



# Pro Biodiversity Business

## Gap Analysis for National Park Tara, Serbia



Photo: Ranko Milanović

### Global Nature Fund - Eco Karst Project

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## **Gap Analysis for National Park Tara, Serbia**

Promising Pro Biodiversity Business ideas that support the protection, sustainable use and appreciation of Ecosystem Services in the Danube region.

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## Table of Content

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Gap Analysis for National Park Tara, Serbia .....                                  | 2  |
| Table of Content.....  | 3  |
| 1 Aim and procedure of the Gap Analysis.....                                       | 4  |
| 1.1 Aim.....   | 4  |
| 1.2 Procedure .....  | 4  |
| 2 Overview Tara National Park.....   | 5  |
| 2.1 Cross-sectoral challenges in Tara .....  | 5  |
| 2.2 Cross-sectoral opportunities in Tara National Park .....                       | 6  |
| 3 Gap Analysis .....   | 8  |
| 3.1 Wood production, processing and marketing.....                                 | 8  |
| 3.2 Non-timber forest products (NTFP), processing and marketing .....              | 10 |
| 3.3 Livestock production, processing and marketing and landscape maintenance ..... | 12 |
| 3.4 Crop production and marketing of agricultural products .....                   | 13 |
| 3.5 Orchards, fruit processing and marketing.....                                  | 15 |
| 3.6 Bee keeping and honey production .....   | 16 |
| 3.7 Touristic accommodation & restaurants & cafés.....                             | 18 |
| 3.8 Touristic activities.....  | 20 |
| 3.9 Consultancy services .....   | 22 |
| 4 Conclusion .....   | 23 |

# **1 Aim and procedure of the Gap Analysis**

## **1.1 Aim**

The aim of this gap analysis is to showcase opportunities for the development of Pro Biodiversity Businesses (PBBs) in the National Park Tara. The results of the analysis will contribute to the development of the Action Plan which is an outcome of the ECOKARST project.

PBBs are enterprises that generate financial returns and at the same time make a positive contribution to preserving biodiversity. For most economic activities, ecosystem services are used and sometimes exploited. Conserving biodiversity and ecosystem services, while simultaneously ensuring economic success, offers the chance to ensure a sustainable use of ecosystem services.

The usage of ecosystem services in a National Park provides a special opportunity to produce natural products, because the resources are less exposed to pollution from traffic and industry. The special karstic landscapes additionally provide unique features to develop touristic activities. To ensure a long-term success, also for future generations, sustainability and biodiversity conservation are crucial aspects for the economic development of the region should be a key aspect in planning economic development.

In the National Park Tara there are already some businesses that have good first approaches to preserve biodiversity and the environment. However, this analysis will identify gaps for future economic development or for enhanced biodiversity conservation practices.

## **1.2 Procedure**

The results presented in this gap analysis are the outcome of a desk research and expert interviews on Pro Biodiversity Businesses (PBBs) and international examples. The results of several interviews, discussions and workshops with the project partners and a variety of stakeholders that took place between May 2017 and December 2018 in each National Park will be presented and compared to successful PBB approaches.

In a first round of interviews, local economic and environmental conditions in the area were discussed with the project partners from the National Park Tara. Simultaneously, GNF searched for good international examples of PBBs, which were then presented to the involved partners and stakeholders through presentations and the PBB brochure. An overview of PBB examples is also included in the PBB Development Guide. Combining the information regarding the National Park with information on international best practice examples helped to identify first gaps and opportunities for the development of PBB. In a second round of interviews with the project partners, open questions about the situation in all economic sectors were then clarified. While considering a rating of the project partners from each pilot area regarding the importance of the identified opportunities, a first selection of opportunities with high potential was undertaken. These sectors were then further discussed in a participatory approach with local stakeholders from a variety of institutions and sectors during the workshops. All relevant information acquired during these steps, are included in this document.

## 2 Overview Tara National Park

The Tara National Park is a mountain massif located in Western Serbia and covers an area of almost 25,000 hectares. The Karst plateau is intersected by numerous canyons and gorges. The Tara National Park is a typical forest area dominantly covered with mixed forests including important endemic species such as the Serbian Spruce or the Pančić's grasshopper. In addition, numerous archaeological sites and monuments dating from the Neolithic period to modern times can be found in the park. The National Park and territory of Bajina Basta Municipality are managed by the public utility "National Park Tara". The park is divided in three zones. The first zone (13 % of the area) is a non-intervention zone. Zone 2 with 37 % is managed with restrictions and in Zone 3 (50 % of the area) forestry and other activities are possible. Additionally, there are three villages completely inside the Tara National Park and 8 villages partially. Local companies are mainly engaged in forestry and wood processing while the tourism sector, honey and rakija production have further potential for the economic development of the region.

**Location:** Western Serbia

**Size:** 24,991.82 hectares

**N° Business:** 38 without agricultural producers inside park

**Population:** 3,424 with villages that totally or partially are included in the park

**Unique characteristics:** natural stands of Serbian spruce, outstanding biodiversity and geo diversity, one of the most productive forests in Europe

**Landscape:** forest area with mountain Tara that is separated from Mt Zvijezda by Canyon of Derventa River and bounded by Drina River.

### 2.1 Cross-sectoral challenges in Tara

Despite the beautiful landscape and high potential for the economic development of the area, the inhabitants in the Tara National Park and its surrounding are facing several administrative, demographic as well as environmental challenges which have an influence on the development of all economic sectors. The following sections give a brief overview of the most pressing challenges.

#### 2.1.1 Administrative obstacles

The national legislation makes the registration of businesses complicated. A lot of administrative effort is necessary to register businesses and this is the reason why some private persons do not register their businesses. In addition, there is not sufficient support from the authorities and especially a lack of information about the available support such as subsidies. As a result, there are businesses inside the park that are not registered.

#### 2.1.2 Social and human resources

Due to rural-urban migration of the younger population, there is a lack of young people who are willing to found businesses. At the same time, there is aging of the local people and low population density. There is poor motivation and disappointment among the local population.

Within the local population that stayed in the region there is a lack of education, ecological awareness and knowledge regarding business development and the importance of biodiversity conservation. Many people do not speak foreign languages or have special educations, which makes it difficult to work in tourism or to sell products on the international market. In addition to this, the population does not have extensive financial resources as start capital for the foundation of new

businesses. Rather, they work very hard, so there is no time to develop a new business or attend a training course.

At present, only little value added is being created in the region. The restaurants do not buy food from local farmers and there is generally a lack of cooperation between the existing local businesses. Furthermore, already existing services are not jointly promoted and coordinated.

### **2.1.3 Infrastructure**

There are several challenges related to the infrastructure in the National Park Tara. First, no proper water treatment and waste management are available for all villages leading to illegal deposition of garbage and water pollution. Waste water infrastructure is missing and especially for big hotels needed. Furthermore, some villages do not have a waste collection system.

Even though there is a well-developed road network, the rural landscape and low population density makes the transportation of products to other regions difficult.

## **2.2 Cross-sectoral opportunities in Tara National Park**

Several opportunities prevalent in the National Park Tara are relevant for the economic development of a variety of sectors and shall be discussed, before going into more detail for the different sectors.

### **2.2.1 Cooperation between producers, processors and service providers**

To successfully sell products enhancing the cooperation between producers, processors and service providers in the park and the region is crucial. The short transportation pathways between regional businesses are cheaper and decrease pollution in comparison to national or international import/export relations. This would additionally lead to a higher value creation in the region.

The collaboration can simultaneously be used for a joint marketing and selling of products to tourists with higher buying power. For example, restaurants and accommodation providers can offer meals that are made from locally produced and processed products. This does not only create local value, but can also be useful for marketing strategies, since it transmits the local identity to tourists.

Selling the locally produced products to national or international customers is another opportunity, which is facilitated by cooperation since bigger amounts can be transported and sold jointly. The use of labelling or a certification scheme (see below) could facilitate the cooperation with international customers.

### **2.2.2 Certification schemes and regional brand**

Producing in an organic way without using fertilizers, pesticides and by avoiding antibiotics is recommended to preserve biodiversity and to ensure sustainable land use. This more natural way of producing does attract new customer groups and can increase revenues. Acquiring an organic certification proves the production techniques to the customer and raises awareness within consumers.

The same is valid for a fair trade certification, which stands for a fair treatment of employees. The FairWild standard for instance, ensures that wild resources are maintained and that there are no negative environmental impacts. In addition, good working conditions are ensured: no

discrimination, no child labour, healthy work conditions and a fair contract with collectors are required to receive the certification. Using such a standard can help to access new markets and to create trust.

In addition to these international certification schemes, there is an opportunity in using the origin from the protected area as a special feature that demonstrates the naturalness. Products from protected areas can be considered less contaminated, because of fewer industries that pollute the environment. The naturalness, beautiful landscape and clean air of the National Park Tara can be used as a marketing feature and products could be sold as high quality products also outside of the region. The trust of customers who care about the origin of their food can be earned with a regional label, which reliably certifies products from the National Park Tara. The traditional culture is important for locals and could be represented with such a label, by selling of traditional products and the provision of cultural courses and tours. Cross-sectoral organization is crucial for the success of such a regional label. There are already businesses who are interested in such a label.

### **2.2.3 Store focusing on National Park products**

A specific store that exclusively sells National Park products could offer a business opportunity that connects different product chains and uses the regional character of products as a key selling point which promises naturalness to the buyers. The cooperation of businesses and the development and use of a regional brand certifying the origin of the product can be helpful here. The store could simultaneously serve as an information contact point for tourists.

### 3 Gap Analysis

During the process of analysis the possible linkages between the three sectors became more and more apparent. Many companies operate in more than one of the sectors as they are also processing there products or offering services to tourists. In addition, the cooperation between companies of different sectors makes sense because it enables local value creation and a stronger connection to the National Park. This is why the results of the analysis will be presented in a value chain approach: each chapter includes various activities to underline possible linkages.


The indicated rating for each Pro Biodiversity Business is a result of discussion between stakeholders and the park administration. The discussions and the rating is an ongoing process. One star (\*) stands for not important or low opportunity, five stars (\*\*\*\*\*) stand for a high importance and good opportunity for business development.

### 3.1 Wood production, processing and marketing

#### 3.1.1 Current situation

Around 80 % of the National Park is forested and managed by the public utility “National Park Tara”. Half of the forest is state owned, 47 % private and 3 % belong to a monastery. Private owners mostly use the timber for themselves and do not sell it. The region has a long history of organized forestry and developed forest roads. Horses and oxen pull the timber out of the forest which minimizes the environmental impact. There is no certification for sustainable forest management in place as this has no significance on the local market.

There are 25 wood processing companies in the region (4 in the park) that produce technical wood, but no final products and without focus on environmental friendly techniques. Furthermore, there are companies that produce final products; two of them use resources from Tara. They produce doors and windows. In total the businesses provide approximately 200-250 jobs. There is also one processing company that started to build wood houses.

|  <b>Challenges and opportunities in the wood sector</b>  |   |
|---|---|
| Challenges for biodiversity conservation  | Challenges for economic development   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Invasive species</li> <li>○ Private forests are not well managed (sometimes uncontrolled and / or excessive cutting)</li> <li>○ Fires and illegal cutting</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Old machineries</li> <li>○ Adverse age structure of employees in the use of forest because they are mainly employed in forestry from the village</li> <li>○ Lack of capacity and knowledge for final processing</li> </ul> |



| Opportunities for biodiversity conservation   | Opportunities for economic development  |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Production with supporting of rare and endangered tree species in a nursery.</li> <li>○ Production of timber close to nature</li> <li>○ Increase the share of FSC certified wood for processing</li> <li>○ Implementation of sustainable management practices for wood processing companies</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Production of biomass from residues</li> <li>○ NP could obtain a FSC certificate to achieve higher prices and increase the value of the forest in further processing</li> <li>○ Use of local wood for manufacturing / processing (carpenter); higher degree of product finalization is possible</li> <li>○ Production of eco houses (wooden houses), handicrafts, wood souvenirs, etc.</li> <li>○ Tradition of forestry in the region and established road network</li> <li>○ Use origin as unique selling point / connection to National Park Tara</li> </ul> |

### 3.1.2 Pro Biodiversity Business opportunities in the forest sector


- \*\*\*\* Wood processing business / Carpentry business** Establish a business that focus on processing of local timber under sustainable standards (use of environmental friendly paints and varnishes) and using the origin of the wood for marketing and price setting. Production of final products increases the local added value (chairs, kitchen tools, nesting boxes and handicrafts).
- \*\*\* Producer of wood houses** Wood houses from timber from the park could increase added value and demonstrate the direct benefit people obtain from nature. Origin of wood from the park can be used for marketing.

## 3.2 Non-timber forest products (NTFP), processing and marketing

### 3.2.1 Current situation

The collection of NTFP (mostly mushrooms, medicinal herbs and wild berries) for business is allowed in the park with a permit. There are 250 mushroom species in the park, 10 to 15 of which are edible and therefore popular with inhabitants and visitors. Mostly, people collect NTFP for self-use or without permission. Local people also sell NTFP on local markets or to collecting centers that sell it abroad.

Outside the National Park there are 1-2 companies that are registered for buying and selling of forest fruits and mushrooms from the park and broader region.

|  <b>Challenges and opportunities in the NTFP sector</b>  |  |
|---|--|
| Challenges for biodiversity conservation  | Challenges for economic development  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Unsustainable picking of NTFP; big amounts are bought from locals and sold abroad by merchants</li> <li>○ No monitoring or control of collected amounts</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Collected NTFP are mostly sold on black market</li> <li>○ Few local value added is created; Restaurants do not buy local food</li> <li>○ Small allowed collection rates do not suffice for a viable business</li> <li>○ High administrative effort hinders people to register their business.</li> <li>○ People are unwilling to pay taxes and report the resource use and production volume</li> </ul> |
| Opportunities for biodiversity conservation   | Opportunities for economic development   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Education of pickers on sustainable harvesting</li> <li>○ Use of standards / certification which ensures sustainability and monitoring (FairWild)</li> </ul>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Usage of naturally occurring species from unpolluted soils and water and use origin for marketing</li> <li>○ Collaboration with accommodation provider, restaurants, shops, supermarkets could incentivize legal collection and production</li> <li>○ Competitive advantage through using standard or certification (FairWild)</li> </ul>   |

**3.2.2 PBB opportunities**

**\*\*\*\***

**Individual enterprise/ family business that collects and sells medicinal herbs and cosmetic plants**

One business opportunity is an individual enterprise or family business that collects and processes legally collected NTFP to process them to jams, juices, soaps, handicrafts, etc. Collaboration with local restaurants, cafes, shops, hotels, NGO and National Park administration enables secure sales channels and incentivizes legal registration.

**\*\*\***

**Production and processing company of NTFP**

It would also be possible to establish a business which takes over the production and processing of NTFP. The company could collaborate with local people who collect and harvest the products to support sustainable harvesting and registration. Again the origin of resources can be used for marketing.

**\*\*\***

**Distributor of NTFP / Collection company**


It is also an option to distribute NTFP on the international market without processing them. Customers on the international market might be more interested in sustainably produced resources. Often this is especially valid for medicinal resources. The use of certification schemes such as FairWild prove legal collection and to create a competitive advantage. The collaboration with local suppliers increases trustful relationship and transparency of the origin of resources.

### 3.3 Livestock production, processing and marketing and landscape maintenance

#### 3.3.1 Current situation

Inside the National Park Tara there are some farmers that breed goats, cows and sheep. They produce meat mostly for self-use and for local restaurants.

There are about 2,500 ha of meadows and pastures inside the park. Most of the existing meadows are abandoned; it is sometimes not clear who the owners are and where they are. There is a lack of farmers that do extensive grazing, one reason is that the average age is 60 years and many families are too old to do livestock farming.

|  <b>Challenges and opportunities in the livestock production, processing and marketing and the landscape maintenance sector</b>  |  |
|---|--|
| Challenges for biodiversity conservation  | Challenges for economic development  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Natural succession on parts of the meadows</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Businesses are not legally registered</li> <li>○ Aging population</li> </ul>  |
| Opportunities for biodiversity conservation   | Opportunities for economic development   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Extensive cattle breeding on abandoned meadows would stop natural succession</li> <li>○ Reintroduction of traditional, adapted species</li> <li>○ Meadows for touristic activities (traditional mowing practices)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Establishment of farmer association that shares equipment, land, workforce and know-how and supports the distribution of meat and dairy products</li> <li>○ Production of specialty / high-quality product</li> <li>○ Cooperation with processors, restaurants, hotels, etc. to create local value and to sell to tourists</li> </ul> |

#### 3.3.2 PBB opportunities


**\*\*\*\* Livestock farmer/ Shepherd** High potential to market high-quality products from the park. More grazing activities could increase the amount of milk and meat in the region and conserve the cultural landscape. Create local value chains with processors, shops and restaurants and sell products also to tourists that have higher buying power.

**\*\*\* Meadow business** Furthermore, there is a business opportunity in maintaining and mowing meadows. For instance, it can be used for touristic activities: traditional mowing techniques without heavy machines could be explained to and practiced by tourists. This has the double effect of ensuring biodiversity friendly management and providing an income to the land owner.

## 3.4 Crop production and marketing of agricultural products

### 3.4.1 Current situation

Around 10-15 % of the area in the NP Tara are meadows and agricultural land. Cereal and corn production is only for self-use. Raspberry cultivation is common in the region, but in the park it takes over just a small amount. Most of the farmers produce traditionally which has a low impact on biodiversity. An agricultural advisory service which is part of the municipality exists.

|  <b>Challenges and opportunities for the development of PBBs in the <i>agricultural sector</i></b>   |  |
|---|--|
| Challenges for biodiversity conservation  | Challenges for economic development  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No organic farming practices so far</li> <li>○ No old varieties</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Age structure of the population and emigration</li> <li>○ Difficult market access</li> <li>○ Small local population which is not well educated and poor</li> <li>○ Insufficient support from authorities, insufficient information about available support</li> <li>○ High cost of organic certification</li> </ul> |
| Opportunities for biodiversity conservation   | Opportunities for economic development   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Good agricultural land capacity and traditional techniques with low impact on biodiversity</li> <li>○ Organic farming without fertilizers and pesticides</li> <li>○ Provision of biodiversity refuges (hedges, nesting boxes, wildflower areas, etc.)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Establish farmer cooperatives / producer associations to enable joint production, marketing and distribution</li> <li>○ Use connection to National Park for marketing / NP logo</li> <li>○ Organic farming as unique selling point</li> <li>○ Collaboration with restaurants, hotels, shops</li> </ul>              |

### 3.4.2 PBB opportunities

#### \*\*\* (Certified) organic farmer

Since many farmers already produce in a rather traditional way, without the use of big machines or chemicals, it would be a chance for existing farmers to shift to organic agriculture which avoids the utilization of pesticides and fertilizers. By acquiring an organic certification, higher prices for products can be achieved. Providing biodiversity refuges such as hedges, wildflower areas or buck hotels ensures additional advantages for biodiversity conservation. Organic farmers could also collaborate with schools, the NP Tara and tour operators to show agricultural practices and raise awareness. In addition, they could sell their products to shops, restaurants and cafés. Especially the cultivation of medicinal herbs and sales to traders, processors or companies abroad is an opportunity.


**\*\*\* Farmer association**

Establish a farmer association which produces and processes agricultural products jointly. Share machines, transportation vehicles and work force to increase productivity. Joint sale of product on markets, local shops or restaurant might be an option as well as using the origin of the products for marketing. A joint brand can be developed to promote the products from National Park Tara.

## 3.5 Orchards, fruit processing and marketing

### 3.5.1 Current situation

Farmers grow plum, apple and pear trees, but in small amounts and mostly for self-use. Some of the orchards are abandoned. Some of the owners no longer live in the region and make it difficult to use these valuable areas.

|  <b>Challenges and opportunities in the orchard sector</b>                            |   |
|--|---|
| Challenges for biodiversity conservation   | Challenges for economic development   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Abandoned orchards</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Small orchards</li> </ul>  |
| Opportunities for biodiversity conservation  | Opportunities for economic development  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use orchards to raise awareness about importance of preservation of biodiversity within tourists, local</li> <li>○</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cooperation with other producers to market biodiversity friendly products</li> <li>○ Selling to local restaurants, hotels, markets, shops</li> </ul> |

### 3.5.2 PBB opportunities

#### **Production of fruit products from orchards**

\*\*\*\*

Products like juices, spirits, fruits, dried fruit, etc. can be made with local products and can be sold to locals and tourists. Collaboration with several producers and with restaurants, hotels and markets and shops or schools for distribution of bigger amounts of products.


Potential to show tourists how important orchards are for biodiversity conservation and how juices are produced.

Using the contribution to biodiversity as a marketing asset is an idea to improve the advertisement.

## 3.6 Bee keeping and honey production

### 3.6.1 Current situation

25 to 30 beekeepers work regularly in the Tara National Park. They sell their honey mostly on the door step or on local markets. The producers do not have organic certification. One of them had an organic certificate, but did not renew it, because certification was too expensive and complicated, but he continues to produce organic honey. High prices (up to 10 Euros) can be achieved per kilo. Associations of beekeepers with different number of members exist. The biggest association has 70 members. Three of the associations are connected with the park.

|  <b>Summary of specific challenges and opportunities in the <i>beekeeping</i> Sector</b>   |  |
|---|--|
| Challenges for biodiversity conservation  | Challenges for economic development  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pollution with chemicals from agriculture</li> <li>○ Diseases</li> <li>○ Invasive species of plants and animals</li> <li>○ Abandoning traditional activities (meadows and pastures crucial for common meadow honey)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Population structure of the area</li> <li>○ Insufficient knowledge of species biology (bees, plants) and honey production</li> <li>○ Unorganized sales</li> <li>○ Distribution of products</li> <li>○ Sales of false honey</li> <li>○ Bear: protected species</li> <li>○ Changing Climate</li> </ul>                      |
| Opportunities for biodiversity conservation   | Opportunities for economic development   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Organic beekeeping</li> <li>○ Beekeeping enables pollination which enhance biodiversity on pastures, meadows, forests of the National Park</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Origin from unpolluted environment as special feature</li> <li>○ Logo as proof for origin</li> <li>○ Professional packaging</li> <li>○ High quality of honey</li> <li>○ Increasing number of people is involved in the production of honey</li> <li>○ Production of bee keeping material</li> <li>○ Apitourism</li> </ul> |

### 3.6.2 PBB opportunities

- \*\*\* Production of honey products** The good quality of the honey and important service of the bees should be given more prominence. There is a potential for organic beekeepers inside the National Park. The advantage, that the honey comes from an area which is far away from industries and conventional farming and thus from an unpolluted environment, can be used for marketing. Since many people appreciate the healing effects of honey a natural origin is often important for honey consumers. Using a logo that proves this origin can help to achieve higher prices.  
Sell different products: honey, candles from beeswax, pollen or pollen bread.




- \*\*\*\*\* Production of bee hives and sale of bee keeping equipment** As bee keeping is a common activity in the area, the production of bee hives for bee keepers and sale of further equipment also for the packaging of the honey is a business opportunity.
- \*\*\*\*\* Apitherapy and Apitourism** Additional income can be generated by bee keepers in showing bee keeping practices and raising awareness to the importance of bees to mankind and enrich knowledge about the use and effects of bee products, preparations and apitherapy.

## 3.7 Touristic accommodation & restaurants & cafés

### 3.7.1 Current situation

Tourists are mostly coming from the region or other parts of Serbia. There are 4500 beds in the wider region of the National Park; around one third is in hotels, which are mostly owned by people from Belgrade. This third is legally registered. The rest, many of them private guest houses, are not officially registered because of the high taxes and complicated administration processes. The people offering those guest houses do not do it as their main job. Of the 12 registered hotels/motels/pensions, 8 are located inside the park. Some of the public hotels, owned by ministries, buy food from the local markets.

There are 13 registered restaurants/cafés/bars, 9 of which are located in the park. Most of the restaurants are not buying products from local people. Maybe some of them are starting.

|  <b>Challenges and opportunities in the <i>touristic accommodation, restauration sector</i></b>   |  |
|--|--|
| Challenges for biodiversity conservation   | Challenges for economic development  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing restaurants do not buy on local markets or buy organic ingredients</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holiday houses are not legally registered due to complicated processes</li> <li>Restaurants do not buy locally and use the naturalness of the products from farmers close by for their advertisement</li> </ul>   |
| Opportunities for biodiversity conservation  | Opportunities for economic development   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restaurants and Cafés could sell organic products</li> <li>Implementation of environmental friendly practices, such as energy saving, waste reduction, etc. by restaurants and cafés</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restaurants and Cafés could sell local products and advertise the naturalness</li> <li>Restaurants and Cafés could provide traditional meals</li> <li>Connect a farm with provision of accommodation, restaurant and activities</li> <li>Open EcoCamping facility</li> <li>Establish platform which provides information about all available accommodation, restaurants, cafés, activities in the area</li> </ul> |

### 3.7.2 PBB opportunities

#### EcoCamping

\*\*\*\*\*

Camping is a popular and low-budget way to experience close-to nature tourism. Guests can be short-stay tourists, retirees or young people with low budget.

By implementing a couple of environmental friendly practices such as the provision of biodiversity refuges, a camping space can be designed environmental friendly.

In addition, a camping site could offer environmental education courses or tours into the National Park.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Tourism Farm</b></p> <p>*****</p> | <p>Furthermore, a PBB opportunity could be to combine farming with accommodation and restauration which would give tourists the chance to experience the traditional life on farms. Courses related to farming practices, such as traditional livestock farming or mowing techniques or processing of local products, could be offered to tourists. This could also be used for educational purposes, especially to explain the high value of meadows for biodiversity. For instance, farmers could explain and show the special value of meadows of old species to school children or tourists.</p> |
| <p>***</p>                              | <p><b>Restaurant (traditional/organic/Specialties)</b></p> <p>A restaurant which provides special services or products and differs from other restaurants might be a potential. Not only offering traditional food from local meals is a chance, but also the provision of special services like cooking classes, catering services or wine tastings could make a difference.</p>  |


## 3.8 Touristic activities

### 3.8.1 Current situation

There are six businesses that offer activities in the National Park Tara. For example, there is the Tour Agency Taratours which is located outside of the park. However, they have some facilities in the park (restaurant and boat) and they offer lake cruising and sightseeing tours. The Tour Agency TaraInfo is located inside the park. They own the hotel Planinska kuca. The Tour Agency Šarm turs offers lake cruising and sightseeing tours. The Tour agency Green bear offers outdoor activities such as stand up paddling, canoeing, rafting and hiking in the park

The guides are partly employed by operators and partly self-employed. There are some incoming operators that also work in other regions. They use local food and accommodation. However, it is a problem, that there are not a lot of legally registered accommodations, with which the tour operators can cooperate. The three of the local operators, with sightseeing tours in the region, have knowledge about the local flora and fauna. It is new for them to start thinking more about environmental education.

Activities that are already offered include: lake cruising, canoeing, rafting, kayaking, stand up paddling, hiking, horseback riding and paragliding. There is a demand for activities such as mountain biking.

|  <b>Challenges and opportunities for the development of PBBs for touristic and cultural activities</b>   |   |
|---|---|
| Challenges for biodiversity conservation  | Challenges for economic development   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Insufficient ecological awareness of locals</li> <li>○ Problems with disposal of waste and wastewater</li> <li>○ Not all tour guides work according to an environmental standard and do not provide environmental education</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Legal registration is difficult</li> <li>○ Age structure and emigration</li> <li>○ Limited offer of activities and services for tourists</li> <li>○ Lack of education of locals and trained staff; lack of knowledge of foreign languages</li> <li>○ Maintenance of hiking trails</li> </ul>   |
| Opportunities for biodiversity conservation   | Opportunities for economic development  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provide environmental education to tourists and locals</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Rich cultural heritage</li> <li>○ Preserved nature and outstanding biodiversity, recognisability of the area</li> <li>○ Excellent network of hiking trails</li> <li>○ More touristic attractions in the region</li> <li>○ Development of camping facilities and rural tourism</li> <li>○ Potential to connect touristic activities with accommodation, restaurants, farms, etc.</li> <li>○ Counter with touristic information (from May to October)</li> </ul> |

**3.8.2 PBB opportunities**


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|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Trained local tour guides</b> | Local tour guides who offer their own tours or could be hired by the tour operators. To be successful, they need specific knowledge, for instance regarding the local flora and fauna in the National Park Tara. From a biodiversity perspective it is essential that the tour guide works according to environmental standards such as the “leave no trace” standard, which ensures that the natural environment is respected by visitors.<br>In collaboration with local restaurants, accommodations the guide could offer the tours. |
| ****                             |   |
| <b>Specialized tour offers</b>   | Guide that offers specialized thematic tours, which can attract specific groups of people such as families, singles, plant lovers, rakia lovers etc. Further examples are E-bike tours that attract people with lacking fitness and enable them to enjoy the park or cross-border tours. Combining such tours with knowledge about ethnology and local culture, which is available within the local population, has potential.  |
| *****                            |   |

## 3.9 Consultancy services

### 3.9.1 Current situation

An agricultural advisory service which is part of the municipality exists. They mostly give advice regarding the raspberry production, which is popular in the region. In the park there is a low amount of raspberry cultivations.

| Challenges and opportunities in the <i>consultancy service sector</i>  |   |
|--|---|
|   |   |
| Challenges for biodiversity conservation   | Challenges for economic development   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No specific knowledge on biodiversity conservation</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Missing knowledge on consulting services</li> <li>○ Difficult for locals to pay a consulting firm</li> </ul> |
| Opportunities for biodiversity conservation  | Opportunities for economic development  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Consultancy on biodiversity friendly practices and management</li> <li>○ Consultancy on the development of PBB</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Consultancy for business registration</li> </ul>   |

### 3.9.2 PBB opportunities

- \*\*\* **Consultancy company** It gives services on legal business registration (open there own businesses; rebuild an old house or receive subsidies), fund access, subsidies, etc. Further consulting services might support the development of local PBB. Consultancy on biodiversity friendly practices, management and certification. High demand due to complicated processes.

## 4 Conclusion

All in all, the National Park Tara offers numerous opportunities for the development of biodiversity-friendly and viable businesses.

There are several business activities already taking place in the park. Local people working in the forest and wood sector, produce various foods, collect NTFP or offer accommodation for tourists. However, many of these companies are not legally registered, as there are no incentives to carry out the administrative work and pay taxes. This is an important starting point for the further economic development of the region. Incentives for the registration and support can be offered by the government or by local companies that wish to collaborate with entrepreneurs. If the collaboration is economically attractive for the entrepreneur, a legal registration is worth it.

Since an economic business is not worthwhile for many individual entrepreneurs as they have only small patches of land or limited resources, the establishment of cooperatives represents a great opportunity. They can use synergies and jointly produce, transport and sell goods.

In addition, the establishment of a regional brand would have a positive effect on local value creation. Products could be advertised specifically with their origin and traditional production method.

Both the regional brand and a cooperative increase local added value and contribute to the economic development of the region. This in turn increases the attractiveness of the region for young people. In order to improve their economic situation and establish PBBs, however, the inhabitants need further support, be it in financing, writing a business plan or technical and administrative know-how.

The above discussed sectors cover those business opportunities that currently offer the most potential. There are, however, other sectors in which the development of Pro Biodiversity Businesses is generally possible and which might provide opportunities in the future. Those sectors include hunting, angling, delivery services, transport agencies, banking, insurance and investment.

For further steps, it is recommended to read the Pro Biodiversity Business Development Guide, in which, through a series of simple items, recommendations are given to implement measures to incorporate biodiversity into small local businesses.

