



Schutzgebiete in Slowenien mit besonderer Berücksichtigung des Alpenraums—Bestandsaufnahme und Problematik (Protected Areas in Slovenia with Particular Emphasis on the Alpine Area—Inventory and Problems)

Author: Borowski, Diana

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Schutzgebiete in Slowenien mit besonderer Berücksichtigung des Alpenraums— Bestandsaufnahme und Problematik (Protected Areas in Slovenia with Particular Emphasis on the Alpine Area—Inventory and Problems)

By Mladenka del Negro. Vienna, Austria: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009. 179 pp. US\$ 38.00. € 25.00. ISBN 978-3-7001-6755-6.

Nature conservation in the European Alps still faces major challenges, ranging from the pressure of the leisure industry to the expansion of settlements and the simultaneous intensification and extensification of agriculture. These are similar for all Alpine countries. Mladenka del Negro's book—which was submitted as a dissertation at the Institute of Mountain Research of the Austrian Academy of Science—attempts to illustrate these challenges in the Slovenian context and to show that the task of nature conservation is all the more difficult for a country in the late stages of its political and economic transformation.

The book comprises 7 chapters, following an inductive line of reasoning from the more general to specific examples. Del Negro sets out with a general description of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and its categories of protected areas, followed by a description of national regulations on nature conservation and international conventions, such as the Ramsar Convention, the Alpine Convention, and relevant EU legislation.

Chapter 4 provides an overview of the existing and planned protected areas in Slovenia and includes maps depicting their locations. It also presents the debate about the habitat of the brown bear in Slovenia: while the government believes the brown bear population to be stable and repeatedly has increased the shooting quota in recent years, environmentalists have fiercely opposed this, claiming that Slovenia's bear population is far from adequate and that increased shooting would threaten not only the survival of this population, but also that of brown bears in all of Europe. Chapter 5 focuses on basic problems in the Slovenian Alps. From the planned expansion of skiing regions within the territory of the national park to the erosion caused by the conversion of hillsides, these mountains face many of the same problems as those in other European countries.

In Chapter 6—"Different types of economic development and their relevance for protected areas"—the author starts by describing the differences between the concepts of *endogenous development* and *sustainable development*. However, the point of this distinction is not entirely clear, as she does not refer to either of the concepts in the rest of the chapter. The subsequent section gives an overview of the role of protected areas for regional economic development and investigates more deeply the conflicts among nongovernmental organizations, the government, economic operators, and the local population in protected areas, taking Triglav National Park as an example. Unusually, a significant proportion (85%) of the national park is privately owned instead of being public property, so that implementing nature conservation measures is difficult. In addition, the local population has so far

shown little interest in the development of the national park.

The final chapter deals with the Julian Alps Biosphere Reserve, which was declared in 2003 and has Triglav National Park as its core area. However, the driving force behind the creation of the biosphere reserve was not the local population, but national authorities; this is one reason why the reserve so far has neither its own management, nor any public visibility. The author closes by proposing that this biosphere reserve could model itself on the (further developed) Austrian biosphere reserves.

Overall, the book contributes to a field of research that so far has attracted the attention of only a few scholars. The subtitle "Inventory and Problems" hits the nail on the head: the author provides an extensive overview of the protected areas of Slovenia, their development, their geographic position, the relevant legal framework, their socioeconomic characteristics, and their status. Keeping a very descriptive tone throughout every section, she falls short of putting this mass of information into a broader context or weaving it into a compelling conclusion. All the same, the book certainly has the value of making knowledge available in German that had hitherto mainly existed in Slovenian. It should give a good introduction to anyone interested in—but without prior knowledge of—protected areas in Slovenia.

AUTHOR

Diana Borowski

diana.borowski@perth.uhi.ac.uk
Centre for Mountain Studies, Perth College UHI,
Perth PH1 2NX, United Kingdom

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