

## **STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT ON THE EXAMPLE OF KOZARA NATIONAL PARK**

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**Abstract:** *The sustainable development of tourism represents a positive approach in development, its intentions are to reduce the discrepancies that arise in the relations between the tourism industry, local communities, the environment and tourists. Protected areas, and especially national parks, are important tourist destinations. The principles of sustainable tourism help managers to organize and improve the areas they manage. In this sense, the strategic approach of sustainable development of tourism represents the aspiration of management structures to launch initiatives that will not degrade natural resources. Of particular importance in the development of tourist destinations are their elements and attractive factors, on the basis of which their further development and organization is directed. The concept of sustainable development, as the most important challenge and task at the beginning of the 21st century, should be based on an integral holistic approach, which implies the mutual connection of all factors that participate in the development of tourism. In modern business conditions, it is necessary to improve the management of tourist areas, with the aim of preserving them, as well as improving the quality of development. This implies the definition of indicators that ensure the measurement of various economic, physical and sociocultural impacts, which originate from tourism. The success of the operation of the “Kozara” National Park depends on quality strategic management, i.e., formation of strategic harmony between the destination’s resources, on the one hand, and threats and opportunities, on the other. The aim of this paper is to point out the need to apply strategic management of sustainable development of tourism in the National Park “Kozara”, and to define an adequate strategy to ensure the effectiveness of the National Park “Kozara” as a protected tourist destination.*

**Keywords:** *strategic management, sustainable development of tourism, tourist destination, National Park “Kozara”*

**JET classification:** Q56

## INTRODUCTION

The intensity of negative effects on the environment will depend on the number of tourists visiting certain areas, which manifests itself in the reduction of air and water quality, increased noise, changes in the appearance of the landscape, damage to flora and fauna, etc. (Inskeep, 1991). Environmental protection received its global framework in 1972 at the UN Conference in Stockholm and in 1992 at the Conference on Environmental Protection in Rio de Janeiro, where it was emphasized that environmental protection is a global issue, but that the local community must also participate in the processes of environmental protection. The main document on environmental protection issues is Agenda 21 (Global Program of Action on Sustainable Development), in which it is clearly emphasized that environmental protection represents an integral part of overall human development. Every activity, when planning and making decisions, must respect the requirements of the environment as much as possible, in order for its development to be permanent, otherwise it can lead to self-destruction (UNEP, 1994)

The expansive and uncontrolled development of tourism during the past few decades, accompanied by many unwanted ecological, social and cultural consequences, imposes the need to bring this activity under the concept of sustainable development. The sustainability of the development of tourism, as well as other activities, depends, above all, on the ability of the environment to provide a stable and long-term basis for development. There is a clear demand for all participants and holders of tourism activities to adapt to this new development philosophy and way of thinking (Jovičić D., 2002)

The goal that should be strived for and that should be maximally supported is the coordinated development of tourism, based on an integral or complex approach, which places equal emphasis on five components: achieving economic profit, preserving the environment, affirming social integrity, nurturing the cultural peculiarities of the local population and optimally satisfying tourist needs. That is why sustainable tourism is shown schematically as an equilateral triangle, because it should, at the same time, contribute to the achievement of goals on five different levels, none of which must become dominant in relation to the others (Muller, 1993).

The concept of sustainable tourism, first of all, requires essential ethical changes in all participants of the tourism process, from the tourism industry as the carrier and creator of the offer, to tourists as users of these services. If a consensus is reached around important basic ethical principles as a prerequisite for action and they become a key component in the decision-making process, positive results can be expected in the development of tourism on a sustainable basis. In order to end poverty in the world, as well as to provide prosperity and opportunities for everyone on a healthy planet, the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda was launched in 2015, which was supported by all UN member states, adopting a program of 17 goals, within the 15-year plan for realization of the stated goals (UN, 2023)

The stated reasons impose the need to apply the concept of sustainable development, which focuses on the necessity of strategic thinking about the future development of tourist destinations. It is especially necessary to apply this concept to the oldest natural assets and tourist resources, which are national parks (Vukosav & et., 2015) The sustainability of tourism development in national parks depends on the ability of

the environment to provide a stable and long-term development basis for these tourist resources. It is up to all participants and holders of tourism activities to adapt to this new development strategy and way of thinking. In addition, the success of a tourist destination will increasingly depend on its sensitivity in relation to the intensity of consecutions in the environment (Vukosav & et., 2015).

The touristic capabilities of national parks represent a high degree of originality and creativity in the presentation of aesthetic and curiosity values, which fully evokes the authenticity of a certain area (Jovičić D. , 1997) In order to position the “Kozara” National Park as a successful tourist destination, a continuous and comprehensive development of strategic management is needed, based on the principles of sustainable tourism development.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Strategic management can be defined as a permanent process of adapting the organization (enterprise) to the environment while simultaneously influencing the environment, in accordance with the purpose and goals of the enterprise (Ansoff, 1981). Tourism is a complex and open system, the management of which requires an integral approach both internally and externally. In order to achieve the effectiveness and efficiency of the tourism system, adequate management should integrate and coordinate the development of all its segments and subsystems such as supply, demand, physical and institutional elements. In addition to internal integration and coordination, planning is necessary to integrate tourism into the context of the general economic and sociocultural development of the state, region or some other spatial unit, its specificities and material resources. It is the best way to unite communal services, traffic, catering, tourism, trade, agriculture, environmental protection and other activities into a harmonious whole (Jovičić D. , 2002).

A strategic approach to tourism management and planning brings about a fundamental change, according to which the focus is no longer on making a plan, but on the planning process, which is based on the appreciation of the complexity of changes occurring in the environment of the destination (Gunn, 1998). Accordingly, strategic planning is focused on systemic anticipation and change management, with the aim of promoting regular development and increasing economic, social and environmental benefits. The strategic management of a tourist destination is understood to mean the choice of the appropriate path by which the tourist destination should secure a competitive position on the tourist market in the long term, as well as a plan of actions based on anticipated conditions in the environment, all with the aim of adapting to market conditions and achieving defined goals business (Dobre, 2004). Successful strategic management of a tourist destination must have the following characteristics:

- The strategy must concentrate on the totality of activities of the tourist destination,
- The strategy must ensure a successful and permanent alignment of the activities of the tourist destination with its environment. There is a certain danger if the management first develops the missions, goals and guidelines of the tourist destination, and only then takes into account the importance and impact of the environment,
- The strategy must be oriented towards the issues of internal limitations (es-

pecially the problem and inelasticity of the offer),

- Strategic management must be oriented towards long-term decisions, which have a decisive influence on the growth and development of the destination (Dobre, 2004).

Achieving the business goals of a tourist destination depends on its ability to satisfy the needs and wishes of consumers (tourists) with an adequate combination of market performance instruments, i.e., finding their optimal combination through the choice of strategic alternatives. Defining the choice of strategies is a rather complex process, especially because with the emergence of numerous destinations, a large number of different tourist products appear, as well as the great possibility of market segmentation into small homogeneous groups of consumers (Vukosav & et., 2015) That's why in designing the management strategy of tourist destinations, the basic question is, what kind of product, to which market and how to get a foothold in the selected market. Well-positioned tourist destinations constantly adapt their strategy to the demands of tourists, and the strategy itself begins and ends with selected market segments. The application of the concept of strategic management in the national park in the current turbulent conditions is an effective way of management in order to create a strategic harmony between the resources of the destination and the threats and opportunities acting from the environment (Vukosav & et., 2015)

The starting point for the development of tourism must be a valid spatial plan of the national park, as a basic lever for the protection and development of these assets. The spatial plan of the national park provides opportunities for the realization of such a spatial organization which would avoid or reduce to a minimum ecological risks present, under the condition of the long-term programs of protection and development of national parks. These programs should include the evaluation, ranking and protection of natural and cultural values and define the overall development structure of the national park, bringing it under the level of sustainable ecological development (Jovičić D. , 1997). In designing the overall development strategy of tourism in national parks, a more active role of state enterprises or institutions that manage these assets is necessary. This implies the improvement of their staffing, along with the hiring of experts for certain aspects of tourist development, who would prescribe precise instructions and firm standards for the work of companies that provide services to tourists in the park. Business entities that are granted concessions on certain properties in the national park in order to serve tourists must be under the permanent control of the national park administrations, in order to timely register any excessive phenomenon in nature as a consequence of their inadequate work (Jovičić D. , 1997)

In addition to the abovementioned, visitor management is of particular importance. The term visitor management must be treated strategically, because it is very important in the domain of management of protected areas, with a rapid increase in visitors. For the protected area, it is important to know precisely that the management of visitors leads to increased participation of tourists, as well as raising their awareness regarding the protection of the natural and cultural features of the area in which they are staying. The concept of sustainable visitor development includes tourists and strategies related to tourist destinations and maintaining a quality experience for current and future visitors (Štetić & Šimičević, 2009).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Strategic management of the sustainable development of tourism in the Kozara National Park (<https://npkozara.com/>) is a process that includes several steps:

- Analysis of the tourist destination,
- Determination of comparative indicators of sustainable development of tourism in the National Park “Kozara”,
- Strategy formulation,
- Directing the tourist destination.

Indicators of real impacts on the environment should provide the measurement of those physical and sociocultural impacts, which exclusively originate from tourism, independently of the impact of other activities. Practice shows that such indicators are very difficult to identify, because tourism is only one of the activities that has an impact on a certain spatial entity, which means that the impacts are complex, cumulative and depend on the specifics of the specific place and region. The European Union has shown great activity in order to determine indicators for assessing the sustainability of tourism development. In accordance with such efforts, a team of EU experts conducted case studies on the example of different European tourist areas and places. Based on the results of published research, a list of comparative indicators of sustainable tourism was proposed, through which research is conducted on the effects of tourism development in the countries of the European Union.

The indicators used for the purposes of the analysis of the “Kozara” National Park are classified into five groups:

- Economic indicators, which show the economic effects of tourism in a tourist place or area,
- Tourist satisfaction, refers to the degree of tourist satisfaction with the quality of tourist facilities and services provided and their opinion on the attractiveness of the motive, the state of the environment and the socio-cultural peculiarities of the receptive place,
- Social indicators reflect the social integrity of the local community from the aspect of the subjective well-being of the resident population in the tourist region or place,
- Cultural indicators express the degree of preservation of the cultural identity of the local community under the influence of tourists coming from areas with different cultural characteristics,
- Indicators of the state of the environment should provide a picture of the state of the environment and the impacts that tourism has on certain media.

The stated methodological principles correspond to the concept of strategic management of sustainable development of tourism in the National Park “Kozara”, in order to improve business and efficient growth and development of the tourist destination.

## RESEARCH RESULTS

Kozara Mountain is located in the northwestern part of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is a low mountain between the Pannonian Plain in the north and the Dinarides in the south, and is bordered by the Sava, Una and Vrbas rivers. The central part of Kozare Mountain, with an area of 39.07 square kilometers, was declared a national park in 1967. The main reason for the declaration of the “Kozara National Park” was

the historical aspect related to the events of the Second World War, with the aim of protecting the cultural, historical and natural values of the Kozara mountain.

The central part of the “Kozara” National Park is dominated by the Mrakovica plateau (806 m.a.s.l.), where the memorial zone with a memorial complex and a museum are. The Park area is elongated in the north-south direction, so that its length is 7 km, and its width is 3-6 km. “Kozara” National Park extends to the territories of the municipalities of Prijedor, Kozarska Dubica and Gradiška. Thanks to the dense complexes of deciduous and coniferous forests, the wealth of flora and fauna, clear streams and glades, the Kozara mountain was nicknamed the “Beauty of the Region”.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, since 2008, the World Bank project “Forest and Mountain Protected Areas Project” - FMPAP, whose general goal is to strengthen institutional and technical capabilities for sustainable management of protected areas and natural resources, has been implemented. The focus of the project on the territory of Republika Srpska is to improve the management of protected areas, as well as to expand and develop the capacity of existing protected areas. Within the framework of the mentioned project, a management plan for NP “Kozara” was prepared.

Despite the fact that it is a quality document, the subject of research into the sustainable development of a tourist destination, in many ways exceeds the scope of such a plan. Namely, the management of each tourist destination should analyze its situation and competitive position in detail and, depending on the above, formulate a management strategy. In this sense, we will use a situational analysis to determine the overall circumstances for the development of tourism by analyzing the environment of the tourist destination.

1. *Political factors* are factors that the destination cannot influence and must adapt to. Despite the fact that the war conflict on the territory of BiH ended less than three decades ago, constant political instability conditions a noticeable decrease in tourist visits.
2. *Economic factors* related to the amount of free funds and the paying power of the tourist clientele, have a decisive role in the placement of products and services in tourist destinations, including in the National Park “Kozara”. Bearing in mind that the management of NP “Kozara” in the current circumstances can count mainly on domestic clientele, all the more, the current economic crisis affects the significantly reduced number of tourist visits, compared to the pre-war period.
3. *Ecological factors* in tourist destinations such as national parks represent a fundamental reason for visiting, especially knowing that tourism is much more than other activities conditioned by the quality of the environment. In this sense, the management of the “Kozara” National Park is doing everything (and at a high level) in order to improve overall, environmentally responsible behavior.

Management of tourist destinations should consider their overall situation and competitive position and formulate a strategy based on that. However, the question arises - on the basis of which to choose the appropriate strategic alternative, that is, on the basis of which information and predictions to choose the appropriate strategies. In this regard, a high-quality SWOT analysis as a result of an internal and external analysis of the environment in which the tourist destination is located can best serve.



### Strengths

- Existence of conditions for the development of various types of tourism (excursion, sports-recreational, congress, event, hunting, etc.),
- Natural motifs of high values,
- Memorial and historical center of special importance,
- Cultural and historical motives,
- Favorable tourist-geographic position,
- Diverse plant and animal life,
- Favorable position in relation to emission markets,
- The beauty of nature and the environment.

### Weaknesses

- Seasonality of tourist traffic,
- Inadequate climatic conditions for more intensive valorization during the winter season,
- Relatively weak tourist equipment,
- Lack of accommodation capacities of higher categories,
- Weak marketing activity,
- State of traffic infrastructure,

### Possibilities

- Wide contractile zone,
- Greater degree of urbanization,
- Better promotion of available resources,
- Improvement of sports tourist offer,
- Stronger positioning in the market,
- Better valorization of summer content,
- Eco-tourism.

### Threats

- Failure to apply the principles of sustainable development of tourism,
- Risks of further urbanization and saturation of space,
- Conflicts regarding development options,
- Inadequate behavior of tourist clientele in protected natural resources,
- Possibilities of polluting the environment (water, soil, air),
- Unfavorable economic, social and political environment,
- Acquiring a negative image of an unsafe destination,
- Weak purchasing power of citizens.

SWOT analysis is a very suitable tool for identifying and classifying the possible choice of key strategies and policies to achieve the desired goals. It is a very suitable technique for every tourist destination in order to gain knowledge about the strengths and weaknesses of that destination. The SWOT analysis of the “Kozara” National Park was done based on the analysis of influential elements and factors, natural and cultural potentials, as well as the analysis of the overall attractiveness of the “Kozara” National Park. Part of the results were obtained by field research and interviewing the management of the National Park “Kozara” and the holders of tourist offers within the Park, and the other part by market analysis.

A seriously prepared SWOT analysis provides a better insight into the immediate connection and alignment of the tourist product and the mission of the destination,

as well as the quality of the tourist offer, as a measure of the standard and general image of the tourist product. The aforementioned analysis enables a better determination of market opportunities, which relate to the degree of current and future tourist demand for given tourist products.

In order to qualitatively determine the general and strategic goals of a tourist destination, it is necessary to identify its key tourist products. This means, within the overall offer, decide which tourism products deserve more support, which should be maintained, and which should be reduced or omitted from the offer. That is why it is necessary to carry out a portfolio analysis of the destination.

**Table 1.** Portfolio of National Park "Kozara"

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MISSION			
	Great importance	Middle importance	Low importance
Q	Excursion and eco-tourism (MO-H)	Congressional tourism (MO-H)	Sanatorium tourism (MO-M)
U	<b>High</b> Decision: -Increase the quantity -Pay extremely close attention to the protection of the environment	Decision: -Increase the quality of the offer -Increase the accommodation capability	Decision: - "Kozara" National Park is an aerial spa and it is necessary to increase the quantity
A	Sports and recreational tourism (MO-H)	Event tourism (MO-M)	Hunting tourism (MO-L)
L	<b>Middle</b> Decision: -Increase the quantity -Increase the capacity	Decision: -Increase the quality of the preexisting ones -Come up with new events	Decision: - Increase the quantity -Increase the promotion abroad
I			
T	<b>Low</b> Children and youth tourism (MO-L) Decision: Establish sports and ecocamps as well as schools in nature	Wellness (MO-L) Decision: - Significantly improve the quality of the offer within the current capacities	
Y			

Market opportunities: H-high, M-middle, L-low

**Source:** Author's adaptation according to the matrix: Kotler, Fox, 1985 (Kotler & Fox, 1985)

High-quality strategic management of tourist destinations, and especially national parks, implies optimal guidance by profiling adequate management goals. Certainly, the basic function of the "Kozara" National Park is the preservation of the natural environment in its original form, but also a scientific-research, cultural, educational and, of course, tourist-recreational function. In this sense, bearing in mind that the "Kozara" National Park is a complex spatial-functional area with specific natural, ecological and economic values, the main goals of management and spatial planning would refer to:

- Sustainable use of natural resources,
- Protection of the cultural, historical and natural heritage of the Park,
- Establishing a system of general protection, preservation and improvement of the basic functions of the Park,
- Defining areas for biodiversity conservation, usage regimes and monitoring,



- Defining the protection regime and use of forests, water resources and land,
- Developing tourism in the National Park,
- Allowing all categories of visitors to use the Park,
- Determining the “ecological capacity” of natural zones, ways and purposes of visiting the Park,
- Preservation of traditional knowledge and experiences in the process of managing natural resources,
- Determining the area for construction within the boundaries of the National Park “Kozara”, in a manner appropriate to the regime of protection and arrangement of the space,
- Construction of diverse recreational infrastructure and accompanying information content,
- Determination of spatial planning documentation for detailed arrangement and design, as well as possible construction in accordance with the purpose and zoning of the space,
- Building better accessibility to the Park and internal mobility in the Park,
- Strengthening the capacity of the Park administration,
- Establishing financial mechanisms for sustainable management of the Park,
- Establishing a database on protected natural values and cultural assets and species of flora and fauna,
- Assessment of the degree of endangerment of species and habitats in accordance with the IUCN classification,
- Strengthening of information and technical services and services,
- Defining the visiting regime,
- Protection of drinking water sources and land use and development,
- Solving the problem of waste water,
- Joint planning of activities with local organizations in the area,
- Renovation and maintenance of existing and creation of new recreational infrastructure,
- Diversification of accommodation capacities,
- Education of the local population for the provision of tourist services,
- Active cooperation with other parks in the area,
- Providing a system for waste collection and recycling (partially taken over and modified from the “Spatial Plan of the Special Purpose Area National Park “Kozara” 2011-2031)

Strategic goals must be based on the need to protect the cultural-historical and natural heritage, on the sustainable use of natural resources, on the need to strengthen the administration, accessibility of the National Park “Kozara”, sustainable financing and development of tourism. The aforementioned set of proposed goals clearly shows that their formulation depends on the character and specificity of a certain tourist destination, and they are modified and corrected over time, then new ones are introduced, while some previously defined ones are suppressed and even eliminated.

*Comparative indicators of sustainable development of tourism in the National Park “Kozara”*

1. Economic indicators:

1) *The seasonal nature of tourist traffic* has economic and ecological impli-

cations. The high concentration of tourists in the period of the full season leads to increased pressures, which leads to increased saturation of space and the appearance of negative ecological effects. Bearing in mind that part of the Kozare mountain, due to historical events during the Second World War, received the status of a National Park, the mentioned circumstance explains the fact that in the period leading up to the civil war in B&H (1992-1995), an incomparably higher tourist traffic was registered. The then high level of tourist traffic was based to a large extent on the ideological relationship of social organization.

At the beginning of the war conflicts on the territory of Yugoslavia, there was a sharp decline in total tourist activities, where the National Park "Kozara" was certainly not an exception. After the events of the war, there is a slow revival of tourist activities, but the tourist traffic has not even reached the pre-war level. Even for the period of immediate post-war consolidation, there are no relevant data on tourist visits.

**Table 2.** Number of visitors of National park "Kozara" 2011-2015.

Month Year	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	In total
2011.	9500	4500	3320	5380	7580	1500	8700	9300	6160	3740	1840	220	63720
2012.	11500	3500	3000	4500	12650	7530	7910	7340	6870	3000	2800	2400	78000
2013.	5000	10000	4500	4000	13000	9500	9500	8500	6000	5320	2550	2740	80610
2014.	5500	6900	6340	4000	8220	8380	8000	12240	4300	4700	3500	2920	75000
2015.	10000	15000	7000	4500	13500	9500	9324	11400	4800	3100	4100	2700	94924
2016.	12200	3600	7500	5900	15000	8500	12000	15900	8600	7900	3900	2200	103200
2017.	23000	6500	6500	10000	16500	10500	16000	15000	6000	9000	5000	4000	128000
2018.	9000	19000	10000	10000	19000	10000	14000	12000	10000	7000	4800	5200	130000
2019.	18000	10000	12000	6500	9500	8000	8000	16500	13500	12000	4500	3500	122000
2020.	13000	17000	6700	300	8500	11700	13100	22200	14400	10400	6800	3500	127000
2021.	21400	5895	3000	3400	8200	5100	5700	25000	8500	5700	2600	4400	98895
2022.	18290	5205	4800	2400	10259	7500	5700	12000	3700	7100	2300	4700	83954

**Source:** Administration of the National Park "Kozara"

As can be seen in the Table 2., the number of tourist visits during the year is quite evenly distributed, which is very important both from an economic and ecological point of view. However, as can be seen, the management of the "Kozara" National Park has approximate numbers of tourist visits, which is a shortcoming that will be eliminated by the more up-to-date work of the info center in the park. In the course of the past few years, progress has been made to enrich the overall offer by introducing various contents - cycling tours, walking tours, hiking, some new events and the like. It should be emphasized that the local population still does not have a sufficient need for a summer stay in the mountains, so those whose financial means allow it go to the sea abroad in the summer. It should also be said that the climate conditions on the Kozari mountain during the summer period represent a great opportunity for vacation. And yet, the fact is that "Kozara" National Park still holds the image of a very popular

tourist place from the pre-war period, when several hundred thousand visitors came to Mount Kozara every year.

2) *The relationship between the number of overnight stays and accommodation capacity.* Unfortunately, we could not get this data, which is also an important indicator, because the Park Administration does not have this type of data. The reason for this is the adaptation and reconstruction of accommodation facilities over the past years, as well as frequent changes in ownership, which managed the same accommodation facilities.

3) *The coefficient of local tourism growth* represents the direct and indirect impacts that tourism consumption and employment have on the local economy. In the area of the “Kozara” National Park, the development of tourism initiated the development of a number of other activities, which were not previously present in this area. These are activities whose products and services are essential components of the overall tourist offer in order to increase the functionality of the tourist destination. Thanks to traffic, both internal and external connections with the near and far surroundings are achieved. The development of tourism in the National Park initiated the construction of various types of transport infrastructure - ski lifts, bicycle paths, hiking trails, hiking trails, parking lots, etc. Then, capturing springs, water supply, garbage removal, clearing snow from roads, are also activities that help the better functioning of the overall development of tourism.

With the proclamation of the “Kozara” National Park in 1967, there was a significant decrease in the exploitative function of forestry, but the landscape-aesthetic and health-attractive functions of the forest complexes strongly contributed to increasing the level of tourist attractiveness of the park. We also expect that the holders of the tourist offer of the National Park will achieve more intensive cooperation with local farmers, with the aim of marketing local agricultural products and affirming the production of healthy food.

#### 2. Tourist satisfaction:

The only extensive visitor survey was conducted in 2014. This survey, with a very comprehensive approach, made it possible, at least at that moment, for the National Park Administration to get to know the opinions and needs of visitors. Those evaluations later served the managers to remove certain shortcomings and improve the Park’s operations. We have received firm assurances that with the more active work of the info center, surveying tourists will become a regular practice, which will enable better insight into the needs and satisfaction of visitors.

#### 3. Cultural indicators:

This indicator refers to the parameters that show how the intensity of tourism development in a certain tourist destination affects the local population, as well as the ratio of the number of accommodation facilities and the number of local population. There are no permanent settlements in the area of the National Park, because in the period from the proclamation of the park in 1967 and in 1971, the entire permanently settled population moved out. These are the reasons why this indicator cannot be determined on the example of the “Kozara” National Park.

#### 4. Social indicators:

This type of indicator primarily refers to the percentage of tourism’s participation in the local net social product. Bearing in mind that the “Kozara” National Park

spatially occupies parts of three municipalities, this fact complicates specifying the answer to this question from the very beginning. However, starting from the fact that the Park Management is located in the municipality of Prijedor, we can assume that at today's low level of realized tourist consumption and realized income, the National Park "Kozara" still has a symbolic effect on the local social product of the municipality of Prijedor.

As for the percentage of tourists who do not come through tour operators, we can only conclude that it is still dominant. Namely, before the start of the civil war, when, for historical and ideological reasons, the National Park was visited by guests from the entire former Yugoslavia, an incomparably greater number of visits were realized through organized bookings and collective visits. Nowadays, there are indications that such a trend could return again, and for such a thing the Park Management will have to show much greater organizational and marketing readiness.

##### 5. Indicators of the state of the environment:

According to the data obtained from the National Park Administration, no new facilities are currently planned for construction, but only the adaptation of the existing ones, and this is an activity that is mostly already coming to an end. This data is encouraging from the aspect of environmental protection. However, we believe that if there is an increase in the number of tourist visits in the coming period (which is realistically expected due to the weakening of the economic crisis), the existing accommodation capacities will not be sufficient. Also, we must mention that in the peripheral parts of the park (zone of the weekend settlement "Bešića poljana") deviations were observed from the spatial plan in the construction method.

National Park "Kozara" has major problems with accessibility, because it is connected by an asphalt road with the main traffic corridors only by a co-pass through Kozarac - a populated place at the foot of the mountain. True, there are approaches to the Park from two other alternative directions, but they are of very poor quality and are practically impassable in certain periods of the year. In the absence of organized transportation in the post-war period, the use of private cars for tourist arrivals prevails. Of course, this trend can potentially cause a number of negative effects in the sensitive nature of the National Park, such as - an increase in the amount of exhaust gases, increased noise levels, and the like.

Two ski lifts with a total length of 950 m are currently operating in the "Kozara" National Park. Comparing the length of the ski-lifts with the number of commercial beds - 167, we get a ratio of 5.7:1, which, from the point of view of the EU criteria, indicates that infrastructure facilities of this type meet the needs of stationary tourists.

"Kozara" National Park abounds in clean and potable springs and streams. The area of the park represents the hydro-potential hub of Kozara Mountain, with many permanent and occasional watercourses. Most of these watercourses are unused. The "Mrakovica" complex uses water from the "Bijeje vode" source, while the "Benkovac" complex uses water from the Zovik stream. However, in addition to exceptional natural hydro-potentials, insufficient organization of water supply, and the absence of source protection can be noticed. A special problem is the collection of wastewaters in the form of septic tanks, without data on their quality and permeability, which endangers the quality of groundwater. We believe that these problems need to be solved ur-

gently by collecting and purifying waste water from existing facilities, with treatments that will guarantee maximum protection of nature and preservation of hydro potential in the park.

There are no significant sources of air pollution in the park area. The presence of the central boiler room of the “Monument” hotel, which uses fuel oil as an energy source, has no particular impact on the environment. Other facilities of the park use biomass for heating. In addition to the above, the only source of pollution is the access road Kozarac - Mrakovica. In general, the mentioned sources of pollution are not able to seriously threaten the environment and air quality.

The Park currently has a well-organized waste collection and removal system, which is regularly removed by the Municipal Company from Prijedor, which is very important because the amount of waste is constantly increasing.

Timely identification and monitoring of pollution sources and degradation of environmental elements (water, air, soil) is possible by continuous recording of the current situation on the ground (instrumental monitoring). Unfortunately, there is still no permanently established monitoring system for the basic inorganic elements of the environment in the park. When it comes to biological monitoring, that is, the control of plant and animal life as constituent elements of the environment, the situation is more favorable. In this regard, the monograph “Flora of the Kozara National Park” written in 2007 is particularly noteworthy. During this research, an impressive biodiversity of 657 species of vascular plants, systematized in 7 classes, 40 orders and 94 families, was established. Out of a total of 657 registered species, 640 are flowering plants and 17 are ferns. Among the flowering plants are 114 species of dendroflora (77 autochthonous and 37 allochthonous) and 526 herbaceous plants (Bucalo & al., 2007).

For high-quality and optimal management of the park, it is necessary to include a much wider range of monitoring activities grouped into several categories, such as: development factors, marketing factors, economic factors, ecological and socio-cultural factors, and institutional factors. Although the comparative indicators of the sustainable development of tourism in the National Park “Kozara” have been presented quite extensively, it is still not enough to determine the precise values of the indicators in terms of their precise numerical interpretation (green, yellow or red zones).

A general assessment that would be defined on the basis of established indicators for assessing the carrying capacity of the area and determining optimal standards for tourists requires more complex and detailed analyses. Taken as a whole, summarizing the analysis of the development of tourism and nature protection of the Kozara National Park, we can say that in addition to certain shortcomings in the management approach of the Park, the overall natural potential is very well preserved.

## **DISCUSSION**

The management of national parks is an extremely complex job, as it includes a large number of coordinated activities that are carried out in several stages, which includes: analysis of resources, identification of potential problems of endangering the environment, initiation of projects that are in line with environmental preservation, assessment of the impact of such activities, establishing a monitoring system, etc. Defining the management strategy imposes the need to determine different strategic options for realizing the goals of the tourist destination.

The SWOT analysis of the “Kozara” National Park showed great strength, but also certain weaknesses, as well as opportunities and threats for the development of tourism in the coming period. In this sense, the main strategic potentials of the National Park would refer to:

- Natural motifs of high values,
- Memorial and historical center of special importance,
- The existence of conditions for the development of various forms of tourism.

Portfolio analysis indicated a wide range of tourism development opportunities. Of course, certain types of tourism such as excursion, eco-tourism and sports-recreational tourism have greater importance within the National Park, but in general, none of the offered types of tourist activity should be eliminated as a whole, but only to a greater or lesser extent work on their improvement. Otherwise, a wide range of tourist potentials and opportunities for tourism development implies a detailed analysis of the strategic goals of the Park’s management, as well as the obligation to realize the set goals.

During 2012 and 2013, the administration of the National Park “Kozara” adopted two important documents in which it was elaborated about the most important goals of the management and development of tourism in the park. Comparing these planning documents with earlier documents of a similar character, we must say that these are higher quality documents in which the goals of tourism development are viewed in a more complex way. Special emphasis is placed on the protection of the environment, as a vital prerequisite for achieving the long-term goals of tourism development, as well as all other complementary activities in the park. Welcoming the approach of the Park Administration, that environmental protection must become an integral part of the development of tourism, we express our satisfaction with the demonstrated determination of the Administration, to realize the aforementioned principles in practice. The emphasis is on non-risky activities (walking tours, cycling tours, schools in nature) that do not disturb the ecological balance, but awareness of the importance of nature protection is spread through educational content.

We believe that these and similar documents should promote the basic strategic goal, which is focused on ensuring quality growth, by enriching it with those types of offers that are adapted to the capacities of the environment. Precisely for these reasons, we can generally state that tourism and the environment are treated in an integral way in the area of the National Park “Kozara”. Also, there is a necessary degree of coordination between the tourism industry and organizations in charge of tourism and environmental protection.

**Table 3.** The zoning proposal of the National Park “Kozara”

1. The most protected zone	Bijela kosa – Zečiji kamen – Zofik, Šupljikovac - Glumine
2. Actively protected zone	Pašini konaci – Tisova kosa – Moštanička vrela – Kozarački kamen – Vrnova glava i Bijela voda – Kriva strana – Gola planina
3. Zone for use	Memorial zone Mrakovica, Tourist and sports-recreational complexes on Mrakovica, Youth recreation complex, the remaining hamlets of Bešići, Mazgali, Bešić poljana, Jakupovići and Jankovići, all forests and meadows outside zones 1 and 2.

**Source:** Spatial plan of the special purpose area National Park "Kozara" 2011-2031 (Institut za građevinarstvo – IG, 2012)



Zoning is the basic and most important element of the planning and organization of tourist destinations, which define zones with different purposes and levels of use. In accordance with the above, the zoning proposal of NP "Kozara" is based on the principles of protection and preservation of natural and cultural values.

Regardless of the quality of the zoning procedure, if its results are not applied consistently in practice, such proposals are usually of no value. Every tourist destination should have good and controlled traffic access. Due to pronounced climbs and large bends, as well as the fact that the main access road to the National Park passes through the inhabited town of Kozarac - the road network can be considered a limiting factor in the development of tourism in the park. It would be good if a possibility was found to relocate the part of the road that passes through Kozarac, although in the current circumstances we express our doubts about the possibility of realizing the proposed initiative, because such an undertaking requires large financial resources. In order to promote public transport and more environmentally friendly modes of transport, the Administration of the National Park "Kozara" organized a weekend bus service in cooperation with the Klekovača Mountaineering Society a few years ago. Unfortunately, due to insufficient interest, after some time that line was discontinued. As far as tourist signage is concerned, the management of the National Park "Kozara" deserves all the praise. This refers to the access to the park, then to the signaling of pedestrian paths, bicycle paths, the memorial zone, springs, etc.

The application of economic instruments should ensure that the economic sector and tourists who create pollution in the environment bear the costs of eliminating such pollution and stimulate them to reduce pollution as much as possible. In order to realize the project of catchment of water sources and cleaning of watercourses, the Park administration was assisted by the World Bank, IPA-funds of the EU, the Ministry of Trade and Tourism of the Republic of Srpska and the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry of the Republic of Srpska. Part of the funds collected from fees for construction land and the use of tourist facilities could be directed to special dedicated funds for environmental protection, with the aim of overall protection of nature and raising the awareness of tourists.

Although the tourist offer based on natural tourist motives dominates in national parks, projects based on traditional ethnic motives and their inclusion in the offer would further contribute to the affirmation of the park. However, we are convinced that the more active operation of the info center will lead to the completion of the overall tourist offer. After all, high-quality IT support is necessary in order to validly perform monitoring, analytical-research work and implement tourism development programs in the "Kozara" National Park.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The goal of strategic management is to ensure the long-term and coordinated development of the tourist destination. The sustainability of tourism development, as well as other activities, depends on the ability of the environment to provide a stable and long-term development basis. The previous presentation clearly confirmed the assumption that the National Park "Kozara" as a tourist destination has very high-quality preconditions for the sustainable development of tourism. In order to improve tourism in the National Park, it is necessary to:

- Modernize existing tourism capacities, and build new ones exclusively according to the standards of sustainable tourism development,
- Improve marketing activities and promotion of tourist potentials,
- Provide the necessary professional personnel, both for the Park Administration, and for personnel serving the tourism industry.
- This approach obliges the Park Management, all the more so since this tourist destination has a really wide range of possibilities for tourism development, which implies:
  - Excursion tourism, with additional equipment and arrangement of picnic areas and recreational trails,
  - Sports-recreational tourism, arranging ski slopes and other sports facilities,
  - Mountain tourism,
  - Spa tourism (air spa),
  - Cultural and event tourism, presenting objects of cultural and historical importance,
  - Children and youth tourism, by building sports and eco-camps,
  - Hunting tourism, by arranging hunting lodges and arranging and equipping hunting grounds.

By changing the quality of accommodation facilities, as well as increasing their number, new forms of tourist content (hostels, spa resort, apartment complex), but also fields for adventure sports and golf courses will be introduced in the coming time. The need for continuous training arises, among other things, as a consequence of opening up to the outside world and international cooperation. Thus, at the end of 2010, the implementation of the project “Bike for tourism without borders” (BIKE 4 TWF) began, which was financed from the IPA - Cross border cooperation (CBC) fund between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. The project is intended for the development of tourism in the border area between the “Kozara” National Park and the “Lonjsko Polje” Nature Park. In addition to the mentioned example, the National Park “Kozara” has excellent cooperation with the National Parks “Sutjeska” and “Una”. Mutual competition additionally obliges these types of tourist destinations to successfully control the quality of services, which cannot be achieved without close cooperation and coordination between destination managers and individual providers of the offer. We sincerely hope and believe, that with diligent work and commitment, the management of the National Park “Kozara” will continue to protect and improve the tourist values of the Park in accordance with the postulates of sustainable development of tourism, and thanks to such an approach, it will be possible for Kozara mountain to preserve the epithet “Regional Beauty”.

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