

S U M M A R Y

The land use regime and management of protected sites “Shiroka polyana”, “Kaval tepe”, “Slancheva polyana” and “Studenata chuchurka” is defined by the Protected Areas Law, the Regulation on preparation of management plans for protected areas, the Ordinance declaring the protected status of the areas ((№ 449/ 25.04.1984 of the Committee for Environmental Protection) and the present Management Plan.

The format and content of management plans are defined by Terms of Reference issued by MOEW. These requirements make the plan comparable with other management plans for protected areas in Bulgaria.

Protected sites “Shiroka polyana”, “Kaval tepe”, “Slancheva polyana” and “Studenata chuchurka” occupy territory, which is part of Batak’s municipality land. The size of the protected areas is as follows:

“Shiroka plyana”	- 120.2 ha
“Kaval tepe”	- 85.8 ha
“Slancheva polyana”	- 66.8 ha
“Studenata chuchurka”	- 78.2 ha

Management, safeguarding and overall control of the areas is implemented by one administrative structure – State Game-breeding Station “Shiroka polyana”

The management plan is a document, which places the basics and main ideas for the development of the protected site and provides means for resolving existing problems and achieving defined management objectives for a 10 year period. Based on these strategies, programs, activities and other mechanisms for efficient management of the site, the land use types and benefits to the population have been defined. Throughout the planning period, the protected site have been treated in the larger regional context, which has an impact on it, and at the same time is influenced by it.

Financing

The contracting agency is the United Nations Development Program, the Rhodope Project.

Studies

The Management Plan is the result of focused preliminary studies and a planning process, which took place in the period June – December 2006.

According to the Terms of Reference, the text of the Management Plan includes maps and concise texts for each part, while the detailed reports for the studies are attached separately, as annexes, in electronic format.

Stakeholder participation

Throughout the planning process, stakeholder involvement has been ensured through the participation of representatives of the Regional and Municipal administrations, RIEW – Pazardjik, State Game Breeding station “Shiroka polyana”, NGOs from the tourism, sport and nature protection sectors, and other.

BASIC CHARACTERISTICS AND ASSESSMENTS

The assessment of the data and resource information includes three elements – ecological, social and economic assessment of the protected sites. The ecological assessment defines the significance of the specific characteristics of the site, including species, habitat types and landscape. This is achieved by assessing the indices for vulnerability, rarity, naturalness, typicality, size, biodiversity, stability and instability. Whenever necessary, respective measures have been defined. The selection of habitats and species in need of protection is based on their global, European and national significance.

The social and economic assessment refers to built-up areas, technical infrastructure, cultural and historic heritage, sanitary conditions, recreational activities, activities related to use of natural resources, ownership and management. This assessment defines the general and specific problems related to the site and provides grounds for decision making process

Abiotic factors

Data is provided on climate, geology and geomorphology, hydrology and soils. The results of the analysis are discussed in concise explanatory texts. The data is presented in table format

Ecosystems and biotops

According to the EUNIS Classification, 7 types of habitats are presented, from different hierarchy levels, belonging to 3 basic units.

Of European significance, according to Annex I of Directive 92/43/EEC, there are four types of habitats. Their presence defines the protected sites “Shiroka polyana”, “Kaval tepe”, “Slancheva polyana” and “Studenata chuchurka” and their adjacent territories as potential sites of the European network NATURA 2000 and national ecological network

Flora and vegetation

In protected sites “Shiroka polyana”, “Kaval tepe”, “Slancheva polyana” and “Studenata chuchurka” have been identified a total of 212 taxons. They are distributed in 150 genera, belonging to 45 families. 17 species with nature protection status have been identified. Additional information has been collected about the degree of preservation, presence of conservation value species in communities and other.

Fauna

In protected sites “Shiroka polyana”, “Kaval tepe”, “Slancheva polyana” and “Studenata chuchurka” have been identified 17 animal species listed in Directive 92/43 and the Bird Directive. In the protected sites have been identified a total of 115 vertebrate species, including: fishes – 13, amphibians – 3, reptiles – 4, birds – 66 and mammals – 29 species.

Landscape

The pattern of the protected sites “Shiroka polyana”, “Kaval tepe”, “Slancheva polyana” and “Studenata chuchurka” consists of forest, meadow, aquatic and anthropogenic landscapes. For the aesthetic quality of the sites, of utmost importance are the forest and aquatic landscapes, which form a unique harmonious view with high aesthetic value.

The presence of a number of anthropogenic elements on the site (ruins of bungalows, sheds and other abandoned buildings) and in the adjacent areas (abandoned buildings and piles of uncollected garbage) to some extent reduce the aesthetic impact of the protected sites on the visitors

Tourism and recreation

The opportunities and conditions for activities, related to tourism, recreation, sports and services in the protected sites, have been defined.

The sites of particular interest for specific sporting and tourist events like fishing, educational tourism, cycling, horseback riding and other, have been described.

The collected information reveals, that protected sites “Shiroka polyana”, “Kaval tepe”, “ Slancheva polyana” and “Studenata chuchurka” can fit into the national program for tourism in Bulgaria.

Public awareness about protected sites sites “Shiroka polyana”, “Kaval tepe”, “ Slancheva polyana” and “Studenata chuchurka”

In the period 8-10 August, 2006 a field survey was carried out to assess the level of informedness of the visitors of protected sites “Shiroka polyana”, “Kaval tepe”, “ Slancheva polyana” and “Studenata chuchurka” about the site and their attitudes towards it. Specialized questionnaires have been developed for each stakeholder institution and for the visitors and citizens, which were used for the survey.

Throughout the management planning process, a number of work meetings and a workshop with stakeholders took place, aiming at defining the threats to the protected sites and possible ways for addressing them, as well as what are the possible management arrangements for the site.

LONG TERM GOALS AND RESTRICTIONS

The goals and restrictions are based on the assessments and conclusions described above. The main conclusion is that the functioning and long-term management vision for the site can be achieved through:

1. Implementing a simple and comprehensive zoning system, defining clear regimes of use, which can be abated to by the stakeholders; and
2. Ensure protected site management compliance with the general international standards, and NATURA 2000 in particular.

The goals (and sub-goals) and restrictions are formulated in a way, so that they can guide the decision making process and envisage specific activities for the following 10 year period. For the achievement of the defined goals, a series of programs and projects have been developed. The following aspects for each project have been defined: (a) scope; (b) expected results; (c) methodology; and (d) implementation responsibilities

Long-term goals

Based on the expert team findings, and results from the discussions, the following long-term goals have been formulated:

1. Reconstruction, protection and maintenance of the biological and landscape diversity within the protected site;
2. Ensure conditions for sustainable use (direct and indirect) of natural resources;
3. Improved management policy and introduction of specialized safeguarding of the protected site;
4. Compliance and implementation of relevant national legislation, regulations and policies.

Restrictions

The level of impact of the restrictions/threats on the goals is defined by the experts, who have developed the parts of the management plan. The assessment was made using the point system

regarding the impact of the restrictions /threats on the achievement of the main goals and regarding their territorial scope in protected sites “Shiroka polyana”, “Kaval tepe”, “ Slancheva polyana” and “Studenata chuchurka”

NORMS, REGIMES, CONDITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CARRYING OUT THE ACTIVITIES

The proposed norms and regimes aim at overcoming or limiting the impact of the threats identified in Part 2; providing conditions, facilitating the control and decision making process. The regimes for natural resources use, for recreation and promotion of pro-nature traditions and practices, which contribute to the development of nature – friendly business and services, were defined.

Functional zoning of the site

The Management Plan for protected sites sites “Shiroka polyana”, “Kaval tepe”, “ Slancheva polyana” and “Studenata chuchurka” defines 2 zones, according to the management goals:

Zone	Management Goals	% of the PA area
<i>Biodiversity and landscape protection zone</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Protect natural resources from being used via practices, which harm the biodiversity of the site; – Protection of animal habitats, ensure tranquil environment for the game; – Support and promote ecologically sustainable forest management practices. – Landscape protection 	84,9
<i>Tourism and infrastructure zone</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure access for people to certain areas, where they can appreciate the specific quality of nature, enjoy contact with the surrounding wildness without causing harm or disturbance. – Ensure suitable conditions for visitor stay and recreation, development of specialized nature-friendly tourism and sport activities; – Provide informational and interpretative services to visitors; – Achieve and maintain good quality hygiene and provide sanitary facilities on the site; – Support regional development 	15,1

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

Programs and projects are defined with the objective to create a wide lobby for the protected site “Shiroka polyana”, “Kaval tepe”, “ Slancheva polyana” and “Studenata chuchurka” and to motivate responsible, nature-friendly behavior among all owners, visitors and people utilizing the site. Based on the assessment of the responsibilities of the specialized administration, the following programs have been planned for the period of Management Plan implementation:

- I. Complex long-term monitoring for the conservation and maintenance of the biological and landscape diversity;
- II. Forest management consistent with biodiversity conservation goals;
- III. Sustainable use of natural resources;
- IV. Development of sustainable eco-tourism in the protected site and the adjacent areas;
- V. Institutional development of the PS management and training of staff.

The establishment and functioning of specialized staff for protected site “Shiroka polyana”, “Kaval tepe”, “ Slancheva polyana” and “Studenata chuchurka” is the basic guarantee for the implementation of the management plan. This is why the regulatory aspects of its establishment, functioning, development, capacity building and staff training are treated in detail in the Management Plan.

REVIEW OF GOALS AND TASKS ACHIEVED

A review of the goals, set in the management plan of the protected site, is planned for 2011. It will be made on the basis of the regular monitoring performed by the staff and the annual reports. For the purpose of this review, is proposed a schedule, listing the participants in the review, venues for public participation in the process, a list of all projects and activities, the evaluation of which is mandatory, the goals and projects’ evaluation criteria, etc.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM

For the territory of the PS were elaborated topical layers and maps, containing the information and data, necessary for the operational work of the staff.

PRESENTATIONAL FORMAT OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

1. Text of the Management Plan /in Bulgarian/ and Summary of the Management Plan /in English/ – paper and electronic version.
2. Annexes described in the text of the Management Plan /in Bulgarian/ - they complement the characteristics and evaluations and are inseparable part of the MP – provided in electronic format.
3. Reports of studies and research, carried out in the process of preparation of the MP - provided in electronic format.
4. Informational GIS layers for the territory of protected sites sites “Shiroka polyana”, “Kaval tepe”, “ Slancheva polyana” and “Studenata chuchurka” - provided in electronic format.