

Summary

The regime of management and use of “Trigradsko zdrelo” PS is defined by the Protected Areas Law, the Regulation on preparation of management plans for protected areas, the Ordinance for designation of the Protected Site (№ 4021/ 06.12.1963) and the present management plan.

The structure and the content of the management plan complies with the requirements set out in the ToR and endorsed by the MOEW.

“Trigradsko zdrelo” PS covers an area of 350.0 ha and includes lands of two municipalities:

- The land of Yagodina village – Borino Municipality, Smolian District;
- The land of Trigrad village – Devin Municipality, Smolian District.

The activities related to the management, safeguarding, overall control and governance of the protected site are implemented by the administrations of Trigrad and Borino State Forestries.

The management plan is a document, which sets the basis and provides ideas for development of the protected area and suggests problem solution methods for achieving certain management goals for ten- year period. Based on these strategies, programmes, activities and other mechanisms for efficient management of the territory (land management), the uses and the benefits for the local people were identified. In the context of the planning, the protected site territory is considered in its regional context, which has an impact on it, and at the same time is influenced by it

Funding

The Contracting Authority is United Nations Development Programme – “Rhodope” Project.

Studies

The management plan is a result of purposeful preliminary studies and planning in the period June – December 2007.

According to the requirements of the ToR, the plan’s different parts include short, synthesized texts and the detailed reports on the studies made are provided as annexes (electronically).

Shareholders’ participation

The participation of the interested institutions and persons in the planning process was ensured: the District and Municipal Administrations, RIEW – Smolyan, State Forestries, owners, users. Representatives of the different tourist, sports, environmental and other non-governmental organizations also took part.

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS AND EVALUATIONS

The assessment of the data and the information includes three elements – ecological evaluation, socio-economic evaluation and evaluation of the potential value of the protected area. The ecological evaluation determines the importance of the specific features of the area, including species, habitat type and landscape. For this purpose the following indicators were assessed: vulnerability, rarity, naturalness, typicalness, size, biological diversity, stability and instability. Respective measures were also defined, where needed. The choice of natural habitats and species to be protected was based on their global, European and National importance.

The socio-economic evaluation relates to the technical infrastructure, cultural and historical heritage, sanitary and hygiene conditions, recreational activity, activities on use of the resources,

ownership and management. This evaluation determines the common and specific problems of the territory and serves as basis for decision making.

Abiotic factors

This chapter includes information about the climate, geology and geomorphology, hydrology and soils. The results of the analysis are discussed in short descriptive texts. The data is presented in suitable table format.

Ecosystems and biotopes

12 types of habitats (under EUNIS Classification) are presented on the territory of the protected site. They are of different hierarchical level and belong to 4 major units. According to Annex I of 92/43/EEC Directive within the protected area, there are 8 habitats of European importance. The presence of these habitats predetermines the area of “Trigradsko zdrelo” PS and the surrounding territories as a potential site of NATURA 2000 and the National ecological network.

Flora and vegetation

A total of 478 taxons were identified within the territory of “Trigradsko zdrelo” PS. They are divided into 272 genres belonging to 72 families. The species with conservation status are 64. Additional information about the level of conservation, presence of species of conservation importance in the communities, etc is also provided.

Fauna

Within the territory of “Trigradsko zdrelo” PS were identified 41 animal species included in the Directive 92/43 and 22 bird species from the Bird Directive. A total of 160 vertebrate species (excluding bat species) were identified, including: fishes – 1 species; amphibians - 7 species; reptiles – 10 species; birds – 109 species and mammals – 33 species.

Landscape

The face of “Trigradsko zdrelo” PS is formed by 5 landscape types – forest, meadow, rock, aquatic and anthropogenous landscapes. The rock formations of the gorge, and the forests and meadows succeeding each other, have high aesthetical value. The anthropogenic landscape of the village of Trigrad is well combined with the other landscape types and does not deteriorate the overall landscape picture but contributes to its uniqueness.

Tourism and recreation

The potential of the protected site in terms of providing possibilities and conditions for tourism, sport and recreation related activities and services were identified. A list of existing tourist routes was prepared.

The places of interest for practicing specific sport and tourism activities, such as caves, cognitive tourism, biking and horse riding, etc. were described.

The information collected shows that “Trigradsko zdrelo” PS could be included in the international tourism programmes in Bulgaria.

Public knowledge of the site

The knowledge and informedness of the local people and the visitors/tourists was studied in the period 8-10 August, 2006. Questionnaires were prepared for the different institutions, for the visitors and the local people. During the preparation of the MP, a number of meetings were held and a seminar was organized. The stakeholders participated in the identification of the threats, the ways to address them and discussed the issues related to the management of the PS.

LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES AND CONSTRAINTS

The objectives and goals were defined based on the conclusions and evaluations. The main conclusion is that the functioning and the long-term vision for the territory could be achieved through:

1. Achieving simplified and comprehensive system for use of the territory, with clear regimes to be observed by the stakeholders, and
2. Ensuring management of the PS, which meets the international standards and in particular the requirements of NATURA 2000.

The goals and constraints were formulated to guide the management decisions and to plan the specific activities for the next 10-year period. To achieve the specified goals, series of programmes and projects were developed. Each project was designed in terms of (a) scope, (b) expected result, (c) methodology and (d) responsibility for implementation of the project/programme.

Long-term objectives

The following long-term goals were formulated based on the evaluations made by the team experts and the outcomes of the discussions carried out:

1. Restoration, protection and maintenance of the biological and landscape diversity within the protected site
2. Conservation of the caves in “Trigradsko zdrelo” PS
3. Providing conditions for sustainable use of the material and non-material natural resources
4. Improving the management policy and the specialized warding of the PS
5. Observing the respective legal framework

Constraints

The levels of impact of the constraints/ threats on the goals were defined by the experts, who have elaborated the different parts of the management plan. The evaluation is made according to the point system, concerning their impact on the achieving of the main goals and their territorial scope in Trigradsko zdrelo PS.

Potentials of the protected site

The evaluation of the “Trigradsko zdrelo” PS potentials was made according to the goals defined. It is the basis for setting the programs and projects in Part 4.

“Trigradsko Zdrelo” PS can be: a model for natural processes in communities of high conservation value; an object – part of protected areas network in the region focused on conservation of the rich species and genetic diversity, and place where interpretative and environmental educational programmes can be organized; a model for development of sustainable tourism on local, national and international level; a tool for sustainable economic development of the adjacent territories.

NORMS, REGIMES, CONDITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIVITIES

The proposed norms and regimes seek to overcome or limit the impact caused by the threats identified in Part 2; to provide for control and decision making. The regimes for natural resources use, for recreation and promotion of pro-nature traditions and practices that contribute for development of business and services were defined.

Within “Trigradsko Zdrelo” PS is differentiated only one zone for protection of the biological diversity and the landscape.

OPERATIONAL TASKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR USE AND PROTECTION

Defining priorities

The following priority directions for the plan's 10-year period of action have been defined on the basis of the characteristics and evaluations made and the goals set:

Priority directions for protection and maintenance of the biological and landscape diversity within the protected site:

- Conservation of the existing natural habitats;
- Conservation of the naturalness of the landscape and the karst ecosystems;
- Conservation of species - indicators.

Priority directions for protection of the caves within "Trigradsko zdrelo" PS:

- Conservation of the caves as natural habitats for the bats;
- Improving the management of the caves;

Priority directions for providing conditions for sustainable use of the material and non-material natural resources:

- Developing ecologically sustainable tourism;
- Ensuring participation of the local population, municipalities and NGOs in the development of ecologically sustainable SMEs.

Priority directions for improving the management policy and the specialized warding of the protected site:

- Establishing specialized personnel within Trigrad State Forestry to be responsible for the PS;
- Establishing of Public Council (wide public support) for the PS;
- Providing training to the staff responsible for the management of the PS.

Priority directions for observing the legal and institutional framework

- Clarifying the ownership status of the caves and the facilities according to the regulatory base;
- Effective application of the legislation
- Establishing a legal base for financial revenues from other users' profits.

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

The programs and projects are defined with the goal of establishing a wide support for "Trigradsko Zdrelo" PS, as well as motivating responsible and pro-nature behaviour among all owners and users.

Based on the assessment of the responsibilities of the specialized administration, the following programs are planned to be implemented during the plan's period of action:

- I. Complex long-term monitoring for the conservation and maintenance of the biological and landscape diversity;
- II. Management of the caves linked to the conservation of the biological diversity;
- III. Development of ecologically sustainable tourism within the PS and the surrounding areas.
- IV. Institutional development of the management and training of the staff.

The establishment and functioning of specialized staff directly responsible for "Trigradsko zdrelo" PS is precondition for the implementation of the management plan. Therefore in the management plan is provided special attention to the establishment of specialized staff administration, including improving the staff capacity.

REVIEW OF THE FULFILLMENT OF GOALS AND TASKS

A review of the goals, set in the management plan, is planned for 2011, based on the permanent monitoring performed by the staff and the annual reports. A scheme, pointing out the participants in the review, a list of projects and activities, which should obligatorily be subjected to evaluation, the goals and projects' evaluation criteria, etc. is proposed for this review.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM

For the territory of the PS were elaborated topical layers and maps which include the necessary information and data needed for the operational work of the staff.

STRUCTURE 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 add to the characteristics and evaluations made and are an indivisible part of the MP - electronic version.
3. Reports of studies and research, made in the process of preparation of the MP - electronic version.
4. Informational GIS layers for the territory of “Trigradsko zdrelo” PS - electronic version.