

REDUCED BIODIVERSITY LOSS THROUGH IMPROVED MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS IN ALBANIA



FROM 2015 TO 2019

PROTECTED AREAS
MANAGEMENT
EFFECTIVENESS

increased from
34 to 58%

THE IMPLEMENTATION
RATE OF
MANAGEMENT
PLANS

changed from
19 to 53%



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Project website:	www.natura.al

CAPACITY BUILDING

A training programme was developed tailored for the employees of National Agency of Protected Areas and its regional offices, covering topics such as conservation biology, implementation of monitoring protocols, ranger foundation, use of IT and field equipment, fire fighting, tourist infrastructure development and maintenance, conflict resolution and project writing, etc.

We built knowledge and experience of around 100 rangers and protected area specialists through:

- 14 training modules;
- Continuous on-the-job training;
- Attendance of more than 10 international and national congresses and seminars;
- 6 study tours; and
- Twinning programme between Albanian rangers and European Rangers Federation.

WILDLIFE MONITORING

We provided equipment required for field work and wildlife monitoring, such as:

- patrolling vehicles: off-road cars, motorbikes, boats, and bicycles;
- GPS, binoculars, camera traps, water analysis instruments, computers, spotting scopes, camping equipment, etc;
- 16 sun powered electric fences kits to mitigate human-wildlife conflicts; and
- 40 full sets of fire fighting equipment to contrast damages from fire.

We have co-organized 4 yearly International Waterbird censuses starting from 2016, to monitor the status of wetlands in the country and occurrence and frequency of bird species.

Operational tools for collection and analysis of wildlife data that enable the biodiversity assessment such as the National Biodiversity database (BioNNA www.bionna.al) and the Wildlife Information Management System are in place.

NATURA 2000

Potential distribution of the Natura 2000 Sites of Community Interest (SCIs) was identified, resulting in the preliminary list of 43 proposed sites. The definition of the boundaries of sites in the area of Karaburun-Llogora-Orikum-Mount Cika was completed through the participatory approach, serving as a showcase for the process.

Through the engagement of dedicated experts we produced:

- 5 vegetation cover and habitat maps (Bredhi i Hotoves-Dangelli National Park, Mali i Tomorrit National Park, Korab-Koritnik Nature Park, Lake Shkodra Managed Nature Reserve and Divjaka-Karavasta National Park);
- 13 monitoring protocols on selected species and habitats;
- technical guidelines for the establishment of Natura 2000 network;
- More than 80 field investigation progress reports; and
- National Action Plan for Bats and Bats Atlas of Albania.





5 primary sites:

1. Bredhi i Hotoves-Dangelli National Park,
2. Mali i Tomorrit National Park,
3. Korab-Koritnik Nature Park,
4. Lake Shkodra Managed Nature Reserve,
5. Divjaka-Karavasta National Park.



5 secondary sites:

6. Buna River-Velipoje Protected Landscape,
7. Shebenik-Jabllanica National Park,
8. Llogara National Park,
9. Vjosa-Narta Protected Landscape,
10. Dajti Mountain National Park.

Initiated in 2015, at the time of establishment of the National Agency of Protected Areas of Albania, NaturAL provided a strong push and instrumental support to improvement of management of protected areas of Albania.



NATURE EDUCATION AND AWARENESS RAISING

Aiming to educate local communities and the young generations about the importance of nature conservation we have:

- Published 5 issues of the Green Steps magazine;
- Held more than 100 nature education classes in schools in and around protected areas; and
- Prepared the Educational toolkit on Natura 2000 for secondary schools.

The innovative Junior Rangers Programme involved 104 school kids in cooperation with 7 Regional Agencies of Protected Areas.

The communication unit of Regional Agencies of Protected Areas was formed by having one employee designated in each and trained to continue and initiate promotional and educational activities.

To increase the visibility of protected areas in Albania and to promote their sustainable development, we have supported or organized:

- 4 yearly International Waterbird censuses as of 2016 and Environmental Film Festival in Albania in 2015, 2016 and 2017;
- More than 10 local campaigns of Regional Agencies of Protected Areas per year as of 2016;
- Around 25 awareness raising campaigns; and
- International Tourism Fair in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP

Local communities in and around protected areas play a crucial role in achieving sustainability goals, due to their continuous interactions with the environment. Celebrating local festivals we promoted products characteristic for the areas. We supported local organizations to improve the relationship between the community and protected areas' management and tackled human-wildlife conflict through 3 pilot projects.

Newly built and refurbished visitor centres will serve as bridges, connecting visitors, local community and the rangers. We invested:

- More than 250.000 EUR in 3 visitor centres: Divjaka-Karavasta was opened in June 2018, Llogora was opened in January 2019, and Dajti in March 2019; and
- Around 1 million EUR in infrastructure rehabilitation, improving functionality and working conditions for Regional Administration of Protected Area's personnel in Shkodra, Velipoja, Kukes, Berat, Lezhe, Shebenik, Llogora, Peshkopi, Bredhi i Hotoves, Dajti, Tomori, etc.

The assessment of protected areas of Albania was conducted using the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) in 2015 and 2019, indicating the evolution of implementation level of protected areas' management plans and their effectiveness.





NATURA 2000

PROTECTED AREAS
ALBANIA

