

THE CASE STUDY OF BABIA GÓRA NATIONAL PARK / BIOSPHERE RESERVE
POLAND

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TOURISM AND ITS IMPACTS ON BIODIVERSITY



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1. General description

1.1. History of the Babia Góra's nature protection

The Father of the Babia Góra tourism and a propagator of the unique value of the Babia Góra nature for science was Hugon Zapalowicz who carried out the research of flora there. Because of his effort, a hostel was built at Markowe Szczawiny in 1906, and a Babia Góra branch of the Society of the Tatra Mountains was established in Zawoja. Marian Raciborski, a well-known Polish botanist and a supporter of nature protection, was among those who first proposed recognising the Primeval Czatoza Forest in the lower forest belt as a nature reserve in 1910. Then in 1923, in a year-book of the Society of the Tatra Mountains called "Wierchy", Kazimierz Sosnowski demanded to establish the nature reserve on Babia Góra. After that in 1928, Wladyslaw Midowicz formed the first project of the reserve, which he published in a "Ochrona Przyrody" year-book. In the same year, protective forests were designated on the southern slopes of Babia Góra. In 1930, the project of the reserve of the Polish Academy of Learning was formed by Stanislaw Sokolowski, one of the founders of the State Council for Nature Conservation. Next, Stanislaw Szafer (the Council's chairman) rendered a valuable service in establishing the reserve in 1933. Located on the northern slopes, the reserve's area covered 642 ha. Together with the forests on the southern slopes managed on reserve principles after 1928, the protected area totalled 1046 ha at that time. Owing to Walery Goetl, a decision was taken to assign the area for the forthcoming national park on Babia Góra, on the tenth rally of the State Council for Nature Conservation in 1929.

Those efforts were crowned by the creation of the Babia Góra National Park by the ordinance of the Council of Ministers of 30.10.1954. The park covered 1704 ha first, then 1734 ha, up to August 1997. In that year, the area of the park was extended to 3391,55 ha. The forest incorporated into the park belonged mainly to the National Forest Service. BGNP has a protection (buffer) zone totalling 8437 ha.

The International Co-ordinating Council for the Man and Biosphere (MAB) programme of UNESCO nominated the Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve, including the Babia Góra National Park within the World Network of the Biosphere Reserves on 17th January 1977. In September 2001, the Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve was extended, also. Distinguishing of a Transition Area was based on the existing protection zone of BGNP. At the same time, new zonation was implemented:

The Core Area is the heart of the reserve, and it includes areas which have not been changed by human influence or were used in the past but are excluded from use now. The area belongs to Babia Góra National Park and covers 1061 hectares. It is subjected to strict protection. The Core Area is surrounded by the Buffer Zone to limit influence of human activity there. Totalling 2331 hectares, the Zone is a part of BGNP covered by active and landscape protection. The final zone called the Transition Area is formed by the protection zone of the national park and covers about 8437 hectares. It includes state forests neighbouring with the BGNP, rural and inhabited areas. This zone is controlled by local authorities.

1.2. Description of ecosystems, flora and fauna and geographical borders

a) Vegetation zones

The foothills up to 700 m a.s.l. are covered by cultivated fields, meadows and pastures. Areas which are not suitable for growing crops are covered by forest.

The lower forest belt (700 - 1150 m a.s.l.)

Main communities: the Carpathian beech forest *Dentario glandulosae – Fagetum*, the fir forest *Galio- Abietetum*, the mixed fir and spruce forest *Abieti – Piceetum montanum*, the grey-alder forest *Caltho-Alnetum* and the Carpathian grey-alder forest *Alnetum incanae*;



Forests such as the Carpathian beech forest, the fir forest and the mixed coniferous fir-spruce forest dominate there.

Situated on the northern slopes, in the vicinity of Mokry Stawek and Knieja Czatozanska, patches of the Carpathian beech forest are preserved fragments of the Carpathian Primeval Forest. Reaching over 40 m of height and over 1 m of thickness, more than 200- year-old trees grow in the natural fir-beech forest. In this belt, there are small patches of other interesting forest communities such as: the grey-alder forest following stream valleys, the sycamore forest on steep stony slopes and the boggy fir forest with abundance of herbs in the Oravian foothill of Babia Gora.

The upper forest belt (1150-1390m a.s.l.)

Main communities: the Carpathian spruce forest *Picetum excelsae carpaticum* and the sycamore forest with rowan *Sorbo- Aceretum carpaticum* when passing from the lower to the upper forest belt; The main community of this belt is the Carpathian spruce forest which appearance correlates with an elevation. At the higher altitudes, a distance between trees increases, and they themselves become lower and branchier. Besides, the sycamore forest occurs on small patches, and rowan thickets can be found at the timberline.



The dwarf pine belt (1390-1650 m a.s.l.)

Main communities: the dwarf pine thickets *Pinetum mughi carpaticum*, tall herb communities such as: *Adynostyletum allariae*, *Petasitetum Kabilkiani*, *Calamagrostietum villosae*, *Saxifrago-Festucetum versicoloris babiogorensis*, *Vaccinietum myrtilli*, *Empetro- Vaccinietum*, *Deschampsia caespitosa* and *Hieracio-Nardetum*;

The dwarf pine thickets, a tall herb community and bilberry tufts form a mosaic arrangement there. The area covered by dwarf pine increases because a natural process of regeneration takes place.



The alpine belt (1650 -1725 m a.s.l.)

Main communities: *Junco trifidi-Festucetum supinae*, *Desampsio-Luzuletum*;

The alpine mats occur there mainly. The snow-patch vegetation, found in spots where duration of snow cover is prolonged, and fields of boulder scree with lichens growing on the surfaces of rocks make this belt more diverse.

Habitats which are unique or exceptionally important from the point of view of conservation:

The alpine meadows – the Core Area, 1650-1725 m

Junco-Festucetum, *Hieracio-Vaccinietum* and community with *Rhacomitrium*

lanuginosum are isolated from their main range in the Carpathians.

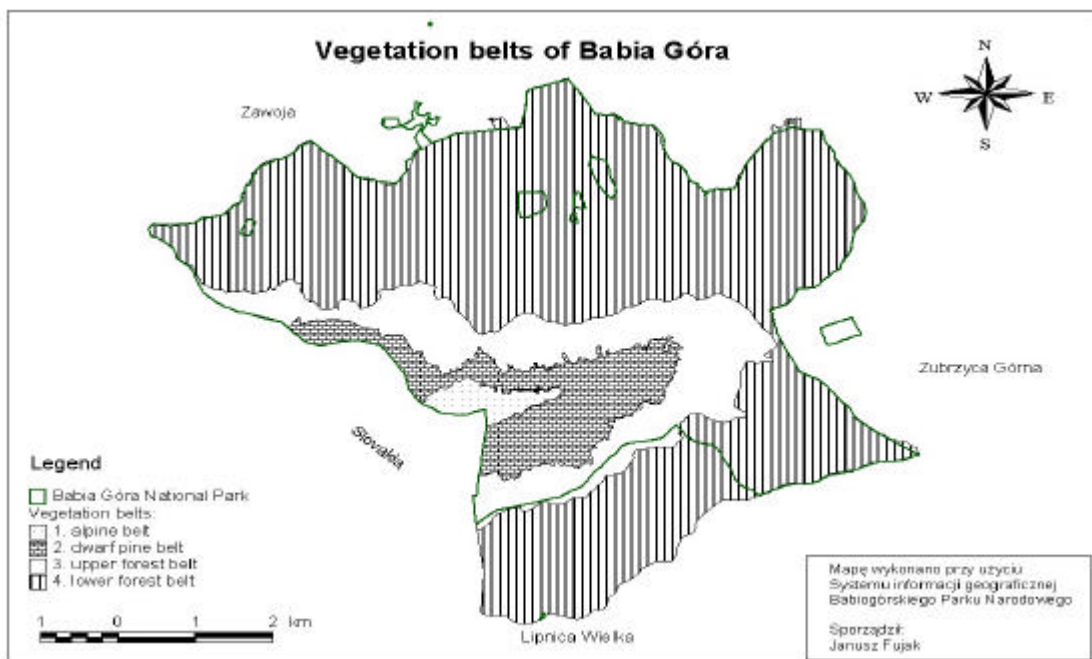
Community *Saxifraga-Festucetum versicoloris* occurs on Babia Góra only (is endemic to Babia Góra.)

The clearings in the lower forest belt – the Buffer Zone

Carici-Agrostietum caninae is represented by small patches on meadows which are endangered by natural succession.

The lower forest belt - from the base of the massif up to 1150 m- the Buffer Zone

The Carpathian grey-adler forest *Alnetum incanae*, *Lunario-Aceretum* and *Doronico austriaci-Abietetum* communities occur on small patches in the part incorporated into the park in 1997. The structure and the composition of the communities are changed because of the influence of forestry.



b) Fauna and Flora

There are all representative ecosystems of the Beskids in the biosphere reserve, and the massif has complete zonation of vegetation belts. The Core Areas include natural ecosystems (primeval forests) and ecosystems in which human interference was insignificant. The Buffer Zone which surrounds the Core Areas include near-natural ecosystems, forests that are used with the aim of achieving ecological stability and semi-natural ecosystems maintained by human intervention. In the Transition Area, there are rural areas, meadows, pastures, production forests and near-natural forests.

As a result of full zonation of climatic and vegetation zones, all ecosystems of the Beskids are found in the reserve. Thus, life conditions of animals and plants are very differentiated causing diversification of the local fauna and flora. There are over 900 species of vascular plants, 200 species of moss, 100 species of liverworts, 250 species of lichens, 120 species of algae, 640 species of fungi here. There are 93 plant communities and their various modifications in the area, also. Two species such as *Laserpitium archangelica* and *Cerastium alpinum* can be found in Poland only in the Core Area. Alpine species (at over 70) are well-represented, and about half of these do not grow elsewhere in the Beskids, except for Babia Góra. In addition, the largest number of protected species (at over 30) in the Beskids is found here.

Fauna is very diverse too; there have been recorded about 188 species of vertebrates including 49 species of mammals, 119 species of birds, 12 species of amphibians and 6 species of reptiles and 2 species of fish. Occurrence of 3571 species of invertebrates including many endemic species has been recorded also. However, most animals avoid crowded tourist trails, so the easiest ones to spot are birds and insects. Seeing a bear or a wolf is very unlikely because the size of the biosphere reserve is too small to have its own population of these mammals. Wandering on their territory that extends far beyond Babia Góra and covers many square kilometres, they stay in the reserve only periodically. An occurrence of many species is limited to some vegetation zones or some habitats. For example, among birds that live here, there are the Alpine accentor which can be seen in the alpine belt only and the hazel grouse which occurs in forest. In spring, during their mating season, frogs, fire-bellied toads and newts are numerous in streams and ponds that are their breeding ground. Rare animals are the adder and the grass snake though they are numerous in some places. Insects are the most diverse, and several thousand of their species occur on Babia Góra. For many of them, this is the only known area of their occurrence in Poland.

c) Geographical borders

Biogeographic province: Central European highlands

Biome: Mixed mountain and highland ecosystems with complex zonation

Biogeographic number: 2.32.12

Country: Holarctic,

Area: Euro-Syberian,

Province: Mountainous,

Topographic Divide: Carpathian,

Sub-topographic Divide: The Western Carpathians,

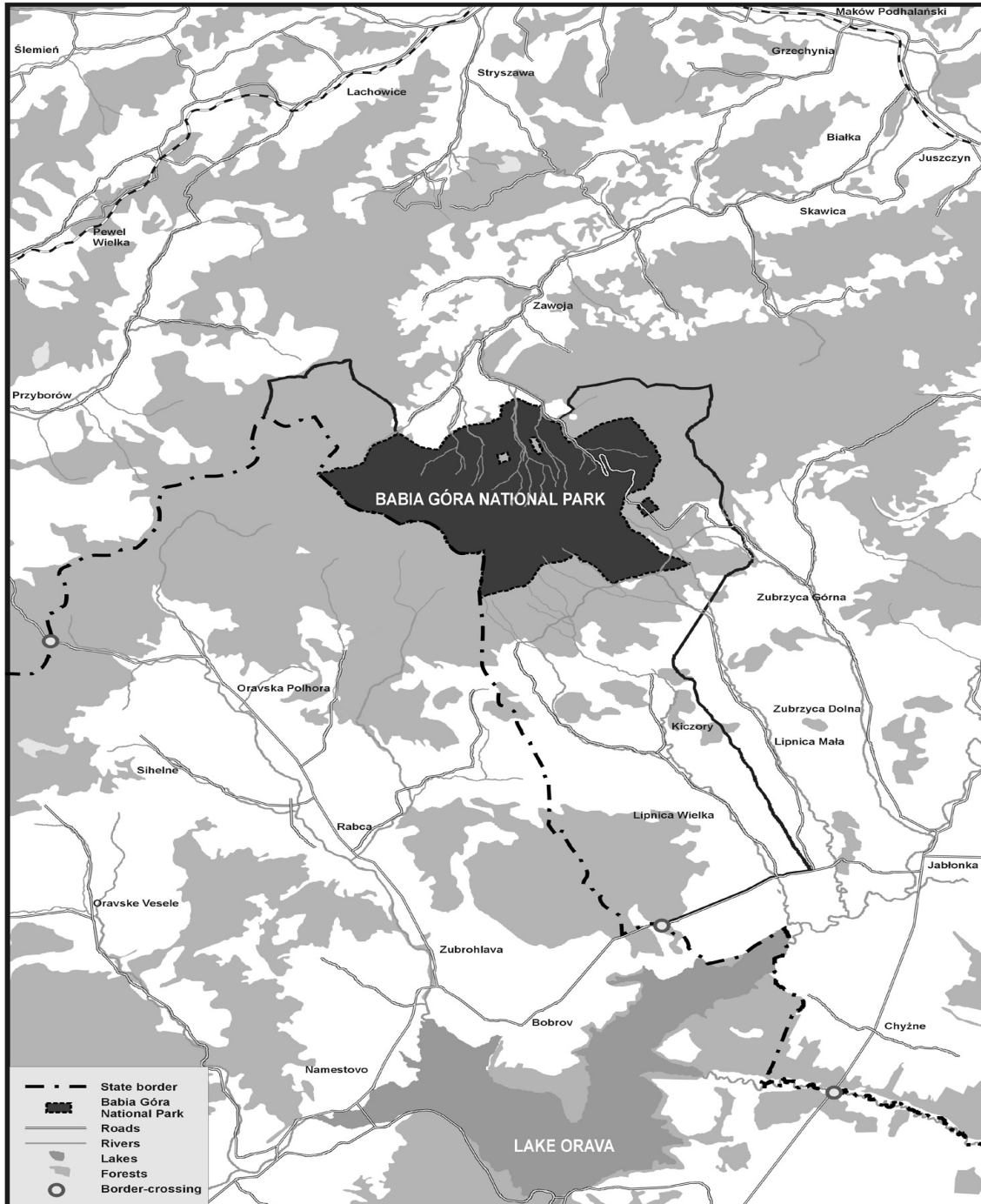
Region: The Beskids,

Sub-Region: Silesian-Babiogorski,

Babia Góra is the highest peak of the Western Beskids. It has a form of an isolated and unbranched mountain range. It is a massif which length is 11 km. It is located in the eastern Beskid Zywiecki, in the part called the Babia Góra Group which includes three mountain ranges, such as the Babia Góra range (at 1725 m above sea-level), the Polica range (at 1367 m a.s.l.) and the Jalowiec range (at 1110 m a.s.l.).

The Babia Góra range is situated between the Jalowiecka Pass and the Polgórzanka Valley to the west, the Lipnicka Pass (the Krowiarki Pass) at 1012 m a.s.l. and the valley of the Syhleć Stream to the east, and the valleys of the Skawica River and its tributary (the Jaworzynka) to the north. The south limit of Babia Góra is not distinct, and is marked out by the level of 800 m a.s.l., on the grounds of an agreement. Created as a high orographic

barrier, the range divides the areas of the southwest Little Poland and Orava, two historical regions of Poland. The Babia Góra massif has several summits including Cyl (Mała Babia Góra) at 1517 m a.s.l., Diablak (Babia Góra) at 1725 m a.s.l., Gówniak at 1619 m a.s.l., Kepa at 1521 m a.s.l, and Sokolica at 1367 m a.s.l. The European watershed between the Baltic Sea basin (the northern slopes - rivers: the Skawica, the Skawa and the Wisła) and the Black Sea basin (the southern slopes - rivers: the Orava, the Vag and the Danube) follows its ridge.



d) Climate

The following climatic zones occur on the Babia Góra massif:

- a warm temperate climatic zone, the average annual temperature of 6 - 8 °C,
- a cool temperate climatic zone, the average annual temperature of 4 - 6 °C,
- a cool climatic zone, the average annual temperature of 2 - 4 °C,
- a very cool climatic zone, the average annual temperature of 0 - 2 °C,

- a cold temperate climatic zone, the average annual temperature of -2 - 0 °C, The climate is typically montane. The average annual temperature on the altitude between the lower (1150 m) and the upper forest belts (1390 m) is about 4 °C and at the upper timberline (1390 m) is about 2,5 °C. The average annual precipitation is 1140 mm at the foothills and about 1410 mm at the hostel on Markowe Szczawiny (1180 m). South-western winds dominate. The Foehn wind occurs often on the northern slopes. The snow-cover lasts 5-7 months. The climate of the south foothills has influences of continentality.

2. Human dimension

2.1. Description of human impacts

2.1.1. Forestry

The forest covers 95 % of the total area of the Babia Góra National Park and 35% of the total area of the adjoining gminas. The zonation of the biosphere reserve reflects different degrees of human influence. The Core Area is excluded from human impact. The Buffer Zone includes forests which were affected by intensive forest husbandry in the past. Protective measures help its ecosystems to regenerate or to maintain their balance. In the Transition Area, woods and forests are a key public asset as a source of widely used renewable raw materials and significantly contribute to the development prospects of the vicinity of the national park. These are available to both commercial and public users. The forest management in the state forest adjoining the park is oriented to the aims of near-natural forest management.

Effects of forest economy

Former effects:

- a) Robber forest economy conducted at the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century resulted in:
- large clear cuttings and even-aged spruce monocultures on vast areas where habitats of beech, fir and mixed fir and spruce forests used to be,
 - long term deformation of species composition and the structure of plant communities,
 - discontinuation or deformation of energy flow in ecosystem,
 - disturbances of natural selection in the populations of forest tree species,
 - disturbances of genetic structure of populations caused by introduction of elements from outside of the ecosystems.
- b) Melioration of wetlands covering about 100 ha.

Present effects:

Tree stand reconstruction has the same drawbacks that the past forest husbandry used to have: however, there is one important difference because it aims at minimalization of the negative effects. A new danger is mechanization of work in forest, in particular transportation and skidding. Nevertheless, justification of conducting the activity is necessity of renaturalization and quick elimination existing deformation due to the danger of fungal diseases and gradation of the spruce bark beetle as well as the discontinuation of the processes that take place in the soil and extinction of plant communities occurring on small areas.

There have been some practices in the private forest in the vicinity of the park that have caused excessive and uncontrolled felling due to economic reasons.

Positive activities in forest ecosystem:

- renaturalization - change of species composition and the structure of tree stand and its adoption to the potential habitat, the area covered by the activity is about 1600 ha,
- slowing down the process of dieback and disintegration of tree stand, prevention of the occurrence of ecological disaster,
- prevention of the spruce bark beetle gradation and honey mushroom spreading in spruce forest stands by removal of infested trees,

- restoring communities which have been destroyed or profoundly changed by human interference;
- securing upward growth of fir-trees from grazing by the deer family, that activity takes place on about 50 hectares per year,
- conservation of biodiversity.
- the area of forest increases because of the change of land use and afforestation. Private forests are an important element of the landscape and provide a space for relax and tourism.

2.1.2. Hunting

The area of the national park is too small to deal with the population management of large animals, but in its vicinity 3 hunting associations have been active. A large number of deer spends winter in the national park's territory (125 specimen; 32 deer per 1000 ha during the winter of 2001), and they gather in several numerous herds which feed in fir greenwoods. It causes harm to fir restocking which makes renaturalisation of forest ecosystem difficult. For this reason, the management issues licences for reduction of several hinds in order to disperse numerous herds.

In the vicinity of the park, the deer, the roe deer, the wild bore and the hare are hunted.

2.1.3. Agriculture

Considering land ownership and geographical constraints, Babia Góra region's agricultural production has never been competitive to the production of other regions and will remain marginal in the future. In the area, great importance is attached to the development of sustainable forms of land use because it is seen as an opportunity for economic growth by the local population. The agro-tourism, whose one of the essential requirements is healthy food served by hosts and hostesses, is offered in the area. Home-cooked meals are prepared using the produce of their farms which has the Ecoland certificate. This family-run establishments offer an extraordinary degree of hospitality.



a) Characteristic

An example of the gmina Lipnica Wielka - the Transition Area of the Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve.

Structure of land use in farming

Category of land	area (ha)	average area of one farm	percentage
cultivated field	782	0,9	15,7
orchards	3	0,0	0,06
meadows	2065	2,5	41,6
pastures	365	0,4	7,4
total of agricultural land	3215	3,8	64,8
forests	1663	1,6	33,5
other	84	0,1	1,7
total	4962	5,5	100

In addition, there is a high level of fragmentation of farmland. The structure of the plots is called the chess-board. The average area of plots of a farm is 0,1-0,2 ha while the average number of plots of one farm is 37,3. Ten percent of households is typically agricultural, gaining income only from farm's production. 42% produces only to meet their own needs. Cereals and potatoes (61% and 33% of the area of crops) are most commonly grown. In livestock, cattle prevails (2230), then pigs (582), horses (216), goats (128) and sheep (3). Despite the fact that pastoralism in Orava was based on cattle-farming, 3 specimen of sheep (1996 year) are an evidence that it is on the decline. The flock of sheep which is pastured on the southern slopes of Babia Góra belongs to the farmers from the vicinity of Nowy Targ (about 50 km eastwards).

Pastoralism

Semi-natural communities such as the plant communities of meadows and pastures are very abounding with species. The area of traditional extensive land use decreases steadily. The drive to increase productivity in agriculture forces the application of ever-increasing doses of fertilisers as well as intensification of cutting down and grazing. The progressive impoverishment in floristic terms accompanies these processes. The rest of land is no longer used, which usually leads to its conversion into forest. This results in extinction of many species and in decreasing biodiversity.

The meadows of the Babia Góra glades, most of them abandoned, are now in various stages of secondary forest succession. Some of existing plant associations completely disappeared. Cessation of mowing enabled overtaking them by patches of black berry heaths, later overgrown by spruce. Others that still exist have simplified species composition now. In sites at lower altitudes and many overshadowed glades, a rapid development of tall herb-type species was noted. In the Babia Góra National Park, active protection measures are introduced in order to simulate traditional agricultural use. The preservation of meadow communities requires active measures such as traditional use or applying methods to maintain meadow communities like grazing, extensive cultivation of meadows, mowing and removal of biomass and cutting down trees and shrubs.

b) Negative impact of agriculture and pastoralism:

- melioration of wetlands and regulation of stream beds to obtain more land for agriculture,
- excessive use or bad application of chemicals and mineral fertilisers in some farms caused by intensification of their production,
- cessation of land cultivation,
- afforestation of pastures or leaving them natural secondary succession because of decreased profitability of pastoralism.



c) Positive impact

- fragmentation limits mechanisation of farms,
- use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides is limited in the area. Small quantities are used mainly in the lower part of the commune where crop farming has prevailed traditionally while pastoralism and livestock farming have been spread in the upper part of the slopes. This diversification has been maintained in principle to the present time as an important factor for agro-tourism development,
- fragmentation and mosaic of fields, meadows, woods and streams creates favourable conditions of live and breeding for animals, particularly insects and birds (birds of prey),
- unique value of the landscape which attracts tourists,
- occurrence of many plant species is connected or limited to the area of extensive land use (pastures) ,
- high percentage of grasslands and woodlands protects the soil from erosion,
- occurrence of old local varieties of fruit trees adopted to the local climate. Minimal temperature reaches minus 37° Celsius at the bottom of the Orava basin because of inversion,
- the conditions are favourable for sustainable development because most of the farms are small.

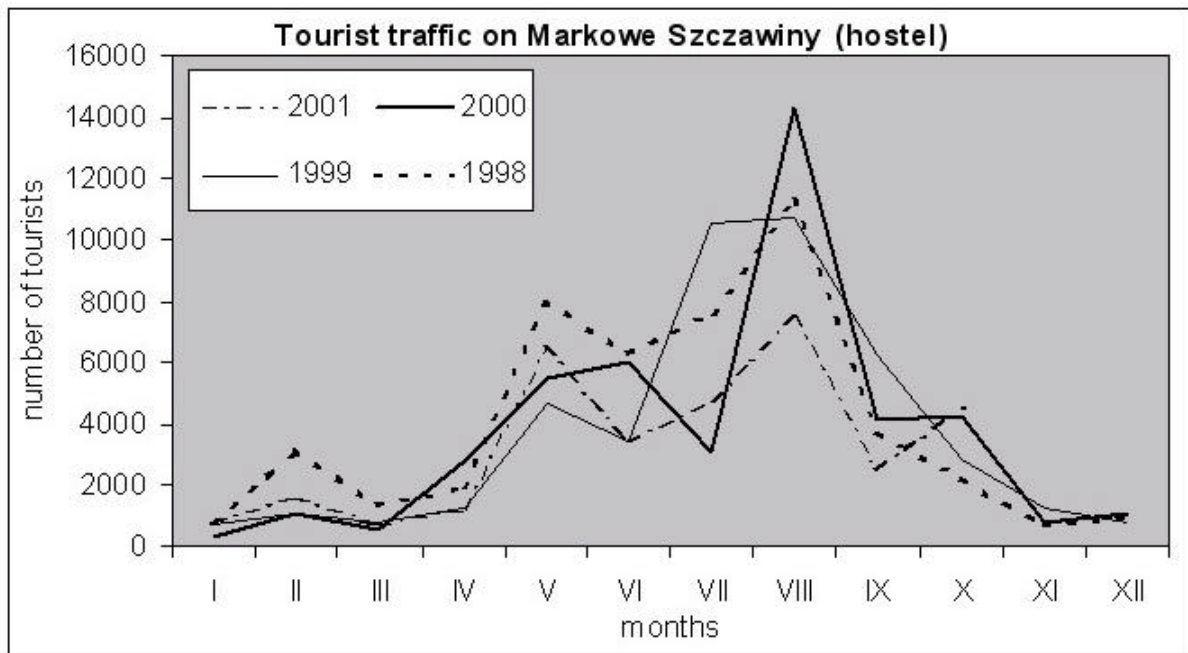
2.1.4. Tourism

a) Characteristic of the tourist traffic within the Babia Góra National Park.

Distribution during a year.

The tourist traffic is regulated by the rules defined in "*The regulations of the BGNP accessibility for tourist activities*". Its characteristic feature is its seasonality having its peak during summer months. The number of tourists visiting the park in the winter constitutes a few percent only. During summer, large fluctuations are noticeable, and they are caused by:

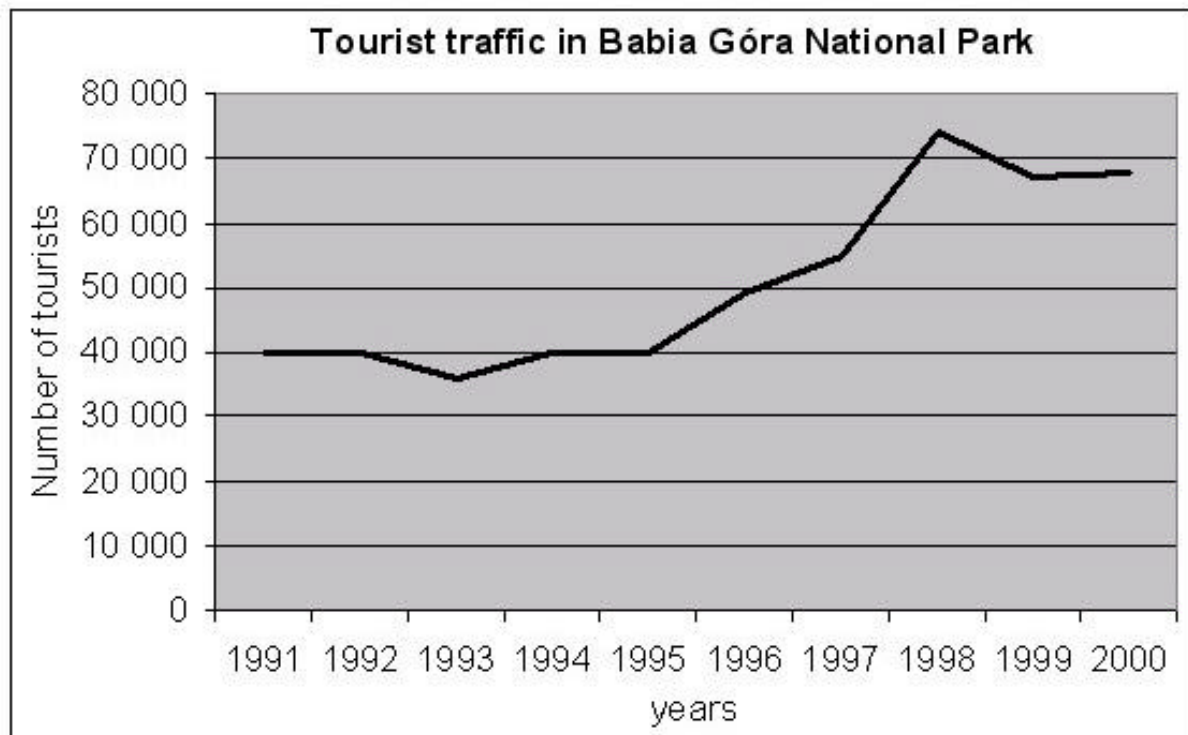
- long holidays periods caused by occurrence of national holidays in May and August,
- atmospheric condition - rainfall.



Distribution from 1991 to 2000.

The numbers are based on tickets sold at the park's entrances from 1st May to 1st October. The number of visitors increased from 40 000 to 70 000. In 1997, the enlargement of the park's territory resulted in the increase of popularity.

Atmospheric conditions have influence over the number of tourists because of the lack of tourist infrastructure, sport and entertainment facilities in the neighbourhood of the park.



b) Negative impact.

a) The trails are crowded in the summit area; 60% visitors come during June-August and most of them (about 80%) use trails leading through Krowiarki Pass - Diablak Summit – the hostel on Markowe Szczawiny - Krowiarki Pass. The trails go through the most precious places and natural curiosities which are not always important for an average visitor. This

location of the trails is caused by fact that they were built at the time when tourism was at its initial stage and the area itself was not protected there.

b) Tourist traffic causes erosion of the trails' surface, and tourists sometimes make unauthorised paths and shortcuts. Because of destroyed surface and erosion, 14 km which constitutes 27 % of the total length of the existing trails in the Babia Góra National Park was repaired during the period 1995-2002; however, it does not meet the needs.

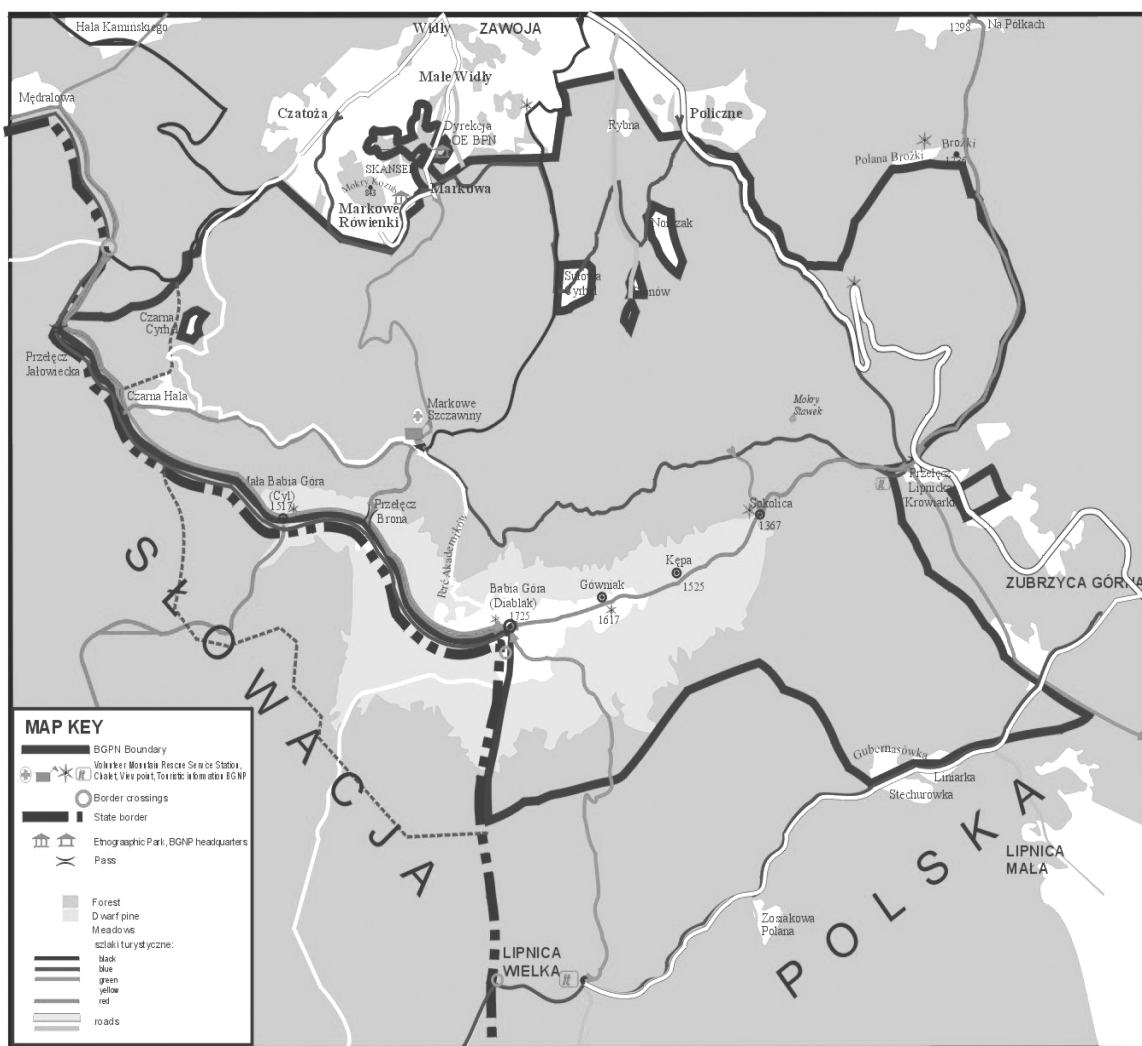
c) Synanthropization of flora and fauna. Existence of tourist trails changes habitat conditions which leads to change of flora of the sides of the trails. Besides, tourists provoke movement of plants along the trails. Migration of species which are foreign for natural communities takes place by carrying seeds or plant parts by tourists. Change of the trail surface helps these species to survive. It is particularly often in places where tourist traffic is very intensive such as the entrances to the national park, the hostel and the parking lots.

Abandoning of unwanted dogs which loiter and run wild is observed within the park's territory.

d) Littering. The national park removes about 70 m³ of trash gathered from the trails and their immediate vicinity. That number does not cover the trash from the rubbish bins and containers placed by the national park's waste management or the hostel's administration.

e) Damaging of flora. Tourists cause some damage to plants and plant communities occurring near the trails by trampling and mechanical destruction.

f) Damaging of fauna. It is caused by frightening away animals. Skittishness of deer was observed during the time of the most intensive tourist traffic, in the summer. Tourist traffic makes difficult the nesting of birds also. Unauthorised dog walking without a leash causes more negative effects than the presence of their owners.



c) Positive impact

Positive impact of tourism on protection of biodiversity is rarely noticed directly during tourists' visit in protected areas because they do not actively take part in protective activity and the time of their visit is limited. However, in the long run, the impact made on local societies is positive and conditions the course of changes which take place in the period of economic transformation. Nevertheless, it depends on the attitude towards the nature protection, preservation of biodiversity and the level of ecological awareness of local societies as well as the tourists themselves. The impact is made by economic and political stimuli.

Economic

The tourists buy services

-folk culture and crafts

The Shepherd's Festival in Lipnica Wielka including the fair and the exhibition is a good possibility for many artists, craftsmen and agro-tourism farms to present their work. Shepherd's games and contests, which require great ability, are spectacular and very popular among tourists and the inhabitants. They include climbing a fifteen meter high wooden pole topped with the bell called "Moj", a grass cutting contest, a cow and goat milking contest and a whip-swishing competition. All games are strictly connected with traditional style of life, land use and old methods of farming.

-agro-tourism

The competition between agro-tourism farms compels the farm owners to maintain a wide range of services. Producing food for their own use and making the guests' visit attractive, in particular for children, are connected with keeping differentiated livestock such as cows, sheep, poultry, pigs and horses, and growing many field crops. Therefore, intensifying the production of those farms to increase their income is impossible because the final product of agro-tourist farms is service, not agricultural produce. Thus, continuation of the land use hampers and limits cessation of husbandry which has an influence on preservation of diversified cultural landscape and habitats of plant species which occurrence is connected with extensive agriculture, boundary strips and roadsides. It secures habitats and breeding grounds for a multitude of animals, particularly insects and birds of prey.

Tourist are customers

Tourists often visit restaurants serving local dishes which are cooked using produce grown on the local farms. In the mountains, products made of ewe's milk or mixed ewe's and cow's milk are popular, such as "oscypki", "korbacze" and "bundz". Meat dishes made of mutton are often prepared also. Sheep farmers supply all needed products; consequently, extensive pastoral farming has been preserved up to nowadays. Sheep-grazing is the main factor of preservation the traditional use of pastures, and, what is connected, preservation and protection of functioning meadow ecosystems and their biodiversity.

-sledging cavalcades

They are very popular during winter. Those providing the service have to have a horse; thus, they also have to have a farm managed in the extensive way. Intensive farms involved in commercial production do not keep horses because of economic reasons.

Tourists buy goods

They buy not only souvenirs and gadgets but also regional crafts, mainly sweaters, gloves, hats, shoes, animal skins and others. This is a very important factor helping to preserve sheep-farming, particularly during time when there are not markets or government help.

Tourists are sensitive to aesthetic impression

It compels the people living in the region to keep the surrounding tidy, not only in the immediate vicinity of lodging but also in the whole region. Littered streams, forest margins

and roadsides, unauthorized dumping grounds and sewage disposal discourage and do not meet with approval.

Political

Tourist are observers.

- Management malpractice and mistakes are quickly noticed, and restoring the management which is in accordance with rules can be crucial in preserving a species or functioning of ecosystem.
- Introducing technology and management practices which are friendly to the environment simulates popularity of the region among tourists; however, it depends on ecological awareness and sensitivity.
- Informing firefighters about fires that are almost always caused by negligence or arson, (particularly dry grass on pastures. Plant communities and animals living there are not adapted to this factor.)
- Informing about vandalism, illegal plant and communities damaging, capture and killing of protected or rare animals.

Tourist are voters also

It plays an important role in adopting a strategy and undertaking action on the national and regional levels which can be crucial in preserving the natural values and biodiversity of the area and stopping the extinction of species.

2.1.5. Settlements

a) Population living in the reserve

Approximate number of people living within the biosphere reserve.

	Permanently	/	Seasonally
Core Area	0	/	0
Buffer Zone	20	/	80
Transition Area	6 000	/	10 000

Brief description of local communities living within or near the biosphere reserve.

Rural inhabitants live in the area. Located within the Biosphere Reserve, the biggest village is Lipnica Wielka. The other villages situated on the southern side of the massif are Lipnica Mała and Zubrzyca Górna. On the northern side Zawoja is located.

The population is young, and 40% of the inhabitants is below the age of 14. The living standard in the region is much lower than the national average.

Unemployment is high (over 20%) due to lack of industry in the region and the economic changes of the country as well as an impossibility to intensify agricultural production in the mountains.

The people respect tradition, and family ties are strong.

Description of population

The area is inhabited by two groups who are isolated by the massif of Babia Góra.

Orawiaczy are a Polish ethnic group who lives on the former territory of the Kingdom of Hungary (Austria-Hungary). After the disintegration of the monarchy, they chose to join to Poland. They earn a living in agriculture, cattle-breeding, forestry, carpentry, agro-tourism and the service sector. Located on the southern slopes of the Babia Góra massif and in the Orava Valley, the largest settlements are Jablonka and Lipnica Wielka. The area is inhabited by the Slovak minority also who keeps its identity.

Babiogórcy are a Polish ethnic group who lives in the valley of the Skawica River. They make a living in agriculture, industry, agro-tourism and the service sector. The largest settlements are Sucha Beskidzka and Jordanów.

Names of the nearest major towns:

Katowice distance 150 km

Kraków distance 100 km

b) Housing

The population of Lipnica Wielka is about 5 500 people, and about 16 000 people live in adjoining Jablonka, which means that respectively 78 and 74 people live on 1 km². The average number for a mountain region is 95 people on 1 km² for a rural area. According to the demographical structure of the population, problems with housing and technical infrastructure will increase within the next 10 -20 years. The existing spatial arrangement of the villages located on the southern slopes of Babia Góra is typical of the village arrangements found in the broad valleys of the Black Orava and its tributaries. It has a characteristic lengthy development on one or both sides of a stream and a road which is the central part of the arrangement completed by farm roads, usually perpendicular to a main road, along forests. Currently the settlement network and land ownership structure largely limit development of roads. It is recommended to enhance the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. It is absolutely necessary to establish alternative safe pedestrian and bicycling paths.

The territory of the Transition Area and the vicinity of the biosphere reserve on the southern and northern slopes of Babia Góra is attractive for building cottages by citizens of major towns.

c) Negative impact

- regulation of stream beds to obtain more land,
- ecological corridors which are along streams are inaccessible for most species,
- anthropopression,
- uncontrolled development of holiday cottages,
- not all households are connected to wastewater network,
- during the heating period, pollution of the air occurs due to topography and inversion.

d) Positive impact

- waste management is easy because of the settlement network. All of the villages in the vicinity of the national park have treatment plants.
- the efforts to promote collecting, transporting and sorting of solid waste are undertaken in Lipnica Wielka.

2.2. Description of tourist activities in the reserve and its vicinity, including strengths and weaknesses or potentials and problems.

2.2.1. Biosphere reserve

A. Core Area

1. Description of tourist activities:

- Study of fauna and flora, hiking.

2. Strength: natural and landscape values, very attractive tourist trails 20 km, downhill skiing trails 3 km.

3. Weaknesses: activity is limited by the Protection Law, (strict protection - trails were made before the creation of the national park).

4. Potentials: limited.

B. Buffer Zone

1. Description of tourist activities:

- Study of fauna and flora,
- Bicycle riding,
- Camping,

2. Strength: 100 years of the tradition of the hostel on Markowe Szczawiny (37 beds – a plan of modernization 2002-2005), natural and landscape values, very attractive tourist trails 30 km, downhill skiing trails 3 km.
3. Weaknesses: active and passive protection – the Protection Law.
4. Potentials: limited.

2.2.2. Transition Area

a) Description of tourist activities:

- aro-tourism and eco-tourism,
- cross-boundary tours,
- study of fauna and flora,
- sightseeing,
- hiking,
- bicycle riding , etc,
- holiday visits and recreation,
- fishing,
- horseback riding,
- camping,
- sledging,
- study of culture and folklore.

b) Strength:

Natural and landscape values, the key attraction - Babia Góra.

The substantial isolation of the upper parts of the village Lipnica Wielka (southern slopes), clean air and water as well as numerous mineral springs (e.g. "Jacek", "Piotr" and "Heródek") and abundance of wild mushroom and berries create truly favourable conditions for relaxation and recreation.

Large protected areas

- the biosphere reserve,
- the National Park,
- nature reserves.

Rich cultural and historic heritage

Lipnica Wielka and Kiczory are places where folklore of the Oravian highlanders is still alive. Two folk bands function there, and one of them is the E. Mika Folk Group "Orava", and the other is the Heródek Children's Regional Group. Glass-painting, sculpture, traditional embroidery and other folk handicrafts have been reviving. Various exhibitions and folklore events are organised, and some of the most interesting ones are:

- the Shepherd's Festival- a summer fair and a very popular folklore event organised annually after 1974,
- the Contest of Young Story Tellers and Reciters,
- the Contest of Easter Palms,
- the Contest of Christmas Carol Groups,
- the Harvest Festival,
- the church and the chapel fairs (Kiczory, Przywarówka and Murowaniec).

Location

It is close to the Tatras and the Mala Fatra, and the state border. There are five border crossings in the area.

Development of agro-tourism

The Oravian branch of the Galicia Hospitality Households' Association is fairly active in the commune. It makes reservations, rents rooms, and has a great variety of interesting offers.

c) Weaknesses:

- lack of co-operation between the local governments and institutions,
- insufficient sports, recreational and leisure facilities,
- largely unused tourist facilities due to their scattered location and inadequate transport arrangements,

- poor quality of basic services,
- poor winter tourist offer,
- poor condition of several historic sites,
- lack of qualified tourist managers, especially for foreign visitors,
- poor quality and insufficient length of bicycle trails,
- insufficient promotion of the region.

d) Potentials:

- development of agro-tourism and eco-tourism,
- upgrading the existing accommodation,
- sustainable development chosen by the local communities,
- cultural values, regionalism,
- discovered resources of mineral and thermal waters,
- touristic attraction can be various sports and touristic events organised here annually such as rallies and races, e.g., the Euroleague of mountain bicycles.

e) Problems:

- trouble with solving some problems, it is caused by the land ownership, in particular by fragmentation of farmland and the lack of municipal land. Despite of the support of the majority, implementation of the projects can be conditioned by fulfilling of unexpected demands of individuals.
- unemployment,
- poor level of education (especially foreign languages),
- pressure on building summer cottages in remote location and in a dispersal way,
- region's image of an area with underdeveloped services,
- accepting investors' partial interest,
- slow development of transport and infrastructure facilities,
- excessive claims,
- failure to comply with decisions made by public institutions and authorities,
- lack of complex legal solution for areas in the vicinity of protected areas and clearly defined powers of authorities,
- limited financial abilities of local governments, lack of funds and limited possibility to gain them.

2.2.3. Potential tourist opportunities

Natural resources

Visitors are attracted by scenic landscape and interesting ecosystems. Other attractions include trekking and gathering forest fruits. For the time being, downhill and cross-country skiing, skating, and hunting activities are unavailable. The proximity of the Slovak Republic and existence of 3 tourist border-crossings, an international border-crossing in Chyzne and a border-crossing in Lipnica Wielka for inhabitants of the region are a great opportunity for tourist traffic. The border-crossing in Lipnica Wielka will be changed into an international one in the future. The nearness of the reservoir of Orava Lake which is unfortunately inaccessible for tourists from the Polish side of the border gives a possibility to use the name and create another reservoir used for water sports and swimming. It will diversify the tourist offer and keep tourists away from protected areas.

Cultural/historic heritage

In Lipnica Wielka, traditional customs are observed and ceremonies are held, e.g.: Christmas carol singers, Shepherds' Festival, "Moj" Erecting. Two folks groups exist in Lipnica Wielka.

Tourist products:

- The undisturbed environment, e.g.: traditional local culture, the image of the region, agro-tourism, sports and recreation, areas of rich pristine fauna and flora, the natural reserves on both side of the state border.
- Traditional highlanders culture can still be found in the region cultivated by folk groups, a few sculptors, embroiders and potters.
- Landscape values and the wide offer of agro-tourism farms may attract tourists from large cities and invite them to extend their sojourn. Agro-tourism is intrinsically connected with the

local environment, health of the forests, the preservation of swamps, sharing the local way of life and the regional cuisine.

- This area may provide ideal conditions for trekking, biking, horse riding, both cross-country and downhill skiing, sledging, ice scating and others. Today, these opportunities are largely untapped due to the lack of recreational facilities which is especially painful during bad weather condition.

3. Legal and Organisational Framework of the Activity of Babia Góra National Park and Biosphere Reserve

3.1. Historical overview.

The legal nature protection system which is these days in force in Poland is a result of nearly 150 years long evolution. The first step was done in 1868 when the Land Council in Lvov passed two acts: on the protection of chamoises and marmots and on the protection of insectivorous and singing birds.

The period before the IWW was also the time when the first ideas regarding establishment of national parks were formulated. Some owners created first natural reserves within their estates, also; however, such reserves did not have a legal base .

After the restoration of the independent Polish State in 1918, the main efforts of the people engaged in nature protection were directed towards creation of the appropriate state institution. The progress was done in 1919 when the Provisional State Commission on Nature Protection was set up, chaired by prof. Wladyslaw Szafer. The Commission (transformed soon into the State Nature Conservation Council), and amongst other important works set up the theoretical conception of the law of nature protection. These efforts were completed in 1934 when the Nature Protection Act was passed. This Act created *inter alia* the legal instruments for establishment of national parks and nature reserves. However, even before the mentioned Act was passed, few national parks (Bialowieza, Pieniny, Czarnohora) were created in a practical manner by the way of decrees given *ad hoc* by the Minister of Agriculture, or declarations of the owners of particular areas.

This second method was used to start the protection of the Babia Góra. In 1933, the authorities of the Polish Academy of Science designated the area of 642 hektars for a nature reserve. Additionally , 404 ha of state forests were managed as a nature reserve. This protected area of 1064 ha which expanded on the both slopes of the Babia Góra massif was commonly called “national park”, however it was not a national park *de iure*.

In 1949, the new Nature Conservation Law was passed. It was connected with the essential changes in political and economic situation in Poland which happened after the IWW. In accordance with this Law, the Council of Ministers gave decree on the creation of the Babia Gora National Park, on the area of 1704 ha. The administration of the national park was created at the same time to carry nature protection into effect. In 1977, the Babia Góra National Park was designated as the Biosphere Reserve.

The next fundamental change in the legislation took place in 1991 when Polish parliament passed the next (third) Nature Conservation Law (Official Journal of 1991, No.114, item 492). This Law is still in force; however, during last ten years it was altered and amended a few times. The last substantial amendment occured in 2001 (Official Journal of 2001, No. 3, item 21).

In accordance with the Law of 1991, the Council of Ministers gave in 1997 the new decree on the Babia Góra National Park (Official Journal of 1997, No. 99, item 608). The national park was enlarged up to 3392 ha., and buffer zone was designated (see 3.2). After this enlargement the national park administration and the Polish UNESCO-MAB Committee started efforts to enlarge the Biosphere Reserve as well. After several consultations with local authorities, an appropriate application had been submitted to the International Co-ordinating Council (ICC) and approved during the ICC meeting on 19-21 September 2001.

From that time the Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve has comprised not only the national park but also its buffer zone.

3.2. The present legal position of the Babia Góra National Park

According to the Nature Conservation Law, the system of protected areas in Poland consists of: national parks, landscape parks, nature reserves and areas of protected landscape linked by ecological corridors (Art.13.2). National parks are created by the decree of the Council of Ministers, whereas the other three (with few exceptions) by the decree of a voivoda (the head of a voivodship – province).

Regarding national parks, the Nature Conservation Law states *inter alia* that:

- A national park shall include a protected area distinguishable through particular scientific, natural, social, cultural and educational values, covering an area of at least 1000ha, in which the whole of nature and landscape shall be protected.
- All the activities within a national park shall have as their aim nature conservation.
- The primary aim of a national park shall be to research and preserve the unity of natural systems of an area, including the conditions in which they function, and to restore the disturbed or extinct elements of native nature.
- A national park shall be open for visitors, under the conditions described in the conservation plan.
- Fees may be collected for entry, for the usage of the natural values of a national park or its facilities (Art.14.1-3, 6.)

It is clear that the main aims of Polish national parks reflect those described in the IUCN classification for protected areas of category II. In fact, majority of Polish national parks possess this category (II), including the Babia Góra National Park.

The decree regarding the creation of the national park contains also the list of limitations and prohibitions being in force within the park territory (see app. 1). Many of them influence tourism directly or indirectly.

The crucial document for each national park is “conservation (management) plan”, approved by the Minister of Environment. A conservation plan shall also contain chapters regarding tourism, sport, education and other human activities carried out within the area of a national park.

Because of changes in legislation, currently new conservation plans are being prepared for all Polish national parks, including the Babia Góra one.

Conservation plans shall be also prepared for landscape parks and nature reserves. Such a conservation plan of a national park, a landscape park or a nature reserve after approval by the Minister of Environment or a voivoda respectively, becomes a legal document which is superior in relation to land use management plans adopted by local authorities (communes). It means also that the development and distribution of tourist facilities described in a local spatial management plan ought to be compatible with a conservation plan.

A different situation exists within buffer zones of national parks, as conservation plans do not apply to them! However, land use management plans within buffer zones have to be agreed with the director of a relevant national park.

The director of a national park, nominated by the Minister of Environment, is responsible for its activity. Each national park has its own administration and staff, including officers responsible for education and tourism. National parks are founded by the State budget; however, they can obtain money also from other sources like: entrance fees, parking fees, concessions, selling timber and other forms of economic activity. It is important, that all Treasury property within national parks' boundaries is managed by national park administration. “The director of a national park shall represent the State Treasury in the civil-law turnover concerning managed property” (Art.16.3). That is significant difference

comparing with landscape parks in Poland as well as situation in many other national parks in the CEE countries.

There is a special body in each of national parks: the National Park Council, nominated by the Minister of Environment. The Council shall work with a national park director as his advisory and commenting body. However, as amongst the Council members are also representatives of local authorities and NGOs, such Council can be as well a platform of discussions and solving conflicts between a national park authority and local communities. It is a custom in Poland, that the oldest and the biggest Polish tourist society (PTTK) is represented in each national park council by at least one member.

3.3. Legal position of Biosphere Reserves

The first Polish biosphere reserves were designated in 1977 when the Nature Conservation Law of 1949 was in force in Poland. This act did not contain any article about biosphere reserves nor even about landscape parks. The new act, passed in 1991, solved many legislative problems (e.g. connected with landscape parks). Biosphere reserves were mentioned in it directly, however very generally. The Polish UNESCO-MAB Committee was making continuous efforts to include particular regulations regarding biosphere reserves into the national legislation. These efforts were especially intensive in the period 1998-2000, and the main target was to regulate legal situation of biosphere reserves containing not only a national park but also other territories. Unfortunately, these postulates were not apprehended by the Ministry of Environment, and during general revision of the nature protection act which took place in 2001, biosphere reserves were completely removed from this document. The law on nature protection contains now only general statement that protected areas may obtain international status.

In the case of the Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve, especially after its enlargement in 2001, it means in practice that the goals of the reserve can be achieved only due to negotiation and co-operation between the national park administration and the local authorities.

According to the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves the main function of a particular biosphere reserve is described as follow:

“In combining the three functions below, biosphere reserves should strive to be sites of excellence to explore and demonstrate approaches to conservation and sustainable development on a regional scale:

- (i) conservation – contribute to the conservation of landscapes, species and genetic variation;
- (ii) development – foster economic and human development which is socio-culturally and ecologically sustainable;
- (iii) logistic support – support for demonstration projects, environmental education and training, research and monitoring related to local, regional, national and global issues of conservation and sustainable development”. (Art. 3)

As the local economy in the Babia Góra region is considerably based on tourism, it is evident that the sustainable development of tourism has to be one of the priorities of the Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve activity.

3.4. Obstacles

From the protected areas' point of view, the process of deep political and economic changes, which took place in Poland after 1990' eliminated the most dangerous threats connected with autocratic character of the state, but brought also new menaces and challenges.

At present, following general problems seem to be the most important for the proper work of Polish biosphere reserves and other protected areas:

1/ Nature Conservation Law, especially after changes enforced in 2001, is commonly criticised by prominent jurists such as Radecki and Sommer as well as ecologists like Olaczek and Tomialojc. They ascertain that legal position of protected areas, especially *versus* private and local interests is now much weaker than before. On the other hand, there

is no proper mechanism of negotiation, conciliation and involving local communities and NGOs into decision-making process regarding protected areas.

2/ There is an insufficient legislation in the field of spatial planning in Poland. Planning was reduced only to communal level (the smallest administrative units in Poland), however especially nature protection needs a wide angle approach.

3/ Communes obtained broad self-government, but ecological awareness is low. Local authorities are concentrated rather on solving current problems than thinking in long-term perspective. From such point of view restrictions connected with landscape and nature protection seem to be restraints of social and economic development. Local authorities often ignore or try to evade protective regulations, especially regarding localisation of the investments and building of houses.

4/ Because of organisational (lack of personnel, equipment etc.) and political (politicians afraid to lose popularity) reasons control of the abidance by law within protected areas is insufficient. The problem of corruption is also serious on all levels of administration.

5/ Biosphere reserves (including Babia Góra) protect usually very attractive areas for leisure and tourism. There is a strong pressure for great investments (like: cable-cars, hotels, recreation centres etc.) especially in the mountains and lake districts. Such projects are often supported by local authorities and politicians, however usually they are contradictory to the nature protection regulations. There is also pressure for building secondary houses in the biosphere reserves' buffer zones

6/ After 45 years of limited consumption and centrally directed economy, when trade was called „system of distribution”, people living within biosphere reserves (as everywhere in the country) are being attacked by insistent advertisement pressing them to increase consumption and promoting homogeneous style of life. This uniformization is visible in architecture, clothes, customs and loss of regional dialects and local products. Villagers became consumptive, society using a lot of throw-away goods, but villages do not have efficient refuse removal systems. In many villages and small towns there is also still lack of sewage treatment plants, however in this field situation improves quickly owing to deep engagement of local and national institutions.

7/ Private ownership, confirmed by Constitution, is often considered as an absence of control over somebody's property. This public feeling is fanned by some politicians scrambling for popularity. The opinion, that nature conservation rules can be effectively implemented only regarding public properties or with owners approval, is widespread even amongst civil servants responsible for environmental issues. It is misconception! Leading Polish jurists argue, that protective restrictions can be legally enforced even against owners' will or interest. So, problem does not consist in defect of the law, but in juridical ignorance and politically motivated unwillingness to enforce the law.

Examples of all problems mentioned above can be found in the Babia Góra region.

4. Planning and management

4.1. Management structure and responsibility

List in hierarchical order of administrative entities in which the biosphere reserve is located.

State: Poland
Voivodeship: Malopolskie
Powiat: Sucha Beskidzka, Nowy Targ,
Gmina: Lipnica Wielka, Jablonka, Zawoja

Land management

Within the framework of the Polish law, the following structure exists:

The Nature Conservation Plan is made for the area of the national park. The local self-government gives an opinion on the project of the plan. Provisions which are included in the Nature Conservation Plan are binding for the local spatial management plan and decisions about condition of building and land management. Establishment of the

Nature Conservation Plan obligates the local self-governments to make a local spatial management plan for area covered by it or to change the existing spatial management plan.

Projects of plan and spatial management plans which partially refer to the national park area and its buffer zone (in the instance of Babia Góra - Biosphere Reserve Babia Góra) need approval of the national park's director.

Land tenure of Babia Góra BR.

Zone	Administrative body	Ownership	Percentage
core area	Babia Gora National Park	State	100
buffer zone		State	95
		Private	5
transition area	self-government of gminas Lipnica Wielka and Jablonka	Private	75
	State Forest Administration, (Nowy Targ forest division and Sucha Beskidzka forest division)	State	25

Mechanisms of consultation and co-ordination among these different authorities:

The director of the national park consults the activities conducted in the Core Area and the Buffer Zone with the Park Council, which is an advisory board for the administration of the National Park. Activities conducted in the Transition Area which can have an influence on the Buffer Zone are consulted by the authority responsible for it with the director.

The Core Zone and the Buffer Zone, as the national park, report to the Board of Polish National Parks.

The Transition Area reports the matters that refer to nature protection to the Voivodeship Conservation Officer.

Because of the complicated aspect of the land ownership and numerous authorities managing the area, a co-ordination model was accepted in the biosphere reserve based on shared objectives and joint actions of the participants. Due to the extension of the Babia Góra Biosphere Reserve in 2001, a co-ordinating body for the biosphere reserve is projected as the Permanent Working Group of the Park Council of the Babia Góra National Park, that will be extended by the representatives of the business associations and the institutions which work in the Transition Area. The Park's Council is composed of representatives of the local governments, a tourist organisation, the administration of the State Forest and the Voivodeship Conservation Officer.

Management policy

The detailed principles and activity goals for the Core Area and the Buffer Zone as well as the relations with the Transition Area were specified in the Nature Conservation Plan for the Babia Góra National Park.

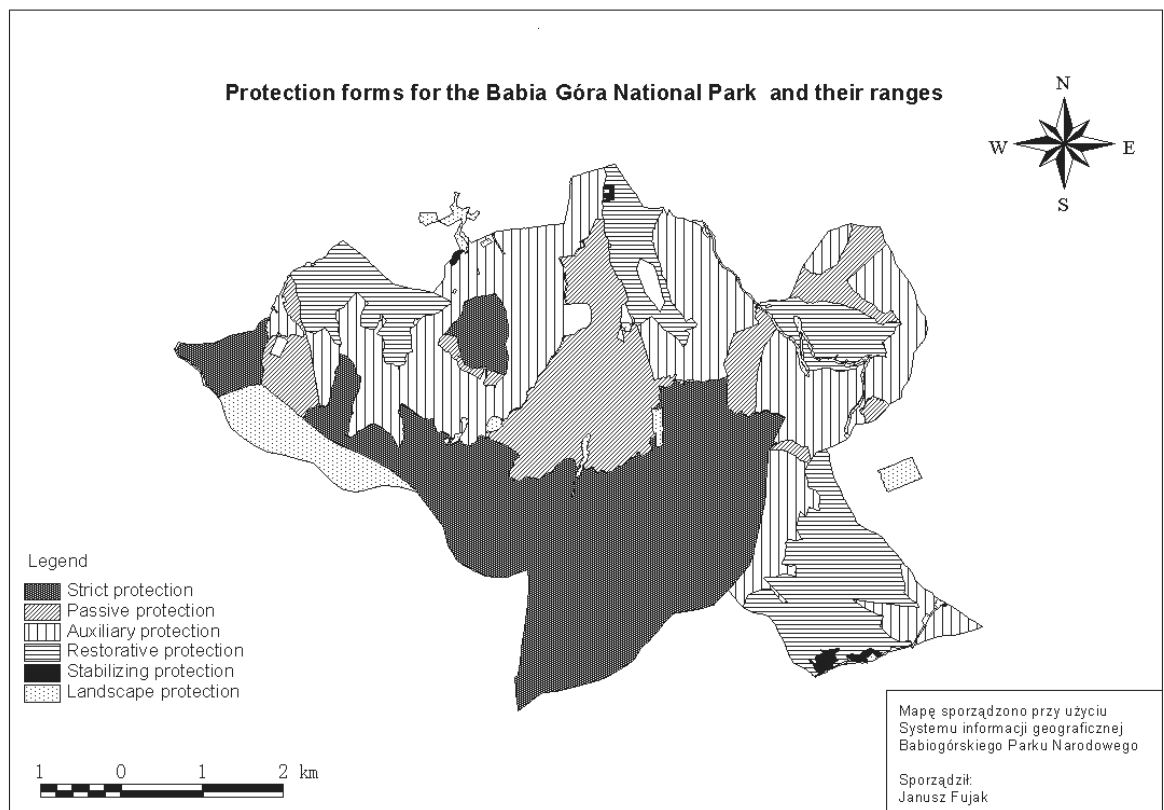
4.2. Description of existing strategies

The Biosphere Reserve does not have any tourist strategy as an entity. The stakeholders have their own strategies. Despite of it, these strategies or plans take into account the existing national park.

4.2.1. Project of Nature Conservation Plan for the Babia Góra National Park. (2001)

The strategy of biodiversity conservation is based on applying methods of protection on an specified area. The one third of the park area (about 1061 ha) is subjected to strict protection. Its main goal is to maintain natural processes, and its principal method is the

elimination of any human interference. The next method is the passive protection (covers about 700 ha), and its main goal is to allow the spontaneous regeneration of ecosystems formerly disturbed by humans activities. The only form of human interference permitted in these areas is that one designated to protect the adjacent areas from the effects of natural disturbances which can spread from the area subjected to passive protection into its neighborhood. More active forms of protection are restorative protection and auxiliary protection. Their goal is to restore communities which have been destroyed by human interference. The auxiliary protection (about 1000 ha) is designated to enhance the spontaneous regeneration of natural communities. The restorative protection (about 600 ha) is meant to restore a given species composition or structure. Semi-natural communities such as meadows and pastures are subjected to stabilizing protection, which the main goal is to maintain the already existing communities.



4.2.2. The regulations of the BGNP accessibility for tourist activities. (2001)

1

1. Within the Babia Góra National Park, all animated and inanimate nature, characteristic features of the landscape and objects of national and cultural heritage are protected.
2. Within the Babia Góra National Park, all activities are subordinated to nature protection and have priority before other activities.

2

The visitors of the Babia Góra National Park are obliged to comply with the regulations of *the BGNP accessibility for tourist activities*.

3

Tourist traffic within the BGNP is restricted to marked tourist trails:

1. Walking is limited to walking tourist trails.
2. Bicycle riding is limited to bicycle trails.
3. Skiing is limited to ski trails.

4

Taking into account safety of the visitors, some tourist trails can be temporarily closed.

5

An entrance fee is collected for accessing some tourist trails, utilising the natural value of the park's and its facilities. The fee and the way of its collection are defined by the director of the BGPN.

6

Within the Babia Góra National Park's territory, organisation of mass and sport events and rallies is forbidden, with the exception of educational events organised by the BGPN or with its co-operation. The organisation of educational events or tours and field workshops requires a permission of the park's director.

7

Organised tourism within the BGPN have to be led by qualified guides, the guides of the Mountain-Climbing Badge (GOT) who have the licence of the Babia Góra National Park which allows to guide tours within the area of the national park, or by the park's employees. The number of people led by one guide can not exceed 35.

8

Within the area of the BGPN, the following are prohibited:

1. the littering and polluting of the forest, meadows and water;
2. the hunting, angling for, fishing, capture, disturbance and killing of wild animals; the collection of the antlers of deer; the destruction of the dens, lairs, nests of birds; and the collection of eggs;
3. the destruction of trees and other plants;
4. the harvesting of plants and parts thereof, in particular berries and fungi;
5. the destruction of the soil; the quarrying or damaging of rocks and minerals;
6. the disturbance of peace and quiet;
7. the walking, bicycle riding, horse riding and skiing away from places designated for the purposes;
8. the lighting of fires, smoking of tobacco away from places designated for the purposes;
9. the walking of dogs without using a leash and a muzzle;
10. the placing of signs, noticeboards and other signs and the damaging of those existing;
11. the camping away from places designated for the purpose;
12. the driving of vehicles away from roads designated for the purpose;
13. the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages away places designated for the purposes;

9

Commercial activity can be conducted only if permitted by the director.

10

The visitors of the Babia Góra National Park have to comply with instructions of the park's rangers and rescuers of the Volunteer Mountain Rescue Service (GOPR).

11

The National Park's Rangers are entitled to verify identity papers of the visitors of the BGPN and fine, if necessary. Not complying with the rules contained in these regulations is penalised according to the law.

4.2.3. Strategic Plan of Sustainable Tourism Development for Gmina Lipnica Wielka. (2000)

Plan contains:

- a) description of conditions,
- b) diagnosis of economy, education, health care, natural environment, forestry, agriculture, public utilities, tourist attraction, infrastructure and participation of community.

Goals:

- a) forming conditions for healthy life and personal development,
- b) creating job opportunities in tourism and services connected with it,
- c) increasing standards of life by development of infrastructure,
- d) responsible and sustainable use of natural, cultural and human resources, simultaneously protecting them,

e) preserve regionalism.

Elaborated programs:

- a) management of resources,
- b) "Regional product of Orava"
- c) " Orava Coalition of Development "
- d) "Efficient administration"
- e) "Socio-cultural development and protection of cultural heritage"

4.1.3. Study of conditions and aims of spatial management of the gmina Lipnica Wielka. (1998)

It includes:

- conditions,
- existing and planned protected areas and objects,
- aims of spatial and tourist management,
- development aims of transportation and infrastructure,
- public investments,

The aims of spatial management are making the area more attractive for services, crafts and development of tourism by designing zonation:

The spatial management plan of the gmina includes three zones:

- I. "The Park Zone" preserves remarkable values of the environment, and the use of this area is in accordance with its natural and legal conditions.
- II. "The Agro-sylvan Zone" is formed to utilise forests and agricultural lands, to preserve environmental and landscape values and to create favourable conditions for development of ecological agriculture, tourism, hiking, bicycle riding and skiing.
- III. "The Agro-settlemental Zone" includes areas of various forms and methods of utilisation that are designated for development of settlement, services, economic and tourist functions.

Aims regarding tourism:

- upgrading the values by creating a spatial order, increasing sanitary level and developing infrastructure,
- development of accommodation,
- promotion of the gmina,
- co-operation with the BGPN.

4.2.4. Study of conditions and aims of spatial management of the gmina Jablonka. (2000)

In the plan, following topics are elaborated:

a) main factors determining development:

- social-economic,
- environmental, cultural and spatial:
 - natural resources,
 - environmental threats,
 - nature protection,
 - recreational and tourist values,
 - cultural resources,
 - condition of spatial planning,
- development of technical infrastructure and transportation

b) aims of spatial management, spatial and economic policy:

(In paragraph "socio- economic aims" one of the points is "tourism and recreation")

- field of interest: hiking, bicycle riding and skiing,
- developing the sport infrastructure in the villages adjoining to the BGPN,
- designating new hiking, bicycle riding and educational trails,
- development and promotion of agro-tourism,
- building sport facilities and recreation areas.

4.1.5. Sustainable tourism development strategy for the Upper Orava region. (1998)

(see also appendix nr 2)

The gminas of Lipnica Wielka, Jablonka and a part of Slovakian Horna Orava have common tourist strategy that is stressed on transborder cooperation (see Appendix nr 2).

It includes:

- a) the basic premises behind the strategy,
- b) the diagnosis,
- c) preliminary strategy for sustainable development,
- d) Upper Orava development strategy:
 - manufacturing industry and services,
 - agriculture,
 - forestry,
 - tourism and recreation (accommodation and other services)
- e) Tourism development capacity and creating tourism products.

On the Slovakian side of the border, this will involve primarily modernization of hotels, while in Poland expansion of the agro-tourism base is the main concern.

f) priorities:

- establishing a regional tourist management system,
- support of the local entrepreneurs,
- creating a specific attractive image of the Upper Orava,
- matching supply demand for accommodation, catering and supporting services,
- optional coverage of natural and cultural curiosities by the trails,
- setting-up a joint information system,
- improving service quality,
- rehabilitation and restoration of the historic monuments,
- setting-up packages of curiosities and services,
- Slovakian-Polish cooperation.
-

4.1.6. Strategy of tourism development for the gmina Zawoja. (1998)

Strategic aims:

- a) creating conditions for sustainable tourism development,
- b) coordination of tourist activities and personnel training for tourism services,
- c) increasing public safety,
- d) increasing the number of visitors and attracting investors,
- e) implementing "modular conception of development of infrastructure",

In this conception, visitors are divided into 3 groups of tourists:

1. interesting in recreation and leisure,
2. interesting in sport and active form of tourism,
3. interesting in landscape issues.

For each group of tourists should be a "module" which is a package of services regarding the infrastructure in certain parts of the village.

4.1.7. In addition

1. The park signed "The agreement of co-operation with the Babia Góra Communes Association". It involved parties committing themselves to, e.g.:

- a) developing cooperation in fields: nature protection and cultural heritage in the Babia Góra region,
- b) organising common activities regarding solving ecological and cultural problems,
- c) permanent exchange of information about undertaken projects

The park has several agreements with other stakeholders (institutions, organization, associations etc.)

2. The park has the Park Council; it is an advisory body for the director of the national park, that members are designated by the Ministry of Environment. It includes: scientists, representatives of the local governments, the State Forest Administration and a tourist organisation.

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Appendix 1.

An extract of the Decree of the Council of Ministers of August 8th 1997 on Babia Góra National Park (Official Journal of 1997, No. 99, item 608.)
[.....] (Paragraphs 1- 3 and 6-8 omitted).

§ 4. Areas of the Park may be brought under strict or partial protection, with the reservation that areas of contiguous construction, Treasury property subject to perpetual lease and property not owned by the Treasury may only be brought under strict or partial protection with the consent of their owner, leaseholder or administrators.

§5.1. With the reservation of Paragraph 2, the following are prohibited in the area of the Park:

- 1) the hunting, angling for, capture, disturbance and killing of wild animals; the collecting of the antlers of deer; the destruction of the dens, setts, lairs, etc. and breeding sites of animals as well as the nests of birds; and the collection of eggs;
- 2) the harvesting, destruction or damaging of trees or other plants;
- 3) the scattering, burying or pouring away of sediments or other foul matter, or any other pollutant of waters, the soil or the air;
- 4) changes in water relations and the regulation of river or stream courses;
- 5) the quarrying or extraction of rocks, minerals or peat;
- 6) the destruction of soils;
- 7) the lighting of fires or smoking of tobacco away from places designated for the purposes;
- 8) The use of chemical agents in agricultural, forestry, afforestation or hunting management;
- 9) engagement in commercial activity away from places designated for the purpose;
- 10) the collection of wild plants or parts thereof, and in particular fruits and fungi;
- 11) the driving of vehicles away from the roads designated for the purpose;
- 12) the siting without the consent of the Director of the Park of noticeboards, signs, advertisements and other indications not connected with nature conservation, with the exception of road signs and other indications connected with the maintenance of order and public safety, as well as indications and installations associated with the safeguarding of the national border;
- 13) the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages and narcotics;
- 14) the disturbance of peace and quiet;
- 15) the use of hang-gliders and microlights, as well as the pursuit of motor sports;
- 16) the making of flights by civil aircraft at altitudes of less than 9000 m above the protected area, with the exception of the patrol or stand-tending flights made by aircraft of the State Forests or the State Fire Brigade

2. The prohibitions referred to in paragraph 1, do not concern:

- 1) the carrying out of protective, silvicultural and tending measures;
- 2) the pursuit of scientific research with the consent of the Director of the Park;
- 3) the pursuit of agricultural and forestry management in areas not enjoying strict or partial protection;
- 4) the pursuit of rescue activity;
- 5) actions connected with the adjustment of the numbers of game animals to the needs of the Parks's protection and agricultural management
- 6) actions connected with the collection of seeds for the needs of forestry in seed stands located in compartments nos. 223b,d and 226c,d (according to the Map of Nowy Targ Forest District, sheet 15 of January 1st 1990), for as long as these are in operation;
- 7) the use of the drinking-water intake on the Jaworzyna stream in compartment no. 116 and on the Markowy stream in compartment no. 114 (according to the Map of Sucha Forest District, Zawoja sub-district, of January 1st 1986);
- 8) the performance of tasks in the sphere of the defence and security of the state, the safeguarding and maintaining of public order and the protection of the national border.

Appendix nr 2.

An extract of Sustainable tourism development strategy for the Upper Orava region. (1998)

Tourism and Recreation: SWOT Analysis

Strengths

1. Pristine environment with its key attractions - Babia Gora and Orawa Lake.
2. Numerous protected areas.
3. Local hospitality.
4. Rich cultural and historic heritage.
5. Proximity of tourist traffic from Czech Republic and Poland.
6. Attractive neighbouring regions - High Tatra and Mala Fatra Mountains.
7. Affordable prices, comparing to neighbouring regions.
8. Good schools (SOV- Catering School, Hotel Academy) in the region.
9. Adequate services available in Namestovo.

Weaknesses

1. Lack of tourism development co-ordination between Slovakian and Polish local governments and NGO's.
2. Insufficient sports/recreation/leisure facilities.
3. Largely unused tourist facilities during the season due to their scattered location and inadequate transport arrangements.
4. Poor quality of basic services.
5. Poor Polish-Slovakian winter tourism offer.
6. Too high dependence of the region's tourist facilities on weather conditions.
7. Lack of co-ordination between tourist companies.
8. Poor condition of several historic monuments.
9. Insufficient promotion of the region.
10. Undeveloped souvenir industry.

Opportunities

1. The use of protected areas for educational tourism purposes.
2. Attracting more affluent tourists by providing them with better services and a wider choice of offers, so that the customer may select the one that is best suited to his/her pocket.
3. Establishing appropriate tourism organisation framework in Upper Orawa by including both Polish and Slovakian accommodation providers in bed booking system.
4. Registering a volunteer Polish-Slovakian association of local entrepreneurs, local officials and hobby associations.
5. The involvement of supra-regional unions - Tatry and Beskidy Euroregions - in elaboration of comprehensive development plans for these areas and additional fund raising.
6. Taking advantage of bathing and recreational possibilities offered by Slana Voda.
7. Providing support to development of local art and crafts based on local raw materials. Tourism-oriented use of local agricultural products and food processing (regional dishes).
8. Final completion Orawa Lake's border with two distinct complementary sports/recreation and environmentally protected areas.
9. Building a network of complementary trekking/biking, skiing, horse riding, water tracks combined with paved tourist paths, shelters and additional services, linked to supra-regional tracks, such as Orawa Biking Way and International mountain track.
10. Taking advantage of offers from cultural institutions and various organisations, such as culture clubs, folk groups, local artists, music groups and performers, with a view in enriching the comprehensive offer of the region.
11. Providing additional space to sports clubs and schools' sport grounds for individual and team games, fitness grounds and tracks, equipment rental shops; these should be included in comprehensive offer of the region.

12. Supplementing the primary offer with leisure attractions, such as playgrounds, discos, casinos, amphitheatres, etc.
13. Restoring Christian and ancient Slavs' customs and events - Epiphany greetings, masked carnival festivities, Easter water pouring, May erecting, harvest home, Christmas and New Year festivities.
14. Opening new museums and galleries, exhibiting specimens of fauna and flora, exhibitions devoted to history, celebrated persons, unusual events (e.g. the Orava meteorite), arts and crafts.
15. Setting-up and holding a system of events, exhibitions, concerts, contests for tourists and local residents.
16. Establishing special sojourn packages addressed to different age groups or teams - yachting, cross-country biking, horse riding and angling schools.
17. Upgrading existing accommodation/catering facilities and other services
18. Re-adapting summer cottages to year-round houses with related improvements in sanitary facilities, architecture and gardens.
19. A significant increase in the number of beds offered by households by re-constructing houses into apartments with a separate entrance
20. Improvement and renewal of local information facilities (a transparent local authority).
21. Providing adequate supply of information materials in track starting points.
22. Co-operation with promotion and media agencies. Promoting the region at tourism fairs.

Threats

1. Inappropriate legislative framework which hampers the development of local culture.
1. Failure to comply with decisions made by public institutions and authorities.
3. Excessive claims from the sector of primary services, while neglecting supplementary services.
4. Too slow development of transport and infrastructure facilities.
5. Accepting investors' partial interests.
6. Region's image of an area with underdeveloped services.

Recommendations based on inquiries and workshops attended by Upper Orava residents

Attractions

1. To renovate Slana Voda bathing grounds.
2. To extend the Vojenske-Klin environmental/didactic path to Lipnica Wielka and Namestovo centre, including trekking, biking and water tracks.
3. To trace out and mark tourist paths between all the major attractions of Upper Orava.
4. To build the Magurka winter sports centre (ski lift, downhill and cross-country skiing, sledge track, biathlon track with shot range).
5. To build a ski lift in Namestovo.
6. To build a ski lift in Przywarówka.
7. To build new and modernise existing basic water skiing facilities at Slanicka Island and Namestovo lake front.
8. To open harbours in Murowanica at Lipnica Wielka, Bobrov, Zubrohlava, and Predmostie in Namestovo.
9. To build a gondola lift to Babia Gora.
10. To build a biking track from Zubrzyca Gorna to Namestovo.
11. To build airfields in Rabca and Vavrecka villages.
12. To open Magurka transmitter to the public as a vista tower.
13. To build an additional cross-country ski track in Klin meeting certification requirements; similar tracks to be built in Magurka and Slana Voda.

Accommodation and Catering

1. Supplementing existing accommodation facilities with beds in privately-owned hotels and apartments in Bobrov and Namestovo.
2. To expand existing accommodation facilities in Slana Voda.
2. To build camping sites for vehicles in Klin, Slanicka Osada and Vavrecka.

3. To build a camping site for bikers in Bobrov.
5. To build a network of pension homes and agro-tourism farms in Lipnica Wielka.

Trade and services

1. Full information should be available at path starting points/crossings, along with kiosks and services.
2. To review the town planning scheme for Namestovo's lake front with a view in accommodating the amphitheatre.
3. Namestovo's lake front area should be developed so that commercial buildings are located according to City Hall's recommendations.
4. Tourism-related services should be developed in Lipnica - horse rental for horseback riding and coach rides.
5. To provide existing ski lifts with artificial snow generators.
6. To develop bike rental services.

Organisational Measures

1. To establish a network of information offices in particular localities.
2. To develop a local territorial plan for Orava Lake shore, Bobrov and Namestovo localities.
3. To link existing infrastructure facilities and tourist attractions around Orava Lake with bikelanes and tracks that will be available to pedestrian traffic.
4. To develop and approve regulations for those using these paths.
5. To develop a plan for the management of tourist traffic in Poland and Slovakia.

Events

1. To co-ordinate and sort events by time, order and importance.
2. To publish a multi-language tourist guide for Upper Orava and tourist maps 1: 20 000.
3. To publish a book on the beauty of Upper Orava's environment, its flora and fauna, broadly defined environmental protection, including the region's logo.