

## **CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION ON LANDSCAPE BETWEEN CROATIA AND MONTENEGRO**

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In the east coast of the Adriatic in Croatia and Montenegro various aspects of development especially through tourism and large-scale investment projects threaten to degrade and destroy landscape values. Natural and cultural heritage of outstanding value is the most important resource of the cross-border region of Dubrovnik and Boka Kotorska. In 1979, both the City of Dubrovnik and the Natural and Culturo-Historical Region of Kotor joined the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites. These two create one of the most attractive landscapes in the Adriatic area, which is also confirmed by the massive amount of tourist visits. In addition to two UNESCO sites, the whole region of Dubrovnik-Neretva County and Boka Kotorska Bay constitutes an exceptional cultural landscape, blending diverse and abundant layers of natural and cultural heritage. Adequate protection, planning and management of this landscapes are key to its sustainable development.

The areas of Dubrovnik and Boka Kotorska which have cultural and natural heritage and overall landscape of similar characteristics, face the same problems when it comes to protecting and managing these valuable resources. The landscape is at risk of being inadequately managed and thus devastated. Current development trends, as well as excessive and inadequately construction, are threatening to degrade this authentic landscape and destroy its natural and created values.

The mountain of Vrmac is a peninsula, dividing the Bay of Kotor from the Bay of Tivat. Its territory is likewise divided between the two municipalities, Kotor and Tivat. Due to its evident natural and cultural qualities it was selected as the first pilot area.



Bay of Kotor and mountain of Vrmac

The city of Dubrovnik, the administrative and economic centre of Dubrovnik - Neretva County - has developed on the sea cliffs. The broader territory of the city, encompassing the suburbs, fortress, the district behind the Old City, and the island of Lokrum. Above the Old City rises the Srd massif. Srd is the protagonist of almost every image of the city, precisely expressed by the contrast between its intact slopes and densely woven urban fabric at its feet. Srd is strongly connected in terms of history, culture, tourism. Nowadays Srd hill serves as a recreational area for local residents. Even though it is not a UNESCO site, nor located in its buffer zone, it is functionally and symbolically part of the city. Construction projects like the one planned apartments and golf course, with an area that is 17 times bigger than medieval walled city will have immense consequences for the functioning of the whole area, even putting aside changes in the visual aspect.



The city of Dubrovnik and Srđ massif

Vrmac and Srđ share a number of similarities. They both well-preserved natural areas, forming an integral part together with the old towns of Dubrovnik and Kotor. They have both been largely neglected in recent decades as part of the cultural landscape and they have both recently become the subject of development through large-scale investment projects. There are also some differences. The similarities make both pilot cases easily comparable and enable a very fruitful sharing of experiences. Essentially, the most important problem the region faces is that various stakeholders, especially policy-makers, perceive natural and cultural heritage as an “obstacle to development”.

The value of landscape is not sufficiently recognized, despite the fact that it is one of region’s basic resources and a possible driver of development. It is also important to say that the economic value of landscape has not been recognized. These were the starting points for the project “Heritage – Driver of Development”, a partnership action, coordinated by institutions and organizations from the regions of Dubrovnik and Boka Kotorska and aiming to improve the protection, planning and management of landscape.

The project aimed to improve collaboration between the actors through implementing joint programs, education, transfer of knowledge and know-how as well as awareness raising activities. The project also aimed to enlarge professionals’ knowledge and increase citizens’ awareness of how landscape heritage can be used as a driver of development. Within the context of the project these activities are often referred to as new methodologies in protection and management of landscape.

The project “Heritage – Driver of Development” was funded by the European Union and implemented within the cross-border programme Croatia-Montenegro, under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA). The functional lead partner was the Municipality of Tivat, while the main partner in Croatia was the Physical Planning Institute of Dubrovnik-Neretva County. The project partners were: the non-governmental organizations EXPEDITIO Center for Sustainable Spatial Development and the Cultural Heritage Association NAPREDAK Gornja Lastva in Montenegro; and the Dubrovnik Neretva County Regional Development Agency DUNEA and the Public Institution for the Management of Protected Natural Values in the Dubrovnik-Neretva County in Croatia.

In Montenegro, the project associates were: the Administration for Cultural Properties Protection of Montenegro, the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism of Montenegro and the South East European (SEE) Heritage Network. In Croatia, the project associates included: the Conservation Department in Dubrovnik for the area of the Dubrovnik-Neretva County, the Croatian Section of ECOVAST – European Council for the Village and the Small Town and the Institution Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre Split. The project lasted for 23 months, from March 11, 2013 until February 10, 2015.

The approach towards protection, planning and management of landscape in the project has been characterised by methods and tools, which can be described as good practice and represent innovative

approaches, at least in the context of Dubrovnik and Boka Kotorska.. Some of the methods and tools used are:

- Participatory approach. By being involved in project activities, stakeholders develop a sense of ownership of the project. The participation of various stakeholders ensures better quality of project activities and improves its sustainability; in addition, participatory processes are good opportunities for stakeholders to network.
- Workshops. Useful for a small number of highly motivated people interested in a specific topic, offering the possibility to exchange ideas, obtain practical knowledge and establish personal contacts.
- Training. Useful for a small number of selected participants to obtain practical knowledge.
- Studies and guidelines. Methods for jointly developing and applying methodology and obtaining concrete results that could be used further on in specific area.
- Study visits. This is a good method of learning about good practices and experiences in neighbouring regions; since the project envisages a joint study visit for partners/associates from Croatia and Montenegro, this method will improve connections between them.

The “**Landscape Days**” campaign project partners wanted to inform public about the objectives, processes and results of a project, but above all to establish cooperation with the public, explore various uses of landscape through artistic and other social events, and increase interest in spatial and tourism development in areas of natural and cultural heritage.

The following events took place within the “Landscape Days” campaign in Dubrovnik:

- photography exhibition “Landscape of Dubrovnik” (photographs were taken by residents of the city),
- photography exhibition “Storm Chasers” by the local photography group,
- international symposium “The future of the historic urban landscape of Dubrovnik, UNESCO World Heritage – new methodologies for urban conservation and development in a territorial context” with presentation of the studies and photography exhibition “Landscape – the stage of life”,
- exhibition, singing and drawing event at Saint Klara,
- promotion of brochure and maps of cross-border region of Boka Kotorska and Dubrovnik – Neretva County.

In Boka Kotorska the following events took place within the “Landscape Days” campaign:

- photography exhibition “Landscape of Boka through the eyes of people”,
- “a three-day workshop on dry stone making in Gornja Lastva (Vrmac),
- “Concert at dawn” in Gornja Lastva (Vrmac),
- “Concert at full moon” (Vrmac),
- Art at the sunset” in Gornja Lastva (Vrmac),
- “Music at the top of the hill” in St. Vid (Vrmac)
- “Culinary event “Heritage in the pot” (“Baština u loncu”

### **Studies and guidelines**

Lack of a knowledge base (analyses, studies, assessments and guidelines) for the protection and improvement of landscape was identified in the cross-border area, especially lack of coordination between legislative frameworks at the local and national levels, a lack of models for economic evaluation of landscape and a lack of assessment of landscape. Therefore project has foreseen making jointly developed studies and guidelines for improving a legislative framework, economic valorisation and more effective protection and management of landscape for Dubrovnik – Neretva county and Boka Kotorska. They will serve as the basis for developing and updating planning and policy documents in the region. The following studies analysed landscape as part of the project:

- Study on the natural values of Vrmac (Montenegro)

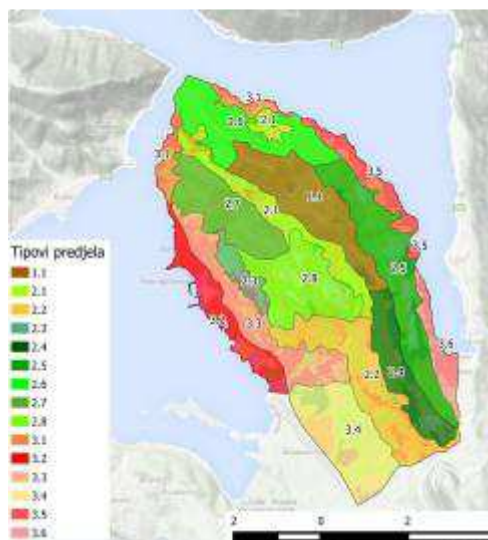
- Study on the cultural heritage of Vrmac (Montenegro)
- Study on identification and valorisation of natural and architectural heritage of Dubrovnik (Croatia)
- Analysis of Dubrovnik cadastre from the 19th century with transcription of building parcels register and creation of a database(The city of Dubrovnik in the Francis cadastre)

All the studies were serving as an input for the landscape studies: Study of cultural landscape of Vrmac (Montenegro) and Identification and valorisation of the natural and cultural landscape of Dubrovnik (Croatia).

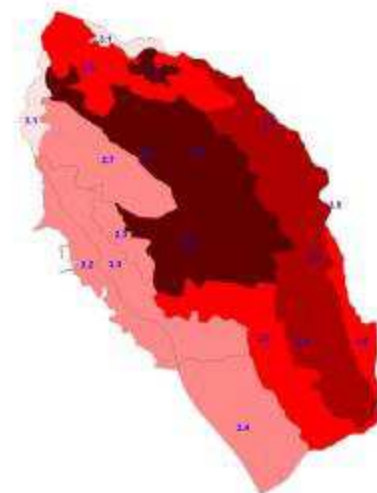
The **Study of cultural landscape of Vrmac** identifies and assesses its natural and cultural characteristics and values. The goal of the study was to identify the characteristics of Vrmac's landscape by using integrated methods considering cultural and natural heritage. It identifies and describes landscape types based on methodology of Landscape Character Assessment and Historic Landscape Assessment. The Study analyses the spatial development of Vrmac hill overtime. It describes the main activities, functions and ways of using this territory and also traditional knowledge and skills, historical events and famous personalities living here. Terrain research results complement existing data and visual and morphological characteristics. Data and information are organized by using models, mathematical statistical methods, GIS and methods of synthesis interpretations. A model of typological classification of landscape, a model of visual exposure and a model of morphological characteristics were also used. Trends and drivers of changes as well as pressures and threats to landscape are being analysed, as well as vulnerability of specific landscape to changes. The main parts of the study are:

- analysis of spatial planning documentation,
- analysis of natural, cultural, visual and historical features,
- identification of landscape character types/areas
- valorisation and vulnerability assessment
- guidelines for the protection, planning and management of landscape.

This study will serve as an input for spatial plans and strategies for the municipality of Tivat and Kotor. It stresses the value of landscape as a potential for economic development. The study can also serve as a basis for presenting and promoting the values of Vrmac and as a model of methodology for defining and improving cultural landscape elsewhere.



Vrmac: Landscape Character Types/Areas

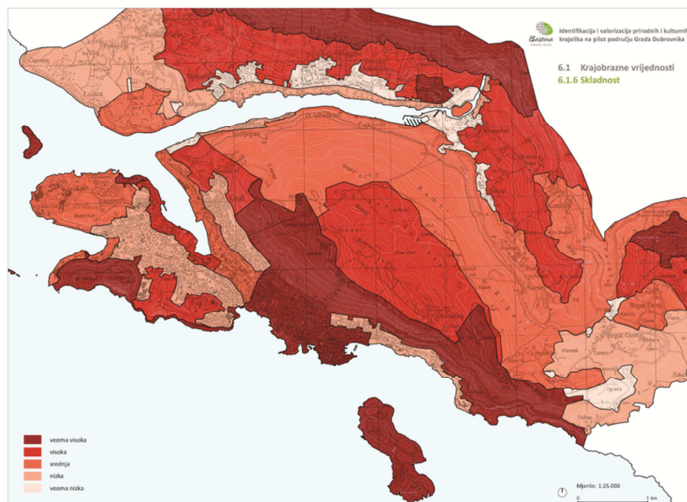


Vrmac: Landscape sensibility and vulnerability assessment

The *Study of cultural landscape of Dubrovnik* is being conducted by experts who are trying to view the characteristics of the city and its settings in a broader context. The study will try to understand the Dubrovnik area through individual features of the landscape and urban issue and their interaction in the last few decades as one rational and integrated system. This will be a starting point for establishing effective protection, planning and managing system of this landscape. The study consist from:

- integral evaluation of the area (landscape analysis, mapping, assessment and integration of different layers of cultural, natural and landscape values),
- analysis of shortcomings of legal protection and managing system in the areas of outstanding values,
- characteristics of spatial development of this area and identification of drivers of current changes, together with vulnerability assessment and identification of areas of possible conflicts,
- defining the concept and methodology of heritage impact assessment (HIA), together with guidelines and recommendation for protection and management of heritage

This studies are very important since their recommendations become input for spatial planning documentation of region and city. They will serve as a support in a decision making process when it comes to the development pressures that have been emerging lately and threaten to devaluate this landscape.



Dubrovnik: Landscape Valorisation