

# Poloniny National Park (Slovak Republic)

- On-the spot visit from 20 to 24 August 2017
- No member of the Secretariat was present
- Slovakian participants: Jana Durkošová (ministry of Environment), Mário Perinaj (National Park Director) and many others
- Interpreters: Zuzana Angelovičová and Martin Djovčoš

# The European Interest

Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) forests and their biodiversity



# The European Interest

Cultural heritage – wooden churches especially



# A history of problems!

- In the past there has been a proposal to withdraw the EDPA from Poloniny National Park due to the lack of a management plan and poor conservation management of the beech forests.
- Distrust by local people due to their compulsory relocation when the Starina Dam was built.
- Lack of approved access by local people to the catchment of the Starina Dam leads to continuing distrust.
- Potential problems due to lack of co-operation by NGOs.

# However, .....

- A management plan for 2017 to 2026 has now been approved.
- The management plan contains 'The Poloniny NP Action Plan'.
- National park staff are making progress in gaining the confidence of local people.
- Leadership is being provided by the relatively newly appointed and young Director, Mário Perinaj.

# Protection Measures

- These are largely based on the 5 levels of forest protection defined in the 2002 Act on 'Nature and Landscape protection'.
- The national park is also a component part of UNESCO's World Heritage Site 'Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe'.



**At the renewal of the EDPA in 2012 there were 5 conditions and 7 recommendations.**

I attempt to analyse these on pages 5 to 7 of my report

**Conditions:** I consider that 3 have now been complied with. Legal restrictions apply to former condition 3, which is retained in this report as a recommendation. Former condition 4 can only be complied with opportunistically if land owner wishes to sell.

**Recommendations:** I consider that progress has been made on either 5 or 6 of the former recommendations.

# Conclusion

My proposal to the group of Experts is:

- that the Poloniny National Park EDPA be renewed for the period 2018 to 2027,
  - that 3 conditions be attached to the renewal, and
  - that 7 recommendations also be attached to the renewal.
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- I also suggest that the Group of Experts might wish to renew the EDPA or only 5 years, i.e. 2018 to 2022. I have provided suggested revised conditions if this is the decision of the Group of Experts, but would not recommend any changes to the set of 7 recommendations.



# Condition 1

1. A detailed report, covering every one of the 52 actions in the 'Poloniny NP Action Plan', should be made to the Council of Europe no later than 31 December 2021.



# Conditions 2 and 3

2. Work should have commenced by 2022 on revised management and action plans for the Poloniny National Park so that they can be approved (by Government Resolution, if necessary) before they are due to be implemented on 1 January 2028.



3. In order to achieve a satisfactory outcome of the actions detailed in the ‘Poloniny NP Action Plan’, adequate resources, both financial and human, need to be deployed.

# Recommendation 1

1. A prioritised plan for all land in state ownership to be reclassified in levels 3, 4 or 5 to be developed and demonstrable progress to be shown.



# Recommendations 2 and 3



2. Encourage owners of private, association and church land to manage their forests by a single tree or group selection silvicultural system.

3. Maintain the management of meadows, preferably by summer grazing with livestock, or alternatively by cutting and removing the cut material from the site.



# Recommendation 4



4. Liaising with others, prepare an inventory of objects of cultural significance within the National Park, and support a prioritised programme of restoration of these culturally significant objects.

# Recommendations 5 and 6

5. Develop effective programmes of research and monitoring to provide data helpful to the management of the National Park.



6. A tourism development strategy and a prioritised action plan need to be devised and implemented with local stakeholders for the benefit of both the National Park and local people.

# Recommendation 7

7. Maintain cooperation:

- World Heritage Site,
- Bieszczadski Nat. Park,
- Východné LPA, and
- Vihorlat Landscape  
Protected Area



# Over to the Group of Specialists .....

