



Public Institution for the Management of Protected
Natural Areas of Dubrovnik-Neretva County

Interreg
Europe



Co-funded by
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GREENHEALTH

GREENHEALTH project

“Sustainable protected areas as a key value for human well-being”

Report of the
1st Interregional Learning Workshop
2nd Transnational Project Meeting and study visit.

22-23 November, 2023
Dubrovnik, Croatia

Public Institution for Management of Protected Natural Areas
of Dubrovnik-Neretva County





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1. Introduction

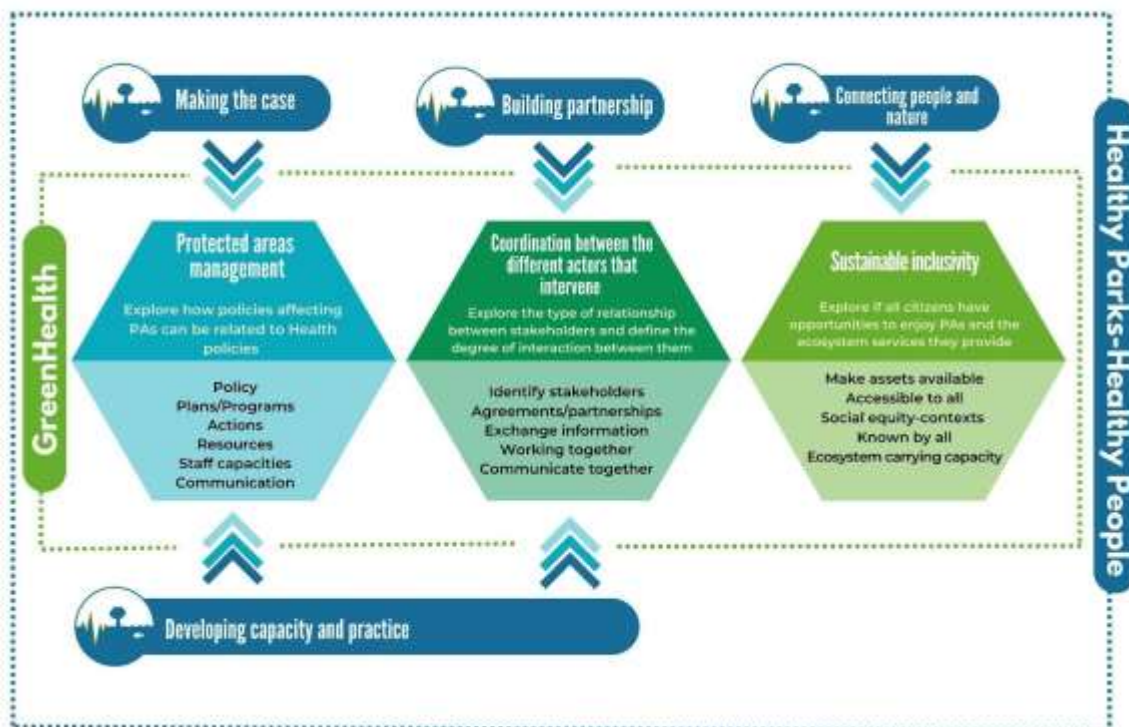
Activity description

On 22nd of November 2023 the 1st **GREENHEALTH Interregional Learning Workshop** took place from 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Dubrovnik Student Centre in the city of Dubrovnik, Croatia. On the same day, the 2nd **Transnational Project Meeting** was held in the Dubrovnik Student Centre from 2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

A study visit took place on 23rd of November 2023 from 8:00 a.m. to 17:00 p.m. in the NATURA 2000 site - *Sniježnica i Konavosko polje* and Significant landscape - *Konavoski dvori*.

The events were organized by the Croatian partner - Public Institution for Management of Protected Natural Areas of Dubrovnik-Neretva County.

The main aim of the Inter-Regional Learning Workshop is the sharing of good practices from the different regions. In semester 2, each partner needed to identify at least one regional good practice related to the 1st thematic area (blue hexagon in the picture below) and introduce it to the other participants to allow cross-fertilisation and seek for replicability aspects.





2. Participation

[37 participants](#) (partners and their stakeholders) participated in the Inter-Regional Learning Workshop. The afternoon session was joined by [14 partners](#) representatives. Both meetings were hybrid and the participants had the possibility to interact. In addition to raising the questions “live”, the online participants were encouraged to write comments and pose questions using the chat through ZOOM Internet platform. A total of [19 participants](#) joined the Study visit on 23/11/2023.

3. Meeting records

Detailed description of the [agenda](#):

1) 22/11/2023

Ms. Nikolina Đangradović, Public Institution for Management of Protected Natural Area of Dubrovnik-Neretva County, opened the Meeting and welcomed all participants. She was followed by Mr. Silvio Markota, the acting head of the Administrative Department for Environmental Protection and Communal Affairs in Dubrovnik-Neretva County, who greeted the participants, emphasizing the importance of urban green infrastructure, which has a positive effect on people's physical and mental health.

Green spaces in cities have a significant beneficial cooling effect in the surrounding environment as well, since heat waves associated with climate change carry a number of health risks. At the same time, green urban areas enable physical activity and relaxation and represent a refuge from noise.

After the introductory part, the First Interregional Learning Workshop was held, which was attended by representatives of the partners and their stakeholders.

Ms. Anna Castelli (EUROPARC Federation – advisory partner) moderated the workshop.

After a short introduction, she left the floor to Mr. Carles Castell from EUROPARC Federation's Healthy Parks Healthy People Europe (HPHPe) Commission.

Mr Castell provided nine successful practice examples that had been developed in Catalonia. He used the scheme of the HPHPe four programme pillars – making the case, building partnerships, developing capacity and practice, connecting people and nature - as a framework to showcase them. Sometimes it is difficult to know to which pillar an action belongs. That it is not negative, but rather means that the action is having an impact. The examples are listed below.

Making the case

1. Visitor's survey on motivation of the visit.



2. Piloting first areas of special protection for acoustic quality inside a protected metropolitan area.

Building partnership

3. Creation of a transversal working group at Diputació.
4. Creation of the Health & Nature Catalan Forum.

Building partnership & Developing capacity and practice

5. Training courses on nature and health for public health professionals. Health practitioners in Catalonia have access to a section on nature assets for green prescriptions.

Connecting people and nature

6. Improvement of website accessibility for groups with special needs. They worked with NGOs that were experts working with people with disabilities.
7. Creation of healthy itineraries in natural parks and peri-urban areas and creation of specific activities to concrete target groups.
8. Forest bathing: they made compatible forest bathing with forest conservation. They put a scheme to conserve forests that were not protected through the activity of forest bathing.
9. Green prescription: they are implementing a pilot programme with people with mental disorders and fibromyalgia.

After Carles Castell presentation the group work (led by Anna Castelli) started.

The partners were given a working matrix and divided in country groups to discuss how the good practices could be of inspiration and which actions could potentially be incorporated and/or replicated. The most interesting points, could be followed up for more information. They also answered questions about the management and promotion of their Protected Areas to a wider group of people with the aim of improving their general health and well-being, and further connecting with the health sector.

At the end of the group work, the partners and stakeholders could introduce their good practices and exchange, interact and pose each other questions.

Mr. Andrés Muñoz (General Directorate Natural Environment of the Region of Murcia - PP01) presented the good practice of Murcia: An Agreement signed between the 3 main General Directorates of Murcia that work on nature and on health. Andrés explained the main features of the agreement and pointed out that this is a good practice of management as it was the starting point where to set the objectives and commitments.

Mr. Dariusz Kozik (Podkarpackie Region - PP02) presented the "Landscape Walking Rallies". Landscape parks are areas protected for natural, historical, cultural and landscapes values. The initiative emerged as people did not seem not appreciate the natural landscape. Walking rallies are 5 cyclical events, which are usually organized on marked nature paths and promote physical activity on nature. The main objectives are popularizing hiking, shape healthy lifestyle habits, improve human wellbeing...



The initiative is being successful, as it sees increasing participation each year and positive feedback every year.

Mr. Łukasz Lis (Podkarpackie Region - PP02) presented another good practice “Using nature reserves in the Podkarpackie Voivodeship to improve health and wellbeing”. They organized a run for the azalea flower or “the days of the azalea blooming”. They have also drafted a conservation plan for the Lisia Góra nature reserve as a way to improve the well-being of Rzeszów residents. They asked people what they preferred, wild forest or open landscapes. Most of the people answered the preferred opened space, what helped them to define how to manage the area, leaving some space more opened for the wellbeing of the people.

Mr. Antoni Jeż (Podkarpackie Region - PP02) explains another good practice “Walks with a forester”, that aims to teach about the history of the forest and its healing functions. The initiative has been very well received. He presents another initiative on BdNP, which focuses its activities on nature protection and promoting tourism.

Ms. Ana Tutavac (Public Institution for the Management of Protected Natural Areas of Dubrovnik-Neretva County - PP03) presented the good practice “Coexistence of people and natural values in the significant landscape Konavoski dvori”. She explained the links they had found between this initiative and the HPHPe programme and objectives of the good practice and results. She thought a main success factor had been the cooperation with stakeholders, the regular area supervision and the interest of local community. The main challenges are the lack of human and financial resources.

Ms. Soňa Kožárová (Prešov Self Governing Region - PP05) and Ms. Daniela Galandová (National Parks in Slovakia - Associated Partner of Prešov Self Governing Region) presented the development of Poloniny National Park that is linked to the growing interest of the area for tourism. They are working on the digitalization in the management of the Poloniny National Park and improving public policies, strengthening cooperation with the academic sector in the framework of the Interreg Europe and Interreg Central Europe Programmes. They presented some initiatives in which they are working for the development of the Region.

Mr. Conall McGettigan and Ms. Eiméar Dowd (Northern and Western Regional Assembly - PP04) presented the initiative of “Slow Adventure Tourism”, it’s a form of tourism, which avoids the quick-fix adrenalin-pumping hits of convenient adventure experiences, in favour of slow, immersive journeys, living in and travelling through wild places and natural spaces. They thought this change would provide more benefits for mental and physical health.

Ms. Elena Bazhenova (Kullaberg Nature Reserve - PP06) and Ms. Fiona Dunne (stakeholder - Kullaberg Nature Reserve) presented “Facilitating incorporation of health/wellbeing in PA management through two good practices: Kullaberg Tourism Forum and Volunteers in Mölle”. The first practice hopes to improve information flow between PA authority and stakeholders. Regarding second good practice the group of volunteers assist with ad hoc tasks, such as garbage picking, informing about natural



values. The experiences and opinions of the volunteers show that the activities developed contributed to their health and wellbeing.

After the presentations, the floor was open for interventions from the participants making comments about presentations or asking questions to the members of panel.

Ms. Nikolina Đangradović thanked the speakers and participants and closed the morning session.

The Second Transnational Project Meeting attended by the partners of the GREENHEALTH project was held in the afternoon, after the First Interregional Learning Workshop. At the meeting, representatives of the partner institutions discussed the activities carried out so far, and future project tasks were defined and coordinated with the aim of better fulfilling the project responsibilities of each of the partners.

2) 23/11/2023

The Study visit was organised as a field tour in Konavle area, visiting the Significant landscape *Konavoski dvori* as well as the area of the NATURA 2000 site: *Sniježnica i Konavosko polje*, which is one of the examples of good practice of human coexistence and natural and cultural values. In addition to the significant landscape, the participants also visited the Sokol town, the Šipun cave and the Konavle Native Museum.

4. Materials

Several resources were developed for the Meeting - nine partner's power point presentations of the good practices, agenda, minutes, list of participants and photos. The presentations and other materials were hosted in the project's Google Drive after the Meeting. The partners have access to the materials, with the possibility of downloading it.

5. Conclusions

1st Interregional Learning Workshop in Dubrovnik gave the conviction that it is necessary to emphasise more strongly the health and well-being dimension in the management of Protected Areas. So far, protected area managers in their activities in the partners countries have been mainly focused on the ecological dimension, the preservation of biodiversity and the protection of nature, and the subject of the impact of these areas on the health and well-being of people has been a peripheral or negligible element.



The good practices that have been introduced or some of their elements of them, will serve as inspiration for further development.

It is necessary to continuously improve staff and managers in the area of the impact of Protected Areas on improving well-being and health, e.g. by participating in training, workshops and courses. Including the stakeholders from a health background within project development is important for the success of the project because there is still an important gap between regions on the link between environmental and health.

It is important to incorporate stakeholders from the health sector not only to the management of the Protected Areas but also to participate in the Learning Workshop.

There is need to incorporate health issues in the strategic planning of the Protected Areas management as well as to improve the capacities training of the PA managers in the field of health. Simply put, the link between biodiversity protection and health must be made more explicit in the regions of intervention.

The [HPHPe toolkit](#) items and the many elements that can be replicated and that have been shared during the workshop can help making the link more explicit and reinforcing each of the regional approaches. It is essential to focus on actions that can be implemented during the first biennium of the project, with the view to start working on longer term actions based on the policy dialogue in the different regions of operations.



ANNEX 1. Agenda

TUESDAY, 21st November 2023

Partners' arrival to Dubrovnik

20:00 Meeting Point → Informal dinner in Dubrovnik Student Center,
Marka Marojice 2b Street, Dubrovnik

WEDNESDAY, 22nd November 2023

8:30 - Meeting at Dubrovnik Student Center reception

1st INTERREGIONAL LEARNING WORKSHOP

(open to partners and their stakeholders)

Venue: Dubrovnik Student Center (small hall), Marka Marojice 2b Street,
Dubrovnik

09:00 - 09:15	Official Opening Representative from Dubrovnik-Neretva County
09:15 - 10:30	Deep dive into HPHPe good practices (PP7) Carles Castell and Anna Castelli
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break and Networking
11:00 - 12:30	Partners good practices presentation on protected areas management (15' per partner)
12:30 - 13:00	Open debate among participants (moderated by PP7)
13:00 - 13:15	Final Q&A and Closing
13:15 – 14:15	Lunch & Networking
2nd TRANSNATIONAL PROJECT MEETING (only for partners)	
Venue: Dubrovnik Student Center (small hall), Marka Marojice 2b Street, Dubrovnik	
14:30 - 15:30	Management – General Directorate on Natural Environment, Region of Murcia (LP01) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting • General management
15:30 - 16:30	Dissemination – Anna CASTELLI – EUROPARC Federation (AP07) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrapping up semester one activities & where we stand • Short update from the communications meeting in Lille



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priorities for semester two & proposed action plan
16:30 - 17:00	GREENHEALTH Next steps - General Directorate on Natural Environment, Region of Murcia (LP01)
20:00 Networking dinner in Dubrovnik Student Center	

THURSDAY, 23rd November 2023

8:00 - Meeting point and Venue location in front of Dubrovnik Student Center

STUDY VISIT

8:00 - 09:30	Visit to the forest-park Velika i Mala Petka
09:30	Departure to Konavle
10:00 - 11:00	Visit to the Šipun cave
11:15 - 12:15	Visit to the significant landscape Konavoski dvori
12:15 - 13:30	Lunch in Gruda
13:30 - 16:00	Visit to the local museum Konavle and Sokol tower

16:00 - Return to the city centre of Dubrovnik

17:00 - Optional Dubrovnik city tour



ANNEX 3. Photos





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