

# IPA 2007-2013

## Final Evaluation

“Nature for the Future”

Independent Evaluation Report  
prepared by CEED Consulting-a and InTER

March 2013





Public Enterprise for National parks of  
Montenegro



This project is funded by the  
European Union

# **Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) 2007-2013**

## **Component II**

### **Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Croatia – Montenegro**

#### **Independent Evaluation Report of the project:**

#### **“Nature for the Future”**

the project was implemented by Public Enterprise for National parks of  
Montenegro (JPNPCG) and Dubrovnik-Neretva County's Regional  
Development Agency (DUNEIA)

**Prepared by:**

**CEED Consulting & InTER**

**March 2013**

## PREFACE

This report was entirely prepared by the consortium consisted of the CEED Consulting Ltd and the Institute for Territorial Development (InTER) and contracted by the Public Enterprise for National Parks of Montenegro to conduct this assignment according to the ToR.

The evaluation experts wish to thank the many individuals from the National Parks of Montenegro, natural History Museum, Tourist Organization Bar, and the project team from the PE for National Parks of Montenegro. The evaluation would not have been possible without their insights, advice, knowledge, contributions and support. Special thanks to Mr. Veselin Luburić and Ms Marina Đurović for providing with logistics and field support.

The evaluation was undertaken in March of 2013.

**Disclaimer:** *The views and comments expressed in this text are the responsibility of the evaluation expert and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of any other party, including the National Parks of Montenegro, Natural History Museum of Montenegro or the other participating organizations.*

## CONTENT:

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
EVALUATION OBJECTIVES.....	1
SCOPE OF WORK.....	1
METHODOLOGY.....	2
LIMITATIONS OF THE EVALUATION.....	2
<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b> .....	<b>3</b>
PROJECT BACKGROUND.....	3
PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS.....	3
TARGET GROUPS.....	3
BUDGET AND TIMEFRAME.....	4
IMPLEMENTATION MODALITY AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES.....	4
<b>KEY FINDINGS</b> .....	<b>5</b>
RELEVANCE.....	5
EFFICIENCY.....	7
EFFECTIVENESS.....	9
IMPACT.....	17
SUSTAINABILITY AND REPLICABILITY.....	18
LESSONS LEARNED.....	19
<b>CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	<b>20</b>
CONCLUSIONS.....	20
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	20
<b>ANEXES</b> .....	<b>21</b>
ANNEX 1: LOGICAL FRAMEWORK.....	21
ANNEX 2: LIST OF INTERVIEWED PEOPLE.....	24
ANNEX 3: LIST OF REVIEWED DOCUMENTATION.....	25
ANNEX 4: PROJECT INTERVENTION AREAS.....	26
ANNEX 5: TERMS OF REFERENCE: EVALUATION OF THE IPA PROJECT 'NATURE FOR THE FUTURE'.....	27

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DAC	Development Aid Committee
DNC	Dubrovnik-Neretva County
DUNEA	Dubrovnik-Neretva County's Regional Development Agency
EU	European Union
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
PENPMNE	Public Enterprise for National parks of Montenegro
MONSTAT	Statistical Office of Montenegro
NP	National Park
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PRAG	Practical Guide to contract procedures for European Union external actions (for third countries)
JTS	Joint Technical Secretariat

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report covers findings, conclusions and recommendation of the final evaluation of the project: "Nature for Future", financed within the IPA and jointly implemented by the National parks of Montenegro (as Applicant 2) and the (as Applicant 1).

### Project description

The project is aimed at strengthening cooperation in area of tourism through development of recognizable tourist offer based on joint environmental and cultural heritage, as well as enhancement of competitiveness of local tourism offer. The specific objective of the project is defined as: „enhancement of joint cross-border tourist offer through valorisation of natural protected areas, by introducing them as joint tourist offer of the region. The project had five estimated results: Strengthened partnership and networking between cross-border nature protection institutions (result 1); joint analysis of biodiversity potential delivered (result 2); preserved and marked various locations in Croatia and Montenegro (result 3); promoted joint concern on nature protection, raised awareness of nature protection and promoted joint tourist offer based on natural heritage (result 4) and promoted cross-border area as an integral tourist destination (result 5). The project activities were implemented in National park Lovćen and National park Skadar Lake. The total budget of the project amounted 418.044, 78€, out of which applicant on Montenegrin side (PENPMNE) had 189.669, 65€ available and share in the amount of 40.646, 21€. The project duration was 24 months, in the period from 16.01.2011 to 15.01.2013.

## KEY FINDINGS

### Relevance

The project was relevant to the objectives of the Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Croatia-Montenegro and to the target group needs. The project had scientific importance since it responded to the need for research of speleological points/locations on the territory of NP Skadar Lake. Secondly, the project responded to the needs of tourism development, through assessment of cave valorisation potential and tourism infrastructure improvement. Finally, it enticed solving the problem of the lack of cross-border cooperation in management of protected areas, culture and natural heritage management. The project was in accordance with strategic documents both on local and national level and in accordance with legislative acts in Montenegro and Croatia.

### Efficiency

At the beginning, there were some difficulties considering that it was the first EU project implemented by PENPMNE. However, even if some delays in conducting certain project activities occurred, they didn't affect the quality of the project activities and outputs. The project team has efficiently managed financial resources and by re-allocation of the budget even organized additional activities that were in accordance with target group needs. Regardless of initial difficulties, the project team has showed ability to adjust to the project needs and act accordingly.

### Effectiveness

The project document stipulated five project results, each of which was defined by indicator. The result indicators 1, 2 and 3 were achieved, while result indicators 4 and 5 were almost fully achieved. Thereat, some indicators were achieved in greater extent than expected or planned. What is evident is that project activities have brought to achievement of expected results and specific objective of the project.

### Impact

The project contributed to awareness rising about the need to merge cross-border natural sites through joint touristic offer. In doing so, cooperation is encouraged, as well as the exchange of experiences between the institutions involved in the management of protected areas in Montenegro and Croatia. Cooperation of various institutions derived new projects that will be a logical extension of established activities through the "Nature for the Future" project. Also, the

project contributed to the development of hiking, explorative tourism through speleology and sightseeing in the national parks, improvement of touristic infrastructure and a motion to valorise caves as a tourist attraction.

### Sustainability and Replicability

There is a high probability that the sustainability of the first project results will be realized. Cooperation between institutions dealing with cross-border protected areas in the region will continue in the future, primarily through joint projects. There are already a certain number of new projects that directly relate to the results of this project. The sustainability of analysis of cave biodiversity in the border region is reflected through the publication of scientific paper based on these results, further monitoring and valorisation of the identified caves. The PENPMNE and Mountaineering Association of Montenegro will be in charge of the maintenance of existing infrastructure. This project can be easily applied to other national parks, due to the fact that they have similar needs.

### Lessons Learned

The project implementation derived some important lessons worth considering for further interventions not only of two implementing partners (PENPM and DUNEA), but also to other development actors. The lessons learned are listed in the main part of this evaluation report.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

The "Nature for the Future" is an innovative approach in valorisation of protected areas in the cross-border region. The project has contributed to creating of preconditions for development of joint tourist offer of the cross-border region, through strengthening institutional partnerships dealing with nature protection and organizing joint activities. Also, one of the project's major achievements was enrichment of tourist offer of protected areas by construction of tourist infrastructure, analysis of the biodiversity of the region, in the context of its touristic valorisation and development of promotional material.

### Recommendations

- Further capacity building of PENPM for writing and managing projects financed from the EU funds.
- PENPM, DUNEA and the Public Institution for the Management of Protected Natural Areas Dubrovnik - Neretva County should continue to collaborate towards the creation and promotion of the unique tourist offer.
- Potential topics of joint projects could include: establishing regional education centre to promote unique tourist attractions; valorisation of caves; education about the value and importance of speleological entities; the joint protection of natural parks etc.
- Further cooperation of PENPM and their associates in the implementation of detailed cave examinations in national parks of Montenegro.
- Publish a scientific paper based on the data obtained during the study of caves, in order to inform the scientific community about the results.
- Continue with the distribution of the project products (outputs)

## INTRODUCTION

### Evaluation Objectives

This report will cover findings, conclusions and recommendations of the mid-term evaluation of the Project "Nature for Future", funded by the European Union, through Cross-Border IPA competent II Scheme (CBSS) for MNE.

The objective of the evaluation is to understand better the project action, achieved results and prospects of impact and sustainability, as well as constraints and benefits from the project implementation. Identification of recommendations and lessons learned are also an important segment of this evaluation.

The evaluation report provides with assessment of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability, in line with OECD DAC Criteria for evaluation of development assistance, focusing on implemented activities, achieved results and objectives.

### Scope of Work

The scope the final evaluation is stipulated within the Terms of Reference (ToR), and it was to focus on the following:

1. Assessment of the *Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact* and *Sustainability* of project actions, in line with OECD DAC Criteria for evaluation of development programs and projects, focusing on implemented and planned project activities, results, purpose and objectives.
2. In particular, assessment the following project documents:
  - Project proposal documents (project proposal, logical framework, work plan, etc);
  - Project Reports (monthly reports, reports from different events: workshops, seminars, round tables, etc);
  - Project deliverables;
  - Other relevant documents
3. Identification of recommendations and lessons to be learned for future project operations of a similar kind;

In addition, the evaluation process will seek answers to the following key questions:

- What are the major achievements of the program in both quantitative and qualitative sense?
- How effective was the project design and approach towards achieving overall and specific objective?
- What changes, if any, have been made in project design during the implementation and what are their effects?
- What are the main lessons learned from the project implementation? Are there any ways this program could have been more efficient and effective in implementation?
- What is the most probable sustainability of the program impact?
- To what extent the implemented program fits into IPA Cross-Border Program Croatia-MNE 2007-2013?

## Final Evaluation of the Project “Nature for the Future”

### Methodology

The evaluation methodology followed the logic of the Terms of Reference (ToR) as the primary guide, designing the process that provided answer on designated evaluation questions and achieve the expected outputs of the evaluation within a limited timeframe. The proposed approach was to split the evaluation in five phases: (1) inception phase; (2) desk review; (3) field work/interviews; (4) analysis & reporting; and (5) discussion of the evaluation results. Each phase of the evaluation is described bellow in details.

#### *Inception Phase*

At project inception the consultant had a meeting with representatives the PE for National Parks of MNE in order to ensure the most effective approach for evaluation performance. During this phase the consultants clarified the set of evaluation questions that target achievement of the purpose and the expected results of the evaluation, as described in ToR. In the inception phase the structure of the evaluation report was finally defined and approved by the National Parks of MNE, as well as the detailed timeline and selection of the interlocutors for the fieldwork interviews.

#### *Desk Review*

Following the inception phase, the consultants undertook a desk review of all project documentation relevant to the evaluation, as provided by the PE for National Parks of MNE and the project implementing agencies. Other secondary sources were also considered. As a result of this phase, the consultants designed a set of hypothesis that was checked in further phases of the evaluation. Besides, this phase included preparation of quantitative and qualitative instruments that were set during the fieldwork, in this case a set of questions for interviews with representatives of target groups, final beneficiaries, associates, etc.

#### *Field Work / Interviews*

Interviews were organized with the project members of the National Parks of MNE and representatives of target groups and beneficiaries at locations where the project has been implemented (NP Skadar Lake, NP Lovćen, Cetinje and Bar municipalities). The client selected the list of interlocutors. During the fieldwork, the consultants applied different instruments, yet mainly individual interviews. The main purpose of the fieldwork was to check the status of outputs, outcomes and impact, and to check the hypotheses that were determined during the desk review. Interlocutors were also asked on other issues relevant to the evaluation, as determined in the ToR and during the inception.

#### *Analysis & Reporting*

Within this phase the consultant undertook the analysis of the secondary and primary data collected during the previous phases and present evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations in the format that was defined during the inception phase. As the result of this phase the draft report was submitted to the client, the National Parks of MNE.

#### *Discussion of the Evaluation Results and Submitting the Final Report*

This was the last phase of the evaluation in which the final results of the evaluation were discussed between the consultants and the National Parks of MNE. In this particular case, this phase included at the special meetings or discussion about the evaluation findings over e-mail and/or phone. Based on the received inputs, the consultant revised the draft report and submitted the final evaluation report.

### Limitations of the Evaluation

Considering that the evaluation process took place in March 2013, i.e. outside tourist season, and then it was highly unlikely to collect opinion about project results from tourists. Besides that,

## Final Evaluation of the Project “Nature for the Future”

the meeting with the director of NP Skadar Lake was not held. Due to previously undertaken obligations, he was not able to meet consultants.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### Project background

Within the IPA cross-border project Croatia-Montenegro, Public Enterprise for National Parks of Montenegro (PENPMNE), in cooperation with Dubrovnik-Neretva County's Regional Development Agency (DUNEA), has implemented the project 'Nature for the Future'. The project was implemented within Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), component II 2007-2013. The project was submitted on November 16, 2009, while implementation started on January 16 2011 and lasted for 24 months.

### Project objectives and results

The overall objective of the project goes along the lines: *To contribute to the integration of the economy in border areas and enhancing cooperation in the field of tourism through the development of recognisable joint tourist offer based on common environmental and cultural heritage and improvement the competitiveness of the local tourism economy.*

Specific objective of the project was *to enhance touristic offer in cross boarder territory through touristic valorisation of natural protected resources by introducing them to visitors as a joint touristic offer of region.* The estimated results were as follows:

1. Partnership and networking of the cross border nature protection institutions strengthened
2. Joint analysis on area's potential delivered
3. Natural protected locations in Croatia and Montenegro valorised and marked
4. Promoted joint concern on nature protection and raised awareness on nature protection and promoted joint touristic offer based on natural heritage
5. Promoted Cross border area as an integral tourist destination

### Target groups

Target groups of the project were the following:

- Public institutions for nature protection (2), in charge of natural area protection and management. Since there has been no cooperation among these institutions so far, this project's objective was to develop cooperation and partnership among these institutions in cross border region.
- Nature parks and natural protected areas (6) with no adequate touristic valorisation. Through this project, a new tourist offer based on nature; heritage in cross border region will be developed and promoted.
- Municipalities involved in project implementation (6) for natural resources at their territory. They would also benefit from economic impact of the project results.

Final beneficiaries of the project were:

- Visitors/tourists of the cross border region (1.665.762), predominantly of medium-high social economic and cultural level, living in big cities where tourist agencies and tour operators are more present.

### **Final Evaluation of the Project “Nature for the Future”**

- Small and medium-sized enterprises (7557)/farm holidays in cross border region (182), who will have opportunity to improve and enhance their tourist offer based on diversification.
- Local community (cca.50.000) of the regional area, which will benefit from economic effect of project results.
- Tourism associations and other tourism supporting institutions (10), which will experience large benefit from project results.
- Tour operators and tourist agencies (50) from Southern Croatia and Montenegro, which have interest to expand their tourist offer.
- Other tourism supporting institutions in cross border area (30) necessary for integration of tourist products and development of strong brands in regional areas.

#### **Budget and timeframe**

The total budget of the project 'Nature for the Future' amounted 418.044, 78€, out of which the applicant on Montenegrin side (PENPMNE) had 189.669, 65€ at its disposal. The European Commission participated with 149.023, 45€, while PENPMNE with 40.646, 21€. There were 33 re-allocations of the budget. The project was implemented during the period of 24 months, from January 16, 2011 to January 15, 2013.

#### **Implementation Modality and Project Management Structures**

The Steering Committee of the project consisted of representatives of the Public Enterprise for National Parks of Montenegro, Dubrovnik-Neretva County's Regional Development Agency (DUNEA), and Public institutions for managing nature protected areas of Dubrovnik-Neretva County and representatives from Joint Technical Secretariat from Kotor (JTS). The Steering Committee met periodically, i.e. six times (out of eight planned) during the project. Due to good and regular e-mail and telephone communication, it was assessed that there was no need to hold the remaining two meetings.

## KEY FINDINGS

### Relevance

Relevance is defined as the extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners’ and donors’ policies<sup>1</sup> and measures the extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country needs, global priorities and partner’ and donor’s policies.

The project proposal was designed to improve touristic offer of the cross-border region through valorisation of protected natural areas and the creation of joint touristic attractions. To achieve this objective, the project focused on: strengthening institutional partnerships dealing with nature protection in the cross-border region and analysis of the cave biodiversity of the region, in the context of its touristic valorisation and the enrichment of touristic offer.

The project proposal was drafted jointly by the two project applicants, the Public Enterprise for National Parks of Montenegro (PENPM) and DUNEA. Representatives of these two institutions first met at the Info Day of CBC Programme Croatia-Montenegro, where they discovered to have a similar project idea. Afterwards, they developed and wrote project proposal. PENPM tested the project idea with their associates and target groups. Customer Service for Improvement and Development of PENPM developed the project idea and participated in the writing process of the project proposal. This Service is familiar with the needs of national parks of Montenegro, given that they already participated in the development of plans and programs of the National Parks and monitored their implementation. From the above, it can be concluded that the project proposal is designed to meet the needs of target groups and end users, which later influenced the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of project results.

The "Nature for the Future" project is implemented in the border regions of Montenegro and Croatia, categorized as a protected area. In the cross-border area beach tourism is largely developed, but in the past years there is a growing interest of tourists to explore the natural resources and cultural diversity of the area they are visiting. Also, a growing demand for speleo-tourism is evident. From this point, the project is in line with the needs of tourists, as well as end users of the project.

The project initiated research of caves in Skadar Lake National Park. The research aimed to identify the underground facilities in the territory of the National Park (NP) Lake Skadar, their mapping and drawing, and explorations of their cultural, archaeological and bio-speleological aspects. Therefore, the project had scientific importance.

So far, Montenegrin caves have not been accommodated for touristic use, so it can be said that there is no organised speleo-tourism. A study on biodiversity of the regions of Montenegro and Croatia aimed to identify potential of cave valorisation and offer suggestions for their protection, monitoring and touristic valorisation. Given that so far there was neither data nor an assessment of cave valorisation, the above studies were evaluated as necessary.

The project focused on improving tourist infrastructure at NP Skadar Lake and NP Lovćen. Tourist infrastructure in national parks is not well developed, especially in NP Lovćen. In order to motivate the tourists to spend more time and stay longer in the national park, the tourist

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: OECD DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management, p. 32, available at: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/29/21/2754804.pdf>.

## Final Evaluation of the Project “Nature for the Future”

infrastructure and facilities need to become more diverse. In that context, this project activity is a very significant one.

One of the key issues of this programme area was the lack of cross-border cooperation in the management of protected areas, management of cultural and natural heritage and the development of integrated tourist destination. Partnering in project management and study visits turned out to be a good way to meet the need of establishing a regional cooperation of institutions involved in the management of protected areas.

The project was relevant and in line with the first priority of CBC Croatia - Montenegro: "Creation of favourable natural and socio-economic conditions in the programming area by improvement of cooperation in jointly selected sectors and good neighbourly relations in the eligible areas." <sup>2</sup> Under Priority 1, the project is related to the measure 1.2 "Common touristic and cultural space." The project was relevant to the cross-border programme Croatia - Montenegro, as it has enhanced regional cooperation of institutions involved in the management of protected areas and social cohesion by creating conditions for the development of a joint touristic product.

In addition to the cross-border cooperation, project was in accordance with: the Skadar Lake National Park Management Plan 2011-2015<sup>3</sup> and the National Park Lovćen Management Plan 2011-2015<sup>4</sup>. The project is in line with the documents at the national level i.e. the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Montenegro and the Tourism Development Strategy of Montenegro by 2020. Also, the project is in line with the strategies at the local level (Strategic Development Plan 2012-2017 for municipality of Bar and Strategic Development Plan 2012-2016 for the Capital of Cetinje)<sup>5</sup> and legislative acts (Law on National Parks, Nature Protection Law, Environmental Law, Law on the protection of cultural property etc.).

*Conclusion: The project was relevant to the needs of the target groups and final beneficiaries, the needs of the country, partners' and donors' policies.*

---

<sup>2</sup> Source: *Cross-border programme Croatia – Montenegro under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), Component II, allocation for 2007 and 2008, Guidelines for Applicants*, pg.6, available at: [http://www.delmne.ec.europa.eu/upload/documents/tenders/Guidelines\\_for\\_Applicants\\_CBC\\_HR\\_MNE\\_IPA\\_2007\\_2008.pdf](http://www.delmne.ec.europa.eu/upload/documents/tenders/Guidelines_for_Applicants_CBC_HR_MNE_IPA_2007_2008.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> The project is in line with the strategic goal 3: "Enhancement of informational, presentational and educational contents of the Park" and strategic goal 6 "Enhancement of cross-border cooperation".

<sup>4</sup> The project is in line with the strategic goal 1: "Nature protection", the strategic goal 3: "Enhancement of informational, presentational and educational contents of the Park" and the strategic goal 6 "Enhancement of cross-border cooperation".

<sup>5</sup> Local and national development plans do not recognise caves as elements with potential for touristic development. This can be explained with a lack of information, research and knowledge on their values.

### Efficiency

Efficiency is a measurement of project management performance with regard to achieving the goals by using resources at minimum cost. Effective management is a key part of both efficiency and effectiveness of the available funds. Efficiency is trying to answer the question how economically project resources and inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.<sup>6</sup>

Efficient project implementation was influenced, to some extent, by both internal and external factors. The project lasted for 24 months, from January 16, 2011 to January 15, 2013. During the course of the project there had not been the need to extend its duration, although there were slight delays in implementation of certain project activities.

Project Activity 2.2 (a joint study of biodiversity protected area) was planned for the first year, but realized in the second year of the project. The delay was due to lack of knowledge on procedures for the procurement of services by the PRAG<sup>7</sup>. The study was completed by the end of the project and presented at the final conference. However, the study has not yet been distributed to all relevant institutions, which should be done in the upcoming period. Also, there was a slight delay in printing promotional materials (brochures and catalogues). Given that promotional materials have been prepared before the coming tourist season, when their distribution is planned, this delay did not affect the achievement of project results.

It should be noted that the project team completed some activities ahead of time. Marking recreational trails and setting up accompanying furniture set had been done beforehand, in order to make the tourist infrastructure available for tourists during the season of 2011.

There are certain project activities that have not been fully realized. A telescope purchased for NP Lovćen has not yet been set, because the appropriate site is still being looked for, in order to protect the telescope from a possible theft. It is under consideration to place it inside of the mausoleum at the Lovćen Mountain, thus completing the tourist offer of this cultural monument. Regarding the activities of marking and protecting the caves, the fences around the cave have not yet been constructed, even though they were planned by the project documentation. During the fieldwork, it was estimated that current budget could not cover these costs, but a special project is needed for this activity.

The abovementioned delays in project implementation and activities that have not been completed, did not significantly affect the overall quality of the project activities and achievements of the project. The project team has demonstrated the ability to adapt to the needs of the project and respond appropriately.

The project team consisted of a project manager, project assistant, two forestry engineers (who were involved in the first phase of the project on a part-time engagement), two biologists, public relations representatives and a person in charge of the finances. This enabled efficient utilization of funds and human resources. At the beginning of the project there have been some difficulties in implementation of project activities. Namely, the project team was not fully familiar with the rules and procedures for the implementation of EU projects, causing some organizational issues at the very beginning of the project. After initial adjustments, this problem was solved. Efficiency in implementation of the project was still at a high level, given that the Public Enterprise for National Parks of Montenegro conducted a European project for the first time. Successful implementation of the project was also commended by the Delegation of the European Union to Montenegro, saying that the PENPM managed to conduct the project best of all public institutions in Montenegro.

<sup>6</sup> Source: *OECD DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management*, p. 21, available at: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/29/21/2754804.pdf>, last visited on 28 July 2012.

<sup>7</sup> Practical Guide to contract procedures for EU external actions.

### **Final Evaluation of the Project “Nature for the Future”**

The project efficiency was positively affected by the good cooperation among representatives of PENPM, the Skadar Lake National Park and NP Lovćen. Since Montenegro has centralized management of national parks, national park managers are in constant contact with the management of PENPM, which was a facilitating factor in project implementation.

Associates have been involved in the activities 2.1 (field research). PENPM has previously collaborated with these organizations, so there were no difficulties in implementation of these activities. However, the associates' general impression was that they should have, even upon the completion of fieldwork, been informed about further activities and results of the project, especially the activities that followed the research in the field.

The project team managed the finances efficiently. During the course of the project 33 reallocations were made (six reallocation requests), about which the donor was duly informed. Reallocation of funds enabled the team to arrange another viewpoint in NP Lovćen and marked and arranged educational trail Lipovik in NP Skadarsko Lake, organized an additional study trip and a round table after the final conference. In this way the planned budget was fully utilized.

## Final Evaluation of the Project “Nature for the Future”

### Effectiveness

Effectiveness is a criterion that measures the extent to which the development intervention’s objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.<sup>8</sup> Effectiveness is also used as an aggregate measure of (or judgment about) the merit or worth of an activity, i.e. the extent to which an intervention has attained, or is expected to attain, its major relevant objectives efficiently in a sustainable fashion and with a positive institutional developmental impact. It is a qualitative measure of immediate and observable change in the target groups as a direct result of project activities and the delivery of outputs. Effectiveness includes an assessment of the achievement of Objectively Verifiable Indicators (OVI) and whether planned results have been delivered and received.

The project document stipulated five project results, each measured by a single indicator. Project activities are organised to achieve each of the expected results. In further, the evaluation analyse the status of results, output indicators and activities.

**RESULT 1:** Partnership and networking of the cross border nature protection institutions strengthened

#### Overall finding:

The project has contributed to creation of partnership among PENPMNE, DUNEA and Public institution for management of nature protected areas DNC. Considering that these institutions have never cooperated before, a good partnership has been established and grounds for further exchange of experience in management of nature protected areas in both Montenegro and Croatia have been set. During the cooperation on the project, the Applicant and partner from Croatia shared and passed on their experience in EU project management to PENPMNE.

*Indicator: Joint partnership activities organized*

#### Findings:

Joint meetings of the Steering Committee were periodically held (6 in total). The Project proposal anticipated 8 meetings of the Steering Committee, but the number of meetings was adjusted to the project implementation and need for their holding. The reduced number of meetings had not affected the achievement of this result.

#### ACTIVITY 1.1:

1.1. Kick off meeting

#### Findings:

The kick-off meeting was held at the beginning of February 2011, in Dubrovnik. During the first month of project implementation. The meeting was attended by 10 participants, consisted of representatives of the Public Enterprise for National Parks of Montenegro (applicant from Montenegro), Dubrovnik-Neretva County’s Regional Development Agency DUNEA (applicant from Croatia) and Public Institution for Management of Natural

---

<sup>8</sup> Source: *OECD DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management*, p. 20, available at: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/29/21/2754804.pdf>, last visited on 28 July 2012

## Final Evaluation of the Project “Nature for the Future”

Protected Areas of Dubrovnik-Neretva County (partner from Croatia). At the meeting, members of the Steering Committee were appointed, obligations from the Agreement were stipulated, main activities were defined and timeframe for the first six months of project implementation was set.

### ACTIVITY 1.2:

#### 1.2. Project coordination

#### Findings:

The Steering Committee consisted of the members of the project teams from Montenegro and Croatia and representatives of the Joint Technical Secretariat from Kotor. There were six meetings held in total (three in Montenegro and three in Croatia). The aim of the meetings was to discuss conducted activities and plans for future actions. The topics covered included the review of activity plans and partner obligations, writing of the progress report and organization of joint activities.

### RESULT 2: Joint analysis on area's potential delivered

#### Overall finding:

The project has initiated research about speleological points/locations in cross border region. It brought the first preliminary findings about biodiversity status in caves and recommendations for their touristic valorisation in project area.

Namely, the comprehensive research of caves in NP Skadar Lake has been conducted for the first time and made cadastre of speleological points/locations, which will serve as good baseline for further scientific researches. What is important to emphasize is that this research identified speleological locations/points not known before.

The key result of these activities was identifying caves suitable for touristic valorisation (out of six observed caves in Montenegro, the most suitable one was Obodska Cave). In the following period it is necessary to develop a Study on Biodiversity Impact Assessment of selected caves.

*Indicator: 1 Joint analysis on area's potential for the cross border region*

#### Findings:

This indicator is fully achieved. Namely, the joint biodiversity study of protected areas in Montenegro and Croatia was developed. In addition, a cadastre of speleological points/locations has been developed as well and report of on-site analysis on conditions of caves in NP Skadar Lake was made.

### ACTIVITY 2.1:

#### On-site analysis

#### Findings:

On site analysis related to identifying underground points or locations on the territory of NP Skadar Lake, their mapping and drawing and their exploration from culture-

## Final Evaluation of the Project “Nature for the Future”

archaeological and bio-speleological aspect. The project anticipated the on-site analysis of 10 caves in NP Skadar Lake. The experts made visits to 21 locations during the field work. Out of 10, five were selected to be explored in detail. The research was carried out in cooperation with project associates – representatives from the Institute for Cultural Monuments Protection, NGO Outdoor Podgorica and Natural History Museum. The field work required some adjustments. The number of planned meetings was reduced, because it was decided that there were enough information collected for the next project activity – development of biodiversity study. These changes had not hindered the implementation of the following activity.

Based on data obtained on the field, the report on field research was developed and cadastre (inventory) of speleological points/locations in NP Skadar Lake was made. The report and inventory were sent to project associates, Agency for Environmental Protection and other scientific institutions. The results of the field research were presented on three international symposiums.

**ACTIVITY 2.2:** Developing joint study on biodiversity of protected area

### Findings:

After collecting the field data (activity 2.1), the following activity was the development of the joint study on biodiversity of protected area. The Study contains the biodiversity status of caves (six in Montenegro and five in Croatia), identification of actual and possible threats, proposals for protection and monitoring of cave biodiversity and proposals for their sustainable touristic valorisation.

There was some delay in conducting this activity. The Study was planned to be completed during the first year of the project, but this activity was conducted only in the second. The delay was due to the lack of familiarity with implementation of procurement procedures (PRAG). The results of the Study were presented at the final conference of the project. However, the distribution of the study to all relevant institutions had not been done until the end of the project, which needs to be done in the future period.

**ACTIVITY 2.3:** Bio – chemical monitoring of caves

### Findings:

As stipulated by the project proposal, the bio-chemical monitoring was not planned to be conducted in Montenegro. This activity referred to cross/border area in Croatia (Shipun Cave in Konavle).

**RESULT 3:** Natural protected locations in Croatia and Montenegro valorised and marked

## Final Evaluation of the Project “Nature for the Future”

### Overall finding:

The project put special focus on enrichment of tourist offer of NP Lovćen and NP Skadar Lake. To be more specific, this activity included small infrastructure works, such as marking and arrangement of caves, setting up recreational trails and sightseeing points.

During the interview with the representatives of NP Lovćen and tourist organisations, it was highlighted that improvement of tourist infrastructure and amenities were of utmost importance to national parks, which this project achieved. Interlocutors were satisfied by the infrastructure appearance and stressed that it is fitted into environment of national parks.

Special attraction for tourists was sightseeing points, where different events were organized (weddings, Planet Day celebration, etc.). This infrastructure was available to tourists during 2011 and 2012 and it is listed in the promotional materials (catalogue, brochures) to be disseminated to tourists during 2013.

**Indicator 1:** All mentioned locations marked

**Indicator 2:** Šipun Cave Reconstructed

**Indicator 3:** 10 caves on Skadar Lake valorised and protected

**Indicator 4:** Biodiversity trail on Bačina lakes and Skadar Lake set up

**Indicator 5:** Sightseeing points on Lastovo, NP Skadar Lake and NP Lovćen set up

**Indicator 6:** Educational centre in Dubrovačko Primorje set up

### Findings:

Indicators 3, 4 and 5 refer to activities conducted on the territory of Montenegro.

The indicator 3 was differently defined in project documentation (in description of activities it was mentioned protection of two caves, while in Logical Framework it was stated protection of 10 caves). We believe that it was a mistake, since two caves correspond to planned activities. In that context, this indicator was achieved, because small infrastructure works have been undertaken around two caves (Obodska cave and Špela cave).

The indicator 4 was also achieved. Small infrastructure works were carried out on recreational trail ‘Obod’ and trail ‘Godinjski zaseoci’.

Indicator 5 was fully achieved, or to be more precise it was done even more than it was planned - four sightseeing points were built in total.

**ACTIVITY 3.1:** Protection and marking the caves

### Findings:

The project included small infrastructure works around two caves, Obodska and Špela (in Donji Murići village). The works included clear out of the path to the cave, marking and setting up trails, setting up outdoor furniture, etc.

The project documents anticipated setting up protective fences. However after the on-site analysis, it was concluded that setting up the fences required a whole new project, since available funds were not sufficient to implement this activity in full.

## Final Evaluation of the Project “Nature for the Future”

### ACTIVITY 3.2: Protection and marking of lakes

#### Findings:

The small infrastructure was set at recreational trails ‘Obod’ and ‘Godinjski zaseoci’ (Godinjski hamlet).

The recreational trail Godinjski zaseoci“, 1.5km long was marked. At this trail, 9 small info boards were set containing the map of recreational trail, photos and information on culture-historical monuments and natural beauties of the Godinje village. Information on boards was given in English language as well. The walking path “Godinje” is one out of nine walking paths in NP Skadar Lake identified by Mountaineering Association of Montenegro.

The recreational trail “Obod” was marked as well in the length of 2.1km. Four large info boards and accompanying furniture were set on this trail.

One small info board was set in village Murići near cave Špela.

The saving of funds has brought to conducting an additional activity - marking and arranging educational trail Lipovik in NP Skadar Lake. On this trail 4 big info boards were set, 8 small info boards, cleaned 3km of path and set three roe deer feeders.

The marking and arranging of recreational trail ‘Obod’ and ‘Godinjski zaseoci’ was completed earlier than planned, with the aim of finishing works before the starting of tourist season. In this way, trails were available to tourists during 2011 and 2012 tourist season.

### ACTIVITY 3.3: Setting up sightseeing points

#### Findings:

Within the project intervention, sightseeing points were set in NP Skadar Lake and Lovćen. In NP Skadar Lake two sightseeing points were set, one in Vranjina and the other one in Lipovik. The two telescopes were set as well - one in Vranjina and the other one in village Pješačac.

Two sightseeing points were set in NP Lovćen (Kuk and Kraljevo počivalo (King’s rest)). A telescope was also provided for NP Lovćen, but it has not been set yet. The reason lies in the concern that it can be stolen, so the most secure location for it is still to be found. Negotiations about the location are underway.

With this project activity it was achieved more than it was planned. The project proposal stipulated three sightseeing points, but at the end of the project, the project team decided to use available resources to set up another sightseeing point. This proved that project team had good management over the budget and that it successfully adjusts to target group needs during the project implementation.

## Final Evaluation of the Project “Nature for the Future”

**ACTIVITY 3.4:** Establishment of educational centre in Dubrovačko Primorje

### **Findings:**

This activity was conducted in Croatia. The established educational centre in Dubrovačko Primorje has no cross border character.

**RESULT 4:** Promoted joint concern on nature protection and raised awareness on nature protection and promoted joint touristic offer based on natural heritage

**RESULT 5:** Promoted Cross border area as an integral tourist destination

### **Overall finding:**

The project has contributed to raising awareness of the importance of integrating cross border natural locations through joint tourist offer. The joint promotional material will be distributed in 1200 copies during the following tourist season, which will turn tourist attention to natural resources and beauties and tourist offer of the cross border region.

Cooperation between institutions dealing with management of protected areas in programme area was encouraged through study visits and partnership on the project. The study visits to institutions in Croatia were useful for PENPMNE, for they had the opportunity to see how the centralized management of national parks works. This has been a topical issue in Croatia, considering that the development and drafting of the Law on Centralized Management of Protected Areas is underway. On the other side, representatives of PENPMNE shared their experiences with their Croatian colleagues about management and protection of protected areas. Participants in study visit found this activity very useful and stressed that certain management modules can be replicated in Montenegro. During the evaluation it was emphasized that institutions involved in the project are planning to continue cooperation. Also, the final conference conveyed the message to the public that other projects are expected to be generated as continuation of cooperation among institutions for management of protected areas.

The project team performed adequate promotion of the project. There were several informative events organized during the project duration (press conferences, round table and final conference), while media were informed periodically.

**Indicator 1:** Promotional events in local communities organized and held

### **Findings:**

When compared to indicator 1, it is achieved more than it was planned. Instead of one event in Montenegro, there were three events organized (press conference, final conference and round table).

**Indicator 2:** 2 press conferences held

**Indicator 3:** Promotional material distributed

Indicator 2 was achieved. The promotional video was prepared and promoted. 2000 catalogues and 1000

## Final Evaluation of the Project “Nature for the Future”

### *Indicator 4: Web site developed*

maps were developed, which were distributed to tourist organizations and national parks. The prepared promotional material will be distributed to tourists during the following tourist season.

Indicator 3 was partly achieved. The promotional web site was developed. However, since the web site was developed and released into function at the end of the second year of project implementation, target groups and associates were not familiar with its content.

### **ACTIVITY 4.1:**

Design and development of promotional materials

### **Findings:**

During the course of the project, promotional video, maps and catalogues were developed.

The promotional video was developed with the aim of informing the public about the project objectives and achievements and to promote the project area as joint tourist destination. The video was presented at the final conference held on January 11, 2013 and was posted on the PENPMNE web site ([www.nparkovi.me](http://www.nparkovi.me)) and project web site as well ([www.nff-cbc.eu](http://www.nff-cbc.eu)) on January 15, 2013 and it had 309 views by the time the evaluation took place.

The Catalogues were developed with the aim of promoting joint tourist offer of cross border region. One catalogue consists of 5 brochures (brochure for NP Skadar Lake, NP Lovćen, Nature Park Lastovo island, National Environment Network Bačinska lakes and nature monument Šipun cave). Brochures provide information about the nature, culture and protected area's tourist offer. The Catalogues were printed in 2000 copies (1000 for Croatia and 1000 for Montenegro).

Also, the project team developed three types of maps: map of NP Skadar Lake, NP Lovćen and map of Dubrovnik-Neretva County's protected area. During the project implementation, it was considered the option to develop one joint map for this area, but for the sake of easy reference three maps were developed, and each of them contains minimized map of cross border area where the project took place. Maps were printed in 10.000 copies (5000 for Montenegro and 5000 for Croatia).

Brochures and maps were distributed to national parks and tourist organizations. In the following period, the promotional material will be distributed through Visitor Centres in NP Lovćen, NP Skadar Lake, Tourist organization Cetinje and Tourist Organization Bar. The tourist agencies will distribute the material at tourism fairs as well.

### **ACTIVITY 4.2:**

Development of promotional web

### **Findings:**

The project team from Croatia developed the project web

## Final Evaluation of the Project “Nature for the Future”

site

site, registered at the following domain: <http://www.nff-cbc.eu/>. The web site contains information on project activities, published media articles, and contains photographs of cross border area. However, the information on project results, promotional material and reports on analysis and studies conducted during this project are not found on this web site. Also, the web site is developed only in English language. During the evaluation process, it was found that associates, target groups and project beneficiaries were not familiar with the existence of the web site. In the following period it is necessary to update the web site with new information and post materials produced during the project implementation.

### ACTIVITY 4.3:

Organising study visit

#### Findings:

The project team organized two study trips for representatives of PENPMNE. The first study visit was organised in Republic Croatia protected areas<sup>9</sup>. The visit took six days from October 21 to 27, 2012. The participants (seven in total) of the study visit were the following: president of the National Park's Steering Committee, director of PENPMNE, director of NP Lovćen, director of NP Skadar Lake, chief of department for national parks development and improvement and two associates.

The project anticipated one study visit to Croatia, but due to the saving of funds, a reallocation was done, which allowed organisation of additional study trip. The second study visit was organised on the territory of Dubrovnik-Neretva County. It was a two-day visit from December 19-21, 2012. The participants (four in total) were expert associates of PENPMNE. During the study trip, protected areas of Dubrovnik-Neretva County were visited.

The project team from Croatia organised study visit to Montenegro. Five representatives from DUNEA and Public Enterprise for Management of Protected Areas of Dubrovnik-Neretva County visited national parks in Montenegro. The visit took six days, from November 25-30, 2012.

### ACTIVITY 4.4:

Organising final conference

#### Findings:

For the purpose of promotion of project results two final conferences were organised: one in Montenegro and the second one in Croatia. The Final conference in Montenegro took place in January 11, 2013, with near 100 participants at which the project results were jointly presented by applicants from both sides. Among

---

<sup>9</sup> Delegation of PENPMNE visited the Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection in Zagreb and Protected Area Management Authority of the Republic of Croatia: Nature park Medvednica, National park Risnjak, Nature Park Učka, National park Northern Velebit, National park Plitvice, National park Krka.

## Final Evaluation of the Project “Nature for the Future”

speakers were the Minister of Tourism and Sustainable Development and the representative of the EU in Montenegro. The promotional video, results and lessons learned during the project implementation were also presented at the conference. The media coverage was good (published articles in daily newspapers, radio and TV features)

Even if not stipulated by project documentation, after the final conference one roundtable was held on topic: “Importance of speleological points in national parks of Montenegro, their protection and valorisation “.

Except the final conference, another press conference was organized in Varnjina on May 30, 2011, when the first joint meeting of the Steering Committee was held. Also, the project team periodically informed the public during the project implementation via radio, TV and other media (web site, facebook).

### Impact

Impact is defined as positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.<sup>10</sup> Formally, impact (and sustainability) can only be fully assessed after the end of the project since, as a development measure, it tries to give a judgement on the positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, either directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. Therefore, impact measures the effect of the project in meeting the overall objective. A positive impact results if the project purpose is achieved, thereby contributing to the realisation of the overall objective.

The overall objective of the project is formulated as a "*Contribution to the integration of the economy in border areas and strengthening cooperation in the field of tourism by developing a recognizable joint tourist offers, based on a common environmental and cultural heritage and improvement of the competitiveness of the local tourism.*" The objective should be measured according to the following indicator: "Increased number of tourist arrivals in the programme area by 5%", and confirmed with the data collected by MONSTAT (Statistical Yearbook). During this evaluation, it was not possible to determine the value of this indicator, because the necessary data were not available to evaluators. According to representatives of PENPM and other project beneficiaries, higher numbers of tourists are evident, but it cannot be determined to what extent this increase can be attributed to the project.

The specific objective is formulated as "*The Enhancement of joint cross-border tourist offer through valorisation of protected natural resources, by presenting them to tourists as a joint tourist attraction of the region.*" The indicator measuring the achievement of this goal is "the increased number of visitors to the project area by 5%." Based on the available data, it can be concluded that the above indicator was accomplished in the project area of Montenegro. NP Skadar Lake recorded continuous increase in number of tourists during the period 2010 - 2012. In 2011, the number of tourists increased by 12.6% compared to 2010, while in 2012 the increase was 32.0%<sup>11</sup> compared to 2011. There are no reliable data on the number of tourists in NP Lovćen, due to problems with ticket sales in 2011 and 2012. It should be noted that the

---

<sup>10</sup> Source: OECD DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management, p. 24, available at: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/29/21/2754804.pdf>, last visited on 28 July 2012

<sup>11</sup> Given that Montenegro is the second on the list of world destinations for 2013, as chosen by the Lonely Planet magazine, a greater influx of tourists during the upcoming season is expected, and thus the increasing number of tourists in the program area.

## Final Evaluation of the Project “Nature for the Future”

increase in the number of tourists was not directly caused by the implementation of the project. Therefore, in order to evaluate the impact of the project in-depth interviews with target groups and final beneficiaries were conducted.

The project contributed to awareness rising about the need to merge cross-border natural sites through joint touristic offer, which may result in initiation of new forms of collaboration in the future. In doing so, cooperation is encouraged, as well as the exchange of experiences between the institutions involved in the management of protected areas in Montenegro and Croatia. Cooperation of various institutions derived new projects that will be a logical extension of established activities through the "Nature for the Future" project. Thus, a prerequisite for promotion of cross-border tourism in the region has been created.

Also, the project contributed to the development of hiking, explorative tourism through speleology and sightseeing in the national parks, improvement of touristic infrastructure and a motion to valorise caves as a tourist attraction.

In addition, the project has scientific impact, because the results of caves exploration in the National Park Skadar Lake were included in the archaeological map of Montenegro, which is currently being developed. In doing so, the cadastre of speleological entities in the National Park Skadar Lake was created, thus presenting a useful basis for further research.

Project also had an indirect impact. It contributed to the changing consciousness of PENPM employees about the importance of the implementation of EU projects, and to the application of experience gained during the study visits. As a result of one of the study visits, a project to build two public toilets in NP Lovćen was made, and the idea was modelled upon those already constructed in Ucka Park. Public toilets will be constructed before the start of the tourist season.

### Sustainability and Replicability

Sustainability is defined as the continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed.<sup>12</sup>As with impact, sustainability is usually assessed after project intervention since it measures whether the positive outcomes of the project at the level of specific objective are likely to continue after major development assistance has been completed.

There is a high probability that the sustainability of the first project results will be realized. Cooperation between institutions dealing with cross-border protected areas in the region will continue in the future, primarily through joint projects. As a continuation of this project, the Natural History Museum prepared a cross-border project with DUNEA, related to the exploration of caves in the Skadar Lake.

Sustainability analysis of cave biodiversity in the border region is reflected through the publication of scientific paper based on these results, further monitoring and valorisation of the identified caves. Based on the recommendations of the biodiversity study, PENPM made a proposal for the valorisation of a cave in the National Park of Skadar Lake. The project was submitted to the call of Norwegian Embassy on March 5, 2013. Valorisation of the cave would enrich the tourist offer of Skadar Lake and directly affect the sustainability of the project.

Mountaineering Association of Montenegro will be in charge of the maintenance of recreational trails in the National Park of Skadar Lake that will encompass maintenance of the trails marked as the part of this project. The management of NP Skadar Lake and NP Lovćen will take care of the arranged viewpoint. Also, PENPM will endeavour to improve the tourist infrastructure in national parks.

---

<sup>12</sup> Source: OECD DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management, p. 36, available at: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/29/21/2754804.pdf>, last visited on 28 July 2012

## Final Evaluation of the Project “Nature for the Future”

Visitor centres in the NP Skadar and NP Lovćen and the Tourist Organization of Bar and Cetinje will continue distributing promotional materials and informing visitors about new content of the national parks. Prepared promotional material will not be sufficient to cover the entire tourist season adequately. However, the National Tourism Organisation of Montenegro, in agreement with PENPM, will be able to increase its circulation, if needed be.

Promoting the cross-border region as a single tourist destination can continue if the existing education centre in Dubrovnik area receives a regional character and expands its activities to the national parks of Montenegro. This centre could inform tourists about the common offer of the CRO-MNE border area (Dubrovnik-Neretva County, coast of Montenegro with NP Skadar Lake and NP Lovćen).

This project can be easily applied to other national parks, due to the fact that they have similar needs. Also, the same project can be replicated in cross-border cooperation with Albania, given that the institutions of Montenegro and Albania both deal with protection of Skadar Lake.

### Lessons Learned

The Project implementation generated important lessons learnt that are worth for considering for further interventions not only of two implementing partners (PENPMNE and DUNEA), but also to other development actors, interested in delivering projects similar to this one. These lessons learned are identified as the most important ones:

- Improve the internal organization of the project team and familiarity with the rules and procedures when implementing EU projects (procurement procedures, reallocation, reporting rules, etc.).
- Partners, not only collaborators on the project, are important for the implementation and execution of the project. Thus, it is desirable to include other organizations in the project (state institutions, municipalities, non-governmental and international organizations), if they have the same need for the project, so the project would have a greater significance and quality in realization.
- Collaborators need to be informed about other activities and results of the project.
- Products of the project activities (and outputs) should be distributed to audiences and target groups timely.
- Given the great importance of the project to biodiversity protection in the two countries, it would be useful to publish authors' papers in scientific journals, so that professional community can become acquainted with the research findings.
- It is desirable to design the project website at the beginning of the project and update it regularly with the project materials. Moreover, it is desirable for the website to be available in the native language, making it easier for the public to access information about the project. Also, the website should have been promoted more in the public.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

The "Nature for the Future" is an innovative approach in valorisation of protected areas in the cross-border region. The project is being implemented in the cross-border region of Montenegro and Croatia, categorized as a protected area. In this area, beach tourism is primarily developed, but the project responded to the growing interest of tourists to explore the natural resources and cultural diversity of the area they are visiting.

The project proposal was designed to improve touristic offer of the cross-border region through valorisation of protected natural areas and the creation of joint touristic attractions. To achieve this objective, the project focused on: strengthening institutional partnerships dealing with nature protection in the cross-border region and analysis of the cave biodiversity of the region, in the context of its touristic valorisation and the enrichment of touristic offer.

At the beginning of the project there have been some difficulties in implementation of project activities, given that this is the first EU project implemented by PENPM. Minor delays in realisation did not significantly affect the quality of project activities and project results. The project team managed funds efficiently and applied reallocation to organise additional project activities that are in line with the needs of target groups. Regardless of the initial difficulties, the project team demonstrated flexibility to adapt to project requirements and react adequately.

The project contributed to forming a prerequisite for development of joint cross-border touristic offer in the region, by establishing cooperation among institutions that manage protected areas and by organising their joint activities.

Also, one of the major achievements of the project is the enhancement of the tourist offer of protected areas by building touristic infrastructure, researching opportunities for valorisation of caves and production of promotional materials.

### Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed for consideration in further work of the project partners:

- Further capacity building of PENPM for writing and managing projects financed from the EU funds.
- PENPM, DUNEA and the Public Institution for the Management of Protected Natural Areas Dubrovnik - Neretva County should continue to collaborate towards the creation and promotion of the unique tourist offer.
- Potential topics of joint projects could include: establishing regional education centre to promote unique tourist attractions; valorisation of caves; education about the value and importance of speleological entities; the joint protection of natural parks etc.
- Further cooperation of PENPM and their associates in the implementation of detailed cave examinations in national parks of Montenegro.
- Publish a scientific paper based on the data obtained during the study of caves, in order to inform the scientific community about the results.
- Continue with the distribution of the project products (outputs) - a joint study of biodiversity in the cross-border area, reports from the field survey, cadastre of speleological entities in the National Park of Skadar Lake, as well as the promotional material.

## ANEXES

### Annex 1: Logical Framework

	Intervention Logic	Verifiable Indicator	Means of Verification	Assumptions
<b>Overall Objective</b>	<i>To contribute to the integration of the economy in border areas and enhancing cooperation in the field of tourism through the development of recognisable joint tourist offer based on common environmental and cultural heritage and improvement the competitiveness of the local tourism economy.</i>	5% increased number of tourist arrivals in the programme area	Annual statistic data, economic progress reports	
<b>Specific Objective</b>	<i>To enhance touristic offer in cross boarder territory through touristic valorisation of natural protected resources by introducing them to visitors as a joint touristic offer of region.</i>	5% increased number of visitors in project implementing area		Political stability and cooperation support in the region
				Consistency in implementation o the National and regional measures for sustainable tourism development
<b>Results</b>	1. Partnership and networking of the cross border nature protection institutions strengthened	Joint partnership activities organized	Final project report	Substantial number of interested entities and clients  Continuing support of the regional tour operators
	2. Joint analysis on area's potential delivered	1 Joint analyses on area's potential for the cross border area	Final version of the analyses, final project report	
	3. Natural protected locations in Croatia and Montenegro valorised and marked	All locations mentioned and marked Reconstructed Šipun cave Protected and valorised 10	Construction company reports, final project report	

**Final Evaluation of the Project “Nature for the Future”**

		caves on Skadar lake Set up biodiversity trail on Bačina lakes and Skadar Lake Sett up sightseeing points on Lastovo, Skadar lake and Lovćen Set up educational centre in Dubrovačko Primorje		
	4. Promoted joint concern on nature protection and razed awareness on nature protection and promoted joint touristic offer based on natural heritage	Promotional events held and organized in local communities: 2 press conference, distributed promotional material, developed web site	Final project report, local newspaper	
	5. Promoted Cross border area as an integral tourist destination	Promotional events held and organized in local communities: 2 press conference, distributed promotional material, developed web site	Final project report, local newspaper	
<b>Activities</b>	<b>WP1. Management and monitoring</b>	Project staff, representatives of the Partner institutions and relevant institutions as members of the working groups	<b>Costs:</b> <b>APPLICANT 1 - CRO</b> Subtotal Human Resources - 49.269,00  Subtotal Travel - 663,00  Subtotal Equipment and Supplies- 9.770,00  Subtotal Other costs, services - 35.950,00  Other: 112.000,00  Total eligible costs: 229.952,86  <b>APPLICANT 2 - MNE:</b>	<b>Pre-conditions:</b>  Confirmed participation of the all stakeholders remain the same or higher     Building and reconstruction permits for small infrastructure works on natural protected area
	1.1 Kick-off meeting			
	1.2 Project coordination	Project staff, working groups, subcontracted experts		
	<b>WP2. Preliminary research for valorisation of natural heritage</b>			
	2.1. On-site analyses			
	2.2. Developing joint study on biodiversity of protected area			
	2.3. Bio – chemical monitoring for caves			

**Final Evaluation of the Project “Nature for the Future”**

	<b>WP3. Small infrastructure works</b>		Subtotal Human Resources: 59.166,98	
	3.1. Preservation and marking the caves		Subtotal Travel: 1.705,50	
	3.2. Preservation and marking the lakes		Subtotal Equipment and Supplies: 27.250,00	
			Subtotal Other costs, services: 54.450,00	
			Other: 31.500,00	
			Total eligible costs: 195.570,43	
			Overall total: 415.483,20 EUR	
			Overall grant: 325.236,11 EUR	
	3.3. Setting up a sightseeing point			
	3.4. Setting up educational centre in Dubrovačko Primorje			
	<b>WP4. Promotion and dissemination</b>			
	4.1. Design and development of promotional materials			
	4.2. Development of the promotional web site			
	4.3. Organising Study trip			
	4.4. Organising a final conference			

## Annex 2: List of interviewed people<sup>13</sup>

Name	Function	Institution	Municipality
Veselin Luburić	Project manager/Chief of department of development and improvement of national parks	Public Enterprise for National parks of Montenegro	Podgorica
Miloš Pavićević	Project associate	NGO Outdoor Club Podgorica	Podgorica
Sara Jovićević	Advisor	Tourist organisation Bar	Podgorica
Vasilije Uskoković	Director	National park Lovćen	Podgorica
Marko Vujanović	Advisor	Tourist organisation Cetinje	Cetinje
Dejan Gazivoda	Project associate	Montenegro Conservation and Archaeology Centre /archaeology department	Cetinje
Marko Karaman	Project associate	Natural history museum of Montenegro	Podgorica
Marina Đurović	Project assistant/expert associate	Public Enterprise for National parks of Montenegro	Podgorica

<sup>13</sup> Listed by the time of meetings

### **Annex 3: List of reviewed documentation**

#### **Project documents:**

- The Project proposal;
- The Logical framework;
- The Work plan;
- The Project budget.

#### **Project reports:**

- Minutes, event reports and presentations (meetings, study visits, final conference, round table, etc.);
- Project implementation progress report (interim progress report);
- Joint Technical Secretariat (Kotor) Monitoring Report;
- Published articles in daily newspapers and press releases;
- Photos.

#### **Project deliverables:**

- On-site analysis report;
- Cadastre of Speleological entities in National Park Skadar Lake;
- Study on Biodiversity of Protected Areas in cross-border region;
- Catalogue;
- Maps;
- Poster;
- Project web site: <http://www.nff-cbc.eu/> .

#### **Legislative acts:**

- Law on National Parks
- Law on Nature Protection
- Law on Environment Protection
- Law on Cultural Heritage Protection

#### **Other:**

- National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Montenegro;
- Tourism Development Strategy in Montenegro until 2020;
- Municipality of Bar Strategic Development Plan 2012-2017;
- Royal Capital Strategic Development Plan 2012-2016;
- National Park Skadar Lake Management Plan 2011-2015;
- National Park Lovćen Management Plan 2011-2015.

## Annex 4: Project intervention areas



## Annex 5: Terms of Reference: Evaluation of the IPA project 'Nature for the Future'

### Basic information:

**Project title:** 'Nature for the Future'- Within the cross-border cooperation program Croatia-Montenegro, financed by the EU through IPA Component II

**Beneficiary:** Public Enterprise for National Parks of Montenegro (PENPMNE)

**Number of Contract:** CRIS No. 255 810

**Project area:** NP Lovćen, NP Skadar Lake, Royal Capital Cetinje, Municipality of Bar, Dubrovnik-Neretva County

**Total eligible cost on Montenegrin side:** 189,669.65 €

**Beginning of implementation:** 16.01.2011

**Project duration:** 24 months

**Overall objective:** To contribute to the integration of the economy in border areas and enhancing cooperation in the field of tourism through the development of recognisable joint tourist offer based on common environmental and cultural heritage and improve the competitiveness of local tourism economy.

**Specific objective:** To enhance tourist offer in cross-border region through touristic valorisation of natural protected resources by introducing them to visitors as a joint tourist offer of the region.

### Target groups:

- Public institutions for nature protection (2)
- Nature parks and natural protected areas(6)
- Municipalities involved in the project (6)

### Final beneficiaries:

- Institutions for nature protection
- Visitors/tourists of cross-border region
- Municipalities
- Local community

### Project results:

- Partnership and networking of the cross-border nature protection institutions strengthened
- Joint analysis of biodiversity potential delivered
- Enriched tourist supply market

### Objectives of evaluation:

1. Assess efficiency and direct impact and contribution of project actions on four project results.
2. Assess to what extent the project action has contributed to the achievement of overall project objective.

In addition, the evaluation process will seek answers to the following key questions:

1. What are the major achievements of the program in both quantitative and qualitative sense?
2. How effective was the project design and approach towards achieving overall and specific objective?
3. What changes, if any, have been made in project design during the implementation and what are their effects?
4. What are the main lessons learned from the project implementation? Are there any ways this program could have been more efficient and effective in implementation?
5. What is the most probable sustainability of the program impact?
6. To what extent the implemented program fits into IPA Cross-Border Program Croatia-MNE 2007-2013?

It is expected that Evaluation Report offers identification of recommendations for future za IPA programs in area of cross-border cooperation and lessons to be learned for future project operations of a similar kind;

#### **Methodology for final evaluation is the following:**

1. Review of the documents;
2. Half-structured interviews with project partners from Montenegro and Croatia and key actors (as recommended by NPMNE);
3. Visit to at least two locations where project actions took place (NP Skadar Lake, NP Lovćen, Municipality of Bar, Royal Capital Cetinje, and Public Enterprise for National Parks of Montenegro). The visit shall include half-structured interviews with key actors related to tourist offer in protected areas. Representatives of target groups shall be selected by PENPMNE.
4. Assessment of key findings related to indicators and objectives laid out in logical framework
5. Preparation of Draft report for comments; finalisation of the Report.

#### **Final product of evaluation:**

The Final Evaluation Report shall be structured as follows:

1. Introduction
2. Methodology
3. Answer to Key Questions/issues
4. Conclusions
5. Recommendations

#### **Timeframe:**

The evaluation process is expected to start on March 11, 2013. The first Draft is expected to be completed by 21st of March, 2013. PENPMNE will provide comments on the Draft report by March 24, 2013. The Final Evaluation report is expected to be delivered by March 26, 2013.

### **Logistic**

An independent consultant or company shall perform the evaluation, in duration of 14 days (four days for desk research; six days for the filed work, two days in NP Skadar Lake, two days in NP Lovćen, three days in Podgorica) and four days for writing of the Report). PENPMNE shall provide assistance in organization of meetings in Podgorica.

### **Expert qualification**

The Consultant is expected to possess the following professional and personal profile:

- Minimum education degree in this area
- Good knowledge of written and spoken English and Montenegrin/Croatian language;
- Great experience in project cycle management, including, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- Proved excellent analytical and reporting skills.
- Good knowledge of EU monitoring and evaluation procedures
- Minimum 10 years of mixed experience in relevant tasks
- Full computer literacy in using Microsoft Office
- Ability to travel inside Montenegro and Croatia.

**Working language for reporting:** Montenegrin/Croatian and English

### **Budget**

Total budget available: 2000.00 €.

The budget for evaluation services needs to be presented as to include all taxes, accommodation and travel costs during the filed work.

NPMNE shall not cover any additional costs that may occur thereof and the total amount shall be paid upon receiving/approving the Final Evaluation Report.