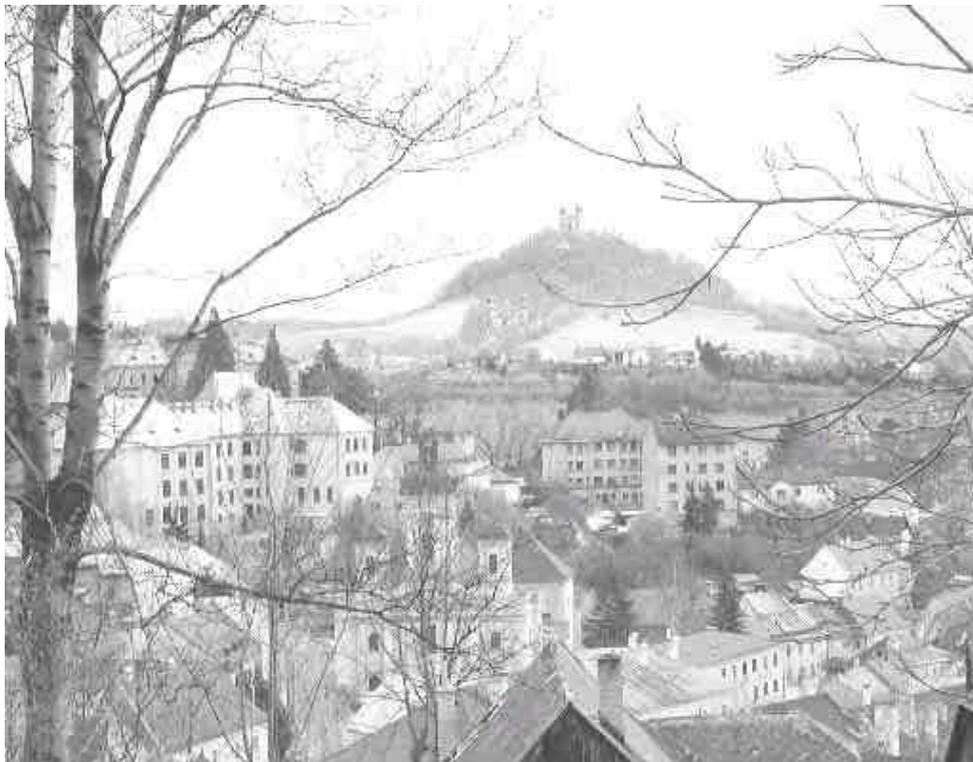


**Christine Garbe, Michael Meyer, Jan Rohac,
Peter Straka & Richard Tapper (Eds.)**

Biodiversity and Tourism in the Framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity

**The Case of the natural and cultural heritage
of Banska Stiavnica, Slovak Republic**



Biodiversity and Tourism in the Framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity

The Case of the natural and cultural heritage of Banska Stiavnica, Slovak Republic

Case study for the implementation of the “Draft international guidelines for activities related to sustainable tourism development in vulnerable terrestrial, marine and coastal ecosystems and habitats of major importance for biological diversity and protected areas, including fragile riparian and mountain ecosystems”, tested in the Framework of the project:

Promoting sustainable tourism in central and eastern Europe:
A demonstration model applied to the natural and cultural heritage of Banska Stiavnica
(Slovakia)

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Cover Picture: City of Banska Stiavnica (© Birgit Nolte)
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Preface

In May 2000, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) accepted “the invitation to participate in the international work program on sustainable tourism development under the Commission on Sustainable Development process with regard to biological diversity, in particular, with a view to contributing to “international guidelines for activities related to sustainable tourism development in vulnerable terrestrial, marine and coastal ecosystems and habitats of major importance for biological diversity and protected areas, including fragile riparian and mountain ecosystems, bearing in mind the need for such guidelines to apply to activities both within and outside protected areas, and taking into account existing guidelines”.

In June 2001, the Secretariat of the CBD with financial support from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment organized an international workshop on “Biological Diversity and Tourism” in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, where the “Draft International Guidelines for Activities Related to Sustainable Tourism Development in Vulnerable Ecosystems were elaborated.

The workshop also recommended, in relation to future actions to be taken with the draft guidelines, to demonstrate their implementation in pilot projects and to submit reports and case-studies on the findings of such projects to the Secretariat of the CBD. In April 2002, also the Sixth Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary of the CBD to gather and compile existing case-studies on the implementation of these guidelines and to make them available to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice prior to the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties“.

Taking up this recommendation, the German Federal Ministry for the Environment and the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic decided to test the draft guidelines in the framework of the running project “Promoting sustainable tourism in Central and Eastern Europe: A demonstration model applied to the natural and cultural heritage of Banska Stiavnica (Slovakia)“.

The present document reports also on the findings of a workshop held in Varin/Slovakia in October 2001, dealing with sustainable tourism development on the basis of the Draft CBD-Guidelines.

We hope that the presented results will be useful for a positive and sound development of tourism in the Slovak Republic, especially in protected areas. Further we hope that this document will contribute to the ongoing process of the Draft CBD-Guidelines.

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Introduction

Aim of this study was to analyse the potentials for the application of the addressed draft guidelines into the systems of the Slovak Republic, tested in the running project of Banska Stiavnica region. Relevant institutions, which were interested to the problematic of the Banska Stiavnica region were actively involved, sharing their visions and comparing the guidelines with the reality at the ground. The authors want to thank gratefully those who supported the study, especially Mr. Richard Tapper, who leded the experts through the topics of the guidelines.

The city of Banska Stiavnica is placed in the heart of the Stiavnica Hills, a Protected Landscape Area (a Slovak equivalent of the IUCN Category V. – Protected Landscape / Seascape.). The Stiavnica Hills Protected Landscape Area (PLA) has been established in 1979. The Area covers 77,629 hectares and is one of the largest PLA in the Slovak Republic. The PLA contains 15 smaller nature reserves and protected sites or habitats of species.

Description

The Stiavnica Hills are part of the Central Slovakian Volcanic Mountain System. The lowest part of the region is the Hron River Valley (200 metres above the sea level), the highest point is Sitno Mountain (1009 m). A broad range of geological structures and geographical locations has generated diverse ecological systems. Hundred years of mining activity have completely re-shaped the nearest surroundings of the town Banska Stiavnica. However, human activity has generated a surprisingly beautiful cultural landscape. Both the human and natural elements are harmoniously united. On the other hand, there are large areas with well-preserved original habitats in some parts of the region.

In 1993, UNESCO included the historical town Banska Stiavnica and the technical monuments (historical water-supply network) of its surroundings on the List of World Cultural and Natural Heritage. The UNESCO took into account a completely preserved townscape and 360 registered monuments and historical relicts.

The project area is located in Central Slovakia in the mountains of the Štiavnické vrchy. The project area is identified on the basis of the administrative border (cadaster) and includes the entire area of the Banská Štiavnica district, the village of Hodrusa-Hamre from the district of Zarnovica, and the villages Vyhne, Repiste, and Sklene Teplice from the district of Ziar Nad Hronom.

The project area lies outside the main transportation highways. The closest important transportation route lies in the valley of the river Hron, where there is road E571, a main road between Bratislava and Kosice, and the railway connecting Bratislava-Zvolen-Kosice. The project area is approximately 20 km North of road E77 (Budapest-Krakow). The centre of the project area is located approximately 180 km from Bratislava (capital city – bordering Austria) and approximately 50 km from Banska Bystrica (regional capital). The distance to the closest airport is 35 km (Sliac).

The town of Banská Štiavnica is considered the centre for the entire area of the Štiavnica region. Our project area can be defined as a circle (with a 10 km radius) around this town. It has a surface area of approximately 380 square kilometres with a jagged border. Approximately 60% of the area constitute mountain or foothills which were created through volcanic activity (Štiavnické vrchy).

The area was selected by the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic and ETE after consultation with a number of regions in Slovakia.

Nature

Nature and landscape protection. The project area is located in the mountains of the Štiavnické vrchy, which has been a protected area since 1979. This protected area measures 776.3 square km. The area was officially given protected status not only for the protection and creation of nature and natural subjects, but also for the important cultural monuments and monuments regarding the technical development of mining which exist in this locality. (Law NR SR c. 287/1994 Z.z. about nature and landscape protection, Regulation MK SSR c. 124/1979 Zb.)

The natural value of the Banská Štiavnica hills which supported their establishment as a protected area includes:

- the biggest volcanic mountain in Slovakia with all phenomena of volcanic relief, but also with the existence of other types of rocks from the first geological age to the quaternary period.
- the rich vein system (approximately 120 metal veins and arteries) including approximately 140 species of minerals, some of them endemic.
- important biogeographical location (in comparison with other Slovak mountain systems containing metal veins, the Štiavnica metal region is further South) as it is situated on the border of two different climate types, fostering the existence of both Panonian flora and fauna types as well as Carpathian mountain species.
- The area has a special landscape characteristic as it alternates forests with meadows, pastures, and settlements containing artificial water reservoirs (53 reservoirs).
- The area has more than 2000 historical and mining monuments, some with technical significance (gallery, shafts, funnels, lakes, and deposits) and from which approximately 39 are included on the list of technical monuments. These monuments are situated not just in the settled areas, but also in the surrounding landscape areas. They are not natural, but man-made. However, we include them here because they play an important part in the diversity of this area.

Geological composition

Štiavnické vrchy has a varied geological composition, which is also reflected by the various types of volcanic relief. These mountains were created in the Neogene geological period during a time of numerous volcanic phases. Banská Štiavnica is often called the "Mecca of Minerals", because during the volcanic phases more than 120 metal veins and arteries containing many different types and species of minerals (140) were created.

Flora

The widely varied composition of flora and fauna found in the area is a result of the varied geological landscape characterized by good climatic, morphological, historical, anthropogenic and other conditions. Typical for this area is the intertwining of Panonian and Carpathian mountain types of flora and fauna. Nearly 72% of this area are covered by forest, a part of which still has the original structure of plant communities. In this area we can see different climatic zones, and the mosaic-like alternated biotopes create the rich biodiversity which exists there. On the landscape of the CHKO (protected area) there can currently be found more than 1500 species of higher plants, some of which are protected by law or are in the Red Book of protected species in Slovakia (Appendix 1).

Fauna

The characteristics of fauna in this area are conditioned not only by the ecological factors in the environment, but also by the effects of intensive human habitation dating from the 12th century. Deep in the forest exist large predators (such as lynx and brown bear) and quite possibly other protected or hunting animals. Extensively used meadows and xerothermic open slopes are rich in various vertebrates. Specific biotopes are underground natural caves and also artificial mining spaces in this volcanic region, with many troglodytic species. Because of the great diversity of endangered and endemic species of fauna and flora, the Štiavnica Hills have been included into an area of European importance in the framework of the European Ecological Network as a biocentre (Koren, Šteffek a col., 1996) (Appendix 2).

Tourism

Brief history of tourism activities in the Banská Štiavnica region. The Štiavnicke vrchy in general and Sitno (1009 m) in particular are regarded as the European cradle of tourism for areas of middle elevation (mountains). These mountains are one of the tourist attractions in the Banská Štiavnica region. The first tourist club ("Club Sitno") was founded in 1860 in this region. In 1882, the institution "Banskostiavnicky odbor Karpatskeho spolku turistickeho v Uhorsku" was founded.

In Slovakia, Sitno is considered to be a mystic hill - the ancient legend says that under this hill, fairy people are sleeping - "sitnianski rytieri", who will help Slovakia in the horrible times. Three different buildings have been built on the hill: a look-out, a tourism cottage and a TV tower.

The history of touristic activities can be traced back to the ancient European family Coburg-Kohary - Mikulas Kohary built the tourism look-out on Sitno hill in 1727. This building was renovated in 1888 by Filip Coburg. Currently this building houses an information centre, and it is one of the stopping places along the "Educational trail Sitno" (3 kilometres, 13 stopping places). Sitno is a National Nature Reserve covering an area of 93,68 hectares. The area was designated as a reserve in 1951, the original intention being the protection of the forest communities including non-living nature.

1. Description of institutional responsibilities

The responsibilities for tourism and biodiversity protection in the Slovak Republic are divided into several institutions at national, regional and local level.

1.1 Tourism development

Although there are several central institutions that are active in tourism in Slovakia, tourism has no special ministry or "ministry like" body.

Tourism belongs to sphere of action of **Ministry of Economy**. Its responsibilities in field of tourism are mainly to set up basics of the state policy in the field of tourism, to secure the statistical investigations, to look for the support opportunities, categorisation of the tourism facilities, co-ordination of the foreign marketing, laws preparation, information sharing etc. The department for tourism in the Ministry of economy is responsible for giving recommendations in the future development but they are not successful with it. The department for tourism is advised by an informal platform, the Council of tourism (experts are members). They are meeting twice times a year, but have no real power because their suggestions are not taken into account. Because of the wide range of tourism it is not sufficient that the ministry for economy is the only responsible body at national level. Tourism is one of several tasks of the Ministry for Economy, which actually is of more political interest than tourism (e.g. gas transportation).

There is an active special institution for tourism at the national level – **Slovak Agency for Tourism** (Slovenska agentura pre cestovny ruch). It is found by Ministry of Economy and its mission is mainly foreign marketing of Slovakia as a tourist target. Since it is not very supported neither from government nor from any other sources, its importance (particularly for regions) is not significant.

The **Ministry of Agriculture** and the **Ministry of Constructing and Regional Development** cover some responsibilities for tourism development at national level. The Ministry of Agriculture participates on the rural development including partially agro-tourism strategy and methodology preparation and supports rural tourism development projects. Although Ministry of Constructing and Regional Development is the most logical body for tourism development and support, it has no special strategy or program. Since the ministry secures and supports regional development (which is tourism part of), it collaborates with Ministry of Economy in including of tourism in regional development documents, strategies, etc. The program for improving of the non-developed regions supports several projects on tourism (particularly tourism infrastructure) but this support is not very great and it is provided not on specialised bases.

1.1.1 Regional institutions

At **regional level** there is a special organisation for tourism development and co-ordination in the Region of Middle Hron (River Valley) (three districts – Banska Stiavnica, Zarnovica and Ziar nad Hronom), the Association for the development of the Middle Hron Region. The creation of the association was initiated and supported for several years by British Know-How Fund through Project of regional and institutional development of Slovakia. The association tries to realise the basic tasks (e.g. strategy planning, regional marketing, promotion, tour operating, etc), however its activities are in beginnings. Tourism will have probably the individual committee in the just-created County Parliament of Banska Bystrica County (VUC). The committee is established yet.

1.1.2 Local administration

At local level tourism belongs under the District Office of Banska Stiavnica (Department of the Regional Development), but there are no visible and effective activities of it. The Municipal Authority of Banska Stiavnica (Town Hall) declares the support of the tourism and there are some activities in this direction. It runs the Tourist Information Office in the city centre. The spectrum of services that are provided by this office is not very wide and it provides only the basic services. The main barrier of its development is lack of money. Although a "tourism committee" does exist within the City Council it is almost inactive. The members of the committee have no motivation and understanding for the tourism development, the management of the committee is weak.

1.1.3 Local institutions in state responsibility

At local level the national coverage in mining industry research and protection belongs to the Slovak Mining Museum – the national museum of mining, geology and another natural sciences. It is mainly oriented on the history of research and “science” however it trends to manage tourism activities in recent months. The Open Air Museum is the most attractive offer in the region probably. The Mining Museum is in the province of the Ministry of Environment. It therefore has potentials for a closer and more co-ordinated collaboration on the tourism / nature protection issues.

The Slovak Mining Office is part of the national mining management administration. It has no influence on the tourism however it is the leading organisation in mining (and geology partially) and may influence some practices.

The State Mining Archive is part of the Slovak National Mining Archive. Extremely valuable items are stored there, however it is not active in tourism. This archive could be one of the most attractive offers in region if it would open for visitors (in suitable way, of course, since its mission is keeping valuable documents, not to receive visitors).

The hunting Museum in St. Anton is located 3 km southward from Banska Stiavnica and plays an important role in tourism and therefore can function as best practice model example. It has slightly higher attendance than Open Mining Museum (probably due to better marketing). Beside general historical exhibition the museum shows also a hunting exhibition, which is very popular and well known in Slovakia. The Museum organises several highly attended events during the year, most of them connected with hunting.

1.1.4 Educational institutions

The Hotel Academy “Slovakia” educates the professionals for the catering facilities (restaurants, bars, etc.). Students are used to have practice in some facilities in Banska Stiavnica, usually in very good quality. The school is also able to provide the social events in town with the very good quality catering. However its influence on the town is not very visible. Maybe it is due the fact that school is private and expensive therefore only a few students are from Banska Stiavnica, substantial majority is coming from another towns and regions.

1.1.5 Non-Governmental institutions

Banska Stiavnica-- Hodrusa Association of Miners is a active body which keep old miners habits (e.g. schachttags, celebrations, etc.) and is able to performance them for visitors. Besides this they organise regular seminars on various aspects of mining history of region.

The Amber Trail Association tries to implement the principles of sustainability in the tourism development in the region. The main task of the AT association is to support (technical assistance, consulting, limited financial support) and develop the tourism product contributing to the rural development between Budapest and Krakow. Activities in BS are part of these tasks.

Although several tourist non-governmental professional organisations exist in Slovakia (association of the travel agencies, union of hotels and restaurants, association for lifts and ski lifts, association for rural tourism and agrotourism), they are not active in the region of Banska Stiavnica.

1.2 Biodiversity protection

The responsibility for the development and protection of protected areas lies in the competence of the Ministry of Environment, which however has no particular and effective power or program on tourism. The range of activity and responsibility is laid down exactly in the in the Law No 287/94 on Nature and Landscape Protection.

The Slovak Environmental Agency, Centre for the Natural heritage and Cultural Landscape, is responsible for conception and policy making of the cultural heritage management with particular attention to UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the province of the Ministry of Environment.

1.2.1 Regional level

The model area belongs to the responsibilities of the Environmental Section of the County Parliament of Banská Bystrica County. The responsibility for nature conservation within of protected areas is in State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic (SNC SR). The SNC SR is a special and technical state institution for nature management operated under the Law on Nature and Landscape Protection and has its own status.

The model area is under the responsibility of the SNC SR – Administration of PLA Stianicke vrchy (CHKO Štiavnické vrchy) that is located in Banská Štiavnica. The management is also responsible for territory outside the model area.

The State Nature Conservancy is a state budgetary organisation, which is responsible to the Ministry of Environment. It administers the management of the landscape, examines the environmental changes and is engaged in research, advertisement and control over the adherence to the law. Also, SNC SR is obliged to comment on the applications for building activities, forest farming activities etc. This means, that in some situations, which are exactly described in the act, the Environmental, Agriculture or Regional development sections of the local authorities cannot make a decision without a letter of approval from SNC SR.

At the present, SNC SR has limited abilities by capacities (personal and technical) for accomplishing all duties that result from their responsibilities (especially concerning expert and rangers staff and financial requirements). This situation does not enable the management to administrate its territory in an efficient way.

The Slovak Environmental Agency (SAZP) is a technical organisation with a nation-wide competence, which falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Environment. It provides expertise and support and is specialised in environmental protection and its development in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. SAZP engages in the different activities, for every activity, there exist a special centres (e.g. territorial development, territorial planning, landscape planning, house and country reconstruction and development, waste processing system, monitoring and information technologies, environmental impact evaluation, evaluation and classification of environmental dangers and chemical safety, state of the environment evaluation and environmental regionalization, environmental economy, environmental education, training and promotion, environmental evaluation and labelling of products, cultural landscape protection and protection of natural heritage).

1.2.2 Local level

The model area belongs in the field of administration to 3 different **district authorities**, one **municipal** and 18 **local authorities**:

- o the authorities in Zarnovica, which administrate the land register of the municipalities Hodruša Hámre and Kopanice, (1 local authority Hodruša-Hámre)
- o the authorities in Ziar nad Hronom, which also administer the land register of the municipalities Vyhne, Repište and Sklenné Teplice (3 local authority offices in the Ziar nad Hronom district Repišti, Sklenné Teplice, Vyhne) and
- o the authorities in Banská Štiavnica which administrate the rest of our studied area (the whole district of Banská Štiavnica) (14 local authority offices Batan-Klastava, Banská Belá, Banský Studenec, Beluš, Dekýš, Ilja, Kozelník, Mociar, Pocúvadlo, Podhorie, Prencov, Svätý Anton, Štiavnické Bane, Vysoká).

It is necessary to say, that the range of activity and responsibilities given by the law to these institutions includes environmental issues, (for example decisions about building activities on the studied territory, decisions about waste etc.) is much wider than the responsibilities under given by the Nature and Landscape Protection Law.

The responsibilities of the Municipal and Local Authorities concern building activities, green areas in towns and villages and in some cases also the powers concerning their possessions outside the town or village area, e.g. municipal forests or municipal farmland. At present, discussions are proceeding on a new Slovak

reform of the public administration, which would devolve many powers of the County and District authorities on to the Municipal authorities.

1.2.3 Non-governmental organisations –civic associations, organisations and foundations

Non-governmental organisations, associations and foundations with environmental interests are also active in the studied territory:

- o Kruh – civic association, which specialises in the development of the institution of family and in the education of children and young people. The association prepares programmes, which also contribute to the improvement of the state of environment.
- o Baden-Powell Foundation- supports nature preservation projects is a branch of Slovakian Scout Organisation
- o F:J. Turcek Foundation – supports small projects in the region

1.2.4 Ecological networks – Bio centres, Bio corridors, GNÚSES, RÚSES, EECONET, NECONET, Natura 2000, Emerald etc.

Ecological networks were initiated after 1991 together with the trend of sustainable development. The networks should provide efficient instruments for the stabilisation of nature, i.e. development of natural resources in the ecosystems and the reinforcement of the interconnection between the ecosystems. The abbreviation USES means Territorial System of Ecological Stability, GNUSES – The General of National USES adopted by Government of Slovak Republic, RUSES – The Regional USES adopted by relevant regional authority, EECONET – theoretical proposal for European Ecological Network, NECONET – theoretical proposal for National Ecological Network.

- o GNÚSES network is established and the regional network called RÚSES followed it. However, the networks were based on different approaches and methods and were created for areas, which did not correspond with the areas of state administration. This resulted in their incoherence. The studied area was included into GNUSES after adoption in 1991 and is represented by the suprarregional bio centre Sitno.
- o The GNÚSES network was followed by the NECONET, which has just been started and which should be coherent with the ecological networks of the bordering lands and should also be a part of the European Ecological Network EECONET. To the detriment of the cause, the project of this network is not compatible with the GNÚSES network,. At present, an updated version of GNÚSES network is planned for renewal, which should also be compatible with the EECONET and NECONET networks. In the studied area, GNÚSES is compatible with EECONET and NECONET and Sitno could become an European level bio centre. Some problems arise in the area of determination of bio corridors.
- o When Slovak republic decided to join the EU, the project of the Emerald network appeared here, whose management and system are identical with the network Natura 2000 in the EU states. At first, 28 territories were preliminarily selected for the Emerald network (CHKO Štiavnické vrchy was one of them), finally only 10 of them were accepted by group of experts . These 10 territories were chosen because they could be made compatible with the network and because they are extraordinarily exceptional. Štiavnické vrchy were not chosen because of the criteria for Emerald (species and habitats).

1.2.5 Educational institutions

Three institutions in the model area educate students in various environmentally-sounded subjects (Faculty of Ecology of Zvolen University, Department of Ecology of Banská Bystrica University, Department of Ecomuseology of Banská Bystrica University). However none of these three institutions participate formally in the heritage management and sustainable use in the town (only individuals – students as well as teachers). It is strange as far they educate particularly in the relationship between human and nature, which is Banská Stianica typical example of and is reason of inscribing on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Additional the located high schools and training colleges educate the middle-level management for various industries, however some of them are environmentally sounded, particularly forestry high schools and two

foresters training colleges. Similar to universities they don't participate formally in heritage management in town, although individuals are active.

STRENGTHS

CHALLENGES TO BE ADDRESSED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- In general there is no tourism management and overall planning at national, regional and level. The competence of the Ministry for Economy is limited on data research and funding. The Slovak Tourism Board is only responsible for promotion activities. The Ministry for Environment actually does have no responsibilities for tourism as well as the state subordinate administrations.
- ➔ Some inter-ministerial institution is needed to be partner of the ministers (environment, economy, regional development, agriculture) in issues of the management of tourism and biodiversity.
- Most institutions work without reference to, and compete with, each other. There is no pressure for them to collaborate and no culture of co-operation exists between them. Inter-institutional relations are consequently poor. There is limited understanding of the value of collaboration among business community and the public institutions. This situation is common for the whole of Slovakia. As a result, tourism activities are not well co-ordinated, and no clear guidance is available for tourism investors and operators.
- ➔ The co-ordination between the institutions and administration with influence on the tourism development and the management of biodiversity should be improved. In the model region the town office should show higher involvement (then more institutions will be attracted). Some institution has to be installed to be responsible for tourism and biodiversity (e.g. tourism platform). This is needed at national, regional and local level. A co-ordination group and a task force consisting of all stakeholders has to be established, which has the possibility to take responsibility for the sustainable development of the area, especially regarding tourism and nature conservation.
- The policy and activities of the public institutions (mayors, state organisations, etc...) are vulnerable to future political changes in both local and national governments.
- The state-owned preservation office does not have enough resources (small number of employees and lack of finances). The distribution of money is not proper. The financing of many activities is not co-ordinated.
- ➔ Restructuring of the financing: tourism taxes should refinance the tourism development. This measure would be more motivating to the private business to participate more in decision-making and in practical work. Restructuring the national budget, satellite account for tourism. Slovakia has no vision on development, therefore a priority list is needed as basis for decisions how to spent the money (tourism should be on the priority list).

2. Baseline information and review

The level of knowledge and information belonging to biodiversity and tourism is very different in the Slovak Republic. It depends on the resources (personal, technical, methodical and financial) and the interest of the several institutions with responsibility for tourism and biodiversity. In general there is a good level of information belonging to foreign tourism and the quantity of tourism in the Slovak republic and the different regions, as well as the model region. However the knowledge on biodiversity issues is small due to the fact that the collection of data on ecosystems, the research on different human and economic impacts and the changes in ecosystems is just in the first stage.

The several institutions, which are responsible for the management of biodiversity and nature protection, actually are very different provided with resources for the organisation of ecological information (capacity and technical). The nature protection organisations don't have enough knowledge about existing information sources and documents in other departments or institutions. The exchange / demanding of information is organised in a very bureaucratic manner.

The priorities of the information collecting of the state nature protection organisations are not related on tourism issues. State nature protection organisations focus on obtaining information and data about subject of protection, not on the relations with another human activities like tourism.

Because of this reasons the protected area is not researched and known in an equal manner (from the nature protection point of view) – some areas / sites are researched well, some less . Therefore it is not possible to approach a comprehensive regional management of the nature protection.

The Stiavnica Hills are very popular, in particular, amongst the domestic tourists. The existing data on tourism in the model area make clearly visible that tourism concentrates mainly in summer time. However, there is considerable polarisation: large-scale tourism activities are highly concentrated in the centre of PLA. The most visited area is approximately determined by a rectangle of villages: Banska Bela-Banska Hodrusa-Kopanice-Dekys-Antol-Bansky Studenec with Banska Stiavnica in the middle of the area. The area covers 80 km², one tenth of the PLA. The rest of the PLA, is actually little used for tourism development (except for Sklene Teplice and Vyhne served as health spa). The main activities of visitors are directed towards visitation of the town and attractions of the mining history (open air museum, channel system) and different recreational activities at the lakes and in the mountains (bathing, walking / hiking, biking). However the number of visitors in the town and over-night stays decreased in the last years.

In the surrounding of Banska Stiavnica the infrastructure is characterised by public tourist paths established in the Sitno Mountain and the Pocuvadlo lake areas. Some of these paths are furnished with information panels. In 1996, there was a network of 70 paths with total length of 530 km. In the model are exist one spa, several hot springs, some museums and galleries, ski lift, hotels, and restaurants. Despite the long tradition of tourism development, there is a lack of modern tourism infrastructure and services.

In the previous politic system during CSSR, an extensive, and mostly illegal, construction of weekend houses in the lake surrounding was detrimental for the environment. After 1989, such constructions ceased due to decreases in the standard of living but both the existing constructions and tourist camps still attract many tourists. Tourists overcrowd the core segment of the region, especially in the summer season. Many public tourist paths are close to the nature reserves. Considerable damages to the environment, in particular, were caused by tourism development.

The PLA and SNC SR is now accumulating scientific information to help determine the carrying capacity of the Stiavnica Hills, and to establish different zones within the model area for management purposes, including zones where tourism of particular types is most suitable, and other zones, which should be free from tourism. However the protected area landscape management does not have sufficient detailed information for the assessment of ecological and socio-cultural impacts.

STRENGTHS

For the model area a large-scale of appropriate knowledge and information basis about ecosystems and their characteristic flora and fauna exists. The knowledge of the number of visitors, their interest and activities as well as the main visited places and attractions is based mainly on experience but is confirmed by selective counts and investigations. Therefore it can be assumed that the information basis for an impact management and impact assessment is available. However the existing information and data have to be updated and to be completed by additional and site-specific research on a small scale for selected hot-spots.

CHALLENGES TO BE ADDRESSED

- There is no adequate framework to allow the exchange of information between the different institutions, and this prevents the integration of such knowledge in assessments of plans for tourism development, and in evaluations of the effects of existing tourism. A central co-ordination and compilation of the existing database does not exist. Therefore there is nearly no knowledge and information exchange between the different authorities.
- There is an absence of indicators to assess and monitor the ecological impact of tourism.
- There is no assessment of flora and fauna species, which can be used as indicators of the impact of the tourism activities - such information is necessary to assist in management actions to counteract any damage to biodiversity that may occur through tourism, and to adjust and plan tourism activities.

- More information is needed for all the planning levels and decision-making.

RECOMMENDED MEASURES

- Improve the ability of PLA to collect regularly the necessary information and data.
- Secure that information, data and know how which are known in other departments and / or abroad will not be collected again and foray
- Improve the mutual communication among the stakeholders concerning the information collecting
- Analyse existing plans and studies of the area, to extract the most important statements and include them into regional strategies
- If we will find the really good project/plan/proposal cooperation I invite authors to collaborate.

3. Analysis of Vision and goals

There is interest to prepare a common vision and goals for tourism development in the area. In particular, some service providers in the private sector, and the municipality, express a desire to prepare an integrated strategy for tourism in the area. Some service providers feel that it is time to develop some common activities to improve the situation and tourism environment in the town. Interest in the municipality has increased as the Mayor and members of the City Parliament have become more aware of the practices and potential in other tourism destinations. The move towards decentralisation as part of reforms of the State administration has also contributed to the municipalities motivation to focus more attention on tourism.

The need for a common vision and goals is not, however, widely accepted or understood. Some local people and organisations would prefer to work on their own to develop tourism, and are concerned that if more attention is paid to tourism development, opportunities for them to invest in tourism might be reduced. Amongst people generally, there is no awareness of the importance of establishing an overall vision for tourism and its role in development of the region.

Alongside the lack of an overall strategy for tourism, there is also a lack of ideas regarding relation between tourism and other economic activities and biodiversity protection.

There is a need to raise public awareness on this, and to establish a basis for development programme/strategy, elaborated and widely discussed with local inhabitants. This will need to take place alongside the development of a commonly accepted overall strategy for regional development.

RECOMMENDED MEASURES

- Public hearings will propose a set of principles (incl. vision) for sustainable development of tourism as basis for a council decision.
- It is recommended that a co-ordination group and a task force consisting of all stakeholders be established, which has the possibility to take responsibility for the sustainable development of the area, especially regarding tourism and nature conservation. In this context it is also important to run an open-ended forum for all inhabitants as a basis for discussion on the relevant issues.

4. Analysis of Objectives

The EU accession of the Slovak republic drives authorities into achieving some useful objectives into national and regional plans and strategies:

The **National Strategy of the Sustainable Development** has been prepared under auspices of Ministry of Environment by wide team of experts. It determines the framework of development of Slovakia from point of view of sustainability. Slovak Government adopted the strategy in October 2001 as well as by National Council in April 2002, but it has a very weak position in the policies and activities of the different ministries generally. The National Strategy set up tourism as one of the main economy industries in Slovakia and determines how to develop it sustainable (see www.tur.sk).

Government in 2000 has adopted the National Program for Tourism Development. The program sets-up the goals and the measures for the tourism development. In case that it would be supported also with some budget it could help concrete projects, however this topic is strongly underestimated by decision-makers.

The **National Biodiversity Strategy of Slovakia** adopted by Government in April 1997 and approved by National Council in August 1997 in its Goal 11 determines how the strategy would have an influence for tourism and how could be implemented in Slovakia. It sets up the “basic directions” of tourism development respecting the CBD in the Goal 11. The strategy is developed into the National action plan (adopted by Government in 1998 with extra governmental financial support), nevertheless the realisation of the AP depends of availability of financial resources are the willing of targeted sectors and responsible institutions. However as far both documents are formally adopted and are formally binding, they justify the sustainable tourism development in Slovakia.

The **National Plan of the Agricultural and Rural Development** sets-up the goals and measures eligible for the SAPARD implementation in Slovakia. One of the measures makes possible to use SAPARD support for tourism development in rural areas in a comprehensive way. Its implementation is expected in 2003. It is not very “strong” measure, but will provide considerable financial support.

The **strategy of the tourism development in the Middle Hron region** sets-up main direction of the tourism in region of Banska Stiavnica – Kremnica and was elaborated by GHK Int., UK for Coordination Group of Middle Hron Region. The strategy is not implemented because it is not generally accepted (even presented) in region.

Some **regional projects** define additional objectives for tourism development: The project “Geopark” is developing a system of trails and points presenting the historical style of mining and geological heritage in responsibility of the Ministry of Environment. The realisation of a new part of open air mine museum to present the history of coal mining in Slovakia or the initiative of the Slovak Cycleclub in signing of the bike trails network. However these particular objectives are not a part of wider generally accepted programme.

Despite of these spatial projects an overall strategy of tourism development in relation to the protection of biological diversity is missing. Moreover inter-linkages between the National Strategy for sustainable development and the other plans and action programmes at national or regional level are not known.

The institutions / stakeholders understand the objective approach, but need additional information.

5. Review of legislation and control measures

Different European Union projects provide efficient instruments for the solution of the problems in the area of nature and landscape preservation. Therefore Slovakia could make more use of European Union projects to provide efficient instruments for the solution of the problems in the area of nature and landscape preservation, such as LIFE-Nature that supports the management of the protected areas through co-financing targeted to potential sites classified to NATURA 2000 Network.

Tourism is underlined in important national documents:

- National Development Plan
- Regional Operational Program NUTS II Slovakia-East
- National Strategy of the Sustainable Development (see below)
- National Biodiversity Strategy of Slovakia (Goal 11) (see below)

The **National Development Plan (NDP)** and **Regional Operational Program NUTS II Slovakia-East** identify the area of PHARE assistance in Slovakia. The NDP sets up the middle term (up to 2006) goals and priorities of the regional development. It is under re-working now and tourism “looses” its position – originally it had individual operation program, now it is going to be included with the Sectional Operational Program for economy development. NDP contain also a Regional Operational Program NUTS II Slovakia (not Slovakia-East), which is under preparation. Tourism development will be part of the ROP, although it is supposed that it will be very vague and general. SOP and ROP contain the development priorities, measures and indicators. However no details are known as far these plans are under preparation now but these plans will make tourism eligible to apply for support form PHARE (and Structural Funds after EU accession).

Tourism is also subject of the PHARE **Special Preparatory Program for Structural Funds**. One part of this program (SPP Priority B: Pilot project for tourism) is dedicated to revitalisation of the National Tourist Fund. PHARE provides money and technical assistance for the grant scheme for development of tourism. No details are known at the moment.

Following laws are in existing or in preparation with effects on the development of tourism and biodiversity:

- The **law on the property detriment** lies down that the state has to reimburse the property detriment caused by the nature protection. This may lead to the consequence that the state will be cautious in establishing new protected areas and will eventually reduce existing ones. Therefore it will be possible to concentrate the effort and resources for the protection of the most valuable part of nature by setting priorities in nature protection.
- The new Law on the Nature and Landscape Protection considers all directives of EU for nature (species and habitats) including a new system of the management within and outside of protected areas as well as compensation tools for nature management, it will establish a regulatory measures for tourist development inside of protected areas and targeted habitats.
- The territorial **system of ecological stability** (USES) on local level is in the finishing phase (deadline is end of March). At regional level it already exists. USES justifies the nature protection (the subject of protection) and identifies the elements of ecological stability in the landscape (e.g. biocorridors, etc.)
- The **Landscape-ecological plan** (KEP) is under finishing (deadline is June). LEP identifies the optimal spatial disposition and functional use of land. It will be used for the preparation of Spatial / Physical Plan for urbanisation development.
- The new Spatial / Physical Plan on the regional level is under preparation and is based also on the USES and KEP. The regional plan determines the land use. The regional plan is going to be adopted, it is based also on the USES and KEP. This ensures that regulations and recommendations incorporated in USES and KEP must be obligatory for decision making (as far regional plan is obligatory). The decision mustn't be contradict to the USES and KEP.

Two governmental programs in the responsibility of the Ministry of Economy provide financial support for tourism generally without condition, e.g. criteria for sustainable development or nature protection:

- Tourism Grant scheme – generally supports various activities in regional tourism;
- Program of soft loans – generally supports various tourism activities.

The project area has been partially inscribed on the List of World Heritage, and thus is part of the highest degree of international protection for cultural heritage. An obligatory priority for all development goals is the caring for cultural heritage. Meeting these agreed obligations is currently problematic for the state administrations, as there is no systematic co-operation between different levels of responsibility at national and local level as well with the UNESCO.

STRENGTHS

Slovakia is developing the comprehensive legal framework to enhance the nature protection and sustainable development (new law on the nature protection as well as NATURA 2000 is under preparation, Strategy of sustainable development is accepted).

There is a strong feeling that the legal framework for tourism development is necessary. Slovak republic joined and implemented most of the international and European agreements and standards concerning the preservation of nature and its elements.

CHALLENGES TO BE ADDRESSED

- There are varied jurisdictional and administrative problems including:
 - o overlap of powers and authority between different institutions, which can cause duplication of efforts or even lead to a lack of action by any of the institutions;
 - o divided legislative responsibilities and missing co-operation can lead to non-consistent legislation; and

- o the continuation of some tourism projects which have failed to comply with legal requirement during their establishment - their illegal situation undermines the image and weakens the efficiency of the institutions.
- The power of the existing laws, in spite of having sound and appropriate legislation, is low because there exists problems in ensuring that it is enforced effectively.
- Law enforcement is provided by the limitations of the administration, and by the shortage of human and financial resources. Disagreement between the political and local groups can also delay progress.
- The existing regulations and frameworks at regional and local do not reflect the necessity for a common management approach to tourism development and biodiversity protection. This results in situations in which tourism development is uncontrolled and may develop illegally, without any consideration of the environmental and conservation impacts. Such situations and illegal developments undermine the power of administration.
- Finally there are no financial incentives to give priority to the development of tourism projects in accordance to environmental criteria, which makes it hard to involve and work with the private sector. There is also a need to develop regulations for compensation for contamination, deterioration and use of natural resources.

RECOMMENDED MEASURES

- Elaboration a new law on tourism based for example of the Austrian tourist law
- Interim result of the strategies (including recommendation for sustainable use of the sites within the model area) should be integrated into the landscape-ecological plan (that is prepared at the moment).
- more effective expert participation in law preparation
- Higher involvement of local/regional stakeholders and decision-makers (e.g. water- and forest-managers, tourism developers, civil society, etc.)
- Higher co-operation between the ministries of economy, environment and agriculture (due forestry and water management)
- Establishment of an inter-ministerial steering committee
- to develop the set of the principles that should be basic for new legislation or/and adjusting of existing one
- To update the legislation concerned to nature conservation, cultural figures and historical monuments (e.g. legislation announcing the CHKO, area projection of the nature protection, etc.)

6. Analysis of Impact assessment

Since 1994 in Slovakia is acting a Law no 127 on environmental impact assessment, there was prepared technical guidelines how to use this act for several principles (f.e. buildings and construction, planing include SEA, mass activity outside of selected space – sports, cultural movements...) e.t.c. This law if fully compatible with EU legislation and procedures, the Slovak Republic is active member of ESPOO Convention on the of the transboundary impact assessment.

Concerning NATURA 2000 currently is running a huge project for mapping and selection of potential sites for NATURA 2000 Network, synchronise is under the preparation a new law on nature and landscape protection with full acceptance of both EU directives on birds and habitats protection including establishing of NATURA 2000 Network after joining to EU. There is a special financial support from state budget for these activities and including of an international sponsoring made by Dutch Government via MATRA Program and Denmark Program DANCEE DEPA.

CHALLENGES TO BE ADDRESSED

- Although the damages in nature caused by increasing tourism activities are visible in the model area (e.g. increasing activities at and in lakes cause erosion and pollution; increasing mountain biking and motor biking activities in dry grass areas) there is no general knowledge and consciousness about potential impacts of different tourism activities and developments on nature and biodiversity. Generally there are no experts in Slovakia who are able to give such assumptions. There are some NGOs and scientists able to

give such comments but decision makers are not interested in their opinion. There are very few documents about impacts of different activities on nature in Slovak language available (only documents of foreign countries can be used). Only some occasional investigations can be found. There is no comprehensive research on it.

- Furthermore the protected landscape management authority neither has the capacity nor the obligation for a regular monitoring of impacts on the protected area and especially sites of high interest for nature protection and tourist demand as well.
- The law on EIA no 127 of 1994 is a good basis with the result that the instrument of impact assessment will be integrated in some development documents and programmes. However no economic activities, which must be assessed by law, were held yet.
- Infringements of existing laws are seldom dealt with penalties according to official statistics the violence of laws and juristic is not so over of average within of EU countries, we have problem with corruption and solution of it mainly on regional level and prevention systems. Also the interest of public on state bureaucracy is relative high there is a lot of NGO oriented for anti-corruption in state service but due to permanent restriction of state budget for state administration this problem is still ongoing.

RECOMMENDED MEASURES

- developing and proper implementing of a suitable methodology of visitor's and impact research.
- Positive and negative case studies and study trips
- public must request for impact assessment. Therefore awareness raising is needed.
- There is a need therefore to form interdisciplinary groups among the CHKO, Ministries for Environment and Economy, research institutes, the local communities and experts in order to carry out environmental impact assessment of proposed projects that may be developed (e.g. by private sector).

7. Analysis of Impact management

The Status of protected region (from cultural and natural point of view) provides certain mechanism for impact management (monument management in the historical town with support of e.g. the monument institute, law on protected landscape area).

STRENGTHS:

- The landscape management authority uses the instrument of educational trails to manage the visitor's flows with the consequence that valuable areas will be in some cases not spoiled. Several projects (GEO Park, restoring of the existing paths, new education trails) will enhance the effectiveness.
- The CHKO has the legal power to act in cases of unacceptable or illegal impacts (e.g. building activities). However the District office makes the final decision on the using of this instrument.
- The CHKO has elaborated a so-called Visitors Order, which is adopted according the Law on Nature Protection by State administration and is binding for all visitors and enforcement by CHKO and Nature Guard (inspection) (there are "bindings" by law and recommendations done by staff of PLA). They are made very general not as detailed as the regulations of nature protected areas. In addition, current zoning of the model area, and associated limits for acceptable change and carrying capacities for sites with tourism potential, will set maximum limits for tourist numbers, and these limits can be applied to regulation of development in the protected landscape area.
- The status UNESCO Heritage site provides for Banska Stiavnica justification for more strict approach to the monument management. This status was fixed several weeks ago: the National Council of Slovak Republic adopted the law about Banska Stiavnica no 100/2002. It defines precisely what kinds of investments and constructions are possible (not damaging the cultural heritage).
- The geographical and landscape features of city and region facilitate the implementation of impact management strategies (only few access roads, only few tourism sites visited by almost all visitors...). There are only three entering points to the town, only several parking lots in the city and the out-of-city activities are concentrated at several places (mainly lakes and museums).

CHALLENGES TO BE ADDRESSED

- There are impacts visible at centres / points of visitor's concentration (e.g. informal parking places, trails and so on). But the assessment of these impacts that means the decision if the noted change of nature is an impact which need to be managed differs between official nature protection authorities and experts in nature protection (e.g. NGOs). Moreover the discussion between personnel responsible for nature protection and tourism developer or operator is usually after problems occur. In case of new project not in phase of preparation but usually only after completion and submission project for approval. The communication must be improved (e.g. roundtables, joined teams etc.) between the tourism developers, services providers and heritage protectionists.
- The CHKO has scarce human and financial resources, limiting the attainment of conservation objectives in the area. Additionally the power of the management authority is limited because the decisions and recommendations have to be confirmed first by the district office before getting implemented.
- The obligation for the assessment and monitoring of potential impacts is not legally established in a suitable way (CHKO is obliged to monitor protected sites only in a period of 5 till 10 years). Problems are not analysed and evaluated therefore knowledge is not available which could lead to a systematic impact management.

RECOMMENDED MEASURES

- ➔ Effective marketing, which maximises the value of the UNESCO listing, and the considerable attractions of the area on basis of a marketing strategy focused on the inhabitants of big municipalities. Create a professional network of marketing activities through all media
- ➔ Develop a clear management plan for nature conservation on the basis of the Habitat Management Strategy.
- ➔ Establish a set of guidelines, giving clear direction to the future development of tourism not only in the selected project area, but also, if possible, for most rural areas of Slovakia.
- ➔ Elaborate a visitor's management plan with the elements information and interpretation system, orientation system, zoning of suitable areas for tourism development, limits for visitor numbers on the basis of the carrying capacity. In small areas it will be possible for the project to establish zoning to create the sustainable co-existence of important habitats and tourism development. The lake Stiavnické Jazero could be one example. If this model is successful, it could be adopted for most parts of the Protected Landscape Area Stiavnické Vrchy.
- ➔ Develop know-how and / or introduce the best practices of the impact management and implement them on the regular basis on the basis of case studies and site visits.

8. Analysis of Decision making

The public administrative reforms create a precondition for improving of the decision-making. The planned decentralisation will put some decision power at regional and local level. This may lead to a better position of nature and biodiversity protection as a basis of decision making. One example may express this estimation: the former State Institute for Historical Monuments was changed into the State Office for Historical Monuments and got the decision power in cases of planned building investments. In combination with the new law to guarantee the keeping of the UNESCO status the influence of the Institute is getting more positive for the protection of heritage.

The legislative framework for decision-making is expected to become a more suitable basis in cases of biodiversity protection and management (e.g. zoning of land use with the instrument regional plan and spatial plan).

STRENGTHS

- For the legal development of tourism projects within the protected area, an environmental impact study is required under some conditions and the decision should be taken by the district office in co-operation with

potential interest groups / authorities (e.g. water management, forestry, experts). In cases that no EIA is required the district office is the decision authority for plan approvals. However the actual praxis in decision-making needs to be improved (see under challenges).

- The willingness of different stakeholders in asking the landscape management authority for approval for planned events is increasing. Although it is obligatory to apply for the realisation of mass tourism events in the protected landscape area (e.g. mountain bike racing), organisers of the mass sport events were not used to ask for approval in the past.

CHALLENGES TO BE ADDRESSED

- The actual praxis in decision-making needs to be improved: The building of a hotel needs the permission of constructing department in the district office. To decide about the project documentation the department will collect the recommendations of other institutions (nature, neighbours, hygienic department, fire men) in a time period of thirty days. After weighting up the different opinions the final decision about the application will be made. The process of participation of other institutions and interest groups and weighting up the opinions is not based on a standardised system / method. The result will be that the responsible department in the district office can be influenced.
- The employees of the district office are not educated in sustainable issues; they only check if laws are fulfilled, it is not their job to assess potential impacts. The awareness about sustainable development and its importance is generally low, the tourism is often over- or underestimated without critical review.
- The decision making process might be badly influenced by lacks in field of baseline information, vision and goals and insufficient impact assessment. In this situation proper decision making process is task for future.

RECOMMENDED MEASURES

- ➔ The power of decision-making needs to be separated between different bodies and experts (e.g. the permission on investments in the protected landscape area should be done in collaboration of the CHKO Management and the district office)
- ➔ Awareness building is needed within the responsible bodies for decision-making (e.g. through round tables, presentations and discussion about the potential impacts).
- ➔ A stronger public pressure for more responsible decision-making should be developed through the initiation of awareness campaigns and open discussion rounds with the public on the potential impacts and sustainable development issues.

9. Analysis of Implementation

From the view of the different management steps of the guidelines some of them may be implemented by accident, but nor intent is visible. It may differ from region to region. The implementation depends on people. At this moment there is no legislation or binding management approach visible. The decision makers or district officers do not know that there are management approaches existing.

The biggest risk for the protection of the cultural and technical monuments at the present status does not come from the tourist activities but from the forestry, which destroys channels systems for example by usage of heavy machines for trees cutting.

STRENGTH

- The forthcoming implementation of new legislation and plans create a basis for a better implementation of management approaches and biodiversity protection strategies in the future. The implemented regional plan for example is a binding document for the implementation of economy activities (like tourism) in landscape according to the zoning of different economic uses.
- There is an effort visible in dealing with bad experiences, which directly influences the actual and future management: the insufficient transport system led to traffic problems in Banska Stiavnica in the past

(disordered parking in the historical town centre and surrounding landscape). As consequence the regulation of the transport and parking system builds part of the territory planning.

- The town administration can get profit of the existing knowledge about the relation between human / economic activities and natural changes in several educational institutions and NGOs and the project teams as well.
- Various institutions want to establish clear planning guidelines that would have to be met for the implementation of projects;

CHALLENGES TO BE ADDRESSED

- There is no overall management plan in the protected landscape area which could provide a general framework for the development of tourism, nor are there guidelines available on how to develop and plan tourism in protected areas in Slovakia - a systematic approach needs to be established for this.
- There is no experience in the approval and distribution of environmental licenses for tourism projects within the protected landscape area. As a consequence it has not been possible to establish a set of conditions - which would be applied during the planning and approval processes - for the implementation of tourism projects or events.
- The missing co-operation between institutions has the result that there is no common approach in implementing and problem solving from the view of biodiversity and tourism. The development of a habitat management strategy in strong co-operation with a tourism management strategy in the selected model area could set an example for the whole protected area and be the basis for future implementation.
- The actual administrative and legislative structure needs to be improved to guarantee an effective implementation of strategies for tourism and biodiversity management:
 - Relaxing of bureaucratic processes
 - Simplification of approval and examination procedures by for example organising clear responsibilities and standardised approaches
 - Clearing of land and building ownership
 - Development of more continuity and certainty in planning and decision-making

RECOMMENDED MEASURES

- ➔ To improve the projecting and project management in the region with particular attention to the cross-sectional and inter-departmental collaboration by establishing appropriate implementing body / structure
- ➔ To improve the ability of stakeholders to implement their projects/intents (general business abilities, education on relevant legislation, small supportive schemes, etc.) by education and training programmes

10. Analysis of Monitoring

In the protected landscape area there are some activities of unsystematic monitoring of impacts of human / economic activities. Example: from time to time CHKO examines selected small protected areas in relation to the changes that have occurred in a time period (e.g. draining of land). However these examinations are not done in a systematic manner. The results are probably not fixed.

CHALLENGES TO BE ADDRESSED

- A systemic and standardised monitoring approach to register and evaluate natural changes caused by human activities is missing. Only punctual monitoring activities are done (see impact assessment). One reason is the lack of human and financial resources in the responsible authority (knowledge, number of employees and park rangers, insufficient technical equipment). There is no systematic monitoring of tourism activities in the protected landscape area and no coherent system to assess any data that has been collected - as a result, monitoring lacks continuity.

- Monitoring processes are at a preliminary stage requiring work to establish long-term assessment programmes - in part; this reflects lack of national guidelines for monitoring.
- Although the universities and educational institutions could use their expertise to help set up a monitoring process and the cooperation with academic institution is open and covered by agreement, its efficiency it is limited by financial resources. These need to be expanded to include monitoring activities. A clearer sense of direction and common interests could be achieved by co-ordinating the input of scientists, and the park managers.
- Finally the lack of trained staff makes monitoring difficult. Staff training is important if the development of future tourism projects is to be properly controlled so that it is undertaken in ways that are compatible with the conservation of the areas biodiversity and wildlife.

RECOMMENDED MEASURES

- ➔ Co-operation with the high schools and universities in town in issues of data collection and interpretation as basis for the development of a systematic monitoring approach and in the implementation of monitoring and research activities.
- ➔ Use the project in the model area as testing phase for the development and implementation of a sufficient monitoring system.
- ➔ Develop the human capacity (knowledge and number of employees) and the technical framework to run monitoring and surveys on a regular basis.

11. Analysis of the Adaptive management

No adaptive management is possible unless proper monitoring and impact assessment are done. Adaptive management lies not in the responsibility of CHKO. The staffs of PLA are usually invited to the evaluation and assessment process if assessed activities are oriented to the protected area or could potentially target other goals of the nature protection. Furthermore the public pressure for a sufficient and effective regional management does not exist because of the missing awareness for the necessity of the management of tourism and biodiversity. This situation is intensified by the absence of a permanent discussion, co-operation and relationship between the bodies responsible for nature protection and tourism development.

RECOMMENDED MEASURES

- ➔ The communication and co-ordination of the different responsible bodies and institution for the tourism management and protection of biodiversity as well as the cultural heritage should be strengthened to form a platform for information exchange and the preparation of decisions about suitable adaptive management strategies.
- ➔ Further more the awareness for the necessity of an adaptive management to guarantee the sustainable development of human and economic activities in the area should be increased in the authorities and public by information, training and education.
- ➔ The basic knowledge has to be improved by the elaboration of case studies. This could / should be done in collaboration with the existing education institutions.

12. Analysis of Notification process and information requirements for notification

STRENGTHS

- The framework of a notification process exists and is defined by several legislative instruments, like
 - The law on the free access to the information no 211/2000 , which defines the framework for the information of the public

- The law on municipalities, which regulate the public participation in local government decisions (e.g. obligate publishing of some news, meetings of the municipalities councils are public, etc.); and
- The spatial-planning law, which makes public hearings as obligate part of the spatial plan preparation.
- The main instrument for the public information is the local newspaper that generally is accepted by the public.
- The law on the Environmental Impact Assessment no 127/1994 is finally another instrument, which makes a notification process binding.

CHALLENGES TO BE ADRESSED

- Although the obligation of public information exists the interest of common public in the local development is low therefore there is small general demand for information.
- The limited personal resources in the bodies of decision-making aggravate an effective organisation and implementation of the notification and information policy development. As a result the notification praxis is handled discontinuous. Therefore the information of public – transparency, acceptance of all rules and conditions is not ensured in every case.
- The rules for notification are not binding for all authorities and institutions (e.g. CHKO management). The notification process is implemented in a different way depending on project approvals: small activities (reconstruction, adjustments, etc.) must be only reported to the “Constructing Office” (part of at District Office and City Office). Bigger activities have to be approved by “Constructing Office” and persons / institutions, which are impacted directly have to be notified (neighbours, users, etc). That means if activity doesn't fall under EIA obligation, the target group for notification is limited.

RECOMMEDED MEASURES

- ➔ By applying the draft guidelines in the case of Banska Stiavnica, it will be possible for the park to develop and test the steps and procedures for notification and examination of ecotourism proposals in general.
- ➔ It is necessary to establish clear procedures for notification, and to identify the participants who should be involved in these procedures so that the whole notification process is transparent and consistent by for example developing a suitable system for the administration's public relation policies including effective instruments of providing information (the points of the first contact, internet, media relations, marketing of the administrative, etc.) or standardising the tools of notification (internet, official display panel, info-centre).
- ➔ To increase systematically the public interest for information and to develop the sense of the responsibility of the public authorities.

13. Analysis of Public education and awareness raising

STRENGTHS:

- There are several activities to raise public awareness in environmental issues, which are organised frequently and well accepted mainly by young people. The government, local authorities (e.g. CHKO) and NGOs undertake existing campaigns in forms of exhibitions, environmental education, competitions, seminars, performances, etc. Besides this a nature protection information centre is installed on top of the Sitno Mountain, a place of high tourist demand. However an additional information centre is missing in the town.
- There is a potential for planning and performance of such activities because environmental and nature-sciences institutions are located in the town (high schools, universities, museum, CHKO, etc.).
- The position of environmental NGOs is strong and their activities include educational measures.
- The issue of nature and environment protection is a quite frequent subject in newspaper and other media.

CHALLENGES TO BE ADDRESSED

- Although activities in awareness raising exist, they are very general and not well addressed, e.g. for young generation or business. Reasons can be found in the inadequate financial and personal resources for an effective and targeted campaigning. In general a capacity-building plan, which defines the aims, target groups, elements and instruments, is missing.
- The public level of awareness of or interest in the issues of nature conservation, cultural heritage and tourism seems to be very low. Older and middle-aged people are not educated on the environment questions and underestimate it. For the common people not to be interested in environmental protection is much more comfortable and at least cheaper (getting ecological products requires a lot of time / energy and money).
- The existing administrative structures are inadequate in raising awareness according to the staff and organisational structure (e.g. no or rare public relation authority). Therefore public institutions, which are responsible for the environment protection, are not very active in education and awareness building. Therefore the public feels not well informed by the administrative structures about environmental or tourism issues. Staff at hotels and tourist facilities is generally ill informed about the availability of tourism activities. Finally information for tourists and locals about natural and cultural environment is missing.

RECOMMENDED MEASURES

- To develop the long-term, attractive and effective campaign strategy on the sustainable development of different economic activities and its benefits with support of the universities and education institutions. This strategy should create system of permanent activities and measures (e.g. information centre, publishing of information, regular roundtables...) as well as ad-hoc events (public hearings, presentations, etc.).
- Implementation of an interpretation centre, which could be run on commercial lines. This would provide a 'gateway' for the region, and would help to integrate the various tourism products of the region: herein lies a problem, the fact that the different tourism products are relatively dispersed geographically, and need to be linked together both physically and in the minds of tourists and visitors. The interpretation centre would have both: information, educational and marketing functions. This would, however, require a significant investment but its feasibility should be investigated. The information provided for the tourists must be actual and available in numerous languages in relation to the origin of the visitors. The centre should provide training and education for the service staff in the local institutions (hotels, restaurants, museums etc.) as well as information to the public, with clearly publicised details on current and planned steps in all sectors of development, including infrastructure, employment, offers such as trails and rental opportunities, and the economic benefits for the region
- Install the framework for the development of a discussion – culture (e.g. by regular meetings or roundtables for direct communication between locals and planners).
- Enhancement of the general public awareness regarding tourism and promoting better relations with visitors and knowledge of the history and current situation of the region (regional knowledge).

14. Analysis of Capacity-building

STRENGTHS

- The recognition of insufficient capacity for sustainable development is increasing. Several programs are available and focused on components of capacity building, e.g. the CHKO gives the lectures particularly at the schools, sometime also for the municipalities and businesses.
- As already described there is high potential in the existing universities and educational institutions for the development of different teaching tools for several target groups.

CHALLENGES TO BE ADDRESSED

- The capacity of authorities, decision-makers and other relevant stakeholders with regard to the sustainable development is not adequate and suitable capacity building activities are not in place.
- The awareness and capacity of the staff in public authorities with responsibilities and influencing decision power on the nature and biodiversity is insufficient regarding the management of biodiversity and tourism. Some small municipalities even don't know that they are in CHKO, UNESCO Site and under the force of the Law on Banska Stiavnica. The personal structure of the CHKO Management is based on the basic analytical work not for the management of a rapidly growing economy, like tourism. They have excellent experts for botany, geology, zoology, but the knowledge of management is small. Interaction of nature protection and economy (e.g. tourism) is not priority of public conservationist institutions (they are focused mostly for the analysis and researches) therefore this is underestimated from capacity point of view.
- Only a few people who try to run tourism business have tourism and / or environmental education. Since tourism is pretty often tool for fight with unemployment low qualified people are stepping into business. The business owners/managers are not educated/trained and they are not able to manage their business in proper manner. Businesses underestimate the need of the institutional development, education, implementing of new methodologies etc. Many of them stagnate on the same level for several years (offer same services, not reconstruct and/or fix facilities, not educate themselves etc.)
- Furthermore no centre of competence or any kind of help for businessmen, or any source for providing systematic assistance for new businessmen exists. There are no incentives for systematically increasing

the potential for creating new employment possibilities. At universities the interaction of tourism and biodiversity is not part of the schedules.

RECOMMENDED MEASURES

- ➔ Co-ordinated measures for the capacity building and training of several target groups are needed:
 - Public authorities and nature protection authorities on the linkages between tourism and biodiversity and the issues of the management;
 - The public to motivate them to care for and monitor their environment (natural and cultural heritage)
 - Private investors and businesspeople in question of successful business strategies and the possibilities and potentials for sustainable tourism development (market, demand, offers)
- ➔ Elements of such a toolbox may be:
 - The establishment of a competence or business centre for assistance, training and advice; The collaboration with similar centre in Ziar nad Hronom (40 km) or in Zvolen (40 km) would be useful and it could be a starting point.
 - The elaboration of a system of permanent education on various topics using different instruments (roundtables, seminars, study trips) by the development of a training and educational set in collaboration with the existing educational institutions;
 - establishing co-operation with local enterprises to demonstrate that sustainable tourism practices provide effective means of developing the tourism resources of the region; and
 - creating a functional framework for co-ordination (company, informal platform, etc.)

**Results of the
International Conference for CEE Countries**
"Tourism towards Sustainability"

Date: October 10th - 12th, 2001

Venue: Varin, Mala Fatra National Park, Slovak Republic

Participants: Representatives from governments, national agencies, institutes and NGO of the countries Poland, Slovak Republic, Bulgaria, Serbia, Great Britain and Germany.

With regard to the content and implementation of the International Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism and Biodiversity of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD):

General recommendations

The regulations of the Guidelines were recognised as very helpful by the participants of the CEE Conference. In their view the Guidelines should be used as a toolbox with different instruments, which express the required management processes as a basis for a sustainable tourism development. The participants stressed out their interest to go forward with the Guidelines and their desire to implement them in CEE Countries.

The participants pointed out the need for global and national co-ordination of implementing the Guidelines. The implementation should be done in partnership between CEE Countries.

The Participants doubt the general feasibility of the Guidelines. They are not certain whether the tools of the Guidelines are suitable and effective to be used as the right tools for the different situations and problems of CEE-Countries. Therefore a flexible use, evaluation and monitoring of the Guideline tools are important to practise them through "Learning by doing". From the view of the participants the recommendations in ANNEX II, according to the monitoring and review of the Guidelines, build part of the most important regulations.

Regarding the Guidelines as an overall solution and common approach, the implementation in CEE Countries might be possible if the addressed pre-conditions are fulfilled.

Recommendations on required pre-conditions of the implementation

Capacity building and public education

The participants see CEE-Countries in an initial state of development. Therefore the first step of implementing the CBD-Guidelines on Tourism and Biodiversity in CEE-Countries is the raising of awareness and building of capacity towards sustainable tourism in general and the International Guidelines in particular at all levels of administration, the public and relevant stakeholders.

In the opinion of the participants, there is a general lack of public consciousness for the need of environmental protection and biodiversity conservation. Furthermore the participants see a general lack of know-how on these issues at all levels of administration. Local People, the private sector and the administration have to be convinced of the importance and the need of a tourism management process as described in the Guidelines to guarantee sustainable development of tourism and the conservation of biodiversity. An important pre-condition is the need of understanding the principles of the Guidelines to accept and to implement them into the regulatory systems.

These measures can be done / started by existing institutions, environmental ministries, schools, NGOs and environmental agencies, which can use the Guidelines as a tool to educate the professional sector and general public, inform them and encourage them to support actions in conformity with these Guidelines. Furthermore participants would like to use education and capacity building as a strategy for NGOs in order to get independent from politicians and to strengthen them in lobbying. NGOs have the capacities and the know-how, but they do not have suitable strategies and measures in lobbying and pushing through their aims.

Therefore the target groups of capacity building and awareness raising are the public and especially the people located in and around national parks and other protected areas and local decision makers.

Review of legislation and control measures

In the view of the participants it will be necessary to review the existing legislation and control measures. In the opinion of the participants the current legislation and regulative mechanisms for tourism development in CEE-Countries are not suitable for sustainable tourism development in general and in particular for the Guidelines. Because the legislation makes the rules and framework, and prefer short-term solutions and personal interests rather than setting long-term measures.

Making the International Guidelines understandable

The participants consider the terminology and definitions of the Guidelines as too difficult to understand to be generally accepted.

In specific cases there might be problems with the acceptance of the complete set of Guidelines. The Government might choose only some parts of the Guidelines for implementation, not regarding and accepting the Guidelines as a complete "package of tools", which are inter-dependent and will only work in a successful manner if all management steps and conditions of the Guidelines were implemented.

They stressed out the need of attractive promotion and understandable translation of sustainable development and the Guidelines. In this case it is important to stress out the role of UNEP besides the named international organisations and institutions in ANNEX II of the Draft Guidelines in interpretation of the International Guidelines in a way, which is understandable and practicable by different target groups / stakeholders in tourism development.

Financial and technical assistance

The implementation of the International Guidelines and other International Regulations in CEE - Countries as well won't work without technical and financial assistance. A crucial point is the need for finances to implement the Guidelines. Therefore it is important in the view of the participants to establish a financial supportive fund and to set-up criteria for sponsoring / granting sustainable development in tourism. It is important for CEE - Countries to develop technical and financial instruments for the implementation. Assistance for the implementation is needed.

Governments of CEE - Countries will be most likely to implement parts of the Guidelines which can be realised with small personal and financial resources. Therefore it will be necessary to address different kinds of institutions for financial support.

Possible partners could be the Regional Environmental Centre (REC) and the technical assistance of the EU.

Recommended Steps for Implementation

The local public in CEE - Countries sees National Parks as a barrier of economic development and therefore are more interested to avoid them as to support the goal of nature conservation. In the case of tourism there is a huge interest towards unsustainable, destructive forms of tourism , because of the hope in job creation. In this case education is needed, to give people the opportunity to choose between different options of tourism development. The assessment of possible impacts might be an important opportunity for the selection of positive and negative impacts of tourism development and as a chance for choice.

The Guidelines include a clear vision and mission of what sustainable tourism is / may be. Therefore the first step has to be a preparation process, which defines sustainable tourism and accesses the problems and impacts of non sustainable tourism. Therefore inter-sectional discussion processes should be initiated to find a common approach and understanding on sustainable tourism development and the strategies needed. The collection and analyse of baseline information and review may help understanding the potential for sustainable tourism development. This step can be realised independent from politicians and needs little personal capacity and money. In their opinion when implementing the Guidelines, National Governments should first set up a common acceptance of vision and goals of sustainable tourism development in general and second the preparation strategies and measures, as those are most important.

1. An initial step of implementing the Guidelines may be a „Think-Tank“ of various stakeholders. This may be used to develop the implementation process. Other measures applicable for CEE-Countries may be the preparation of conferences on national level between the different stakeholders, which may give links to the development of national strategies. Another possible method could be the set up of workshops for NGOs, tour operators and local people as well as local decision makers.

2. Parallel public education and awareness raising is needed to raise the common understanding and acceptance of the Guidelines (see below). Possible measures are National campaigns, education programmes for different target groups (NGOs, decision makers, tourists, the academic sector, tourist managers and agencies and young people), the publication and translation of the Guidelines into different languages, good practice seminars and conferences, and the establishment of networks between NGOs and scientists.
3. Besides this it is important to define „leaders“, which will be pioneers in the process of the implementation of the Guidelines. An important measure is the application and realisation of pilot projects in order to find leaders and to motivate the different stakeholders in tourism to accept the Guidelines as well. Pilot projects in this case may help to indicate learning processes by generalising the „feed-backs“ of these examples. The participants of the conference worried about the time this education process will need. The rate of Biodiversity loss is very fast. Because of the race of time discussions are not always an effective solution. Therefore the participants suggested the „carrot & stick strategy“ , which means rewarding applicable and punishing not suitable measures. First, model projects are needed to show how it works. In this stage it will be easier to find pioneers than to find leaders. They addressed the problems for NGOs to apply for money to support model projects. NGOs do not have experience with fund raising and their capacities are limited to work along with it. Therefore assistance is needed.
4. After the identification of key people and leading persons, these experts have to get together, to develop initial strategies, positive examples and to create capacity building by country level workshops in a next step.
5. The following steps for implementing the Guidelines reflect the participants' opinion:
 - Public education and awareness raising campaigns;
 - Building public pressure;
 - Capacity building and training in order to target persons (e.g. government and administration at all levels);
 - Review of Legislation;
 - Development of national strategies first on sustainable development and second on tourism development;
 - Decision-Making on the implementation measures;
 - Adaptive management;

The implementation process of the Guidelines should include the effective costs of sustainable development and eco-tourism.

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2. The Case of the Tayrona National Park, Colombia; BfN-Skripten 60, 2002
3. Compilation of documents and data basis of phase I of the project PROMOTING OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN CEE - DEMONSTRATION MODEL APPLIED TO THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE BANSKA STIAVNICA
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Maps (elaborated during phase I and II of the project)

Map 1 - Location of the project area in Central Europe

Map 2 - Range of tourist flows

Map 3 - Administration structure of the project area

Map 4 - Road network over the project area

Map 5 - Protected nature areas over the project area

Map 6 - Hiking trails over the project area

Map 7 - Detail of the selected model area – downtown (selected cultural heritage monuments)

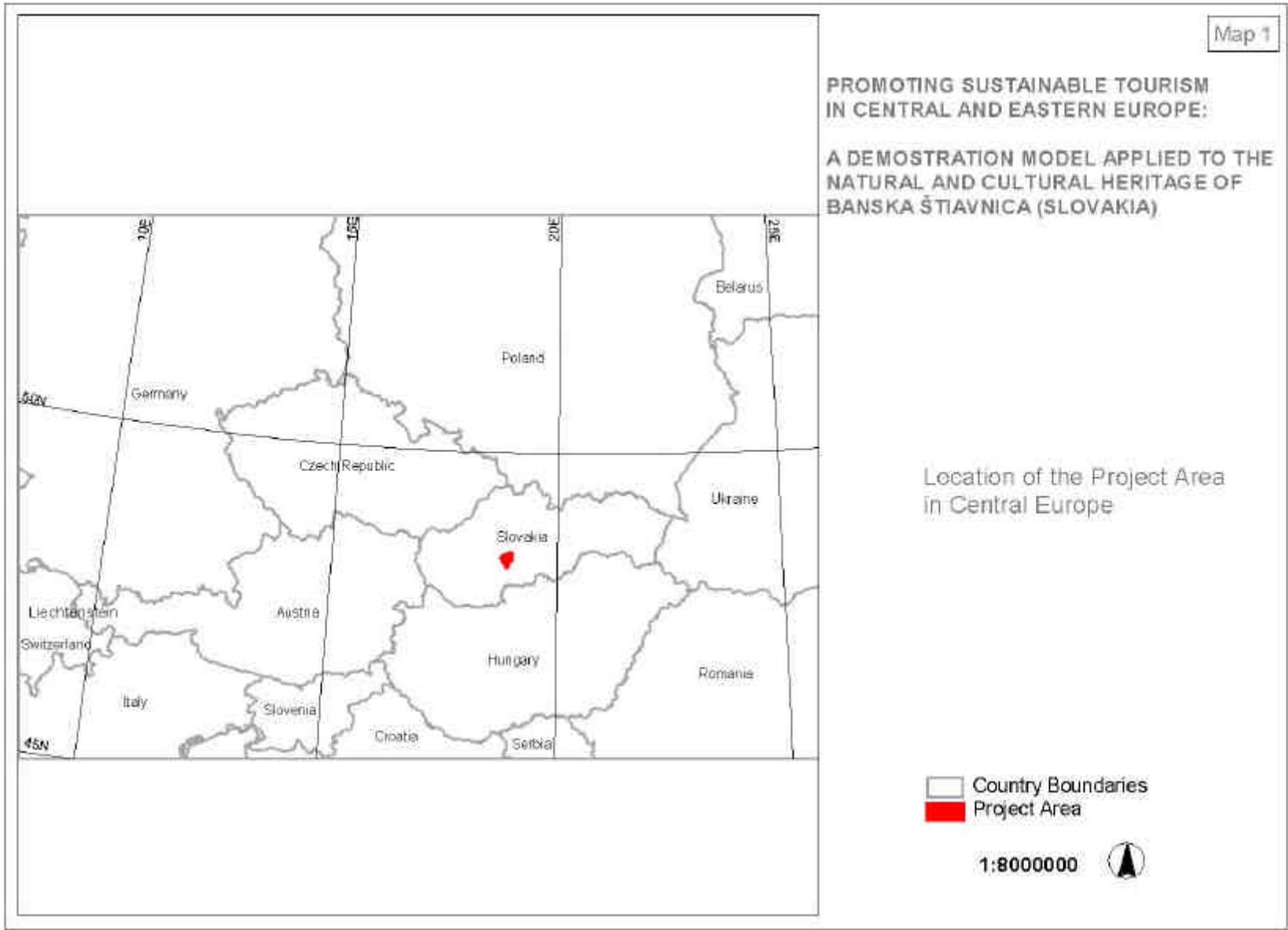
Map 8 - Areal projection of the ecological stability of the model area

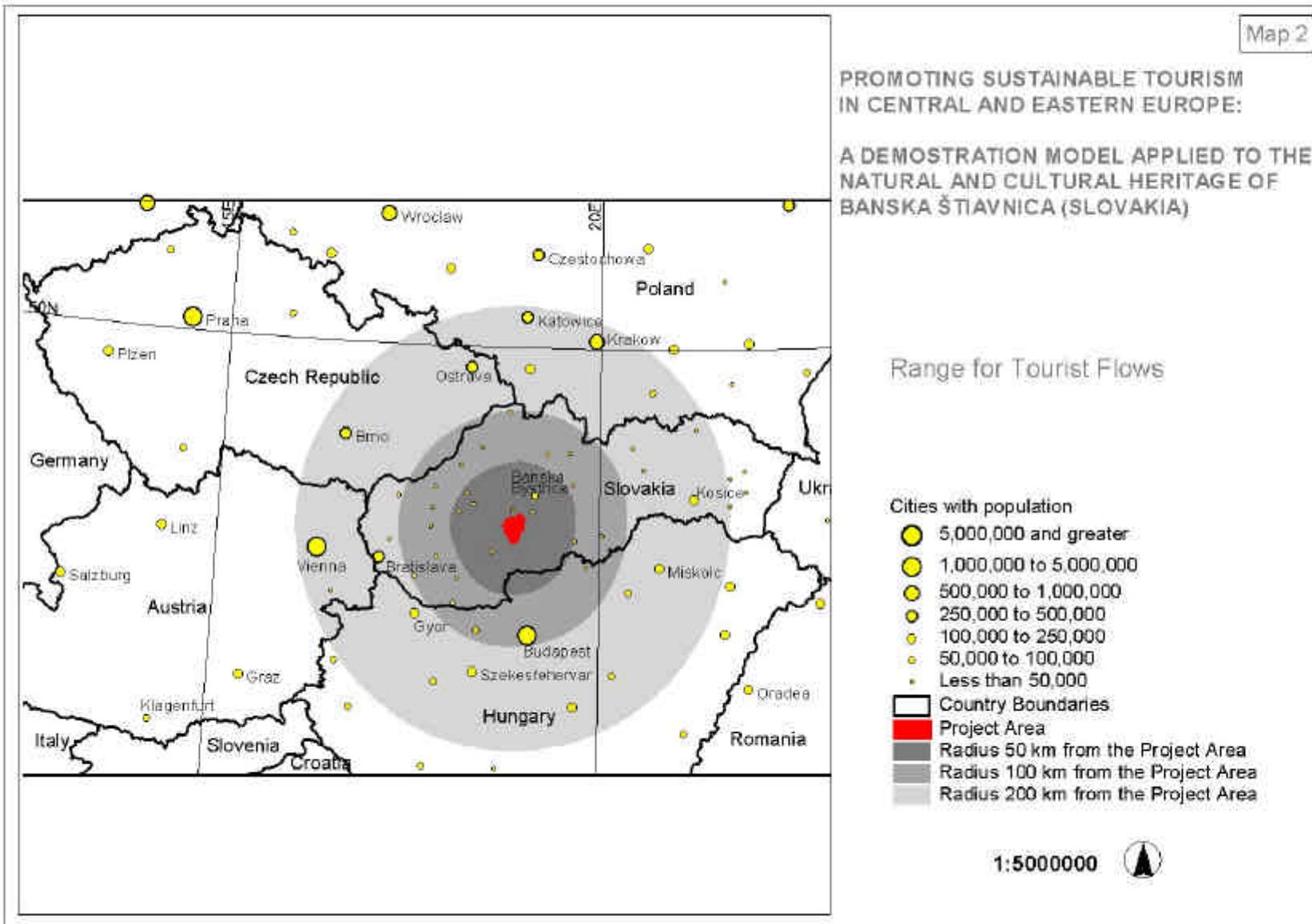
Map 9 - Current landscape structure

Map 10 - Negative elements

Map 11 - Positive elements

Map 12 - Selected areas for potential tourist utilization

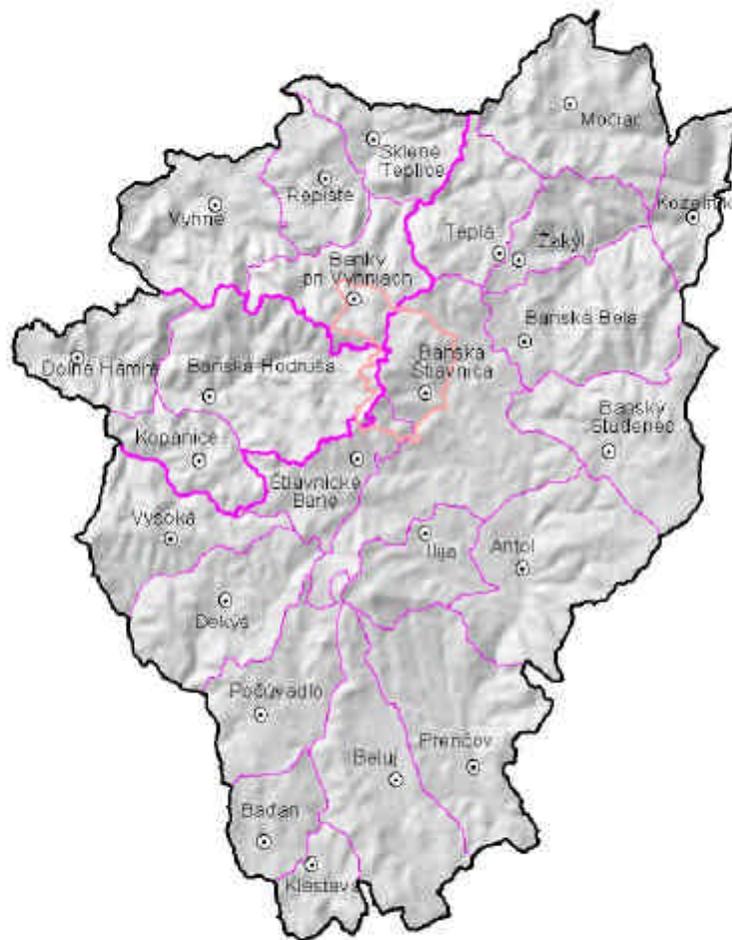




PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE:

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NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE OF
BANSKA ŠTIAVNICA (SLOVAKIA)

Administrative Structure
of the Project Area



- Project Area
- Selected Model Area
- District Boundaries
- Cadaster Boundaries

1:200000

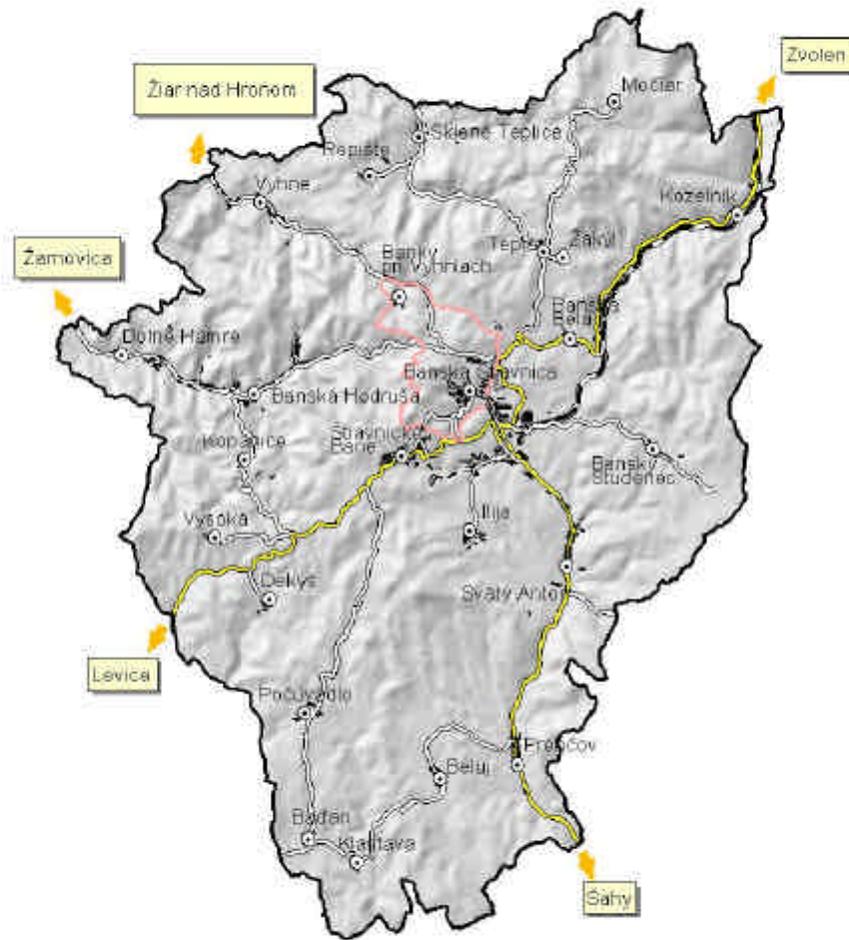


Administrative Structures © Slovak Environmental Agency

Map 4

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE:

A DEMOSTRATION MODEL APPLIED TO THE
NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE OF
BANSKA ŠTIAVNICA (SLOVAKIA)



Road Network
over the Project Area

- Project Area
- Selected Model Area
- Main Roads
- Secondary Roads
- Railways

1:200000



Map 5

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE:

A DEMONSTRATION MODEL APPLIED TO THE
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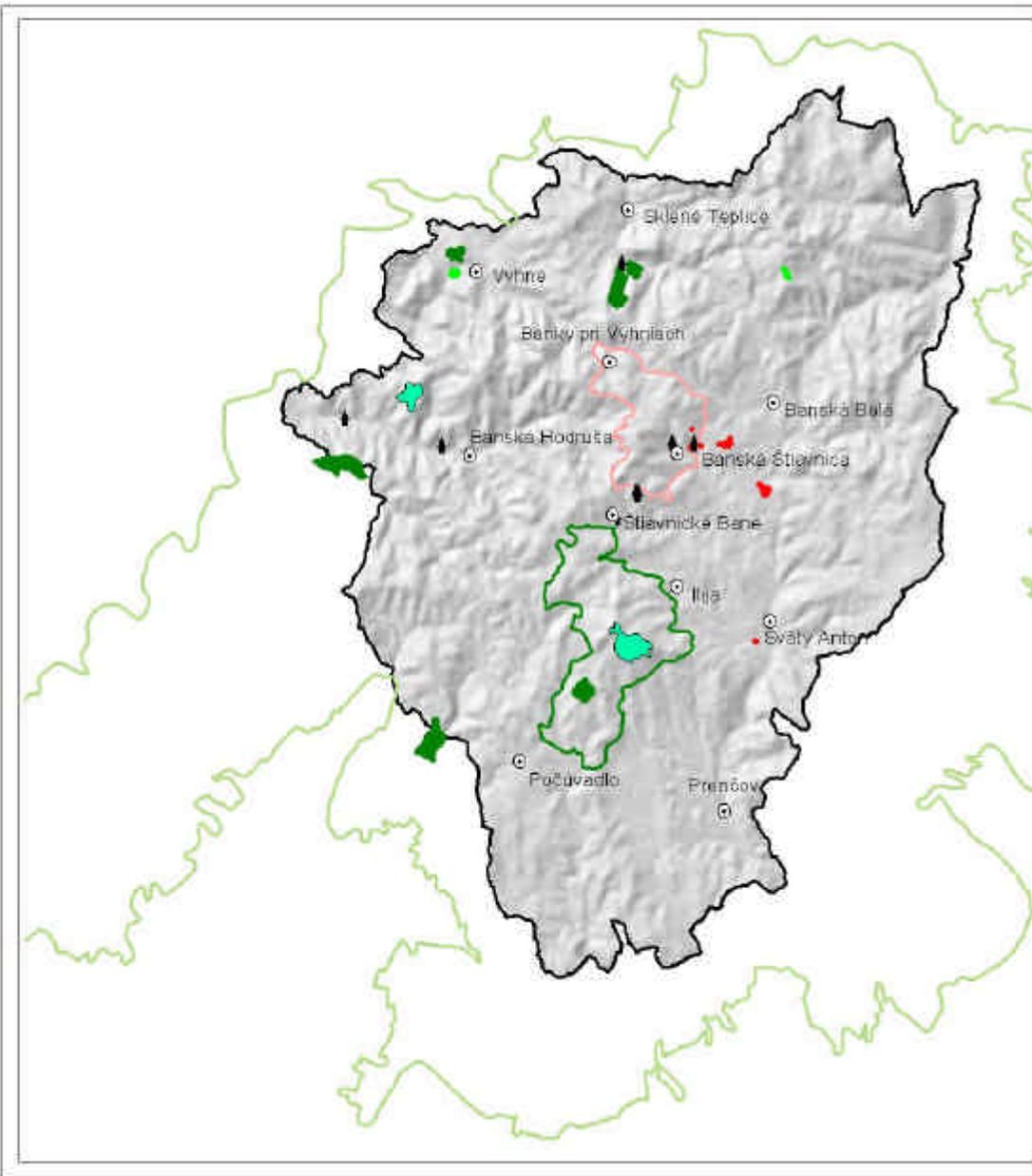
Protected Nature Areas
over the Project Area

- ▲ Protected Trees
- Protected Sites
- Natural Monuments
- Natural Reserves
- National Natural Reserves
- Štiavnické Hills Protected Landscape Area
- Biocenters
- Selected Model Area
- Project Area

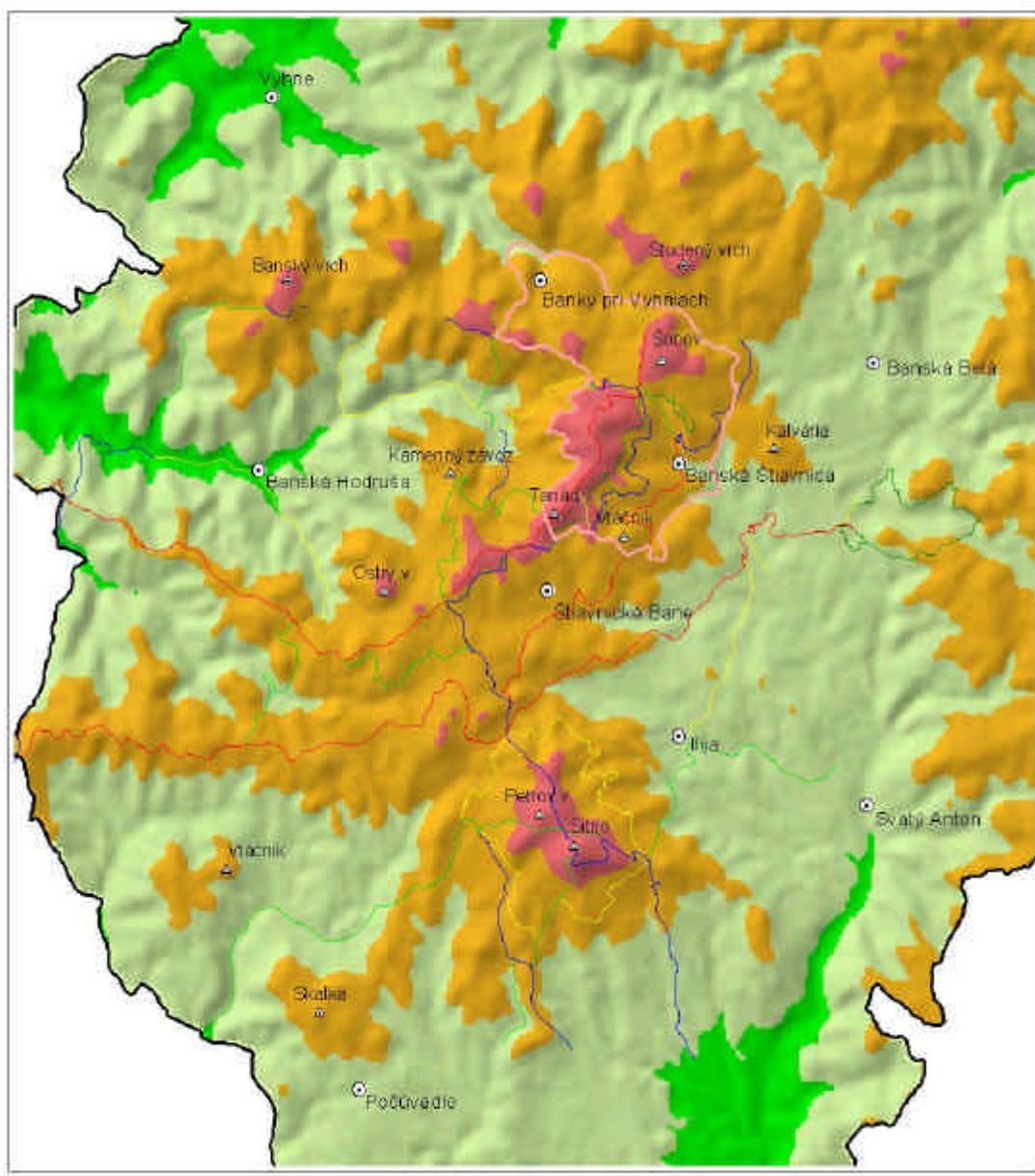
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Protected Nature Areas @Slovak Environmental Agency



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Hiking Trails over the Project Area

- Project Area
- Selected Model Area
- Hiking Trails**
- Red colour
- Blue colour
- Green colour
- Yellow colour
- Educational Trails
- Elevation (meters a.s.l.)**
- 200 - 400
- 400 - 600
- 600 - 800
- 800 - 1000
- > 1000

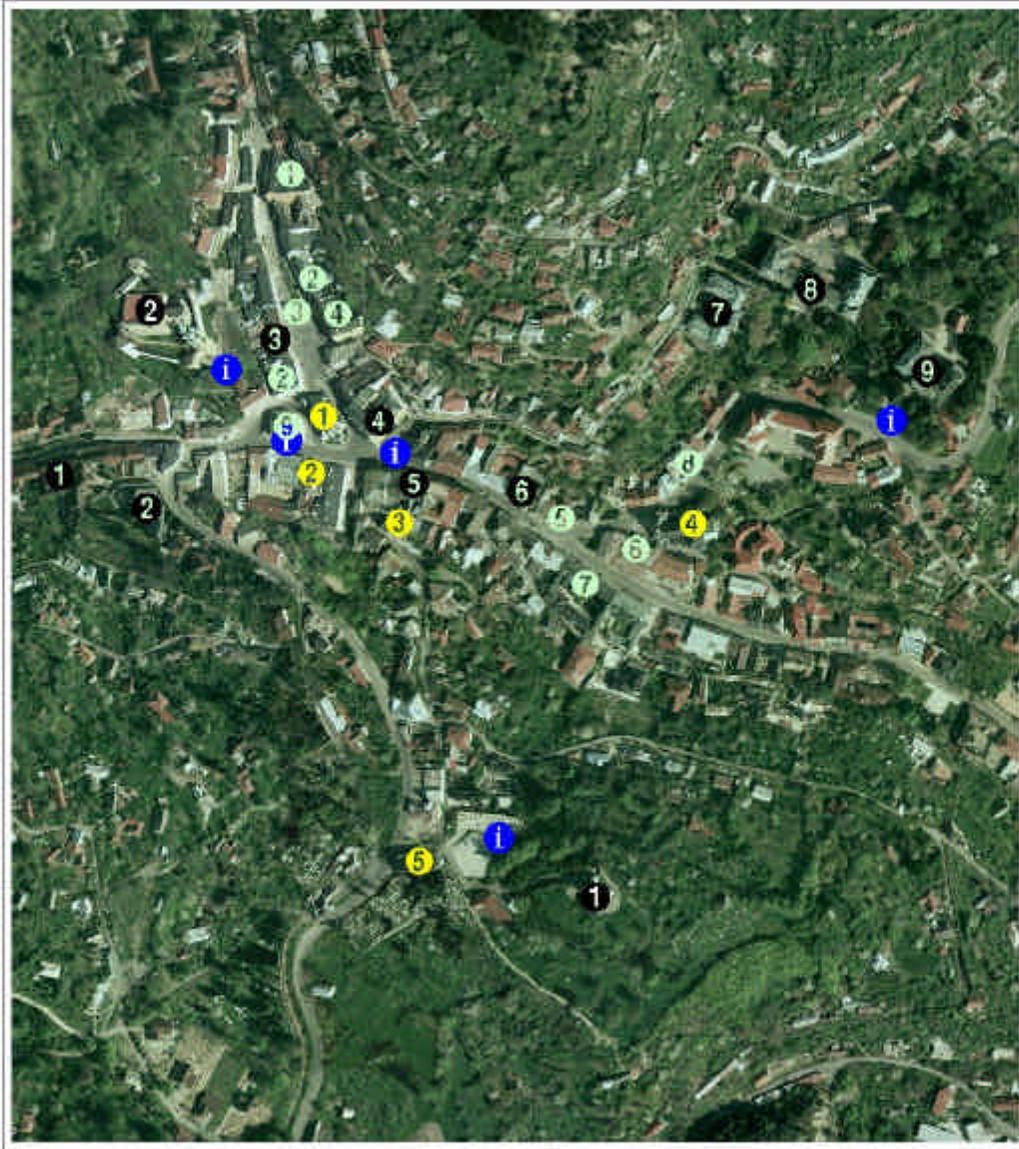
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Hiking Trails @Ekotrust

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Detail of the Selected Model Area
Downtown (Selected Culture Monuments)



Monuments connected with Mining Academy

- 1 Geramb House
- 2 Beltrazy House
- 3 Wilcken's House
- 4 Fritz House
- 5 Jacquih House
- 6 Mikoviny House
- 7 Academic Areal (Laboratory)
- 8 Academic Areal (Main Building)
- 9 Academic Areal (Forestry school)

Castles

- 1 New Castle
- 2 Old Castle

Churches

- 1 St. Catherine Church
- 2 Evangelist Church
- 3 Jewish Synagogue
- 4 Catholic Church
- 5 Cemetery Church

Others Monuments

- 1 Evangelist Grammar School
- 2 "Waldburger" House
- 3 Trinity Column
- 4 Berggericht
- 5 Tindel House
- 6 Catholic Grammar School
- 7 Kammerhof
- 8 Hell House
- 9 Town Hall

- i Information Boards

1:5000



Negative elements



MARKA STARIČA

- Flood area
- location of water bodies
- status of water body (1, 1, 000)
- PHYSICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS: INDUSTRIAL AND MARKET ELEMENTS**
- industrial land use and construction plan
- quarry
- location areas of subsidence and settlement sinking and subsidence zones
- FOUNDATIONS AND PIPELINES**
- settlement line
- TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT**
- high load road transportation corridors
- medium load road transportation corridors
- PROTECTIVE AND WATER MANAGEMENT ELEMENTS**
- irrigation
- water storage and flood flow - water tank
- water pollution source
- water treatment plant
- urban transmission lines - drainage pollution
- MUNICIPAL AREAS**
- areas with predominant industrial use
- areas with high floor development
- areas with low floor development

SOCIO-ECONOMIC, SPORT AND CULTURAL ELEMENTS

- asphalt parking
- asphalt parking with surface
- OTHER ELEMENTS**
- lake
- SOIL QUALITY AND FACTOR SOURCES**
- air pollution source - small
- air pollution source - medium
- pressure independent fire
- DEVELOPMENT AND REPAIR ZONES**
- protected area (category A, II)
- areas damaged and - at risk
- areas damaged and - newly
- NATURAL PROTECTION**
- areas of natural value - parks
- areas of natural value - local and regional

1:10000



Projekcija: projekcija UTM
 Datum: datum 1972
 Datum: datum 1972
 Datum: datum 1972

