in PA Stakeholder council. On the other hand, all other seven other ones are dealing with central activities of a protected area. Stakeholders are interested in them, as the interviews have shown. Anyway, it is worth of considering to combine points 2 and 3 together (sustainable use of natural resources and

management of forest habitats and ecosystems), as well as 5 and 6 (development of sustainable tourism and recreation and local development).

The process can advance in five thematic working groups, which all could have two or three meetings/workshops during the preparation of management programs. In the figure 2, there is a schematic example shown, how those 36 interviewed stakeholders could be located in working groups. In practice, the number of stakeholders to be invited in co-operation is higher, but all of them will hardly be present at the same time. When starting the implementation, all identified stakeholders should be placed in the table and also their importance should be evaluated using the method described earlier in this study (Chapter 6, figure 1).

Some conclusions of this example:

- Distribution between different management planning programs is even, there are organizations in most of the boxes
- Scientific institutions were poorly represented among the organizations, however, it would be useful to mix them among other organizations
- Role of private enterprises is emphasized towards local development and sustainable tourism, which is no problem. On the other side NGOs are well represented in biodiversity and sustainable use of natural resources. Both have a role in public awareness raising.
- In the programs of - on the one hand - sustainable use of natural resources and forest management, and - on the other hand - development of sustainable tourism and local development, the organizations in the boxes are almost the same, which gives support to putting these two plus two programs together in same workshops.
- In the workshop the program should always contain information on Natura 2000 related to the topic of management program as a training part and discussion on the content of the management program for the PA in question

This model, combining stakeholders, management planning and training, is going to be a part of the training program which will be used for training of protected area administrations and stakeholders.

Figure 2. Schematic example of how the interviewed stakeholders (donors and protected area managers excluded) could be involved in management planning programs of Pelister National Park and Lake Prespa Nature Monument. Note that many of the important stakeholders were not interviewed, and they are not involved in this example.

Management plan programs	Biodiversity	Sustainable use of natural resources	Management of forests	Management of cultural heritage	Development of sustainable tourism	Local development	Public awareness raising
Governmental	MAFWE, Local Agency of MAFWE, PE Pastures,	MAFWE, Local Agency of MAFWE, PE Pastures, Water Mgmt Co. "Strezeva",	MAFWE, Local Agency of MAFWE, Centre for Public Health,	PE Pastures,		Local Agency of MAFWE, PE Pastures,	
Municipal	Bitola Env. Sector, Monitoring station L.P., Primary school Resen, Secondary school Resen,	Bitola Env. Sector, Primary school Resen, Secondary school Resen,	Bitola Env. Sector	Primary school Resen, Secondary school Resen, House of Culture,	House of Culture,		Bitola Env. Sector, Monitoring station L.P., Primary school Resen, Secondary school Resen, House of Culture,
NGOs	Ass. of Nature Cons., NGO "Ecosvest", NGO "Front 21/42", NGO "Centre of Climate Change"	LAG "Prespa", Ass. of Nature Cons., NGO "CNVP", NGO "Ecosvest", NGO "Front 21/42", NGO "Centre of Climate Change"	Ass. of Nature Cons., NGO "CNVP", NGO "Front 21/42"	LAG "Prespa"	LAG "Prespa", NGO "Ecosvest", NGO "Aktcija Plus", Mount. Club "Murato", Mount. sports club "Pelister"	LAG "Prespa", NGO "Aktcija Plus"	LAG "Prespa", Ass. of Nature Cons., NGO "CNVP", NGO "Ecosvest", NGO "Centre of Climate Change", NGO "Aktcija Plus", Mount. Club "Murato", Mount. sports club "Pelister"
Private enterprises		Berry pickers, Electricity Powerplant Rek	Berry pickers, tourism enterprises		Travel agency "Balojani DMC", Hotel "Riva", Beach "Konekt", Hotel "Lake View", Hotel "Sumski Feneri, Hotel "Molika"	Travel agency "Balojani DMC", Hotel "Riva", Beach "Konekt", Hotel "Lake View", Hotel "Sumski Feneri, Hotel "Molika", Berry pickers, Electricity Powerplant Rek, Farm "Agro VA-NI"	Travel agency "Balojani DMC", Beach "Konekt", Hotel "Lake View", Hotel "Sumski Feneri, Hotel "Molika"

Promotion of livelihoods		Farmers' Corp. "Blagoja Kotlarovski", Farm "Agro VA-NI"		Farm "Agro VA-NI"		Farmers' Corp. "Blagoja Kotlarovski",	Farmers' Corp. "Blagoja Kotlarovski",
Scientific bodies		Faculty of Forestry	Faculty of Forestry				

14. Road map how to advance

As conclusion from this paper, the following road map describes the steps to be taken for the protected area manager willing to improve and maintain contacts with stakeholders, not forgetting the benefits available from this co-operation in the form of better managementinspiring climate and increased acceptance in the society .

- Whenever working with establishment of a new protected area, think about when it is right time to invite a public meeting to hear about the plans! Be brave to start the co-operation and be ready to continue it in a workshop!
- Learn to know your stakeholders, their viewpoints and interests by putting some time for an analyze!
- Build trust - and keep it!
- Be active in sharing information!
- Avoid conflicts - or put efforts in managing them!
- Develop work with the Stakeholder Council of the protected area, make it a corner stone for co-operation!
- Invite stakeholders to participate in planning - take participatory planning methods in your toolbox!
- Encourage young people to come along - and everybody else showing interest!
- Develop partnership and open ways to joint management!
- Encourage establishment of “Friends of the Park” or similar NGOs!
- Arrange National Park Day every year - develop other activities for public!
- Activate the Stakeholder Souncil and co-operation with NGOs!



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Summary table of the proposals and recommendations

This table is shortly presenting the activities proposed in this Stakeholders' Involvement Plan. The target groups for activities, links to the Short and long term training plan for implementation of NATURA 2000 (prepared by Twinning project) and proposed responsibilities are shown in own columns. The activities are grouped into four groups:

- 1) Continuous co-operation of PA administration and key stakeholders ☒ Public participation on decision making
- 2) Developing communication tools → Public access to information; open dialogue with the society
- 3) Joint implementation of management programs; organising events / activities / projects
- 4) Co-operation with local livelihoods/economy

Chapters in this plan	Activity	Aim	Target groups / implementation	Content and description	Responsibility
1) Continuous co-operation of PA administration and key stakeholders ☒ Public participation on decision making					
10, 13	Work of protected area councils	To develop the work of the Stakeholders' Council and Scientific Council	Stakeholders' Council and Scientific Council of the PA. / Training Plan: "Open approach in protected area management" (for both councils)	Considering and developing the working methods together with representatives of the stakeholder groups. Making the co-operation interesting and productive for all participants by developing working methods	Twinning project, PA administration.

5, 6	Applying Open Approach method	To make the staff and main stakeholder groups to understand the benefits and working methods in open approach	PA staff, MoEPP staff, main stakeholder groups. / Training Plan: "Open approach in protected area management" (for professionals)	Pros and cons of open approach in administration, stakeholder analysis, communication with stakeholders / administration, building trust, conflict management, activities to be developed in permanent co-operation	Twinning project together with MoEPP.
10	Annual co-operation with each of the main stakeholders / stakeholder groups	To strengthen co-operation with the important stakeholders, and to make it an annual face-to-face practice.	Most important stakeholders within and around the PAs: landowners, cattle and sheep breeders, farmers, tourist enterprises, PE Macedonian Forest, PE Pasture, Local district of the MoAFWE, berry pickers, fishermen etc.	Regular discussions about topical issues, preferably separately with each group and - preferably - once a year. Results documented. It gives an opportunity for sharing information, open discussions and solving problems beforehand.	PA directors, annual reporting to the MoEPP
4, 10, 11,13	Inviting stakeholders to participate in defining strategies and future roles of PAs	To promote joint understanding and commitment for development of PAs	Important stakeholders, decisionmakers at all levels / Training Plan: "Analyzing results of valorization and preparing strategical goals for management plan"	Involving stakeholders in programs and projects in sharing information, brainstorming, capacity building, testing of ideas and feedback	MoEPP in preparation of future nature conservation policy, programs and projects. Possibility for external project funding.

10, 13	Co-operation in management planning	To develop participation in preparing management plans and to strengthen good practices in co-operation	All stakeholders / In the Training Plan there are several events for sharing information under this topic	Involving local organizations and other stakeholders through the Stakeholder Council and Scientific Council in the process of management planning. Participation is important especially in strategical work and in drawing up the management programs	PA directors, both councils working with the PA.
4	Rulebook for stakeholders` involvement	To prepare a draft rulebook for the practices in stakeholder co-operation, e.g. under the name of "Open Approach in Protected Area Management"	All stakeholders	Preparing a PM for justification of stakeholder co-operation, and a draft rulebook for the protected area administration, being in line with the incoming new Law on Nature Conservation	MoEPP
2) Developing communication tools → Public access to information; open dialogue with the society					
4	Developing information of the PAs	To produce information available for visitors about valuable nature and possibilities for enjoying it.	All visitors and stakeholders. / Training Plan: "Preparing management programs for public awareness"	Use of both web sites, social media and printed brochures in dissemination Some important steps: 1. Preparing maps of Natura 2000 habitats,	PA administration. Possibility for external project funding.

				<p>2. Preparing maps of available routes in the PA</p> <p>3. Some themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The valuable nature, where and how to find it ○ how to behave in nature ○ facilities available for visitors ○ safety of visitors ○ contact information of the PA administration 	
11	Developing information of Natura 2000 program	To prepare stakeholders for designing new Natura 2000 sites and implementing the rules and restrictions	All stakeholders, administration within forestry, agriculture etc. / In the Training Plan there are several events for sharing information under this topic	Popular, correct and easy-to-adopt information should be available for anyone to avoid misunderstanding and negative rumors among landowners, entrepreneurs etc. Lack of this kind of information would create serious problems in places like Resen, but also within other levels of administration.	MoEPP, PA staff, municipalities
8	Use of internet and social media in promotion and dissemination	To improve skills and use of Facebook, Instagram and similar applications. Encouraging visitors to	All stakeholders can take advantage of improved communication /	Training use of application and e.g. use of photographs. Defining the responsibilities so that updating and maintaining of the tools is guaranteed.	PA staff, visitors

		promote nature experiences		Making uploading of material easy in the media.	
8	Gathering and processing feedback	To improve documentation of all kind of feedback from protected areas and to develop customer service in this respect	All stakeholders, PA staff	Drawing up a system (e.g. on online basis) how feedback, complaints, proposals etc. from stakeholders can be documented, processed and answered	MoEPP together with some external donor. Possibility for external project funding.
8	Analyzing results from co-operation	To compare and analyze results from different co-operation methods with stakeholders (after gathering of results is organized)	All stakeholders, PA staff	Preparing a scientific study of methods (proposed here) for developing stakeholders' involvement. Using results in benchmarking the best ways suitable in the Republic of North Macedonia	MoEPP together with some university or scientific institution. Possibility for external project funding.
3) Joint implementation of management programs; organising events / activities / projects					
10	Open Door concept (Open House)	To organize events together with stakeholders and lowering the threshold	Local organizations (e.g. hobby clubs), ordinary people, especially in communities close to the PA	Organizing Open Door days of different kinds inviting everyone and/or certain stakeholder groups to	PA directors, PA staff, any kind of organizations.

		for people to visit PAs and to approach the staff		participate. Natura 2000 Day to be organized every spring	Possibility for external project funding.
10	Partnership in organizing study tours and guided tours in the PA	To develop guiding services in PAs organized both on commercial and NGO basis. Making the PA familiar for people	Tourist entrepreneurs, mountaineering clubs, NGOs. All stakeholders, visitors of the PAs / Training Plan: “Preparing management programs for sustainable tourism and local development” and “Implementation of the directives in rural development and tourism”	Organizing visits, guided tours and study tours for people to learn more about Natura 2000 and other valuable features in the PA. Different kind of products, some of them free of charge, more demanding ones to be available for payment	PA staff, tourist entrepreneurs, NGOs, scientific institutions
10	Practical co-operation in management of habitats and species	To implement relevant management programs	Organizations interested in nature conservation, individuals / Preparing detail plans for management. One-day actions, voluntary camps etc.	There is a great need to develop and implement measures for management of e.g. Natura habitats and endangered species in the PAs, following detailed plans	PA directors
10	Involving local people (and anyone else) in promoting nature conservation	To strengthen connections between people and nature conservation by offering people with different	1.Young people, students, pupils of schools	1. Organizing Junior Ranger activities (Europarc Federation), invitation for schools to study tours in the PA	PA directors, other staff, Stakeholder Council.

		background an opportunity to participate management or other activities in PAs. Stronger connections increase local and national acceptance of nature conservation.	2. Nature enthusiasts in any age 3. Friends of protected areas 4. Developing strategic partnerships with important local partners and/or NGOs	2. Organizing voluntary camps together with environmental organizations or other NGOs. Possible activities: management of habitats, construction of facilities, cleaning up tourist routes etc. 3. Encouraging active people or organizations to establish and run Friendship club or association for the PA. Developing activities and contacting similar clubs in other countries 4. Identifying and connecting important stakeholders as partners to deepen co-operation	Possibility for external project funding.
4) Co-operation with local livelihoods/economy					
10	Partnership in tourism	To set up and to implement partnership in tourism development	Tourist entrepreneurs, especially mountaineering clubs in Pelister NP, hotels and restaurants in Resen and Bitola /	Creating rules for co-operation between protected areas and tourist entrepreneurs Some issues to be developed in the beginning:	MoEPP and Ministry of Economy at national level and PA administrations.

			<p>This is a wide and important field and needs many different approaches.</p> <p>Training Plan: “Preparing management programs for sustainable tourism” and “Implementation of the directives in rural development and tourism”</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clarifying the role of tourism in development of PAs of different categories 2. Templates for agreements between PA and tourism entrepreneurs 3. Models for permanent co-operation with mutual benefit 	<p>Possibility for external project funding.</p>
10	Joint management in rural development	To implement practical measures in habitat management, and building and maintaining facilities	<p>Agricultural authorities, Local Action Groups, local and national NGOs. /</p> <p>Training Plan: “Open approach in protected area management” (for local stakeholders)</p>	<p>Ideas could be processed together with enterprises in agriculture and Local Action Groups. Leader funding is about to start in the Republic of North Macedonia in 2018, and this opportunity plus EU’s agricultural funds could be utilized.</p>	<p>PA directors, agricultural enterprises, Local Action Groups, municipal authorities.</p> <p>Possibility for external project funding.</p>
4	Benefits from protected areas for local economy	To develop a system for evaluating the benefits of each PA for local economy, implementing it, sharing and publishing results	<p>Visitors, other stakeholders, entrepreneurs working within and around PAs /</p> <p>Training program: “Preparing management</p>	<p>A combination of PA visitor counts, visitor interviews and interviews of entrepreneurs produce information, which can be used in counting benefits for local economy.</p>	<p>MoEPP together with universities or scientific institutions.</p>

			programs for sustainable use of natural resources and forests” and “Preparing management programs for sustainable tourism and local development”	Making the benefits visible gives support in developing the network of PAs and getting acceptance at local and national level.	Possibility for external project funding.
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Summary table of the proposals and recommendations

Continuous co-operation of PA administration and key stakeholders
 → Public participation on decision making

Applying Open Approach method

Work of protected area councils

Annual co-operation with each of the main stakeholders

Inviting stakeholders to participate in defining strategies and future roles of PAs

Co-operation in management planning

Developing communication tools → Public access to information; open dialogue with the society

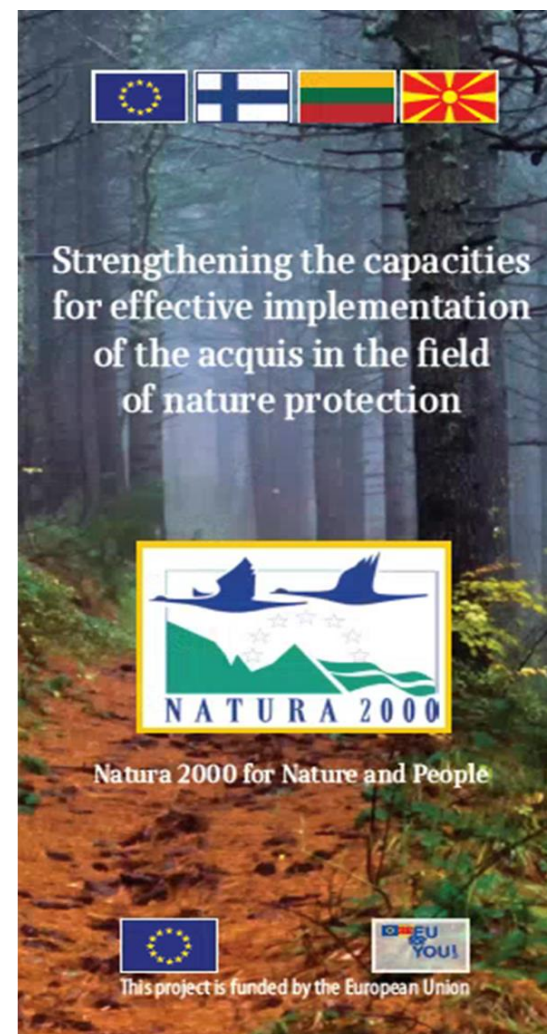
Developing information on the PAs

Developing information on Natura 2000 program

Use of internet and social media in promotion and dissemination

Gathering and processing feedback

Analyzing results from co-operation



Summary table of the proposals and recommendations

Joint implementation of management programs; organising events / activities / projects

Open Door concept;
joint events

Partnership in organizing study
tours and guided tours in the PA

Involving people in promoting
nature conservation

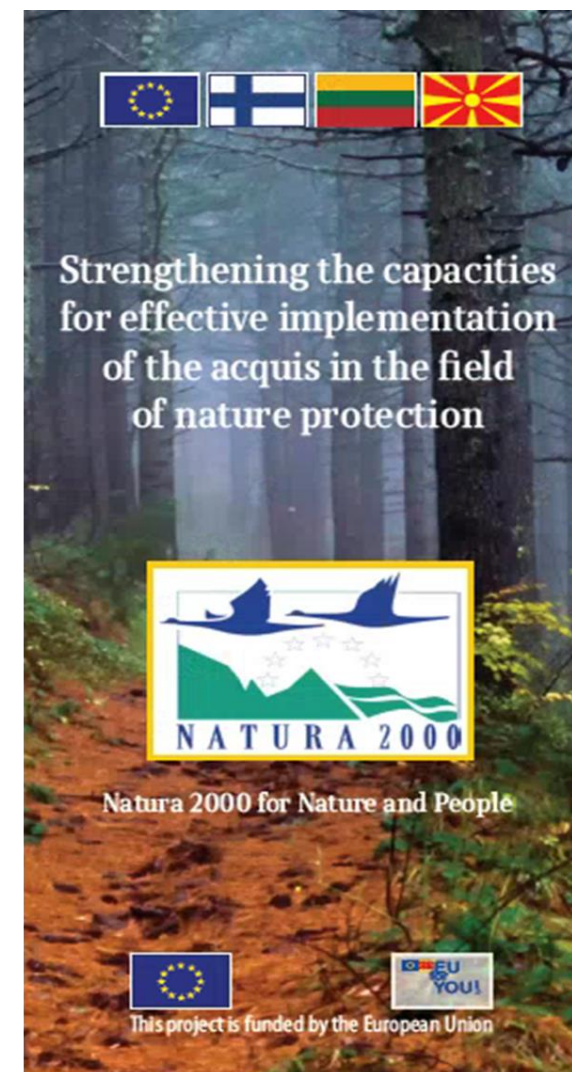
Practical co-operation in
management of habitats and
species

Co-operation with local livelihoods/economy

Partnership in tourism

Joint management in rural
development

Benefits from protected
areas for local economy



ANNEX 1: List of stakeholders and protected area administrations around Lake Prespa NM and Pelister NP

STAKEHOLDERS AROUND PRESPA

Protected Area: **Lake Prespa NM**

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIONS AND SERVICES 8:

Name of Subject	Basic data about the stakeholder and its role	Contact	Interview (y/n)
Municipality of Resen	Department for Environment protection.	Ajman Al Malla, Head of Environment department, +389 70 342 178 ajman.almalla@resen.gov.mk	y
Public Waste Management Enterprise "Proleter"	Management of waste in Prespa.	Muzafer Murati, general director, +389 70 212 510	y
The public enterprise for managing forests "Makedonski Sumi"	Management of forests.	+389 47 451 972	
National Park "Galichica" – Ohrid	Administration of national park "Galichica".	Andon Bojadzi, general director, +389 75 282 200	
Hydrobiological Institute - Ohrid	Public and governmental science-research and educational organization of national interest. It covers research subjects in limnology as in natural lakes, as well in reservoirs and rivers.	Elizabeta Veljanovska Sarafilovska, general director, +389 70 359 135	
House of Culture "Dragi Tozija" Resen	Managing of cultural activities in Resen.	Vasko Vasilevski, general director, +389 78 342 031	y
Protection and Rescue Directorate, Resen	Protection and rescue from natural disasters.	Pece Tabakovski +389 75 457 558	
Crisis Management Center, Resen	Management of crisis situation (fire, floods etc.)	Goce Sokolevski, head of center, +389 72 271 837	

LOCAL NGOs 5:

Name of Organization	Basic data about the stakeholder and its role	Contact	Interview (y/n)
Local Action Group "LAG" Prespa	Association for Rural Development. Creating sustainable rural development and socio-economic security, as well as achievement of common goals and interests through informing and educating the local rural population.	Jovche Volkanovski, director, +389 78 206 764	y
Fruit producers Association Blagoja A. Kotlarovski Resen	Association for spreading good practices in agricultural manufacturing.	Frose Gjorgievska, director, +389 71 811 828	y
"ECO Gerilla" Prespa	Association for organizing activities in environment protection and increasing the public awareness in waste management.	Borce Tolevski, director, +389 78 401 907	
NGO "Akcija Plus"	Association for local rural development through mobilization of the community for sustainable use of local resources.	Zizo Ljamkovski, director, +389 78 625 966	y
UNDP office in Resen	Environment protection, support protection of nature in Prespa region	Nikola Zdraveski, 070362205, nikola.zdraveski@undp.org	

LOCAL SCHOOLS 6:

Name of Subject	Basic data about the stakeholder and its role	Contact	Interview (y/n)
"Goce Delchev" Resen	Elementary School	Blazhe Sokolevski, director, +389 78 622 724 Ivona Radevska, Teacher of Biology +389 78 215 127	y
"Mite Bogoevski" Resen	Elementary School	Shejla Dalipovska, director, +389 71 708 313	
"Slavejko Arsov" Podmochani village	Elementary School	Sebahat Shemshedinovska, director, +389 76 387 574	
"Braka Miladinovci" Tsarev Dvor village	Elementary School	Blaze Kazhanovski, director, +389 75 356 796	

"Dimitar Vlahov" Ljubojno village	Elementary School	Suzi Kjoropanovska, director, +389 78 848 982	
"Car Samoil" Resen	Secondary School	Slavica Bozhinova, director, +389 70 399 552	y

LOCAL SMALL AND MDIUM SIZE ENTERPRISES 12:

Name of Enterprise	Basic data about the stakeholder and its role	Contact	Interview (y/n)
Swisslion Agroplod LLC Resen	Production, trade and services company, with a range of assortment like alimentary products, snacks, baby food and coffee.	"29 th November" St, No.6 +389 47 455 793	
Aluminum and Zink foundry	Producton of high quality aluminum and zinc effluences by using a technology of high pressure casting.	"Dimitar Vlahov" St, No. 6 +389 47 452 255	
Dealtask PTY LTD	Production of fur products.	"29 th November" St, No. 1 +389 47 455 710	
Vita Res DOO, Resen	Production of apple concentrate.	"29 th November" St, No. 1/26 +389 47 451 855	
Hotel Servis, branch office APELINI Resen	Organic production of juices.	"Dimitar Vlahov" St, No. 41/4-1 Slavica Siljanovska +389 78 256 078	
"Jabolcelo" DOO	Production of Apple juice	"Dimitar Vlahov" St, No. 31/1 Lidija Stojanovska +389 75 203 231	
"Rumko 91" DOOEL Resen	Producing, packaging , exporting and importing of fruits and vegetables	"Industriska" St, No.bb Ilce Angelevski+389 75 212 355	
"Hateks" DOO Resen	Production of upper body garments, PPE items and protective clothes.	"29 th November" St, No. Jovanco Rajcanovski +389 70 342 026	
"CD Mako Trejd" DOOEL Resen	Exporting and importing of fruits and vegetables	"Industriska" St, No. Mitko Buchkovski +389 75 457 190	

"Cokomill" DOO Resen	Production of milk and chocolate products.	"Industriska" St, No Hari Kotlarovski +389 70 307 505	
"Aronmah" DOO Resen	Production of fruit juices.	"Dimitar Vlahov" St, No. 10 Nicolce Serafimoski +389 75 443 897	
"Smrcak" DOOEL Resen	Red and golden apple supplier.	"Industriska" St, No. Zoran Stoilovski +389 78 622 102	

LOCAL TOURIST ENTERPRISES 11:

Name of Subject	Location	Basic data about the stakeholder and its role	Contact
Hotel "Lake View"	Oteshevo	Hotel 70 beds; restaurant with 110 seats	+389 76 214 847 lakeview.oteshevo@gmail.com http://lakeviewoteshevo.com/
Hotel "Royal L"	Tsarev Dvor village	Hotel 20 beds; restaurant with 420 seats	+389 47 488 500
Hotel "Pretor"	Pretor	Hotel 51 beds; restaurant with 210 seats	+389 71 225 484
Hotel "Riva"	Stenje village	Hotel 21 beds; restaurant with 80 seats	+389 47 484 165, +389 71 333 157, +389 75 421 145, +389 71 33 33 11
Hotel "Holiday"	Resen	Hotel 13 rooms; restaurant with 350 seats	+389 70 588 355, +389 47 452 904
Hotel "MVR"	Krani	Hotel 111 beds; restaurant with 150 seats	+389 47 483 247
Avtokamp "Kapri"	Krani	Auto-camp 120 beds; restaurant with 450 seats; open restaurant with 150 seats.	+389 47 483 708 +389 47 483 010 avtokampkrani@kapri.com.mk
Restaurant "Mali Raj" Stenje	Stenje village	Restaurant 60 seats	+389 75 356 833

Restaurant "Galaxy" Pretor	Pretor	Restaurant 150 seats	+389 47 551 703
Restaurant "Proper Pizza" Pretor	Pretor	Restaurant 150 seats	+389 71 225 072
Slivnica KONEKT CLUB Beach	Slivnica	Restaurant and beach beds	+389 77 994 635

STAKEHOLDERS AROUND PELISTER

Protected Area: **National Park Pelister**

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIONS AND SERVICES 28:

Name of Stakeholder	Basic data about the stakeholder and its role	Contact	Interview (y/n)
Agriculture Extension Agency (Ministry of agriculture, forestry and water) - Bitola	Controls the executing of Forest plan on the terrain and approve activities with sanitary wood cutting	7000 Bitola, Bul. First May no. Peter Jima 070 403 322 petardzima@yahoo.com	y
Center for Crisis Management	Helps and regulate any danger situation including disasters and firefighting	7000 Bitola, st. Славко Лумбарко б.б. Oliver Mitevski 075 226 419 oliver.mitevski@cuk.gov.mk	
Directorate for Protection and Rescue	Regulate and organize protection and rescue of the people in any danger situation including disasters and firefighting	7000 Bitola, st. Славко Лумбарко б.б. Dimche Joshevski 075 457 516 dimcejosevski@yahoo.com	
Ministry of interior BITOLA	Cooperation for any needed situation on Bitola side	7000 Bitola, Forest police	
Ministry of interior RESEN	Cooperation for any needed situation on Resen side	7000 Bitola, Border Police	

Fire Brigade Bitola	Cooperation and help with any fire on the terrain of bigger dimensions on Bitola Municipality side	7000 Bitola, Bul. First May no. 65 Kostadin Popovski popovski.kostadin@gmail.com	
Fire Brigade Resen	Cooperation and help with any fire on the terrain of bigger dimensions on Resen Municipality side	7310 Resen Vanco Ilievski vancoilievski@hotmail.com	
Municipality of Bitola	Cooperation for the territory that NP Pelister is managing on the area of Bitola Municipality	7000 Bitola, Bulevard Prvi Maj 61 Ljubo Atanasovski - Ecology sector 076 485 779 ljubo_atanasovski@yahoo.com	y
Municipality of Resen	Cooperation for the territory that NP Pelister is managing on the area of Resen Municipality	7310 Resen, Square Marshal Tito 20 Ajman Almalla - Ecology 070 342 178sector ajman.almalla@resen.gov.mk	y
Macedonian forest, Kajmakchalan - Bitola	Cooperation in the firefighting and forest regulations on the border side of NP Pelister - Bitola side	7000 Bitola, st. Boris Kidrich bb 33 Violeta Jovevska 071 313 724 violeta-jovevska@yahoo.com	
Macedonian forest, Prespa drvo Resen	Cooperation in the firefighting and forest regulations on the border side of NP Pelister - Resen side	047451972	
Public enterprise Macedonia Road - Bitola	Regulating and maintaining one part of the asphalt road in NP Pelister - to hotel Molika	7000 Bitola, Djuro Djakovic no. 12 Bekim Memedi 075 282 598	
Center for Public Health - Bitola	Doing analyses of drinking water in taps and fountains in NP Pelister	7000 Bitola, Ul. Parizanska б.б. Marika Ivanova marikaivanova@yahoo.com	y
Transmitters and connections	Owner and user of Transmitter on the Peak Pelister that emitted 3 TV	7000 Skopje, Bul. Goce Delcev no. 18 (02) 3 297 100	

(Macedonian Radio and TV)	chanel and 3 radio chanel of that State Radio and TV company		
EVN - Bitola - Electricity supplier	The main distributor of electricity power to all buildings and users in NP Pelister - main problem is keeping clean on time the terrain under electricity cables	7000 Bitola, Tsar Samuil bb Oktayr Sulchevski 072 931 448 oktair.sulchevski@evn.mk	
Agency for Electronic Communications	State company for controlling the signals of telecommunications	1000 Skopje, Str. Dimitrija Cupovski br. 13	
Public Enterprise for Management of Pastures	State company that is owner of all pastures in state including the pastures in NP Pelister - main problem - they give permits but without previous opinion from NP Pelister	1000 Skopje, bul.Partizanski Odredi 145 2 306 42 21	y
Local community Village Nizopole	Main problems with some collectors of blueberries that come from Villages Kishava and Ostrec, from other side of mountain... and with wild boars that damage the meadows of village owners	Nizhopole, 7000 Bitola	
Local community Village Capari	Main problems with burning the rest of branches and left vegetables after the crop, and danger of forest fires	with. Capari, 7000 Bitola Vlade Vrchkovski 071 249 848	
Local community Village Ljubojno - Resen	Main problems with burning the rest of branches and left vegetables after the crop, and danger of forest fires	with. Ljubojno, 7310 Resen Joshe Mitrevski	
Local community Village Braychino - Resen	Have some possibilities for developing tourism, main problem is the initiative to make it at higher organization... some problems with water level and biological minimum in river during the summer	with. Brajcino, 7310 Resen Jonce Gagovski gagovski@yahoo.com	
Local community - Village Rotino - Bitola	Main problems with burning the rest of branches and left vegetables after the crop, and danger of forest fires	with. Rotino, 7000 Bitola	
Local community - Village Malovishta - Bitola	Main problem is the old and thin asphalt road missing help from municipality to rebuild, pollution of the river in the village and getting older the local inhabitants, that haven't initiatives for developing	with. Malovishta, 7000 Bitola Gjoko Machovski 071 361 422 gjokomacovski@yahoo.com	

Public enterprise for meliuration of Pelagonia Valley - STREŽEVO - Bitola	This Public enterprise is collectin all water from arround the Park and send it, throug Maloviska River (Shemnica River) to Artifical Lake named Strezevo, and after that sell the water to final users for irigation.	Bul. First May bb, 7000 Bitola Aleksandar Vengjelovski aleksandar_vangelovski@yahoo.com	y
Local public entreprice for waste collecting - Komunalec - Bitola	They are collecting the garbage from NP Pelister from containers spread in the park, and NP Pelister is paying to them for its service.	Ul. 16th b.b., 7000 Bitola Vesna Gasevska 070 365 564 vesne.63@hotmail.com	
Local public enterprise for water supply - VODOVOD - Bitola	Vodovod - is public company that takes the water from river Dragor and Sapuncica from NP Pelister, and after filtration in Village Dihovo, sell the water to citizens of Bitola.	7000 Bitola, Kliment Ohridski bb	
Center for development of Pelagonia region - regional organization of municipalities	Organization on regional level, supported by Ministry of local governing, that try to help municipalities cooperation (involved Bitola and Resen) to develop in tourism and agriculture	7000 Bitola, Tomaki Dimitrovski br. 7 Jasmina Stepanovska 076 211 505 jasmina@pelagonijaregion.mk	
Electricity Powerplant REK –Bitola (ELEM)	Production of electircity for the entire country. factory	contact@elem.com.mk , 02/3149278, 047206201	

LOCAL NGOs 9:

Name of Stakeholder	Basic data about the stakeholder and its role	Contact	Interview (y/n)
Biosphere NGO	Among other activities, has some ecological activities	7000 Bitola, st. Dimo Hadzi Dimov 3 Neshat Azemovski 071 578 060 biosfera369@yahoo.com	
Association for environment Molika NGO	Among other activities, has some ecological activities	7000 Bitola, Mailbox 17 Peter Andonov molika@t.mk 070 547 281	
Firefighting volunteers association (NGO)	Organizing and realizing practical and teoretical knowlwdge and exercises for fire fighting	7000 Bitola, Hristo Botev 23-a Sasho Atanasovski	

		070 830 552 saso_atanasovski@yahoo.com	
Mountain sports club "Pelister" registered as NGO	Formal user of Mountinering Hut "Golemo Ezero" on Big Lake, and building hut "Kopanki" that has burned in 2011... Kopanki not in funktion. Sky Lift and Sky Center Kopanki - Formal user of Sky Lift and Sky Center Kopanki - at the moment given to concession to Hotel Molika (ELEM Tours)	7000 Bitola dimcepopov@yahoo.com	y
Police Mountain sports club "7-th May" - Bitola NGO	Take care of the one Mountain Trail from Gjavato Entrance of NP Pelister To Small Church over Malovishte Village and use one Forester Hut at location - Derven (Gjavato)	7000 Bitola Stevce Mitrevski 070 395 892 stevcem@t-home.mk	
Mountaineering Club "Dimitar Ilievski Murato" - NGO	Take care of the Mountain Hut - Shiroka, on the main way to Peak Pelister, hut belongs to Macedonian Radio and Television Opearator	7000 Bitola Jonce Ilievski 078 232 132 jonceilievski@gmail.com	y
Hunting club - Sokol - Bitola	Has regular activities near the border of NP Pelister but problems of entering the hunters on NP Pelister Territory	7000 Bitola Romeo Sazdanovski 075 890 404 sazdanrom@hotmail.com	
Hunting club - Braychino - Resen	Has regular activities near the border of NP Pelister but problems of entering the hunters on NP Pelister Territory	7000 Bitola,	
Association EKE - NGO	NGO from Malovishte Village that try to keep local Village traditions, less active in last years	7000 Bitola, Mavshteshte Risto Paligora 075 298 722 paligoraristo@yahoo.com	

LOCAL SCHOOLS 0:

Name of Stakeholder	Basic data about the stakeholder and its role	Contact	Interview (y/n)
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LOCAL SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZE ENTERPRISES 7:

Name of Stakeholder	Basic data about the stakeholder and its role	Contact	Interview (y/n)
Hydro power - Little Hydro powers - DOO Skopje - v. Maloviste	Private producer of electricity power - possible problems with biological minimum while use the water of the river during summer/autumn period	1000 Skopje Dimitar Ivanovski 078 482 216 legal@eds.mk	
Hydro power - BNB Energi DOOEL Skopje - v. Brajcino - MHC	Private producer of electricity power - possible problems with biological minimum while use the water of the river during summer/autumn period	1000 Skopje	
Hydro power - PCC HYDRO DOOEL - Brajcino	Private producer of electricity power - possible problems with biological minimum while use the water of the river during summer/autumn period	1000 Skopje	
Agro VA-NI, Farmer - village Trnovo	Has sheep and do grazing in and out of the NP Pelister territory	7000 Bitola Nikola Georgiev 071 351 588 agrovani@yahoo.com	y
Hydro power - Energoremont MZT-HERZ - MHC in Malovishte	Private producer of electricity power - possible problems with biological minimum while use the water of the river during summer/autumn period	7000 Bitola, Mavshteshte Andrej Radivchev 071 395 500 andrej.radivcev@gmail.com	
Berry picker Mende Stojanovski	Individual part time collector of blueberries in the forests.	075719609, Bitola	y
Berry picker Goce Velovski	Individual collector of blueberries in the forests.	071831125, Bitola	y

LOCAL TOURISTIC ENTERPRISES 4:

Name of Stakeholder	Basic data about the stakeholder and its role	Contact	Interview (y/n)
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Hotel Molika	Belongs to Public enterprise ELEM - producer of electricity power - The biggest hotel in the park - with old and problematic sewage system	7000 Bitola Nikola Karovski karonik@live.com 075 291 923	Y
Children's resort Pelister	Belongs to Ministry of Labour - not working - on sell and in process of privatization	//	
Balojani DMC, travel agency	Travel agency that try to develop tourism in guided hikings and tours (also in field of bear watching)	7000 Bitola, Gorki Balojani 075 207 273 gorki.balojani@balojani.com.mk	Y
Hotel "Shumski Feneri, Trnovo	Hotel with 12 rooms and popular restaurant	Trnovo Village Bitola	Y

STAKEHOLDERS AROUND SKOPJE

Protected Areas: **National Park Pelister AND Lake Prespa**

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIONS AND SERVICES 4

Name of Stakeholder	Basic data about the stakeholder and its role	Contact	Interview (y/n)
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy	Ministry	Goran Lichenoski, 070403897, info@mzsv.gov.mk , 02/3134477Skopje	Y
City of Skopje, Environment sector	Municipality	Cvetanka Ikonomova, 070359642, Skopje	Y
UN Environment Program, Skopje	UNEP	Iskra Stojanovska, 075371491, Skopje	Y
Faculty of Forestry, St. Cyril and Methodius University	University	Nikolcho Velkovski, 02/3135033 1139, nvelkovski@sf.ukim.edu.mk	Y

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LOCAL NGOs 5:

Name of Stakeholder	Basic data about the stakeholder and its role	Contact	Interview (y/n)
Association of Nature Conservation	Nature biodiversity protection. Awareness, research.	Skopje	Y
NGO "CNVP"	Forest management and protection. Environment Advocacy.	Aneta Stavreska-Panajotova, 071292005, anela.stavreska@cnvp-eu.org , Skopje	Y
NGO "Ekosvest"	Environment protection, legal advocacy of environment protection, legislations.	Stojan Leshoski, Sv Kiril I Metodi, stojan@ekosvest.com.mk , 02/3217247, Skopje	Y
NGO "Front 21/42"	Environment protection, legal advocacy of environment protection, legislations.	Aleksandra Bujaroska, ul Kliment Ohridski 54/2/2, Skopje	Y
NGO "Centre of Climate Change"	Environment protection, awareness rising, assesment, legislations.	02/5208330, b_stanojevska@yahoo.com , Ul Razlovecko Vostanie 2A/2-V, Skopje	Y

