

AVANT-PROPOS

Our handling of the sea and its coast stipulates a great deal of how and to what extent the sea and its natural resources will be able to be exploited by our descendants. It also determines, however, whether they will be still able to admire the sea turtles, dolphins, underwater meadows, pen shells and date mussels in this extreme part of the Mediterranean. The Northern Adriatic is a relatively shallow ecosystem, considering that its depth does not exceed 50 m. It is earmarked by the stratification of its water column, great fluvial input, and high productivity. But above all, is a very sensitive ecosystem, for apart from the stated characteristics it is known for its intensive fisheries, tourism, industry and maritime transport. Years ago we blamed our insufficient knowledge, lack of data and similar deficiencies for our grossly unsuitable interventions into the sea and its coast. Today, however, this can no longer be an excuse. The years when Lord Byron wrote that human impact ends on the coast are long past, and it is high time that we have a look under the surface of the sea and see, with our own eyes, the destruction we have caused in it.

This year, precisely two decades have passed since the formal debate on proclaiming individual protected areas on the Slovenian coast began to unroll in our country. On the basis of the Law on natural and cultural heritage, which was in force at that time, the Littoral municipalities of Slovenia protected the sea in front of Piran, the Bay of Strunjan, 200 metres wide belt of the sea along the northern part of Strunjan peninsula, as well as the extreme part of Debeli rtič and the sea in front of it. By doing so, the Littoral municipalities considerably contributed to the efforts towards preserving biodiversity and integrity of the ecosystem of the Gulf of Trieste as well as of the entire Northern Adriatic.

The period of twenty years is fairly long, but at the same time it is an opportunity to assess how reasonable and successful were the measures and arrangements made at that time. We are able to find part of the answers to this issue in the everyday events at both the local and global levels. During the increasing pressures exerted on the sea and its coast, the role of protected areas has even gained in its significance. An important part of the activities carried out within the framework of the Convention on biodiversity has been devoted to the founding of marine protected areas in territorial waters as well as in open seas and on deepsea floor. The cognition about the urgency of preserving the marine ecosystem's integrity, biodiversity and ecological processes is a significant background for the functioning of the majority of international government and non-government organisations, including those dealing with exploitation of natural resources, from fishing to the exploitation of minerals on the sea floor and under it. The international community has set two important objectives: to stop the decline of biodiversity by 2010 and to establish a representative network of marine protected areas by 2012 at the regional and global levels.

An important contribution to the this international effort in achieving a more sustainable use of the marine biodiversity was the "Expert Meeting on the Impacts of Human Activities at Sea, on the Coast and its Hinterland on the Northern Adriatic's Biodiversity", organized by the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation and held on 7th and 8th October 2008 in Piran. The objective of the meeting is to contribute to an integral treatment

of the Northern Adriatic, both from the aspect of the state of marine and coastal habitat types and from the aspect of human activities and impacts, their separate and above all cumulative effects on marine and coastal ecosystems. At the end of the workshop the participants from Croatia, Italy, France and Slovenia agreed on a set of conclusions that were sent to the regional and national authorities and to the competent bodies of the European Union. Common position was expressed about the need of a common, integrated approach to the management of the Northern Adriatic and of the whole Adriatic basin. You can find some of the findings, thoughts and discussions concerning the Northern Adriatic in the present number of our nature conservation magazine *Varstvo narave*, in which some of the presentations and conclusions from the Piran Expert Meeting are gathered.

Robert Turk, MSc

PREDGOVOR

Naše ravnanje z morjem in morskim obrežjem v veliki meri odloča, kako in koliko bodo morje in njegove naravne vire lahko koristili naši zanamci. Odloča tudi o tem, ali bodo v tem skrajnem delu Sredozemlja še občudovali morske želve, delfine, podvodne travnike, leščurje, morske datlje. Severni Jadran je razmeroma plitev ekosistem, saj je globina manjša od 50 m. Opredeljujejo ga stratifikacija vodnega stolpca, veliki rečni vnosi in visoka produktivnost, predvsem pa je to zelo občutljiv ekosistem, kajti navedenim značilnostim je treba dodati še izdaten ribolov, turizem, industrijo in pomorski promet. Svoječas smo se za neustrezno poseganje v morje in morsko obrežje izgovarjali na nepoznavanje, pomanjkanje podatkov in podobno. Danes to ne more in ne sme biti več izgovor. Leta, ko je lord Byron zapisal, da se človekov vpliv konča na morskem obrežju, so davno mimo in skrajni čas je, da pogledamo pod morsko gladino in se na lastne oči prepričamo o razdejanju, ki ga povzročamo.

Letos mineva natanko dvajset let od začetka formalne razprave o razglasitvi posameznih zavarovanih območij na slovenski obali. Na osnovi takratnega Zakona o naravni in kulturni dediščini so obalne občine zavarovale morje pred Piranom, Strunjanski zaliv in 200-metrski pas morja ob severnem delu Strunjanskega polotoka ter skrajni del Debelega rtiča in morje pred njim. Obalne občine so s tem pomembno prispevale k naporom za ohranjanje biotske raznovrstnosti in celostnosti ekosistema Tržaškega zaliva ter celotnega severnega Jadrana.

Dvajset let je dolga doba in obenem tudi priložnost za oceno oz. vprašanje o smiselnosti in uspešnosti takratnega ukrepa. Del odgovora lahko prepoznamo v vsakdanjem dogajanju, na lokalnem in na globalnem nivoju. Ob vse večjih pritiskih na morje in morsko obrežje je postala vloga zavarovanih območij še pomembnejša. Pomemben del aktivnosti v okviru Konvencije o biotski raznovrstnosti je namenjen ustanavljanju morskih zavarovanih območij v teritorialnih vodah ter na odprtih morjih in globokomorskem dnu. Spoznanje o nujnosti ohranjanja celostnosti morskega ekosistema, njegove raznolikosti in ekoloških procesov je pomembna osnova delovanja večine mednarodnih vladnih in nevladnih organizacij, tudi tistih, ki se ukvarjajo z izkoriščanjem naravnih virov, od ribolova do izkoriščanja rudnin na morskem dnu in pod njim. Mednarodna skupnost si je zastavila dva pomembna cilja: da bo do leta 2010 ustavila upadanje biotske raznovrstnosti in da bo do leta 2012 na regionalnem in globalnem nivoju vzpostavljena reprezentativna mreža morskih zavarovanih območij.

Pomemben prispevek k iskanju odgovorov je bilo tudi Mednarodno strokovno srečanje »Vpliv človekovih dejavnosti na morju, morskem obrežju in zaledju na biotsko raznovrstnost Severnega Jadrana«, ki ga je Zavod RS za varstvo narave organiziral 7. in 8. oktobra 2008 v Piranu. Cilj posveta je bil prispevati k celostni obravnavi severnega Jadrana, tako z vidika stanja morskih in obrežnih habitatnih tipov kot z vidika nabora človekovih dejavnosti in vplivov, njihovega posamičnega in predvsem kumulativnega učinka na morske in obrežne ekosisteme. Udeleženci posveta iz Hrvaške, Italije, Francije in Slovenije so na koncu dvodnevne razprave oblikovali zaključke, ki so bili posredovani pristojnim organom odločanja na regionalni in državni ravni Slovenije, Italije in Hrvaške ter ustreznim organom in delovnim telesom na ravni EU. Udeleženci posveta smo si bili tudi edini, da je treba s skupno in celostno obravnavo ne

le severnega Jadrana, pač pa celotnega Jadranskega morja nadaljevati tudi v prihodnje. Nekaj misli, ugotovitev in razmišljanj o severnem Jadranu ponuja tokratna številka revije Varstva narave, v kateri so zbrani posameznimi prispevki in zaključki srečanja v Piranu.

mag. Robert Turk