

Conflicts in the Protection of Natural Values; Example of River Neretva Valley

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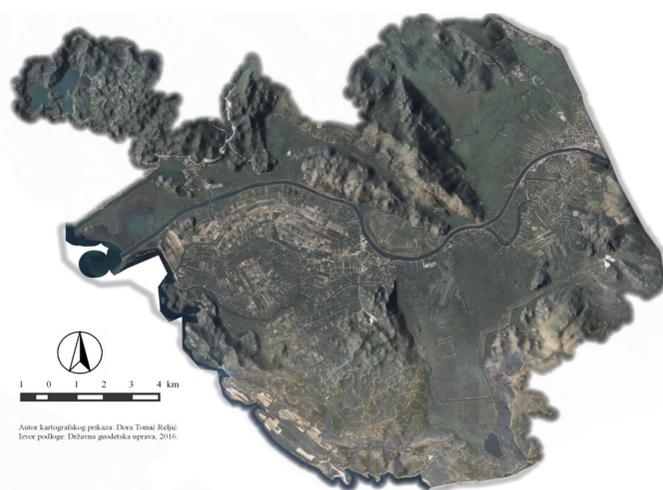


Figure 1. River Neretva Valley

INTRODUCTION

Landscape and nature are public good used by all species but changed mostly by human. So this paper tried to identify the main issues in perception of the natural values and conflicts that arrives from divergences in protection demands. Although the tourism and recreation are basic source of income for inhabitants from settlements near protected areas (Lupp and Konold, 2008, Čaldarović, 2006), this transformation from rural to touristic space causes huge changes in landscape. Also, the conflict between users arrives because protected areas are perceived as a fact or a set goal which have to be respected in spatial planning but at the same time they tend to increase the coverage of the protected area and the level of prohibitions (Marušič, 1993).

RESEARCH

The first issue in this research was to analyze the public documents and maps on physical planning and nature protection which define the layers of protected areas. After the systematization of their attributes, the maps were created and overlapped in order to identify possible spatial conflicts. Other part of research included desk analysis of the historical development of the research area as well as its structural, landscape and natural characteristics. Also, it was needed to explore how land use changes influence the conflicts between different stakeholders and local residents.

AIM OF THE RESEARCH: To identify possible conflicts which may appear in River Neretva Valley due to many layers of the existing nature protected areas and multiple demands of the local population

CONCLUSION

The problem of river Neretva valley, chosen as research area, is multiple protection and tendency for designation of the area as a nature park. Currently, there are 7 nature protected areas, and the whole area is protected under the planning protection measures and international protection categories; Natura 2000 (HR1000031, HR5000031) and Ramsar. Due to the great complexity of the existing nature protected areas and the multiple demands of the local population, the question of management efficiency and mutual coordination between institutions is being raised. So this paper point that nature park, as newly introduced protection category, can be considered as an additional source of conflict. According the Wells and Brandon (1993) sustainable management of protected areas depends on cooperation and support of local residents. So, that issue certainly must be addressed in further planning and protection process. However, although there are many different interests in space, many authors emphasize that the involvement of different stakeholders in the management process contributes to their acceptance, understanding and support. This paper pointed that initiative for proclamation of River Neretva Valley as a Nature park, new category of nature protection, can be a new source between stakeholders, what is also confirmed by various scholars (Penko Seidl et al, 2009, Payés et al, 2013, Lupp and Konold, 2008, Blagojević, 2012)

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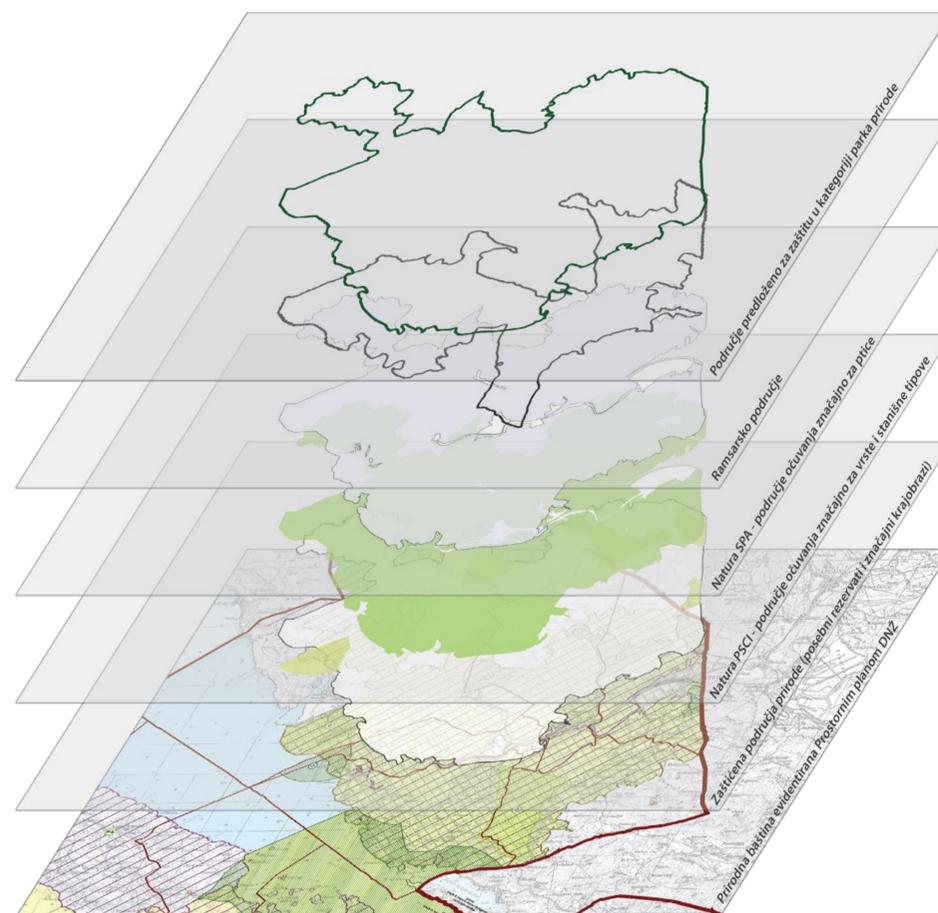


Figure 2. Layers of nature protection