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Protected Areas for a Living Planet

delivering on CBD commitments

Dinaric Arc Ecoregion Project



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River in grassland, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Dinaric Arc ecoregion is dominated by the Dinaric Alps and the Dalmatian coast and Sea. It contains large and well-preserved forests with high floral species diversity and a high rate of endemism, with 10–20% of plants being endemic. The Dinaric Alps are famous for karst ecosystems and cave habitats and harbour important populations of large carnivores — lynx, brown bear, and wolf. The region also hosts important freshwater ecosystems, including the most extensive network of subterranean rivers and lakes in Europe and many wetlands of international importance. The coastal and marine habitats are very varied, and include shallow reefs and *Posidonia* meadows, which are feeding and breeding grounds for cetaceans, seabirds, and marine turtles. The Eastern Adriatic is one of the richest fishing grounds of the Mediterranean. Many nature-friendly, traditional economic activities — especially small-scale agriculture and livestock-raising, traditional forestry, and small-scale fisheries — form a valuable basis for the sustainable development of the Dinaric Arc.

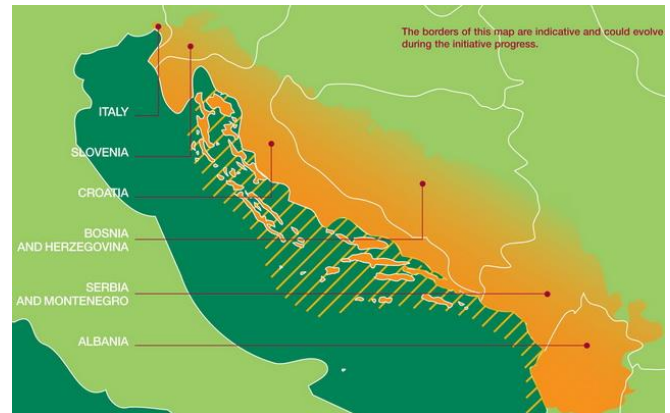
Work to date

WWF started working in the Dinaric Arc ecoregion in the late 1990s. A number of priority landscapes have been identified, including the most valuable forest, freshwater, and coastal marine habitats. WWF has been working with several stakeholders, advocating for the establishment of networks of protected areas and ecological corridors as well as supporting the development of specific skills among conservation practitioners. Among the most important achievements to date are the creation of new protected areas in the Velebit Mountains and the Islands of Dalmatia (Croatia). The current WWF programme in the Dinaric Arc includes projects in Croatia,

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Albania. WWF-Italy manages the small but well-known Miramare Marine Reserve at the northern tip of the ecoregion.

Dinaric Arc Ecoregion Project

WWF's *Protected Areas for a Living Planet* programme initiated the Dinaric Arc Ecoregion Project in 2006 in consultation with stakeholders. The project began in January 2007 and will run until the end of 2011.



Map of the Dinaric Arc ecoregion. The ecoregion runs through Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Slovenia, and Italy, covering an area of approximately 100,000km², and including 6,000km of coastline.

Stakeholder consultation

The programme organized a workshop in collaboration with IUCN–The World Conservation Union in March 2006 which brought together 40 participants from five countries of the ecoregion. The participants included representatives of government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academia, and civil society groups.

Developing an Action Plan for the ecoregion

WWF presented the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas (PoWPA) and participants worked through its goals, targets, and activities to identify the status of implementation in the ecoregion. This exercise looked at the activities of both government and non-governmental organizations and allowed participants to identify gaps in the implementation of the PoWPA. Based on this assessment, priority activities were identified and elaborated into an Action Plan. The Action Plan highlighted the relevant stakeholders that should be involved in each activity and estimated the financial and human capacity needs. The Action Plan formed the basis for the Ecoregion Project activities outlined below.

Dinaric Arc Ecoregion Project Goal

Enabling conditions are created for the successful implementation of the CBD PoWPA in five countries of the Dinaric Arc ecoregion (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Albania).

Multi-stakeholder process: The Dinaric Arc Initiative

During the workshop governmental officials, NGO representatives, and scientists highlighted their interest in engaging in the project. The project concept was also introduced to all Dinaric Arc Initiative (DAI) partners (UNESCO, IUCN, FAO, Euronatur, Council of Europe, UNDP, UNEP), during meetings held in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Italy in 2006. All partners agreed that the project would boost the work of DAI, provide crucial baseline data and further elements of knowledge in the region, increase the engagement of governments, and multiply opportunities to achieve the vision and objectives of DAI. The Dinaric Arc Initiative will provide the overarching framework for the development of the *Protected Areas for a Living Planet* Dinaric Arc Ecoregion Project. WWF will also actively seek the engagement of DAI partners in project activities.



Lastovo Island,
Dalmatia, Croatia.

Dinaric Arc Ecoregion Project activities

1. Protected area gap analysis: A gap analysis for the ecoregion will be produced and made available to all key actors involved in the implementation of the PoWPA by 2008. The project will create a network of institutions (universities, institutes for nature conservation, etc.) endorsed by the respective governments and committed to provide the information and collaborate in the development of the gap analysis under the framework of DAI.

2. Targets: The project will develop a set of biodiversity conservation targets including species, habitats, and ecological processes (report and maps) by 2009.

3. Red Data List: A list of endangered species will be developed by 2010.

4. Land-use mapping: A set of maps of existing and planned infrastructure and land use will be compiled by 2008.

5. Website: A website acting as an information clearinghouse to support PoWPA implementation in the ecoregion will be online by early 2008.

6. Capacity building: The project will elaborate a capacity building plan linked to the implementation of the PoWPA and implement at least 75% of the activities by the end of the project (2011). This work will include the mapping of responsibilities for PoWPA implementation at the governmental level (by 2008); a full assessment of governmental capacity building needs and gaps (by 2009); and a list of concrete actions and tools, time-frame, estimated cost and possible funding opportunities, and partnerships for implementation (by 2009).

7. Mainstreaming protected areas: The project will ensure that the PoWPA gains higher political attention in five countries of the ecoregion, and that it is mainstreamed into strategies and plans of national and local level government as well as civil society, economic actors, and donors. Multi-stakeholder steering committees for the mainstreaming of the PoWPA will be set up in each of the five countries.

8. Sustainable Finance: The project will develop a training module on the economics of protected areas and put it into practice via the five national steering committees. Protected area business plans will be developed for at least one protected area per country and donor conferences will be held to secure financial support for projects stemming from the business plans.

For more information

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