

NATURA 2000 EXPERIENCES IN SOUTHEAST EUROPE: COMPARISONS FROM SLOVENIA, CROATIA AND BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

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The main research objective is to determine the impact of Europeanisation on the nature protection system in the countries of Southeast Europe. Europeanisation is presented in the research through legislative and institutional changes due to the adoption of the European ecological network – Natura 2000. Comparative analyses were made in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Data collection was primarily done through participant interviews in the establishment of Natura 2000 and secondary through all available relevant literature. After that, a policy analysis was carried out through a thesis and subthesis based on the main goal. The conclusion was presented as a confirmation of the main thesis that Europeanisation led to changes in Southeastern Europe's nature protection system.

Key words: The Europeanisation; Nature Protection System; Southeast Europe; Natura 2000.

1 INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

Natura 2000 (N2000) is a sustainable development strategy at the European Union (EU) level. It requires the introduction of sustainable goals and principles into a national legislation through the process of Europeanisation in Southeast Europe (SEE) (Fernández et al. 2010; Kapaciauskaite 2011; Gioti Papadaki 2012; Niedziałkowski et al. 2012; Cent et al. 2014; Denti 2014; Kay 2014; Krenova and Kindlmann 2015). Sustainable goals are based on the Bird Directive (BD) and Habitat Directive (HD) (Rosa and Da Silva 2005; Wurzel 2008; Ferranti et al. 2010; Louette et al. 2011; Winter et al. 2014; Winkel et al. 2015) and the principles of the Aarhus Convention (AC) (Stringer and Paavola 2013; Niedziałkowski et al. 2014). In order to implement these goals and principles in practice, it is a necessary institutional transformation at the national and local level. Institutional transformation leads to the involvement of non-governmental

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organisations (NGO) (Weber and Christophersen 2002; Newig and Fritsch 2009; Ferranti et al. 2010; Cent et al. 2013; Stringer and Paavola 2013) and EU actors (Giljum et al. 2005; Stubbs 2005; Jordan 2008; Brulle 2010) in the system of nature protection and the changing of the roles of national and local institutions. All this leads to a change of the nature protection concept at a local and national level according to the goals of sustainable development (SD) on the global level (Šobot and Lukšič 2016; 2017; 2019). Global environmental changes are influenced by the internationalisation of national and local policies in global movement for sustainable development.

The research was carried out within the framework of the individual research project *Multi-Level Governance of Natural Resources in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina* from 2013 to 2016 and the applied methodology was used from Šobot and Lukšič (2016; 2017; 2019). Primarily, 67 interviews were conducted via snowball sampling, using over 1000 pages of secondary literature text. Secondary, all relevant and available literature (legislative acts, scientific literature etc.) was collected and a policy analysis was conducted according to the main objective of the research. The main research objective was to determine the impact of Europeanisation (legislative and institutional level) on the nature protection system in the counties of SEE.

A comparative discussion is conducted according to the research thesis divided into 5 sub-theses. The research thesis is drawn from the main objective of the research. The five sub-theses are drawn from five research questions, which are included in the research.² The discussion according to the thesis and sub-theses is presented through similarities and differences between the influences of the process of establishing the N2000 multi-level governance (MLG) system on the nature protection system of the countries included in the study.

2 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Research thesis: The Europeanisation of SEE led to the adoption of SD objectives in the nature protection systems due to the establishment of the N2000 MLG system and the legal as well as institutional development is required in order to have the objectives of SD implemented in practice.

The first sub-thesis: The process of establishing the MLG system of N2000 or the integration of the objectives of SD in selected SEE countries following the process of Europeanisation.

Confirmation: The Republic of Slovenia (RS) and The Republic of Croatia (RC) are, according to the constitution, unique and indivisible states, while Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is composed of two entities. In the RS and RC, the main role has the government at the country level, while the Council of Ministers has the main role in BiH. Their roles are primarily legislative. According to the constitution of all three countries, the international objectives must be

² The first research question is to determine the process of establishing the MLG of N2000 in countries of SEE that followed during the pre-accession and accession process; The second research question is to determine the changes in the national legislation during the implementation of N2000 international agreements; The third research question is to determine the roles of the main actors in the process of establishing MLG of N2000; The fourth research question is to determine the contribution of the process of establishing MLG of N2000 in the nature protection system; The fifth research question is to identify future challenges for the nature protection system.

implemented in their national legislation during the process of the Europeanisation. In 1999, the RS submitted its application for EU membership and in 2004, became a member of the EU.³ The RC submitted a formal candidacy to join the EU in 2003 and joined the EU in 2013.⁴ BiH entered the pre-accession process to join the EU in 1999 and in 2016, BiH submitted its official candidacy to join the EU.⁵ All three countries had an obligation to establish the N2000 MLG system in this period. In the RS and RC, this process began with the official candidacy to join the EU (the accession period) while in BiH, it began before the official candidacy to join the EU (the pre-accession period). The first steps to establishing the N2000 MLG system in all three countries were in changing the national legislation of nature protection with the implementation of international objectives. In 1999, the RS adopted a new law on nature protection, which integrated nature protection objectives according to BD and HD, and the RC along with BiH integrated these objectives into their national law in 2003. The next step was to include work on information gathering and the involvement of non-governmental actors in decision-making. In the RS, this process was guided by the competent Ministry of nature protection that included national experts in information gathering and decision-making (Šobot and Lukšić 2017). In the RC and BiH, these processes were guided through projects without a clear plan and strategy of the work on the establishment of N2000 areas. The work was such mostly due to the politics in these countries and the lack of financial resources. Having major EU funding, there had been intensive work on establishing the N2000 MLG system. As an example, in the RC, the first project "National Ecological Network – important bird areas in Croatia" was funded and led by the competent Ministry of nature protection. However, after this project there was a break of 2 years to obtain the EU funds. With obtaining the funds from the EU, the following three projects were organised, "Institutional strengthening and implementation of the NATURA 2000 network in Croatia", "The identification and establishment of the marine part of the NATURA 2000 network in Croatia", "Capacity building for the preparation of management plans and strengthening of nature protection inspection on the proposed NATURA 2000 areas", with which the process of establishing the N2000 MLG system was completed (Šobot and Lukšić 2016). The competent ministry of nature protection was included in all projects and the organisers of projects along with participants were mostly composed of international, governmental and non-governmental actors. All projects contributed to the implementation of BD and HD objectives into the national legislation. In this period a lot of experience was adopted from the RS. In BiH, the process of establishing the N2000 MLG system was performed through 5 projects: "Emerald Network", "Living Heart of Europe", "Protection of Biodiversity of the Sava River Basin floodplains", "Wise use of common natural resources", "Cooperation for NATURA 2000" (Šobot and Lukšić 2019). The EU funded the first 4 projects and the main project managers were national or international NGOs. There were no representatives of competent ministries from BiH in these projects. The EU also funded the last project, however, the project coordinator was the competent Ministry of nature protection in BiH. This project was also the final proposal of N2000 areas in BiH. In this project, a lot of the experience was adopted from the RC and RS. All projects, in the process of establishing the N2000 MLG system demanded information gathering and the involvement of stakeholders in decision-making, which make up the parts of the Aarhus Convention. Therefore, the process of establishing the N2000 MLG system in all three countries led to the implementation of the principles and

³ See more in Šobot and Lukšić (2017).

⁴ See more in Šobot and Lukšić (2016).

⁵ See more in Šobot and Lukšić (2019).

ratification of the Aarhus Convention. The RS ratified the AC in 2002, the RC completed it in 2006 and BiH did it in 2008.

The Second sub-thesis: The objectives of BD, HD and AC are implemented into the national legislation that led to the definition of the main actors and their roles in achieving the objectives of sustainable development.

Confirmation: The implementation of the BD and HD objectives and the principles of AC into the national nature protection systems, which led to the changes of national legislation.⁶ Changes led to the inclusion of new actors in the nature protection system. The main actors in all three countries, in addition to governmental institutions (competent ministries and managers of protected areas), became international actors (such as the EU) and non-governmental actors (such as NGOs in the field of nature protection). The EU became an important actor in nature protection at the national level in all three countries. In the RS and RC, it is a platform of information transfer under the national law. In BiH, RC and RS, the EU is in charge of financing the implementation of international agreements into national legislation. In addition, the EU is responsible for coordinating the implementation of international commitments into national legislation in these countries. In the RS and RC, the EU is a controller of international agreements in order to remain unchanged under the influence of national legislation. The EU is a consultant in BiH for all the important issues on its way towards the EU. Competent ministries of nature protection are in charge of communicating with the EU at the national level in terms of implementation and enforcement of international obligations to protect nature. They have an administrative role in the transposition of BD, HD and the directives of AC into national legislation. They are the leaders of a formal process of establishing N2000. It is defined that the government with the assistance of the competent ministry submits a N2000 areas final proposal to the competent EU institution in RS.

During the process of establishing the N2000 MLG system, competent ministries of nature protection have a role in information-gathering and involvement of stakeholders in decision-making in all three countries. The governments of RS and RC have to establish new institutions that should operate within the competent ministry in order to gather information. Competent ministries are also in charge of inter-sectoral cooperation during the establishment of the N2000 MLG system. In BiH, an inter-entity cooperation and coordination mechanism are established for all-important issues towards the EU. The competent state ministry has the role of co-ordinating the competent entity ministries (in the Federation of BiH (FBiH) cantonal ministries). Furthermore, these ministries have a role in information-gathering and involving stakeholders in decision-making. In RS and RC, competent ministries keep records of N2000 areas after adopting N2000.

The cooperation with managers of protected areas is defined, which are becoming an important actor in implementing BD and HD at the local level in all three countries. The National Parks, in all three countries, have the role of managing the national eco-network and after the adoption of N2000 - of also the N2000 network. Their role in the N2000 is to gather information and involve local people in decision-making. Working with local people is defined in raising

⁶ A literature review on the implementation of the objectives of BD and HD and the principles of AC into national systems of nature protection countries of the EU can be found in the articles by Šobot and Lukšić (2016; 2017; 2019).

public awareness (work on opinions) to achieve the objectives of nature protection. It is defined that National Parks (NP) participate in the development of documents on the national level in RS. It is defined that NPs participate in the transfer of experience from other protected areas and cooperate with non-governmental organisations in all three countries.

The NGOs in the field of nature protection are defined as major actors in achieving the principles and objectives of sustainable development at the national level in all three countries. Their role is based on the help to governmental actors in implementing the principles of the Aarhus Convention and the objectives of BD and HD. They also have a role in collecting information, involving the public in decision-making and promoting the rights of nature protection. They are legitimate participants in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process at the national level and have a role in representing public environmental rights.

The third sub-thesis: The main actors of nature protection had a role in implementing the principles of AC for achieving the objectives of BD and HD in accordance with the concept of SD.

Confirmation 1. The role of the EU.⁷ The EU funded and coordinated, in an advisory manner, all projects to establish the N2000 MLG system in RS, RC and BiH. These projects led to the implementation of the objectives of BD and HD, as well as the principles of AC in the national legislation, that represent the basic change in the nature protection system of these areas. The objectives of BD and HD were implemented in the law on nature protection and the objectives of AC into the law on environmental protection. Financing the implementation of international obligations by the EU enabled the implementation of the objectives of sustainable development in nature protection systems of the SEE and policy development in these areas. The EU is recognised as the guardian of the objectives of international agreements in order to remain unchanged under the influence of domestic legislation in RS and RC. In this manner, supranational rules with a transnational participant enabled the transparency and unchangeability of nature protection rules at the national level. The unchangeability of AC rules led to altering public awareness and old practices. The new practice demanded change in the concept of nature protection, a system access through planning and inter-sectoral cooperation, which was not the case before. That is why the NGO sector gained, for the first time, equality in decision-making in the field of nature protection. It is the biggest change regarding the attitude of governmental and non-governmental actors in the RS, RC and BiH nature protection system. In the RS and RC, this led to altering the practice, increasing the number of participants in nature protection, the respect for all stakeholders in decision-making, as well as a higher degree of respect for legislation. The EU is the guardian of the rights and all disputable situations that came between governmental and non-governmental actors in the process of establishing N2000, which led to the freezing of funds for the RS and the RC. This is the mechanism by which the EU does not participate directly in the relations between the stakeholders (governmental and non-governmental actors) but instead, it protects supranational interest and compels participants to work together to find a solution. In the RS, RC and BiH, the EU became a national consultant for all future plans of nature protection which must comply with the legislative of the EU, i.e. other member states. In this manner, a new practice was introduced in the

⁷ A literature review on the EU role in the implementation of international obligations at the national level can be found in the articles by Šobot and Lukšič (2016; 2017; 2019).

transfer of information that was recognised as important in all processes of nature protection.

Confirmation 2: The role of the competent Ministry of nature protection.⁸ The competent Ministry of nature protection in the RS had a formal role of organising the whole process of establishing the N2000 MLG system. The ministry established the Management board that coordinated the entire process from the beginning to the end. The establishment of the N2000 MLG system was done through projects in the RC and BiH. A competent ministry had a major role in establishing N2000 in RC. They were the leaders of the first project of establishing N2000 and the main actors of the implementation of all other projects funded by the EU. The process of establishing N2000 in BiH was also done through projects. However, in BiH, the competent ministry at the state level did not participate in all the projects but it did participate and coordinate the last project of establishing the N2000 MLG system. Other projects were coordinated by domestic or international NGOs. The role of the competent Ministry in nature protection of BiH, in the process of establishing the N2000 MLG system, is defined quite well by a constitutional structure that differs from the RS and RC (mostly due to the entity governments). The competent state ministry established the Management Board in which all the entities and cantonal ministries were included. The Management Board had a group for the harmonisation of legislative, information gathering, to involve the public in decision-making and creating a proposal of N2000 areas. This Board was established on the practice of the RS. In the RS, the Board had a role to harmonise national legislative with the EU legislative, to gather information, to involve the public in decision-making and to prepare the final draft of N2000 areas. In the RC, there were no boards and activities were done from project to project. The competent ministry, as in the RS, had the role of transposing international obligations into national legislation, of information gathering and of involving the public in decision-making. In the RS and the RC, there was an increase in the number of employees due to the needs for the work on the establishment of N2000. Statutory legislation led to the changes of inter-sectoral organisations of the competent ministry on several occasions (the transformation of institutions) and the establishment of new institutions for the purpose of N2000 areas, such as the Republic Institute for Nature Protection (RINP). The Institute for Nature Protection included many independent researchers in the data collection process. In BiH, due to the constitutional order, there was neither the capacity building and transformation of existing institutions, nor the establishment of new institutions at the national level, however, the coordination mechanism was established. The coordination mechanism plays a role of increasing inter-entity cooperation, i.e. intersectoral cooperation. Collecting data in the Entity Republic of Srpska (ERS) went through RINP and independent experts. In EFBiH, collecting data went through independent experts and NGOs because there was no Entity Institute of Nature Protection (EINP). Inter-sectoral cooperation in RC was developed mostly during the EIA process, which has been going on since 2007. This led to the involvement of other sectors in nature protection (potential N2000 areas) on a planned basis. In RS and BiH, there was the inclusion of other sectors in the process of establishing N2000 through the board for N2000. Primarily, there were included representatives of the forestry and agriculture in all three areas since a large part of forest and agricultural land represents a potential N2000 area. The sector of forestry cooperated quite well, while the sector of agriculture had very little

⁸ A literature review on the roles of the ministry on implementation of international obligations can be found in published articles by Šobot and Lukšič (2016; 2017; 2019).

cooperation in all three areas. In all three countries, all other sectors were marginally involved.

*Confirmation 3: The role of the National parks.*⁹ The role of NPs in all three areas was not defined by the organisers of the process of establishing the N2000 MLG system. The competent ministry communicated with NPs in all three areas during the establishment of the N2000 MLG system in the course of their regular activities of inter-sectoral cooperation. In all three areas, the research was done by the RINP and NGOs. In this manner, there was cooperation between governmental and non-governmental actors in all three parks. Also, all three parks are members of the Dinaric Arc parks and in such a manner, there was an international communication in the process of establishing the N2000 MLG system. The Triglav National Park (TNP) underwent legal changes after the establishment of the N2000 MLG system, whereby a new management model was established that included non-governmental actors in decision-making. There was no new management model and non-governmental actors were not involved in decision-making in Plitvice Lake National Park (PLNP) and Sutjeska National Park (SNP).

*Confirmation 4: The role of Non-governmental organisations.*¹⁰ The need for information gathering according to BD and HD led to the establishment of new NGOs by the experts and the development of existing NGOs in the process of establishing the N2000 MLG system in all three countries. The work on information-gathering led to the professionalisation of the NGO sector in all three countries. The professionalised NGO sector began to control the implementation of national legislation, mostly on the examples of EIA. This led to increasing the public involvement in NGO in the field of nature protection in all three countries. Public involvement in NGOs led to increased public involvement in the national nature protection politics and policy. The increased NGO participation in politics at the national level of nature protection system led to more conflicts between governmental and non-governmental actors. The NGOs in many cases represented the rights of the public and prevented many harmful projects for potential N2000 areas. In this manner, many NGOs received media attention. In addition, in all three countries, NGOs had the role of transferring the experiences from countries, which had already adopted N2000. The NGOs that were more internationally linked (like NGOs in RC) began to participate in lobbying at the international level. In BiH, the international NGO World Wildlife Fund (WWF) was the first proponent of N2000, while in the RS, it was the national NGO DOPPS.¹¹ In the RC, the NGO sector corrected the final proposal of the government for the proposed N2000 areas. Also, in the RC, the NGO sector underwent an evolution in public involvement while in BiH, it was more "symbolic" in nature. This influenced that, in BiH, the NGO sector was less developed than the NGO sector of the RC and RS. In the RS, after the adoption of N2000, NGO DOPPS was given the role of management and monitoring of N2000 areas, while in the RC it had only the role of monitoring the proposed areas.

The fourth sub-thesis: The implementation of BD, HD and AC contributed to the introduction of the concept of sustainable development in the nature protection

⁹ A literature review on the roles of national parks in an implementation of international obligations can be found in the articles by Šobot and Lukšič (2016; 2017; 2019).

¹⁰ A literature review on the roles of NGOs in the implementation and execution of international objectives at the national level can be found in the articles by Šobot and Lukšič (2016; 2017; 2019).

¹¹ National name is Društvo za opazovanje in proučevanje ptic Slovenije (*Society for the observation and study of birds of Slovenia*).

system at the national level. The AC became a central component in achieving the objectives of BD and HD, and introducing the concept of SD.

Confirmation 1: The contribution of the first pillar of the AC according to BD and HD.¹² There was an increase of information on the number and status of species and habitats according to BD and HD in all three countries. In this manner, all three countries established the new protected areas. The RS and RC protected one third of the country according to BD and HD. In BiH, 1/5 of the areas of the state was submitted for protection according to BD and HD and new protected areas were set up, such as the Una NP, which has the role of managing species and habitats that are protected by BD and HD. The processes of information-gathering in the RS and RC led to an increase in communication and cooperation of all sectors, while in BiH, they led to an increased inter-entity cooperation. In the RS and RC, this led to an institutional transformation and capacity-building in the nature-protection sector through the establishment of new institutions, while BiH adopted the coordination mechanism. The processes of establishing N2000, for the first time in the RS and RC, enabled the public access to information on nature protection in one place, while the process in BiH contributed a greater amount of information to be publicly available in more places.

Confirmation 2: The contribution of the second pillar of the AC according to BD and HD. In all three countries, there was a public involvement in the NGO sector. The public was primarily involved in the NGO sector to influence decision-making because the public realised that non-governmental actors had equality in decision-making as governmental actors. In the RS and RC, this led to the first great public participation in decision-making within a nature protection system. The public found that public participation was a way of protecting nature. In BiH, there was no raising of public awareness about the need for public participation in a nature-protection system and the public were mostly involved in the process of EIA. In BiH, there was no great NGO sector development as was the case in the RS and RC. However, non-governmental actors from BiH, for the first time, began to get involved in creating nature protection politics and policy at the national level together with governmental actors.

Confirmation 3: The contribution of the third pillar of the AC according to BD and HD. In all three countries, the public recognised the possibility for action upon the problem in nature protection through NGOs that received a similar impact as governmental organisations and partly therefore included them in the process of EIA. That is why the NGO sector initiated many lawsuits against harmful projects in the proposed N2000 areas in all three countries. This contributed to the raising of public awareness about the importance of BD and HD in all three countries.

The fifth sub-thesis: Future challenges of nature protection (and SD) are based on the application of the principles of AC for achieving the objectives of BD and HD.

Confirmation 1: The challenge of the first pillar of the AC according to BD and HD.¹³ All three countries are faced with the challenges of developing a system of information-gathering as a basis for nature protection. In the RS and RC, the

¹² A literature review on the contributions of all pillars of the AC according to BD and HD can be found in the articles by Šobot and Lukšič (2016; 2017; 2019).

¹³ A literature review on the challenges of all pillars of the AC according to BD and HD can be found in the articles by Šobot and Lukšič (2016; 2017; 2019).

problem is a lack of connection or incompleteness of all information according to BD and HD. This leads to a lack of transparency of information for nature protection. In BiH, the biggest challenge is creating a unified database according to BD and HD. The data have been available so far in multiple sources, which significantly causes the lack of connection of all data. In addition, all three countries experienced a lack of data on the opinions of population of protected areas for nature protection and N2000. It is necessary to collect the views of the population with the aim of improving management control of protected areas in all three countries. On a national level, it is also very important to include the whole of society in order to gather information in all three countries. It is therefore necessary to create a communication strategy of governmental and non-governmental actors in all three countries as a basic document for gathering information and nature protection in these areas. In addition, on an international level, in the future, it is necessary to gather information on the impact of climate change on species and habitats according to BD and HD, which has not been done by the managers of protected areas in all three areas. Based on the gathered information it is necessary to develop policies of adaptation and of climate change management.

Confirmation 2: The challenge of the second pillar of the AC according to BD and HD. All three countries have a lot of problems with public participation in decision-making. In the RS and RC, there is a problem of uneven development of the NGO sector across the country, which leads to the disengagement of public from peripheral areas in decision-making. In BiH, there is a problem of the underdeveloped NGO sector in general. In the future, it is necessary to create a clear plan for the development of the NGO sector on the territory of all three countries, which should be an integral part of a communication strategy. In addition, the RC and BiH have big problems with non-compliance in national legislation while involving the public in decision-making across the country. Following, the law is carried out on a case-by-case basis. In the future, it is necessary to raise public awareness on the respect for the legislation on the whole territory of the country. In BiH, public participation in decision-making is also at a low level, mostly due to the small development of the NGO sector. It is necessary to develop public participation in NGO of nature protection in BiH in the future. BiH and the RC expressed the problems of insufficient involvement of local people in the management of protected areas. In the future, it is necessary to organise new models of governance and management in which governmental and non-governmental actors should have equal participation in decision-making. In the RS, there is a problem of the population's uneven involvement in decision-making in the entire territory of protected areas. In addition, the problem is also the unequal powers of non-governmental actors in decision-making with governmental actors. A future challenge for the RS represents an upgrade of managers of protected areas that should contribute to the balanced involvement of non-governmental actors in the entire territory of the protected area and should distribute equal powers to non-governmental and governmental actors in decision-making.

Confirmation 3: The challenge of the third pillar of the AC according to BD and HD. In all three countries, the judiciary is seen as not sufficiently developed to deal with questions on nature protection. The main problem is a complete access to information in all three countries. Another problem is the non-compliance of legislation (as in RC and BiH) for public participation in all processes of nature protection. On the other hand, the major problem is the low level of public awareness in BiH, i.e. the lack of education of the population on nature protection

in all three countries. It is necessary to integrate education on nature protection and sustainable development in all regular school systems.

3 CONFIRMATION OF THE MAIN THESIS AS A CONCLUSION

The Europeanisation has contributed to the introduction of the concept of SD in the system of nature protection of SEE countries and it is necessary for the future legislative and institutional development to agree to the AC principles in order to achieve the objectives of BD and HD and the objectives of sustainable development in practice. Suggestions for future legislative and institutional development are shown in Table 1. The thesis was confirmed.

TABLE 1: PROPOSAL FOR LEGISLATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL GUIDELINES TO IMPROVE THE GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF THE NATURA 2000 PROTECTED AREAS IN SELECTED COUNTRIES OF SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

1.	Legislative guidelines		
	1.1.		It is necessary to integrate the education on sustainable development based on nature protection according to the Birds Directive and Habitat Directive and principles of the Aarhus Convention in all regular school system that will contribute to the raising of public awareness.
		1.1.1.	It is necessary to raise public awareness of the need to gather information on nature protection.
		1.1.2.	It is necessary to raise public awareness of the need for public participation in decision-making in the nature protection system.
		1.1.3.	It is necessary to raise public awareness of the need for legal disputes over the rights of nature and a healthy environment.
	1.2.		It is necessary to develop communication in nature protection. This can be organised through the creation of a communication strategy for Natura 2000 areas within the national system of nature protection. These strategies should be based on the pillars of the Aarhus Convention, which underpin the implementation of the nature protection objectives (the Birds Directive and Habitat Directive) within the concept of sustainable development.
		1.2.1.	Information is the basis of nature protection and its gathering should be the primary objective of the communication strategy. The gathering of information should include the whole society.
		1.2.2.	In the future it is necessary to develop a plan for public involvement in decision-making within the communication strategy.
		1.2.3.	In the future it is necessary to involve the non-governmental sector in the whole state in the nature protection policy in order that people in the peripheral areas can also influence the decision-making.
		1.2.4.	In the future it is necessary to work in improving inter-sectoral cooperation and in particular the inclusion of all sectors which are in the process of establishing a multi-level governance system, with Natura 2000 been marginally involved.
2.	Institutional guidelines		
	2.1.		Managers of protected areas need to develop new models of governance.
		2.1.1.	New governance models should include all relevant information on management (environmental, social, political).
		2.1.2.	New governance models should ensure equal representation of governmental and non-governmental actors in decision-making. Also, it is necessary to establish an equal distribution of power between governmental and non-governmental actors in decision-making on the management of protected areas.

The impact of Europeanisation in SEE countries reflects in pre-accession and accession processes of joining the EU. Pre-accession and accession processes had their legal and institutional form in these countries. Such a legal and institutional form incorporated the implementation of international obligations of sustainable development into the national legislation in the course of implementation N2000 (sub-thesis 1). Apart from that, there were changes of institutional framework in the system of nature protection (sub-thesis 2) and the role of main actors in the system of nature protection (sub-thesis 3). The establishment of N2000 contributed to the development of this legal and institutional framework (sub-thesis 4), however, there are needs for further development of the legal framework (national legislations, especially according to the principles of AC and objectives of BD and HD) and institutional framework towards democratisation

(national actors in nature protection) in order to implement objectives of sustainable development in practise (sub-thesis 5).

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