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Ecoregionalism - Factor Cross-Border Cooperation and Tourism Development

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Abstract

Regionalism at the time of the global economy and integration processes that are conditioned by it, becomes an inevitable factor of sustainable development of countries and wider regions. Ecoregional opportunity bringing together people of different cultures and from different countries around a common interest to improve their economic and social status and maintain their living space and environment in the whole. Recognizing principles of the European Union in this field and analyzed possibilities and consequences are needed for successful application of this model in the Republic of Serbia.

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1. Introduction

European space is characterized by significant experience in regionalization, particularly in member states which are establishing connections in order to achieve their development interests and be linked with each other (horizontal form of regionalization). The expansion of EU has increasingly emphasizes regional connectivity in the form Euro-region countries. Euroregions are primarily formed to enhance the common interests and living standards of the border population. A Euroregion is an interest organization

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of several states on the basis of geographical location, shared resources and potential, historical ties and relations, the state of bilateral relations and bilateral and regional projects.

The objectives of this regionalization are primarily: to improve and harmonize of the economy, increase the attractiveness of the region for investors, promote cultural, educational, scientific and tourist links, and joint environmental programs, etc.

This form of cooperation is strongly supported by the European Union that provides significant financial support for the promotion of cross-border cooperation. This has contributed to recent increases in the number of Euro-region. It can be said that this cooperation has become a part of the European Union pre-accession strategy, which is particularly important for Eastern and Southeastern Europe, as this can be a way of overcoming many differences.

Tourism as an interdisciplinary economic and social activity can connect all the economic factors of a region that is, strengthen cross-border geographical areas. Due to the international dimension and travel destinations are becoming an important factor of national and regional connectivity, which emphasizes the need for a special type of regionalization. With the introduction of standards for sustainable tourism development, which should provide long-term conservation and protection of natural, social and cultural resources as basic elements of existence and development, principles eco-regionalism become an indispensable factor of planning and merging at all places where natural resources are the basis for economic development. This is particularly related to tourism as a highly propulsive branch of industry.

2. Eco-Regionalism

An ecoregion is ecologically and geographically defined region covering a relatively large area of land or water and includes characteristic, geographically separate groups of natural communities and species. The above mentioned characteristics include geology, physiography, vegetation, climate, hydrology, terrestrial and aquatic fauna and soil.

The basic meaning and purpose of ecoregionalization approach is to create a useful framework in spatial terms for comparable assessments of environmental and natural resource management. Ecoregions should be seen as regions that could be used for various purposes established to perform the aggregation of similar terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems in their frames.

Ecoregion division of European space is specifically addressed in the EU Directive on Waters, which has established 25 ecoregions, see Fig. 1 (a).

Cover the territory of Serbia and the five ecoregions:

- No. 5 ecoregions: the Western Balkans (Dinarides);
- Ecoregion 6: Western Balkans (Greece);
- No.7 ecoregions: Eastern Balkans;
- Ecoregion No.11: Hungarian Plain;
- No.12 ecoregions: the Black Sea ecoregion (Pontic plain).

In the Fig. 1(b) provides an accurate view of the ecoregion borders of Europe on the territory of the Republic of Serbia.

It may be noted that the territory of Serbia in terms of eco-region "most divided" countries in Europe. This division is extremely disadvantageous, especially it regard to catchments and the Great South Morava River, divided into three ecoregions (ecoregions 5, 7, 11). To be able to establish cooperation with neighboring countries in the area of planning of joint activities for the management of natural resources and environmental protection Serbia adopted a number of obligations (for each ecoregion is making plans necessary quality management of the environment, the formation of a special control unit, etc.). The advantages to be gained from eco-region division are as following:

- Ecoregions incorporate areas inside and outside the country with similar abiotic and biotic factors;

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