

Protected Areas Governance in Croatia

EUROPARC NORDIC-BALTIC SECTION SEMINAR

April 3-4, 2013, Vanašue Holiday Centre, Soomaa National Park

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- Independent from 25 June 1991.
- Area of 56 594 sq km
- Population in 2011 4 284 889

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Nature Protection Act

The Nature Protection Act (OG 70/05,139/08, 57/11) defines nine categories of protected areas in Croatia, describes their characteristics and associated restrictions and regulates their designation and management.

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Protected Areas

National Category	Designated by	Managed by
Strict reserve	government	county
National park	parliament	state
Special reserve	government	county
Nature park	parliament	state
Regional park	county assembly	county
Monument of nature	county assembly	county
Significant landscape	county assembly	county
Park forest	county assembly	county
Monument of park architecture	county assembly	county

The national categories largely correspond to the internationally recognized IUCN protected area categories.

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Protected Areas

National Category	No of PAs	Area (ha)	% area of Cro territory	Managed by
Strict reserve	2	2 395,35	0,027	county
National park	8	95 472,36	1,019	state
Special reserve	80	44 105,89	0,502	county
Nature park	11	419 622,03	4,402	state
Regional park	2	102 791,82	0,979	county
Monument of nature	85	207,00	0,002	county
Significant landscape	87	128 892,06	1,461	county
Park forest	32	3 267,88	0,037	county
Monument of park architecture	128	937,62	0,011	county
Total	435	739 422,92	8,44	

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Governance

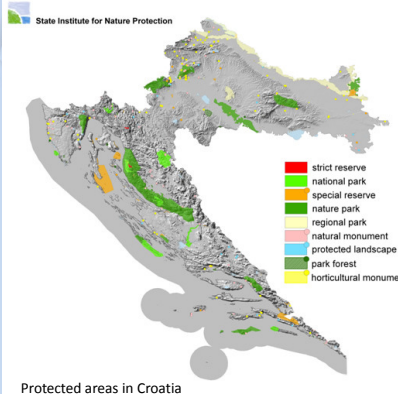
Main authority in charge of nature conservation is the Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection

National parks and Nature parks have their own management bodies (19 areas). This should work good!

All other protected areas are managed by county public institutions (20 counties, 416 PAs). This can't work!

- Too many and too huge areas all along the county (up to 20 areas)
- Not enough people (even just 1, general manager)
- Not enough money
- General managers are not experts usually
- Unknown borders of PAs (borders are not drawn in GIS)
- Justice is too slow
- Etc...

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National Park IUCN cat. II	Year of designation
Plitvice Lakes	1949
Paklenica	1949
Risnjak	1953
Mljet	1960
Kornati	1980
Brijuni	1983
Krka	1985
Norther Velebit	1999

Protected areas in Croatia

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Governance of National Parks

National Parks in Croatia – IUCN Category II

„Protected areas are large natural or near natural areas set aside to protect large-scale ecological processes, along with the complement of species and ecosystems characteristic of the area, which also provide a foundation for environmentally and culturally compatible spiritual scientific, educational, recreational and visitor opportunities.

Primary objective
To protect natural biodiversity along with its underlying ecological structure and supporting environmental processes, and to promote education and recreation.”
(IUCN Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories)

In Croatia; every economic utilization of nature that might affect natural values is prohibited (traditional agriculture and some tourist activities are allowed).

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Governance of National Parks

Nature Protection Act

Management documents:

1. Physical or Spatial Plan of Area of Special Characteristics
2. Management Plan of NP
3. Ordinance of Internal Order of NP
4. Annual Programme of NP
5. Other documents of the PA

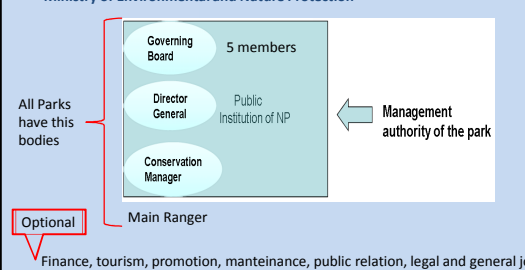
All this documents should be aligned one with another, and with other documents on national and local levels (strategies, action plans, county physical plans...).

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Main authority in charge of nature conservation is the Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection



All Parks have this bodies

Optional: Finance, tourism, promotion, maintenance, public relation, legal and general jobs...

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Governance of National Parks

Although all Parks in Croatia have the same model of governance, the same kind of documents and legislation, Parks have different approaches and different effectiveness. Most of them are not effective at all...

Differences between Parks: numbers of employees (from 10 to 900), size of the Park (from 34 to 2 270 km²), money (from self sustainable to 100% financed by government), different models of Management plans, different general managers, islands, mountains, near or far away from civilization, different kinds of stakeholders or inhabitants, different cultures, way of living, tradition, police, judges, etc...

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Governance of National Parks - Brijuni

One of the most effective NP in Croatia! Why?

- Small area (34 km²) with 24 h surveillance (rangers and cameras)
- Long tradition in protection (local people are used to it)
- Good relation with local people
- Helped by police, fishery inspection and army
- „Justice is quick”
- Self sustainable (90%; 150 000 visitors every year that pay the entrance)
- Good relations between employees (in summer 300 mostly in hotels and restaurants)
- Good management based on experts from different fields
- „Near civilization” with well developed tourism in the region
- Etc...

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Take in consideration, my opinion:

It doesn't exist „a unique perfect model or approach“. Nature conservation depends of many factors but most of all by people.

Managers should not be politicians but experts (not necessary biologists or nature experts) but good managers together with different professionals.

Local people are the key of an effective protected area. Only if they are happy with the PA the PA can succeed.

Money and the way how you get it is very important.

Networking is very important. Everybody have the same problems and every problem has a solution.

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HVALA NA PAŽNJI!

Thank you!

Aitäh!

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