

Working Groups Day 2

Question 1:

How would a “perfect project” along the Balkan Green Belt look like?

Facilitator: Annette Spangenberg, EuroNatur

VISION – JOINT BENEFIT FOR ALL PARTICIPATING ENTITIES

Strategies:

- Bottom-up Approach
- Political support is needed
- Society support is needed

Geographical Focus:

- Transboundary
- Along whole Balkan Green Belt vs. not more than two to three countries included
- Trilateral protected area
- Multilateral protected area
- Create model (project) in each BGB country
- Prokletije (AL/MNE)
- Shar (KOS/AL/MK)

Technical frame:

- Big budget needed
- Long-term project (3-5 yrs. 1. Phase)
- 3 years duration

- Joint management body
- Rotating management body
- One lead partner (not from Balkans)
- Several lead partners (GOs/NGOs)
- Involve experts
- Serious and responsible project partners

- Easy administration – less bureaucracy in terms of financial administration

Contents of project:

Nature Conservation:

- Create new protected areas – improve management of existing PAs
- Safeguard areas of high natural value with support of local people and national authorities
- Create data base for species

Intersectoral approach

- Broad focus: nature protection, development of sustainable tourism, education, research and monitoring
- Address natural and cultural heritage

- Develop area as one eco-touristic destination

Concrete Mechanisms

- Land purchase - buy as much land as possible
- Certify forests (FSC)
- Use carbon mechanism

Capacity Building

- Train people
- Awareness raising – environmental education – capacity building
- Research, capacity building, mapping
- Capacity building, gap analysis, public participation

Involvement and consideration of local needs

- Consider local livelihoods
- Maintain local livelihoods
- Build up local ownership of project and project results
- Add value to local products and project results, e.g. by local brand

Plans and Strategies

- Develop trademark with clearly defined vision
- Develop development strategy for area in focus
- Develop a common marketing strategy
- Develop conservation action plan for Balkan Green Belt
- Harmonize management plans and legislation of PAs in different countries
- Develop ecological network along the Balkan Green Belt
- Develop network of PAs and PA managers

Media and Communication

- PR Strategy
- Corporate Design

General Aspects to consider for a project:

- Share experiences between countries
- Broad project outreach to ensure viability of project results
- Develop mechanism to ensure sustainability of project
- Address a variety of products, not only tourism
- Consider GEF project on Stara Planina as best practice model for large scale projects

Target Results:

- Continuity (financial, identity and results) – new project developed
- Win-Win situation: nature conservation -rural development – touristic development
- Gain private investment
- Public-private partnerships
- Improved visibility of Balkan Green Belt
- Improved cooperation among players along BGB

Question 2:

Which are the obstacles that until now, no regional projects were implemented?

Which basic conditions would be necessary to implement such a project?

Facilitator: Martin Schneider-Jacoby, EuroNatur

Obstacles:

- Different languages
- Different legislation
- Different protection status
- Different level of management

- Private landowner ship limiting nature protection projects
- Depopulation is limiting implementation of projects
- Poverty and illiteracy especially in poor / remote border areas
- Accessibility of the border areas

- No information who is responsible for EGB in the country
- No partner/office in the neighboring country¹
- Lack of communication between a) politicians, b) PAs, c) NGOs → lack of governance

- PAs/EGB no priority of the government
- Government interested in other development goals
- Interest in large scale businesses (big development projects vs rural development)
- Local GOs vs. national GOs
- Corruption

- Lack of human resources / capacity
- No / not enough funding for PAs
- No information on funding opportunities

- Lack of partner in the other country
- Financial basis of good partners (often) too small
- Big projects needs trust in partner to sign obligations
- Cross border programmes (as IPA) are difficult to apply and manage, and it is very difficult to find qualified partner
- Lack of experience to run cross border projects
- Co- and pre-funding is a big problem
- Last minute calls / no time for preparation

- No common vision

- Political issues between countries

¹ Lists of potential partners are available for each country → Stanka

Basic conditions needed:

- Political will / good political climate
- Knowledge on values (biodiversity, cultural, touristic, etc.) which should be targeted by the cross border project
- Promotion of the area to get enough attention
- Partnership to manage the funds in several countries: Partnership = knowing the right people
- Funding opportunities known (in time)
- Improved PAs management efficiency
- TB NGO working group
- Capacity building for project management and development
- Lobbying for importance of the EGB
- Support by regional stakeholders → local project or GB ambassador
- Law enforcement
- Clear government commitment
- Good knowledge of the programme of work for the EGB

Question 3:

Which experiences do you have with funding?

Which funding sources are you aware of?

Facilitator: Gabriel Schwaderer, EuroNatur

Global Funding:

- UNDP
- Worldbank

→ GEF

EU Funding:

- SEE Transnational Programme
- IPA Regional
- IPA ArcAdria
- Interreg C
- Leonardo
- Black Sea Joint OP
- LIFE+ (only EU Members)
- ESPON

→ Complicated procedure

→ Co-financing required

→ Along BGB, there are EU and non-EU countries – not all countries are eligible

Funding EEA Countries:

- SDC
- EEA Grants
- Norwegian Funds

Foundations:

- UK Lottery Fund
- DBU
- MAVA
- Key Biodiversity Areas Initiative

National Level:

- Tourism Sector
- Address Embassies for small grants