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АГЕНЦИЈА ЗА ДЪРЖАВНИ СЛУЖИТЕЛИ

CONDITION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN PRESPA

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Abstract: The tourism movements are primarily spatial phenomenon, while the tourism is dynamical factor for space activation and development.

The Prespa region in Macedonia, with its specific characteristics of natural environment, historical and cultural heritage presents a potential territory for satisfying the tourism needs. Within this region there is an important difference among the potential, possible and realistic economic opportunities for tourism exploitation.

The aim of this paper is to present the conditions for development of the sustainable tourism. The paper is based on empirical research, as well as the already available studies for tourism development. Also, the paper considers the natural and created values for tourism development and it mirrors its current condition. In addition, analysis for the advantages and disadvantages for this development are carried out.

Key words: sustainable tourism; Prespa Region; tourism development

Introduction

The tourism movements are primarily spatial phenomenon, while the tourism is dynamical factor for space activation and development. Beside the traditional economic functions achieved by certain territory, the tourism carries new opportunities for space activation and its economic valorization.

The Prespa region in Macedonia, with its specific characteristics of natural environment, historical and cultural heritage presents a potential territory for satisfying the tourism needs. Within this region there is an important difference among the potential, possible and realistic economic opportunities for tourism exploitation.

The aim of this paper is to present the conditions for development of the sustainable tourism. The paper is based on empirical research, as well as the already

available studies for tourism development. Also, the paper considers the natural and created values for tourism development and it mirrors its current condition. In addition, analysis for the advantages and disadvantages for this development are carried out.

Position, borders, dimension and traffic connections of Prespa

The Prespa basin is a separate spatial unit located in the South-western part of the Republic of Macedonia. Geographically it stretches around the coupe of 41° N.G.A. and 21° E.G.L. It is divided in land, spreading over 562 square kilometers, and water covering 177 square kilometers. The basin is bordered in the east by the heights of mountain Baba with Pelister (2600 meters, altitude above sea level), and in the west Galicica (2255 meters, altitude above

sea level). In the southern part it borders the mountain Gorbac and some of the other lower parts of Galicica. The basin is connected to Republic of Albania through the border pass Stenje on the west coast, and on the eastern side it is connected to Republic of Greece through the pass Markova Noga, which currently is not in function. The road traffic is complied of more roads that enable the primary traffic functional communication within the basin, but with the neighboring areas as well.

A few routs stretch in Prespa, on the territory of Republic of Macedonia, and among them are the highway M-5 relating Ohrid – Resen – Bitola in length of 24 km. This highway provides complete development communication with the remaining areas. This route in the northern part of the basin, or more precisely the place Makazi, is joined by two other travel routes which are of regional importance. The first regional route R 503 is relating from Makazi to Carina and Stenje towards Republic of Albania with a total length of 24,125 km, out of which 20 km are with 6km wide asphalt base. At Carina another regional route is connected to it, it is the route R 504, 29 km long out of which 15 km are in the Prespa basin, which through the mountain Galicica connects the Prespa to the Ohrid basin and most of all is of great tourism significance. The second route of regional importance R505 stretches with 25,880km length by the eastern coast of the lake relating from Makazi towards the border with R. Greece. The remains of the route Via Ignatsia carry the tourism value of the antique period, which witness the importance of Prespa as transit zone between the antique east and west. The roads of local character, which mainly connect the settlements among themselves and to the routes of higher rank, are significantly shorter. This is a result of the settlements being quite close to each other and not being far away from the highways

and regional routes, or otherwise said their length is no longer than 3 km. These routes are mostly made of asphalt base wide 3-4 meters. Other roads are also used in Prespa, made of macadam, but first of all with soil base as many other field and wood roads. This shows that pretty solid traffic infrastructure is developed in Prespa, with the highways and regional roads taking part with only 24 km, in every 100 km.

Relief conditions for tourism development

According to the geo-morphological researches, the Prespa basin is karst field. The flatland is composed of the basin bottom spreading at 1000 meters altitude above the sea level, at most, while the basin frame is composed of the Eastern side of Galicica mountain and the Western side of Baba with Pelister and Bigla. Unlike the alluvial plain, the basin frame is quite complex for its geological and geo-morphological structure. The geo-morphology of the Prespa region is very intensive. The geo-morphological character of the region is defined by the two lakes, Mala and Golema Prespa and the high mountain massifs (Mali and Tate in Albania and Trikalos in Greece) situated in small distance around the coasts of the two lakes. The mountain area with height of 1100-1500 meters above the sea level stretches over the majority of the region. Also, there are four islands in the two lakes.

The coast relief of the Prespa Lake is pretty divergent. It is a result of the tectonic movements as well as the different geological content of the mountains surrounding it. Many cliffs and abrasive basis appear on the western coast. Here is the peninsula Bakuvce, while south of it are the capes Kosornik and Makarija. Their coasts are stiff and with cliffs high about 40m.



Picture No.1 Island Golem Grad

The island Golem Grad is located on the territory waters of R. Macedonia. Its form is in a shape of egg with length of 800m and width of about 500m rising at about 30m above the lake level. The island Mal Grad is placed in the territory waters of R. Albania. It is 250m long, 150m wide with cliff sides up to 37,5m above the lake level.

The Eastern coast of the Prespa Lake has no cliffs, but has accumulative terraces with wide sand stripe and high quality beaches.

The Northern coast on the other hand is low and marshy, overgrown with cane and during high water level it is regularly flooded.

On our side of the Prespa Lake coasts there are 6 major beaches with a total area of 68.000Ha, or in other words own the capacity to accept 40.000 bathers which fact provides tourism development.

Climate amenity

The climate in Prespa is temperate-continental with Mediterranean affection through the cliff Grlu on the Southwest of the small lake and then through the mountain chain Prevtis towards the Southwestern part of Mala Prespa. This provides warm summers with cool night and mild winters, which is quite favorable for pleasant and healthy vacation. The average annual temperatures have temperate amplitudes. The extreme temperatures are between -26,5° C and 35,5° C. The average

multi annual temperature of the air is 12,9°C. The lowest middle month temperature in January is 5,1°C, while the highest middle month temperature of the air in August is 21,6°C. The duration length of the period with middle day temperature $T > 5,0^{\circ} \text{C}$ is 243 days. The duration of the period with active temperature of $T > 10^{\circ} \text{C}$ is 174 days, while the period with middle air temperature $T > 15^{\circ} \text{C}$ is 117 days. The climate depending on the affection of the altitude above the sea level is different and depends on the affection of the lake's water, and other physical – geographical factors (afforestation, the influence of the arable land, land urbanization); dynamical factors, air movements as well as the sun factors; the intensity of the global rays; sun exposure; cloudy weather etc. Out of all these influences the climate appears as:

- warm and cold sub-Mediterranean climate area from 600-900 meters altitude above the sea level and from 900-1100 meters altitude above the sea level
- sub-forest and forest Mediterranean climate area from 1100-1300 meters altitude above the sea level and from 1300-1650 meters altitude above the sea level
- sub-alps and alps area from 1650-2250 meters altitude above the sea level and above 2250 meters altitude above the sea level.

One can conclude that the climate conditions in Prespa are an ideal

prerequisite for tourism development during the whole year.

Hydrographical conditions

The Prespa Lake is second by its size in R. Macedonia and is located in the Southwestern part of the country, between the national parks Pelister and Galicica. It spreads on 274 kilometers square out of which 177km square belong to our territory which is 65%, the South-eastern part belongs to R. Greece with 17%, and the South-western part belongs to R. Albania with 18%. The biggest measured depth is 54m. The maximum length is 28km, the width about 17km, and the middle about 10km. It belongs to the group of desaret lakes which have been created in a tectonic way by lowering of the basis towards the end of the Pliocene and the beginning of the Pleistocene.

The Prespa Lake lays on 853m above the sea level altitude, which is for 158m higher than the Ohrid Lake. One of the main reasons for the oscillations of the water level is the water leakage. It is well familiar that there is no surface leakage of the water in the Prespa Lake. But it has already been claimed that through the limestone structure of the mountain Galicica and Suva Gora and through the underground abyss (well-known is the abyss Zavir) it flows into the neighboring lower areas of Ohrid and Korcan. The springs at St. Naum provide a very good sample to confirm that those are waters (at least the majority) from the Prespa Lake. More precisely, 46% of the water flowing into the Ohrid Lake comes from the Prespa Lake. This draws the conclusion that the two lakes should be considered as a unique hydrological system. The Prespa Lake gets the water from the majority of small influents such as:

the river Istok and Golema or Stara river which flow into it from the North, and Pretorska, Kranska and Brajcinska river which flow out of the western subforest of Pelister, or otherwise put they flow into the lake from the East. The Prespa Lake also is supplied with water from the Small Prespa Lake which is 3m higher than the channel Perovo. It is also supplied from the sublacustrian springs present at more places of the central plain bottom. Most powerful are the springs of limestone bottom, especially the ones located around the Stenje and Nivicka uvala. The sublacustrian springs are quite rich with water which is why there are temperature rise and falls around them. The Prespa Lake loses the water by evaporating and through abysses. The Vragodupka abyss in the Zavir bay in Mala Prespa is the major sublacustrian outfall of the lake. That abyss is actually a cavern, located one meter under the lake level. The level of the Prespa Lake is being regulated through it. However, it is characteristic for this lake that major quantity of its water is being used for irrigation. According to its temperature the Prespa Lake is classified within the temperate type of lakes. The middle annual temperature of the surface water is 12,4° C. It is the warmest in august 21,7° C, and coldest in February, 4,6° C. Within four months of the year, June (17,7° C), July (20,7° C), August (21,7° C) and September (18,8° C), the water temperature is around 18° C or above 18° C, which points to the fact that during those months when the air temperature is higher than 18° C, it is favorable for bathing. Specific for this lake is that the water temperature is not equal within all the surface parts. So, during the summer period in the Stenje bay it is for 2,2° C higher that the temperature at Pretor.

Table 1: Middle-month and middle-annual water temperature in the Prespa Lake

Months	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	Year
T = °C	4,8	4,6	5,9	9,1	12,5	17,7	20,7	21,7	18,8	14,9	11,2	6,7	12,4



Picture No.2 Prespa Lake

In the Prespa Lake there is thermal jump between 10 and 20m depth. Within the winter months there is inverse water temperature stratification. Then the upper layers of the water are colder than the lower and it has happened in certain years the lake to freeze. The freezing of the Lake is being explained with the greater absolute height and the less great depth than the Ohrid Lake, which never freezes.

The transparence and the color of the water in the Prespa Lake are not the same across the whole lake. The transparence varies from 1,5 to 7,20m, and is influenced by the quantity of the suspended particles and entering of the alluvium through the water flow. The transparency is the least present by the coast, and it is increasing towards the middle of the lake. It is the highest in spring, and the lowest in autumn.

The color of the water in the Prespa Lake is dark-green, with shades of blue. In the western part where the coast is from limestone rocks the water has from open-green to olive color. In the Eastern part the water is from yellowish to red-greenish color. The chemical content of the water in the Prespa Lake is almost equal like the content in our remained tectonic lakes. Up to 123,5mg/l salt are dissolved in it. The quantity of oxygen in the water is relatively big and is between 88-125%. It is not

equally dispersed from the surface to the bottom, as is the case in the Ohrid Lake. The presence of the carbon is not big and is not everywhere the same because the lake basin has heterogeneous content.

Vegetation and animals

In the Prespa Lake the most intensive vegetation and animal habitat can be found in the sublacustrian terrace. It is on certain places overgrown by macrofitic vegetation. Therefore the North-east and eastern coast are only in a few spots overgrown by vegetation, unlike the northern and north-western coast which are overgrown by more voluptuous vegetation .

The Zoo-plankton of the Prespa Lake is spread in all the three sublacustrian zones.

However, the quality composition is somehow in the middle of the zoo-plankton in the Ohrid and Dojran Lake. The average quantity of the fauna at the bottom of the Prespa Lake is 46,5 kg/he, which is about three times less than in the Ohrid Lake where it is 126 kg/he. Today 11 types of fish are living in the Prespa Lake, among which most present is the nivicka fish with 37%, followed by the scobust with 30% and by the carp with 20% etc.

Anthropogenic Values Favorable for Tourism Development

There are 130 archeological sites registered in the Prespa region from various periods of the material culture development, then 1000 archeological exponents, 500 coins as well as 450 exponents of ethnological heritage. There are 95 churches and monasteries registered, as well as 104 icons. The island Golem Grad is an attractiveness and natural uniqueness of 1 km² area. It is overgrown by voluptuous forest vegetation of dominating juniper (*Juniperus exelsa*) which is a rarity on the Balkans. There used to be 7 churches of which only one is preserved, St. Peter, dating from the 17th century. Golem Grad is an archeological site with remnants from settlements, churches and necropolis dating from the Roman era and the Middle Ages, a rich reservoir of endemic plants and as a natural rarity thus protected by law. It is an attractive excursion site for visitors and tourists in this region. As a more significant monument of the sacral architecture is the church St. George located in the village of Kurbinovo, built in 1191. A complete conservation and protection has been done on the fresco-painting. Other more important values are the monastery St. Ilija, v. Grnchari, dating from the 18th century. St. Peter church was built in the 16th century with a fresco painting dating from the 16th and 17th century. The preservation of the temple, the lodging houses, the fresco-painting, the location of the village Brajchino, enriches the tourist offer as a traditionally -ambient area. St. Anastasie church in v. Dolno Dupeni, built in 1864, St. Atanasie church in v. Ljubojno built in 1623, St. Archangel, v. Asamati dating from 1633, St. Atanasie church, v. Stenje dating from the post-Byzantium period and St. Nikola

church in v. Zlatari also abound in great values.

Every monument of the sacral architecture is a tourism value for Prespa. Their significance would be even stronger if they would be fully protected, their authenticity preserved, direction boards posted, a person who knows well the history of the temples to be put in charge and to animate visitors and tourists and initiate authorities to take concrete measures so that these values can see the light of the day.

Saraj is a building which distinguishes itself from the urban architecture with its architect and aesthetic features, built at the beginning of the 19th century, and resembling the castles dating from the neoclassicism period. The preserved ambient unit is a challenge to every visitor and tourist. However, it will reach its tourism value with complete reparation of the roof, walls, water-supply, wiring, i.e. a realization of the projects for its protection. The rural architecture distinguishes villages like Brajchino, Ljubojno, D.Dupeni, Kriveni, Jankovec, and especially Konjsko with weaved fences made of mud. Unfortunately, nothing much is preserved today.

Material basis as a condition for tourism development

In 1948 in Otesevo and Carina started the building of the first tourism objects in Prespa. While in the village Pretor the first tents were set in 1959. In 1965, 38 work organizations, mainly from Skopje, Bitola and Resen had their own facilities in the tourism centers in Prespa.

In Prespa the following accommodation capacities are available.

Table 2: Accommodation capacities in individual locality in Prespa

Touristic locality	Type of object	Number of beds	Total	Participation in %
Resen	Hotel	36	36	0,5
Krani	Hotel	108	2940	41,9
	Bungalows	128		
	Trailers	2304		
	Land for tents	400		
Pretor	Hotel	36	1621	23,2
	Bungalows	535		
	Land for tents	1050		
Asamati	Bungalows	825	825	11,8
Sirhan	Bungalows	46	70	0,9
	Trailers	24		
Otesevo	Hotel	465	1515	21,7
	Bungalows	50		
	Land for tents	1000		
		Total	7007	100

The private accommodation participates with 600 beds and is in constant increase.

Development and current condition of the tourism in Prespa

The number of tourists in Prespa was constantly increasing during the second half of the last century. In 1956, 3186 domestic tourists stayed here and reached the number of 9394 overnights, while the number of foreign tourists was 68 with a total of 173 overnights. In 1962, that number was increased up to 19.371 domestic tourists with 176.933 overnights and 283 foreign tourists with 1269 overnights. In the following years the visits was balanced at about 10.000 visitors and 90.000 overnights. Back in those years the

most visited location was Pretor. There, during the summer season often stayed at about 3.000 tourists per day.

The development of the alternative tourism and the eco tourism lately is expanding in South-eastern Europe, and the interest is increasing in this region as well. There are more published editions that promote Prespa on national level for its development of this kind of tourism and for maintaining the natural and cultural values in the region.

This area is characterized by the presence of two national parks, Galicica (2255m) and Pelister (2600m).



Picture No.3 National park Pelister



Picture No.4 National park Pelister



Picture No.5 National park Galicica

The Prespa Lake situated between these two parks is pronounced to be nature's monument, lake-rarity which is far famous for its beauty. Also the ornithological reservoir Ezerani is pronounced to be natural reservoir.

In Prespa there is rich biodiversity, with great number of rare and endemic types of fauna from the mammal kind, such as the wolves, bears, deers, lynxes and great number of birds. Also the area of Prespa abounds in different endemic types of flora depending on the above the sea level height. The coast of the lake abounds in wide stripe of cane, followed by rich wood vegetation. At the higher places there is rich

wood vegetation mostly of oak and beech trees. It is significant to mention that the island Golem Grad has voluptuous vegetation including the juniper, which is rare in the Balkan region.

The presence of the ornithological reservoir in Ezerani as one Ramsarsko place additionally contributes to the development and promotion of the tourism in Prespa and in the wider region.

Considering the size of the lake surface, the island Golem Grad, the separation of the lake in three countries, the tourism locations, many possibilities for development of the water tourism are being offered as an attractive tourism offer. At the

coasts of the Prespa Lake there are 6 major beaches covering a total area of 68.000he, or with a possibility to take over 40.000 bathers, which enables tourism development.

The water tourism of the Prespa Lake is presented only by small private boats.

The Ohrid airport is the nearest one to Prespa, at a distance of 55km, and the nearest railway station is in Bitola, at a distance of 35km.

Most common craftsmanship is pottery. There is an international ceramic colony. There are several monument-houses and museums: the national hero Mite Bogoevski's monument house in v. Bolno, Saraj in Resen, Dragi Tozija Dome of Culture.

The island of Golem Grad is an archeological site with remnants from settlements, churches and necropolis dating from the Roman era and the Middle Ages. There used to be 7 churches of which only one is preserved, St. Peter, dating from the

14th century, or more precisely it was built in 1360. The exploration of the island is a necessity for enrichment of the tourism offer. In this way, Golem Grad will develop into a lake traffic center. There are 95 churches and monasteries in the Prespa region.

Prespa offers a wide range of winter and summer sports. Having a cable railway, ski lift and chalet, as well as a small distance, Galichica Mountain is an ideal offer for a recreation tourist center. The nature and the existing paths in the region are a solid base for cycling development. The temperate Mediterranean climate and the altitude above the sea level are ideal for medical treatment of people with respiratory problems. In Oteshevo there is an Institute for prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of respiratory and allergic diseases. This is a great potential which we should invest in still further in the future

Table 3: Number of tourists and number of overnights (1994-2003)

Year	Tourists			Number of overnights		
	National	International	Total	National	International	Total
1994	30544	1422	31966	170890	7890	178780
1995	27332	1533	28865	120567	7900	128467
1996	25112	1590	26702	110980	8019	118999
1997	22450	1480	23930	109890	8190	118080
1998	24560	1309	25869	115679	8045	123724
1999	21679	1098	22777	101560	7321	108881
2000	23421	1573	24994	109589	8243	117832
2001	21239	867	22106	100450	7110	107560
2002	20345	450	20795	80320	3350	83670
2003	20810	620	21430	95670	4800	100470

Projection of the future tourism development

Advantages analysis:

1) ecologically clean environment with two national parks Galichica and Pelister, monument of the nature Prespa Lake, one strict natural reservoir and place protected with the Ramsar convention – Ezerani; 2) two connected lakes with rich flora and fauna (endemic types); 3) non-existing heavy industry; 4) lake on a three-border-

junction, signed declaration by the three countries for formation of the Prespa Park; 5) international community interest; 6) local population and NGO interest; 7) many natural possibilities for further development (ex. the altitude above the sea level – ski fields and possibility for tourism during the whole year); 8) presence of qualified personnel from the tourism field; 9)

presence of capacities for tourism development; 10) presence of natural conditions to develop the eco-tourism, as well as other forms of sustainable tourism – eco clean food, sustainable agriculture etc.

Lack and threat analysis:

1) gradual ruining of the eco values; 2) gradual degrading of the cultural and historical heritage (disrespect of the legal framework); 3) lack of adequate level of standards in the hotels and catering; 4) lack of eco-tourism center; 5) lack of appropriate information: no maps of the lake, marked places for bathing, tourist information; 6) lack of regular monitoring system; 7) closed border pass with R. Greece and problems with the visas; 8) low level of entrepreneurship and initiatives; 9) constant degrading of the eco-system; 10) disrespect of the present urbanism plans (uncontrolled building); 11) economic instability; 12) lack of interested investors;

Opportunities analysis:

Literature:

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1)raising the populations’ awareness; 2) including children’s education; 3) using traditional customs; 4) inter-borders activities; 5) development of the lake traffic; 6) further development of the sustainable forms of tourism; 7) opportunities to use credit lines for eco-tourism

Projection:

Based on the researches carried out so far, the constant material basis and the accomplished results in the past period, in Prespa up to 2020, according to the Spatial plan of Republic of Macedonia it is projected for 13.000 beds to be build. For the year 2020 in Republic of Macedonia is planned to reach the number of 7.500.000 overnights. 886.000 overnights are projected for Prespa, or otherwise said Prespa regarding the accommodation capacities in Republic of Macedonia which will be 110.000 beds, will participate with 11,8%, and regarding the overnights the percentage will be the same, 11,8%.

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