SPATIUM *International Review*
No. 23, October 2010, pp. 30-37

UDC 711.455(497.11)
338.48(497.11)
502.131.1(497.11)
Review paper
DOI: 10.2298/SPAT1023030M

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABLE SPATIAL, LANDSCAPE AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN SERBIA

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The paper presents an overview of the expected role of spatial and environmental planning in coordination and integration with strategic planning for sustainable spatial/territorial, landscape and tourism development. The application of an integrated approach to sustainable territorial development planning and management in the European Union is also analyzed in the context of problems associated with and possibilities to enhance the European Landscape Convention and Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism implementation. We have analyzed the contributions of reforms that have so far been implemented in current legislation and of planning bases to the establishment of coordinated sustainable territorial development planning and management in Serbia and to the procurement of support for the integration of sustainable tourism development and landscape planning and management into the process of spatial, environmental and sectoral planning. The approach to and problems of landscape protection and sustainable tourism development occurring in the practice in spatial planning are analyzed through examples of a new generation of spatial plans – the Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia, and a spatial plan of the special-purpose area for the Nature Park and Tourism Region of Stara Planina Mountain. Through the example of Mt Stara Planina, the role of strategic environmental assessment in coordination with spatial and sectoral planning is analyzed, as well as potential contribution to landscape integration and sustainable tourism development in the process of planning. The possibilities for better coordination of Serbian strategic planning in achieving the sustainable spatial and tourism development, and possibilities to integrate landscapes into the planning process are indicated.

***Key words:** spatial, sectoral and environmental planning, landscape and sustainable tourism planning, legislation, coordination and integration of strategic plans, strategic environmental assessment.*

INTRODUCTION

The main idea of this paper is to indicate the possibilities and problems of achieving sustainable spatial/territorial development by coordinating and integrating the process of strategic planning and development management. In this context, the key problems of the spatial, sectoral and environmental planning system and practice have been discussed, particularly for the areas with landscapes and attractive natural and cultural heritage, suitable for tourism development.

Along with the implementation of the sustainable development concept, tendencies to integrate spatial planning and planning of environmental quality into one form of planning and their singling out into a separate institutional block, considered to have a coordinating and integrating role in planning and directing the development, have been manifested.

There is an ongoing transformation of the planning system in Serbia along with expectations in acquiring its legitimacy and establishing greater efficiency of practice in planning and managing the development. The planning system and the relevant legislation will be recognized on the basis of the EU strategic framework, regulations and instruments. These circumstances represent an advantage and convenience for the development of sustainable tourism and landscape planning, and their coordination with and integration into the planning system in Serbia.

The abovementioned standpoint is based on some of the numerous EU strategic frameworks and instruments (Maksin-Mićić et al, 2009), primarily the ESDP (European Spatial Development Perspective, 1999), TAE (Territorial Agenda of the European Union, Towards a More Competitive and Sustainable Europe of Diverse Regions, 2007), EU SDS (A European Union Strategy for Sustainable Development, 2006), ELC (European Landscape Convention, 2000), European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (1995), ASCET (Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism, 2007), etc.

The European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) lists the conservation and wise management of natural and cultural heritage as one of the three fundamental objectives of the

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The paper is prepared as a part of the scientific project TR 16013 "Approach and concept for compilation and implementation of Strategy of Spatial Development of Serbia" and TR 16007 "Sustainable Development and Organization of Spas and Other Tourist Settlements in Serbia", financed by the Republic of Serbia Ministry of Science and Technological Development.

European spatial development policy. The proposed wise management allows for controlled development of environmentally friendly economic activities, primarily sustainable tourism, and gains the support for the protection and strengthening of regional and local identity and diversity. This document also sets out options for the policy of creative management of cultural landscapes: (i) inclusion of cultural landscape values in integrated space development strategies; (ii) improved coordination of development measures, particularly those having an impact on landscapes (European Spatial Development Perspective, 1999, p. 34). In the European Landscape Convention, which is undergoing the ratification procedure in Serbia, the most important responsibilities of countries when it comes to integrating landscapes into the system and process of planning are the following: (i) to recognize landscape by law as a dominant component of diversity of shared natural and cultural heritage and their identity basis; (ii) landscape integration into regional and urban planning, as well as sectoral and other policies having direct or indirect impact on landscape; (iii) to define and assess landscapes on the country's territory; and (iv) to establish procedures for the participation of the broader public, local and regional authorities, as well as other stakeholders with an interest in the definition and assessment of landscape, and the establishment and implementation of landscape policies. In the Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism, which has not yet been perceived in Serbia, the key to achieving sustainable tourism development is the following: (i) a holistic and integrated approach, taking all impacts of tourism into account in its planning and development, with tourism being well balanced and integrated with a whole range of activities that affect society and the environment; (ii) long term planning, (iii) achieving an appropriate pace and rhythm of development that should reflect and respect the character, resources and needs of host communities and destinations (2007, p. 5–6).

Starting from regulations and measures set out by the European frameworks and regulations, as well as the need and directions for redefining strategic planning in Serbia, some possibilities for the coordination and integration of landscape and sustainable tourism development into strategic planning have been considered, particularly in terms of spatial planning. In the first part of this paper, the application of an integrated approach to sustainable territorial development planning and management in the European Union has been analyzed and, in this context, problems associated with and possibilities for enhancing ASCET and ECL implementation were also contemplated. In the second part of the paper, we have analyzed the contributions of reforms that have so far been implemented in current legislation and of planning bases to the establishment of coordinated sustainable territorial development planning and management in Serbia and to the procurement of support for the integration of sustainable tourism development and landscape planning and management into the process of spatial, environmental and sectoral planning. The approach to and problems of landscape protection and sustainable tourism development occurring in practice in spatial planning are analyzed through examples of a new generation of spatial plans – the Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia and a spatial plan for the special-purpose area of the Stara Planina Nature Park and Tourism Region. Through the example of Mt Stara Planina, the role of strategic environmental assessment in coordination with spatial and sectoral planning is analyzed, as well as its potential contribution to landscape integration and sustainable tourism development to the process of planning.

The possibilities for better coordination of Serbian strategic planning in achieving sustainable spatial and tourism development through a coordination of spatial, sectoral (tourism) and environmental planning and possibilities to integrate landscapes into the planning process are indicated.

INTEGRATED APPROACH TO STRATEGIC PLANNING OF SUSTAINABLE SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT

Designing an Integrated Approach to Spatial, Environmental and Sectoral Planning in the European Union

The ambition to design a uniform, integrated approach to strategic planning is present today in all European countries and countries with developed planning systems. Along with the development of a sustainable development concept, there is an increasing number of pronounced tendencies to integrate spatial and environmental planning into a separate institutional block considered to have a coordinating and integrating role in planning and directing the development.

After almost three decades, spatial planning has assumed a European dimension, from a local and national one. Spatial planning at the level of the EU and certain member states still does not have enough political and institutional support in relation to sectoral policies, primarily the agrarian and transportation ones. In spite of this, spatial planning has been growing in popularity during the last decade. Efforts invested in strengthening social, economic and territorial cohesion in the European Union on the one hand, and different, often unfavorable, effects of sectoral policies on the desired achievement of cohesion and competitiveness in the European continent on the other hand, have resulted in a need to seek the most suitable instruments for integration of various aspects and effects of general and sectoral policies, as well as for achieving sustainable territorial development (Maksin-Mićić et al, 2009).

Spatial planning is promoted as one of the instruments for sustainable development, able to offer an integral view of the future development of a territory. The assumed capacity of spatial planning is based on its spatial dimension and the capacity for coordination and integration of various policies, starting from economic development, transportation and environmental protection to cultural and landscape policies. The major goals of spatial planning are to plan sustainable territorial development as an overall strategic framework for general and sectoral policies. Thus, a controlling role of spatial planning is also achieved, because it enables decision makers to consider the results and efficiency of different policies in a specific space and landscape, as well as to anticipate their efficiency and the necessary harmonization in the future (Adams, Alden, Harris, 2006). This is also confirmed by the framework for action proposed in the Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism, where it has been stated that "sustainable destination management is critical for tourism development, especially through effective spatial and land use planning and control, and through investment decisions on infrastructure and services" (2007, p. 5).

Over the past ten decades, a series of development documents has been adopted by the European Union, as well as several pan-European initiatives representing a new generation of strategic documents. The greatest contribution to the promotion of the role of spatial planning in the European Union has been made by the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP, 1999), which was followed by the Territorial Agenda of the European Union (2007) as its corrective. It is important to note that the Territorial Agenda

has introduced the obligation to apply integrated strategic territorial approach, i.e. the obligation to implement integral planning and management for all stakeholders in the EU, particularly local and regional ones, within the frameworks established at the pan-European and national levels. Designing an integrated approach to directing and managing the development of the European Union has also been supported by the revised EU Sustainable Development Strategy (2006).

Implementation of strategic documents and establishment of sustainable territorial development framework has encountered difficulties, partially because spatial planning does not fall within the original EU competencies, but within the competencies of its member states. The major problem lies in the main EU policies, primarily in the Lisbon Strategy, in which macro-economic competitiveness was given priority over social and environmental objectives. According to some estimates, most of the basic European sectoral policies have been directed towards achieving economic competitiveness–from transportation to urban policies (Kunzmann, 2006).

Although the implementation of documents on EU territorial development is not binding, as they rather represent guidelines and a strategic framework for coordinating different policies, current experience in their implementation is positive, primarily in the application of new approaches and concepts. Implementation of these documents in EU countries is based on the subsidiary principle and development of horizontal (inter-sectoral at the level of governance) and vertical coordination (across governance levels – EU, transnational, national, regional and local levels).

Sustainability in Spatial, Landscape and Tourism Development Policy Principles

Can we assume that sustainable spatial, landscape and tourism development policies refer to similar principles?

In the UNECE (2008) researches, six fundamental principles of spatial planning have been identified: the principles of democracy, subsidiarity, participation, integration, proportionality, and prevention. For the sake of example, the principle of prevention refers to the implementation of an environmental impact assessment and risk assessment in defining and evaluating spatial planning policies and options. It also encompasses a commitment to limit the development in sensitive regions in order to minimize the anticipated effects of climate change and preserve biodiversity, landscape and natural resources (see more: Maksin-Mićić et al, 2009).

In the Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism, similar principles are outlined: (i) to minimise and manage risk (the precautionary principle), where there is uncertainty about outcomes, full evaluation and preventive actions should be undertaken to avoid damage to the environment and society; (ii) to reflect impacts and costs (user and polluter pays), meaning that the prices should reflect the real costs to society of consumption and production activities; (iii) to set and respect limits, meaning to recognize the carrying capacity of sites and areas, with a readiness to limit, where and when appropriate, the amount of tourism development and volume of tourist flows; (iv) participation, meaning to involve all stakeholders by widespread and committed participation in decision making and practical implementation by all those implicated in the outcome; (vii) continuous monitoring of impacts, as sustainability is all about understanding impacts and being alert to them, so that the necessary changes and improvements can be made (2007, p. 6).

In a greater detail, this and other guiding principles have been brought up by the UNWTO and UNEP guidelines for policy makers in making tourism more sustainable (2005, p. 15–17). Some of these guidelines refer to policy areas that ought to be addressed in implementing sustainable tourism, some of which are (UNWTO, UNEP, 2005, p. 25–48): (i) economic viability (one of the policy areas is overall environmental quality in maintaining and projecting an attractive destination), (ii) local prosperity, (iii) social equity (some policy areas utilize income from tourism to support social programmes and pro-poor tourism), (iv) visitor fulfilment, (v) local control (some policy areas ensure appropriate engagement and empowerment of local communities, and improve the conditions for effective local decision making), (vi) community well-being (one of the policy areas is careful planning and management of tourism enterprises and infrastructure), (vii) cultural richness (some policy areas ensure effective management and the conservation of cultural and historic heritage sites, and work with communities on sensitive presentation and promotion of culture and traditions), (viii) physical integrity (some policy areas ensure that new tourism development complies with the local environmental conditions, and maintain high quality rural and urban landscapes as a tourism resource), (ix) biological diversity (some policy areas work with national parks and other protected areas, using tourism to encourage landholders to practice sustainable land management, and raising support for conservation from visitors and enterprises), (x) resource efficiency (some policy areas take account of the supply of resources when planning tourism development, and ensure an efficient use of land and raw materials in tourism development), (xi) environmental purity (one of the policy areas is influence on the development of new tourism facilities). Another set of these guidelines refers to structures and sustainable strategies, focusing the coordination of multi-stakeholder structure at the national, regional and local level of governance, and at interrelated national strategies that have relevance to sustainable tourism. The relationship between the three types of strategies has been discussed – an overall tourism strategy embracing sustainability principles, other relevant government strategies recognizing or embracing sustainable tourism (such as biodiversity strategy), strategies for sub-sectors of tourism that can play a role in making all of tourism more sustainable. The recommendation is that a tourism strategy should fully embrace the concept of sustainable development. It is based on problems identified in the past when tourism strategies, and especially tourism master plans which tend to be more about physical and spatial issues, often treated sustainability as a separate section of a strategy or plan, being essentially a statement on possible impacts and proposals for their mitigation, which is not sufficient. Instead, the whole strategy should be based on the principles of sustainable development and it should emerge from a process that ensures stakeholder participation, promotes and respects planning for tourism at the local level, and reflects aims and principles for sustainable tourism. Another requirement is for governments to ensure that the sustainable development of tourism is fully recognized within other government strategies, based on an efficient coordination of government departments and agencies (Ibid, p. 50–70).

UNWTO methodology for the preparation of tourism strategies and master plans embraces environmental, socio-cultural and economic analyses and assessments. It is now widely implemented by governments and destinations in planning sustainable tourism development.

Many local destinations in different parts of the world have developed strategies and policies for tourism within the context of Local Agenda 21. Some destinations have pursued the Local Agenda 21 process, where tourism is seen as just one activity alongside many others. Ideally, it is good to take this holistic approach

first and then to develop a sustainable tourism strategy out of this process. In destinations and areas where tourism is a dominant activity, a Local Agenda 21 strategy may be tantamount to a sustainable tourism strategy (Ibid, p. 57).

EUROPARC (The Federation of National and Nature Parks of Europe) has established a Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (2000). So far 21 parks from the EU participate in the European "Charter Parks" network, none of them from Serbia (www.european-charter.org, 20.10.2010). The first requirement from the Charter is that there should be a permanent forum (or a similar arrangement) between the protected area authority, local municipalities, conservation and community organizations and representatives of the tourism industry involved in a sustainable tourism strategy and action plan preparation, approval and implementation for the protected area.

A key and the most difficult task in the planning process is to achieve sustainable development through directing general/framework spatial distribution of development and investment, coordination of infrastructure, housing, public services and economic activities development, environmental protection, and landscape and natural resources protection.

Options for tourism development and spatial distribution should be the subject of public debates and strategic environmental assessment (SEA). Strategic environmental assessment is an important control instrument for the integration of various policies and for support in achieving sustainable territorial development. By implementing strategic environmental assessment, it is possible to determine whether plans and policies are also mutually harmonized with sustainable territorial development objectives, provided that the SEA is integrated into the process of spatial and sectoral planning.

Screening and checking processes for the sustainability of policies are being introduced in some countries. In the European Union, the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of all public policies in certain sectors (which explicitly include tourism) is now a requirement.

How successful is the implementation of the concept of sustainable tourism development in European countries? What are the effects of the SEA process in achieving more sustainable tourism planning and development management? The answers and recommendations should be included in the first report on the implementation of the Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism, to be submitted in 2011.

How is the landscape integrated into the process of planning, i.e. how is the European Landscape Convention being implemented?

The European landscape diversity, continual landscape transformation, as well as the complexity of landscape functions, indicates that it may not be simple to meet the obligations set out in the European Landscape Convention (ELC), or a short-term activity at the national and other levels of landscape management.

Sublimating various experiences of European countries in landscape planning and management, as well as in integrating the landscape into a planning process, the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers has established the Recommendation CM/Rec (2008)3 on the guidelines for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention. General principles of the Guidelines are particularly focused on: (i) defining specific or sectoral landscape strategies at all levels of management and for all territorial units; (ii) integrating the landscape dimension in territorial and other relevant sectoral policies, as well as into their horizontal and vertical coordination; (iii) active participation of relevant stakeholders and the public in the process of landscape planning and management, etc. The Guidelines indicate different practices in landscape development policies and institutional arrangements in European countries, ranging from policies dominantly associated with the protection of particularly valuable natural and cultural heritage landscapes to the policies which are part of environmental policies or spatial planning. The Guidelines also indicate the importance of incorporating landscape problems into mechanisms of coordination which should be strengthened by establishing the processes and procedures for permanent interdepartmental consultations at the national level, and from the national governance level with the regional governance level, as well as the mechanisms of cooperation with organizations and representatives of the private sector.

A section of the Guidelines dealing with the Criteria and Instruments for Landscape Policy Implementation indicates the stages in the process of landscape protection, planning and management, starting from landscape identification and assessment, through the establishment of objectives, actions and measures for landscape protection or improvement of landscape quality, medium-term or short-term action implementation programme, to monitoring landscape change and effects of landscape and other policies. The landscape quality objectives should be designed by policies at all levels of governance and implemented in spatial, urban and sectoral planning. The implementation of landscape planning in other policies may be determined by legislation or developed on a voluntary basis. Determining the responsibilities for landscape policy implementation depends on the legislation of the country in question and on the expected effects, either by integrating the objectives and measures into spatial (and urban) plans, or by providing specific instruments for landscape integration into landscape or (sectoral) policies (landscape study, landscape impact study, reports on the status of landscapes and landscape policies, etc). Voluntary implementation is based on agreements, charters, contracts and quality labelling between public authorities and relevant stakeholders. As an alternative to the development of an autonomous landscape plan, it is recommended to introduce a landscape study in the process of spatial and sectoral planning (particularly for the power supply system, all infrastructure systems, agriculture, tourism, cultural heritage protection, river catchment areas) at all governance levels. It has been concluded that the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) are very useful instruments, but also that inadequate methods of analysis and evaluation of landscape dimension in the assessment process have been used, as they consider landscape quantitatively as merely one of environmental components, instead of taking into account a qualitative evaluation of the effects of the planned development on the landscape. It has been recommended to integrate the landscape dimension, primarily landscape quality objectives, into environmental impact assessment, particularly into strategic environmental assessment for spatial plans and programmes.

The similarities in guiding principles and stages in the process of spatial, sustainable tourism and landscape planning should be the starting point for managing their mutual coordination and integration, particularly for the areas with attractive landscapes, natural and cultural heritage, suitable for tourism development.

PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH SUSTAINABLE SPATIAL, LANDSCAPE AND TOURISM STRATEGIC PLANNING IN SERBIA

An Assessment of Legislative Support to Sustainable Spatial, Landscape and Tourism Strategic Planning in Serbia

Since the transition period began in Serbia, there have been frequent changes in legislation in all domains, the development of general and sectoral plans/strategies and programmes has been intensified, and the lack of their mutual coordination and insufficient coordination with spatial and environmental planning has been manifested.

The major changes in legislation in terms of spatial planning and development were made in 2003 and 2009. None of these changes in legal solutions took into account the issues crucial for the improvement of the process and efficiency of spatial planning in achieving sustainable spatial/territorial development, such as: principles and methodology of spatial planning, methods of plan elaboration; mechanisms and procedures for coordination in the elaboration of spatial and other (general and sectoral) plans and strategies, as well as their integration through the process of spatial and environmental planning; participation of relevant stakeholders in and support to the implementation of plan documents. The Law on Planning and Construction of the Republic of Serbia (2009) placed an emphasis on buildable land, i.e. the marketability of buildable land in state ownership, and on the construction of buildings, i.e. easier procedure for obtaining building permits. All other aspects of spatial planning and development were neglected, namely the coordination and integration role of spatial planning in achieving sustainable spatial development. The protection and improvement of landscape quality were not mentioned in spatial and urban plans. To some extent, this has been corrected by secondary legislation (in the Rulebook on Contents, Scope and Mode of Designing Plan Documents, 2010) for spatial plans, but not for urban plans. Designing the concepts, regulations and plan concepts for environmental, landscape, natural resources and cultural heritage protection has been included in spatial plans. At this level of planning system development, this could be considered a satisfactory, although an incomplete solution provided that it is feasible. And, is it actually feasible? Have we investigated, identified, evaluated and verified landscape types and their regional distribution in Serbia, as well as specified objectives and established recommendations/guidelines for their preservation, development and management? Provided that the answer is negative, the implementation of landscape dimension of sustainable spatial development in spatial planning will be postponed.

The Law on Environmental Protection (2004, 2009), modelled on similar regulations of European countries, established an integral environmental protection system, as well as measures and instruments for sustainable management and the protection of natural resources and cultural heritage, while spatial planning is represented as a planning basis for integrated protection of the environment, natural resources and cultural heritage. Landscape was only formally mentioned in environmental principles and within the principles of natural resources preservation. In other words, the notion of landscape was solely associated with natural heritage as one of the criteria for defining and proclaiming a natural heritage (national park, nature park, outstanding landscape). The Law on Strategic Environmental Assessment (2004) required this assessment to be carried out for spatial and sectoral plans, which explicitly includes tourism strategies and plans. This law did not envisage the obligation to assess the environmental impact of spatial and sectoral plans on the protection and improvement of landscape quality.

The problem also arose out of the fact that laws on spatial planning and development and environmental protection have failed to specify to a sufficient extent the obligation to coordinate spatial and environmental planning, or sectoral with spatial and environmental planning, thus also aggravating the integration of sustainable tourism and landscape into the planning process.

However, in the Law on Nature Protection (2009) it is clearly stipulated that sustainable spatial development is endorsed by spatial and sectoral plans delivered, approved and implemented in compliance with the conditions and measures of nature protection. What if this obligation is not supported by other laws, as is the case with the Law on Tourism? Neither nature and landscape protection, nor sustainable spatial and tourism development of destinations can be achieved until all relevant laws are harmonized. In the Law on Nature Protection, certain attention was paid to landscape and landscape diversity. The Law, in principle, established obligations on landscape protection and its characteristics within the nature protection measures. A principled standpoint on the classification of landscape types was mentioned, but without prescribing any obligation and competency for their investigation, identification and assessment in compliance with the ELC and practice of European countries. These inconsistencies and indistinctness will perhaps be corrected by the adoption of the envisaged Strategy of Nature and Natural Resources Protection, which will contain guidelines for landscape diversity preservation, based on the Report on the State of the Environment of the Republic of Serbia which should also contain data on the status of landscape diversity and impacts on landscape diversity. The question arises as to how these inconsistencies and indistinctness can be overcome in the period prior to the adoption of the Strategy and the Report, so as to enable the implementation of the obligation, prescribed by the law, to set out requirements and measures for landscape protection and landscape diversity preservation through spatial, urban and sectoral planning (power supply, traffic, water resources management, agriculture, forestry, tourism, etc.). The Law on Nature Protection also defines a basis for landscape integration into environmental planning and management by setting out the obligation which states that the requirements for nature protection, including the preservation of landscape diversity, have to be an integral part of an environmental impact assessment.

In the Draft Law on Immovable Cultural Heritage (2008), the protection of immovable cultural heritage was not associated with (cultural) landscape protection and sustainable tourism development, or with the protected territories of immovable cultural heritage.

The Law on Tourism (2009) is also indicative, which, within the principles of tourism development, mentions sustainable development only declaratively, but leaves out any coordination with laws on spatial planning and environment protection. Therefore, the coordination of tourism planning with spatial and environmental planning is not even mentioned. Quite the opposite, the Law requires that spatial and urban plans must implement a tourism strategy or plan, without any adjustment to sustainable spatial development and conclusions of an environmental impact assessment. The obligation stated in the Law on Strategic Environmental Assessment for tourism sector is not confirmed by the Law on Tourism, and therefore it has not been carried out for tourism strategies and master plans. It has only been envisaged that the Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia should

include an analysis of the impact on cultural heritage and natural resources, but not of the impact on the environment, or sustainable spatial/territorial and landscape development. The current Law on Tourism does not provide adequate support for sustainable spatial and tourism development, landscape and heritage protection.

We believe that environmental regulations are the most significant legal basis for defining sustainable sectoral development and environmental implications for sectoral planning. The same stands for landscape (landscape planning, design, development and management) and for setting out obligations for other forms of planning, in the same way in which the environmental protection and management are determined. Without this, it may not be expected that sustainable development and landscape will be adequately regulated in other sectors.

This brief analysis indicates that the issues associated with Serbia's sustainable spatial development, sustainable tourism and landscape have been sporadically, inadequately and inconsistently dealt with in legislation. The necessary support has not been provided for the integration of strategic planning, primarily spatial, environmental and sectoral planning in compliance with the analyzed European documents (agendas, conventions, etc), guidelines/recommendations and experiences in their implementation. In other words, voluminous work is still ahead of us in terms of preparation and harmonization of our legislation with *acquis communautaire*.

Problems Associated with Coordination and Integration of Strategic Spatial, Sectoral and Environmental Planning in Serbia

Coordination and integration of spatial, sectoral and environmental planning is established by legislation and carried out through institutional-organizational arrangements. The previous analysis has indicated that the Serbian legislation has not provided this precondition. In the Serbian planning practice, a coordination of a formal and informal type has been achieved in spatial and sectoral planning in the domain of agriculture, water resources management, forestry, and the protection of natural values. The informal type of coordination has also been achieved with some other sectors (transportation, energy and telecommunication infrastructure), but has been conducted with difficulty with certain sectoral plans, which are insufficiently situated in the planning system (tourism strategies and master plans) or mainly reduced to short-term and medium-term development programmes.

In the first decade of the 21st century, a series of general strategies has been adopted in Serbia modelled on the EU practice, having a direct or indirect impact on sustainable development management, and thus also on space and landscape protection and development, and sustainable tourism development. This primarily refers to the National Sustainable Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia (2008) and the National Environmental Protection Programme of the Republic of Serbia (2010). In the National Sustainable Development Strategy, the concept of sustainable development in Serbia is too general and without a spatial and landscape dimension. In the National Environmental Protection Programme, landscape is neglected, not being mentioned even in the segments referring to the protection of nature and biodiversity. In both documents tourism is identified as an emerging sector with a significant environmental impact, but left without any objective or priority action to make it more sustainable. This ommission has been corrected by the Action plan for the Implementation of the National Sustainable Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2009–2017 (2009), where the ratification of the European Landscape Convention and revitalization is mentioned, and a set of issues for tourism sector has been stipulated (on environment and cultural heritage protection, sewage treatment, renewable energy).

In the Serbian spatial planning practice, the concept and principles of sustainable spatial development have been implemented more or less successfully (see more: Maksin-Mićić et al, 2009). As for the concept of sustainable tourism development, its implementation started in spatial plans for special-purpose areas, primarily for protected areas with natural and cultural heritage. In the proposal of a new Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia (2010), the main goal for tourism is to achieve sustainable development. As the national spatial plan has no power to change the regulations set by legislation, the abovementioned problems in the implementation of proposed sustainable tourism development remains unsolved. The problems in implementing the concept of sustainable tourism development already occurred in spatial plans for special-purpose areas, due to a lack of environmental impact assessment of tourism strategies/master plans and their insufficient coordination with spatial plans.

The approach to the preservation and improvement of landscape quality in spatial planning has been fragmented and limited to some landscape components or to outstanding landscapes. At almost all levels of spatial planning, landscape has been completely neglected in relation to its ecological, historical and cultural, social, economic, aesthetic, and other functions (Maksin-Mićić, 2003). Certain progress has been made in the proposal of the new Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia (2010), which specifies problems, objectives, the concept and priorities in landscape protection and development. An elaboration of the Characterization of Landscapes of Serbia project has been included amongst priorities. The project should be a basis for developing landscape planning and management, as well as for landscape integration into spatial, sectoral and urban plans. Such a recommendation may be specified in the Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia, but it must be determined by the legislation in the domain of environmental and nature protection. Although spatial plans for special-purpose areas are mainly drafted for areas with intensive spatial and socio-economic transformations, or protected and environmentally vulnerable areas, they, as a rule, do not include a landscape dimension. For this reason, it is worth mentioning the approach to landscape planning in the elaboration of the Spatial Plan for the Special-Purpose Area of the Golija Natural Park (2009), in which the Golija-Studenica Biosphere Reserve (MAB list) has been included. A step forward has been made with this plan, compared to earlier practice in spatial planning of protected areas. The Plan sets out objectives of cultural landscape protection and the preservation of landscape ambience, aesthetic and recreational values; a general identification of biotope types has been carried out and general measures for their protection have been established. However, differentiating the area into landscape units/elements and establishing guidelines and regulations for the preservation of the quality of these units has fallen through. In this case, as in others, except for formal demands, it is difficult to observe a real impact of plan concepts and solutions for the protection of cultural landscape and biotope on plan concepts in other plan segments (forests, forest and agricultural land, etc.), especially on the concept of tourism development and its spatial distribution (Maksin-Mićić, 2003).

The integration of strategic environmental assessment into spatial (and urban) plans in Serbia yields good results in the evaluation of

variant concepts of territorial development and contributes to the improvement of environmental quality and the quality of life. A limitation in achieving the coordinating and integrative role of strategic environmental assessment in the Serbian planning system is the fact that it does not observe the legal obligation to perform the SEA for sectoral plans. Thus, the realization of the integrative role of spatial and environmental planning in directing and managing sustainable development in Serbia is, at the same time, put in question (Maksin-Mićić et al, 2009). In order to include a landscape dimension in the SEA process, it would be most appropriate to extend its coverage and harmonize objectives and methods to include an assessment of plan solution impact on landscape.

The collision of spatial, environmental, landscape and sectoral objectives and interests in tourism development might grow in intensity with the implementation of the new Law on Tourism. In these circumstances, the implementation of strategic environmental assessment for spatial plans represents a controlling instrument enabling the coordination between the sectoral-oriented strategies and master plans for tourism development and spatial and environmental planning, as well as future landscape planning. The controlling role of strategic environmental assessment of sectoral strategies and plans is realized by indicating the adverse spatial, environmental and social effects that may be caused by their non-critical incorporation into spatial, urban and other plans and programmes.

The role of strategic environmental assessment may be explained through the example of spatial and sectoral plans for the Stara Planina Natural Park and Tourism Region. One of the objectives of strategic environmental impact assessment of the Spatial Plan for the Special-Purpose Areas of the Stara Planina Natural Park and Tourism Region (further: Spatial Plan for Mt Stara Planina) was the protection of cultural landscape, i.e. the preservation of landscape type diversity and the preservation and improvement of elements of landscape features. In the SEA Report, it has been concluded that significant positive effects of the Spatial Plan for Mt Stara Planina will be particularly manifested within: the protection and improvement of the state of nature, environment and landscape; the preservation, presentation and adequate use of natural and cultural heritage; overall economic effects and uniform increase in local population employment, etc. It has been concluded that according to the concept of dispersive development, which has been applied to most of the area covered by the Spatial Plan for Mt Stara Planina (to about 88% of the area), none of the plan solutions will generate a significant long-term adverse environmental impact which cannot be kept under control (Fig. 1). In the SEA Report, due to solutions incorporated in the Spatial Plan for Mt Stara Planina from the Master Plan for the Jabučko Ravnište-Leskovac Tourist Resort (Fig. 2), it has been concluded that, for a smaller part of the area (about 12%), where the concept of highly-concentrated development in the Jabučko Ravnište Tourist Resort has been applied, it will generate a significant long-term adverse environmental impact which will be difficult to control. The Jabučko Ravnište Tourist Resort will generate a particularly unfavorable long-term impact on nature and the environment, especially in terms of water supply, wastewater drainage system, access and internal roads, solid municipal waste disposal, power supply and

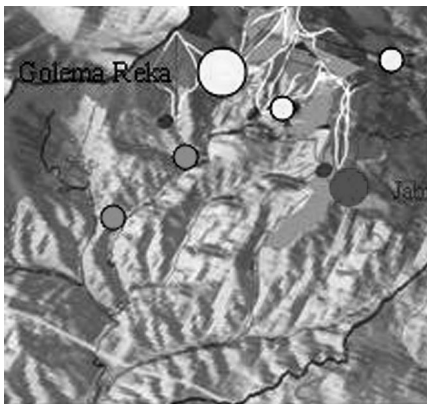

Fig. 1.The Golema Reka and Topli Do ski-resort sectors according to the Spatial Plan

Source: Spatial Plan for the Stara planina Natural Park and Tourism Region, 2008

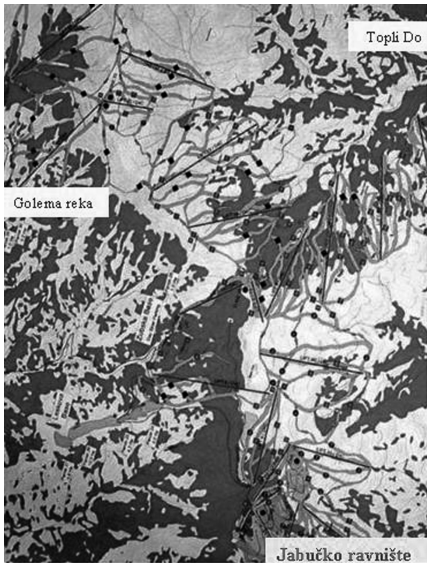

Fig. 2. Solution for the Jabučko Ravnište ski and tourist resort according to the Master Plan

Source: Stara Planina Resort Area Master Plan, 2007

accommodation of the employed, the quality of life in local communities (due to non-uniform distribution of workplaces, dominant participation of the employed coming from distant surrounding areas, etc.). One of the conclusions in the SEA Report is that from the standpoint of the environment, nature heritage and landscape protection, the dispersive development concept is more appropriate for the protected area of Mt Stara Planina.

Strategic environmental assessment has provided recommendations for the reduction of the originally determined capacities in Jabučko Ravnište to the level which will not pose an environmental threat, and also defined measures for the reduction and neutralization of an adverse environmental impact which may occur in the implementation of sectoral plan solutions. By introducing strategic environmental assessment in resolving conflicts in planning, a certain degree of compromise has been achieved by which the sectoral plan concept has been reduced, as well as the planned development and its adverse environmental impact on the most sensitive area of the Natural Park, at least in the first stage of tourist resort development. The efficiency of this controlling instrument would have been even greater had the assessment of sectoral and spatial plan impact on landscape been also adequately included.

By introducing strategic environmental assessment in sectoral planning, as well as extending its coverage to include landscape, strategic environmental assessment would also assume the role of an instrument for the evaluation of various spatial and sectoral plan options and solutions related to the environment and landscape.

CONCLUSIONS

The reforms of the planning system implemented so far and the process of spatial, environmental and sectoral planning in Serbia do not provide their harmonization with the approach, policies, concepts and principles for planning and managing sustainable and competitive territorial development of the European Union. The process of elaboration and preparation of plans in Serbia is not adequate for directing and managing Serbia's sustainable spatial/territorial development in the process of EU integration. Due to poor coordination and absence of integration of strategic planning, the integrative role of spatial and environmental planning may not be achieved.

It is important to consider recommendations/ guidelines and various experiences of

countries in the TAE (Territorial Agenda of the European Union, Towards a More Competitive and Sustainable Europe of Diverse Regions, 2007), ELC (European Landscape Convention, 2000), ASCET (Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism, 2007) and, in line with realistic possibilities, to elaborate them in the Serbian national legislation. The similarities in guiding principles and stages in the process of spatial, sustainable tourism and landscape planning should be the starting point for managing their mutual coordination and integration, particularly for the areas with landscapes, natural and cultural heritage attractive for tourism development. One of the first steps to be taken in integrating strategic planning for sustainable spatial, tourism and landscape development is to establish the necessary principles, instruments and mechanisms for the coordination and integration of planning activities, as well as for the harmonization of conflicting interests in directing and managing the development, protection of natural resources and heritage, and spatial and landscape development. Stemming from this experience, and based on the necessary landscape investigations for the entire territory of Serbia, the first necessary step is to situate and define the notions of landscape, landscape planning and management in the legislation, in the remit of environmental protection, and afterwards in the domain of spatial planning and sectors having a direct or indirect impact on landscape planning (Maksin-Mićić, 2003).

The implementation of instruments of environmental protection policies may help to steer and control the coordination of strategic planning. A precondition for achieving a coordinating role is to initiate its implementation in sectoral planning, starting from experiences in strategic environmental assessment implementation and integration into spatial planning process. In the period before the completion of the necessary landscape research for the entire territory of Serbia, this instrument may enable an integration of the landscape dimension in the process of spatial and sectoral planning.

Another necessary precondition for raising efficiency in the implementation of legal and plan decisions on spatial and landscape protection and development is to adequately and continually keep key stakeholders and the public informed and include them both in the process of spatial and environmental planning, and in sectoral planning. Thus, it will be possible to achieve a controlling role of the public and diminish manipulations of public authorities and interested investors in adopting and implementing sectoral plans, as well as enable the implementation of the Aarhus Convention and other conventions and agendas associated with environmental protection, the protection of landscape, biodiversity and cultural heritage, and which have been, or will be, ratified by the Republic of Serbia.

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Received October 2010; accepted in revised form October 2010