



INTERREG V-A COOPERATION PROGRAMME
GREECE – BULGARIA 2014 – 2020

Reinforcing Protected Areas Capacity through an Innovative
Methodology for Sustainability

– BIO2CARE –

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Tourism and Protected Areas

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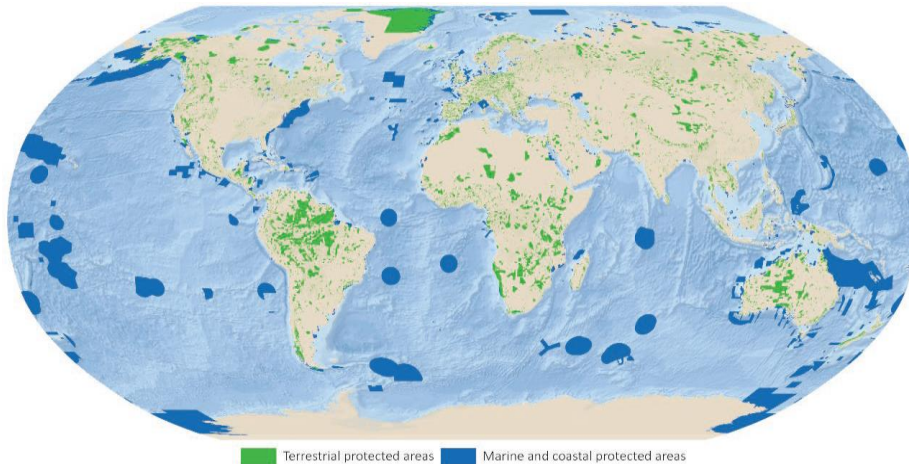
Photo Archive: EKBV

Protected Area

a clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values.

Source: IUCN, 2008

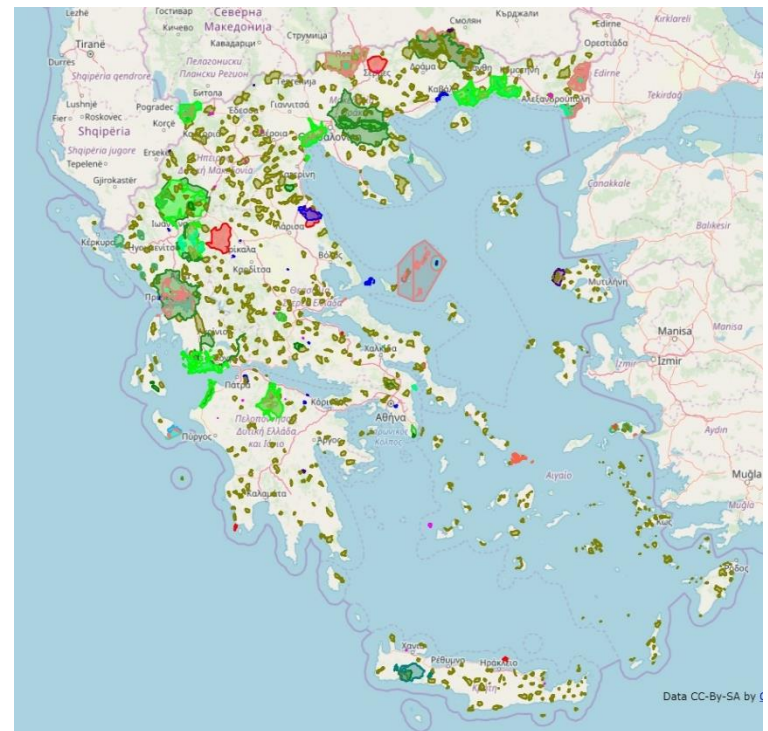
238.563 protected areas



Source: WDPA Database, 2020

Protected Areas
are a key component of any
global conservation strategy.

1.283 protected areas



Source: www.biodiversity-info.gr

Tourism provides a crucial and unique way
of fostering visitor's connection with PA
values making it a potentially positive force
for conservation.

Visitor experiences can be
transformative for an
individual's personal growth
and well-being, while
instilling an increased
sense of stewardship and
support for PA values.



Photo Archive: EKBY

Sustainable tourism

Tourism to a protected area that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the tourism industry, the environment and local communities.

Source: UNWTO, 2018

Great variety of positive and negative impacts.

Affect PA resources, local economies, local communities, and the tourists themselves.

Sometimes the balance is difficult to establish.



Impact of tourism on Protected Areas:

- **environmental**
- **economic**
- **social**

Positive or Negative

Who decides?

Who benefits?



Impact is a neutral term by definition,
as impacts perceived as positive by one person can be
seen as negative by another.



Potential benefits of tourism in PA (1)

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Provide education on conservation issues and needs.
- Transmit understanding and appreciation of natural values and resources through experiences, education and interpretation.
- Create awareness of the value of natural resources and protect resources that otherwise have little or no perceived value to residents, or are considered a cost rather than a benefit.
- Support research and development of good environmental practices and management systems to influence the operation of travel and tourism business, as well as visitor behavior at destinations.
- Support monitoring through citizen science volunteers.
-

Source: IUCN, 2018



Potential benefits of tourism in PA (2)

ECONOMIC

- Generate economic benefit to a nation, region or community to strengthen the commitment to conserve the PA and its wildlife.
- Increase jobs and income for local residents.
- Stimulate new tourism enterprises and diversify the local economy.
- Encourage the local manufacture and sale of goods and provision of services.
- Access new markets and foreign exchange.
- Generate local tax revenues.
- Enable employees to learn new skills.
- Provide financial support to PA through payment of tourism fees and charges.
- ...

Source: IUCN, 2018



Potential benefits of tourism in PA (3)



SOCIAL / COMMUNITY

- Improve locals living standards.
- Encourage people to value and take pride in their local culture and PA.
- Foster greater understanding of natural and cultural heritage.
- Establish attractive destinations, for residents and visitors, which may support other compatible new activities.
- Improve intercultural understanding through social contact.
- Encourage the development and conservation of culture, crafts and the arts.
- Promote aesthetic, spiritual, health and other values related to well-being.
- Improve physical health through recreational exercise (e.g. cycling, walking).
- Contribute to mental health by reducing stress and fatigue.
- Raise the profile of conservation at local, national and international level.
- Interpret values, conservation and management issues for visitors.
- ...

Source: IUCN, 2018

Negative impacts are inevitable.

Even well-managed tourism can create **negative impact**.

e.g. by travelling to a PA, visitors leave a carbon footprint while visitor use inside the PA need to be managed to avoid fragile habitats.



Negative impacts of tourism in PA (1)



ENVIRONMENTAL

- AIR: Air and noise pollution from vehicles / Carbon dioxide emissions
- LIGHT: Distraction of fauna species
- SOUND: Noise pollution can affect breeding success
- WATER: Mineral, nutrients, sewage, solid waste, toxins etc. added to the environment / Reduction of water quality / Increased water consumption
- GEOLOGY/SOIL: Collection / Vandalism / Erosion
- LANDSCAPE: Visual impact of settlements on the landscape
- HABITATS: Fragmentation of ecosystems / Competition between native and invasive species / Fires / Destruction of habitats and clearing of lands / Eutrophication and sedimentation etc.
- WILDLIFE: Changes of species composition, reproduction and behavior / Overfishing / Eutrophication / Psychological stress, behavioral changes etc.
- ...

Source: IUCN, 2018

Negative impacts of tourism in PA (2)

ECONOMIC

- EMPLOYMENT: Employment options may be menial, with low wages and low skills requirements / Seasonal job losses etc.
- LOCAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT: Economic leakage, when a large portion of foreign exchange earnings from tourism is repatriated, hindering local business development / Seasonality of business etc.
- DIVERSIFICATION: Vulnerable economy depended on tourism / Inflation, tourism growth regions may become too expensive for staff etc.
- ...

SOCIAL

- TRADITIONS: Demeaning of ceremonies re-enacted for tourists, causing changes in arts, crafts, festivals / Deterioration of workmanship of crafts etc.
- PSYCHOLOGY: Xenophobia and conflict between locals and tourists due to inappropriate tourist behavior / Loss of sense of security etc.
- ...

Source: IUCN, 2018

10 principles
for tourism and visitor
management

1. Appropriate management depends on objectives and PA values.
2. Proactive planning for tourism and visitor management enhances effectiveness.
3. Changing visitor use conditions are inevitable and may be desirable.
4. Impacts on resource and social conditions are inevitable consequences of human use.
5. Management is directed at influencing human behavior and minimizing tourism induced change.
6. Impacts can be influenced by many factors so limiting the amount of use is but one of many management options.
7. Monitoring is essential to professional management.
8. The decision making process should separate technical description from value judgments.
9. Affected groups should be engaged since consensus and partnership is needed for implementation.
10. Communication is the key to support sustainability.



Source: EUROPARC FEDERATION, 2012

Thank you!

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