

NORWEGIAN UNIVERSITY OF LIFE SCIENCES



Planning and Management Issues in Sharr Mountains National Park, Kosovo: Livelihoods of Local Communities and their Perceptions



MSc Thesis:
**Majlinda
Jupolli**

Supervisor:
**Darley Jose
Kjosavik**

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majlinda.j@gmail.com

Noragric
Department of International Environment and Development Studies
P.O. Box 5003
N-1432 Ås
Norway
Tel.: +47 64 96 52 00
Fax: +47 64 96 52 01
Internet: <http://www.umb.no/noragric>

Declaration

I, Majlinda Jupolli, declare that this thesis is a result of my own research investigations and findings. All sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature

Date.....

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Abstract

The establishment of protected areas in many countries has included restrictions on the use of park resources by local people, in some cases leading to further environmental deterioration (Vedeld et al. 2004).

The research was aimed at exploring whether natural resources in Sharr Mountains National Park (SMNP) in Kosovo are managed in a way that contributes to a sustainable development process combining conservation and development as well as engaging communities to participate in conservation and development activities. Further, the study was aimed at analyzing the present day livelihood situation of communities living adjacent to SMNP. It also investigated local people's perceptions and attitudes towards conservation measures and government policies as well as their constraints to improved livelihoods. To accomplish this, a case study approach was adopted involving both qualitative and quantitative research methods and four villages adjacent to SMNP were purposively selected. Household survey was carried out and a total of 60 questionnaires administered. Stratified sampling technique was used to select the sampled households. Focus group discussions and key informant interviews were also part of the data collection methods.

The study reveals that in Kosovo, the chief objectives of Sharr Mountains National Park management have been limited to defining parks' legal status, demarcation of boundaries, fire control measures, protecting flora and fauna and to some extent, providing visitor services. The role that national park could play in supporting local livelihood systems, has so far been neglected. Local communities are still seen as the principal 'threat' to forests so that they have been denied access to most important forest products such as fuelwood. This has increased economic insecurity among the local communities and generated antipathy towards conservation measures. Further, study indicates that local people living adjacent to SMNP do not per se actively participate in management decisions and land-use policy. Participation as reported by respondents concentrated in the three lower levels of Pretty's typology, up to the participation by consultation (Pretty, 1995).

The data also reveal that the main resource endowments are land, labour and forest. The most important income source among the sampled population is agriculture followed by off-farm activities. Environmental income represents a relatively significant income source with an average contribution to household income of some 12.5 percent in the population sampled. The main sources of environmental incomes are fuelwood, timber, mushrooms and medicinal plants.

The major constraints faced by households in their decreasing order of importance were: lack of available market and low market prices for their traditional products, access to forest products from the park, land access problems and access to financial capital. The findings also confirm that almost 62% of the local people have a negative relationship towards the National Park due to the presence of park guards, but this does not influence their positive perception of 69% towards the Park due to conservation and cultural reasons. Further, the findings indicate that 74% of the local people are willing to participate but have a negative perception of government policies with respect to local participation due to corruption and restricted user rights. The local people perceive participation as a means of the state to achieve its political and policy goals rather than a right for local communities. Further, lack of communication and little experience on participatory management does not increase the hopes for a collaborative future between the users and the protectors.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|------|
| Declaration..... | iii |
| Acknowledgements..... | v |
| Abstract..... | vii |
| List of Figures..... | xi |
| List of Tables..... | xii |
| Acronyms and Abbreviations..... | xiii |
| Chapter 1: Introduction..... | 1 |
| 1.1 Background..... | 3 |
| 1.2 Problem Statement and justification..... | 6 |
| 1.3 Objectives and Research Questions..... | 8 |
| 1.4 Structure of the Thesis..... | 9 |
| 1.5 Summary..... | 10 |
| Chapter 2: Literature Review and Analytical Framework..... | 12 |
| 2.1 Protected Area Management Paradigms (PAMPs)..... | 12 |
| 2.1.1 The Classic Paradigm..... | 13 |
| 2.1.2 Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM)..... | 14 |
| 2.1.3 The Concept of Community..... | 16 |
| 2.1.4 The concept of Participation..... | 18 |
| 2.2 Rural Household..... | 21 |
| 2.2.1 Key concepts..... | 21 |
| 2.2.2 A household Economic Model..... | 22 |
| 2.2.3 Household Strategies and Diversification..... | 24 |
| 2.2.4 Income contribution from different livelihood activities..... | 24 |
| 2.3 Household Constraints..... | 24 |
| 2.4 Costs/Benefits Related to Living Close to the Park, Household Attitudes Towards the Park and Perception of Conservation..... | 25 |
| 2.5 Distribution of Park Income..... | 26 |
| 2.5.1 Wealth categories, location and gender..... | 26 |
| 2.6 Summary..... | 26 |
| Chapter 3: Study Area and Methodology..... | 28 |
| 3.1 Study Area..... | 28 |
| 3.1.1 Location..... | 28 |

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| 3.1.2 | Climate and Hydrology | 30 |
| 3.1.3 | Flora and Fauna..... | 30 |
| 3.1.4 | Demographic and Socio-Economic Conditions | 31 |
| 3.2 | Park Management Institutions | 32 |
| 3.3 | Methodology | 33 |
| 3.3.1 | Research Methods and Techniques..... | 33 |
| 3.3.2 | Data Collection | 34 |
| 3.3.3 | Ethical considerations | 39 |
| 3.3.4 | Data Analysis | 39 |
| 3.3.5 | Trustworthiness..... | 41 |
| 3.4 | Summary | 43 |
| Chapter 4: Results and Discussion..... | | 45 |
| 4.1 | Background for the Management of SMNP..... | 45 |
| 4.1.1 | A Brief Historical Account | 45 |
| 4.1.2 | An Overview of Protected Area System (PAS)..... | 47 |
| 4.1.3 | Roles and Responsibilities | 48 |
| 4.1.4 | Legal Provisions and Nature of Community Participation | 51 |
| 4.2 | Present livelihoods of the communities adjacent to SMNP | 54 |
| 4.2.1 | Household Endowments | 54 |
| 4.2.2 | Household Entitlements | 58 |
| 4.2.3 | Income Distribution | 62 |
| 4.3 | Household Constraints to Improved Livelihoods | 63 |
| 4.4 | Local people’s attitudes towards the park and perceptions of conservation | 65 |
| 4.5 | Summary | 66 |
| Chapter 5: Conclusions and Some Reflections | | 69 |
| References..... | | 74 |
| Appendices..... | | 81 |
| Appendix 1: Household Survey | | 86 |
| Appendix 2: Focus Group Discussion | | 86 |

List of Figures

Figure 1: Household Economic Model (Based on Vedeld 1995, 2002, Ditiro et al. 2008 and Sen 1981)

Figure 2: Geographic position of SMNP (in green) in Balkans (source: Park Directory/MESP 2008)

Figure 3: Map of Nature Reserves (in green) within SMNP (source: Park Directory/MESP 2008)

Figure 4: Prevala, Park Directory/MESP 2008)

List of Tables

Table 1: The characteristics of classical and CBNRM paradigms (Adopted by Philips 2003, in Zimba 2006:40)

Table 2: A typology of local participation in decision-making (Pretty 1995:173)

Table 3: The main characteristics of SMNP

Table 4: Proxies and their expected signs

Table 5: Factors aiding or constraint household income, survey, Kosovo 2009

Table 6: Reported household head occupation, survey, Kosovo 2009

Table 7: Average share contribution of livelihood activities to total household income, survey, Kosovo 2009

Acronyms and Abbreviations

CBC-Community-Based Conservation

CBNRM – Community-Based Natural Resource Management

DFID – Department for International Development, U.K.

FGD – Focus Group Discussion

KFA – Kosovo Forest Agency

KII – Key Informant Interview

INEP – Institute for Nature and Environmental Protection, Kosovo

ISP – Institute of Spatial Planning

IUCN – International Union for Conservation of Nature

MAFRD – Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development

MESP – Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning

MDGs – Millennium Development Goals

NGO – Non Governmental Organization

NP – National Park

PA – Protected Area

PAMP – Protected Areas Management Paradigm

SFRY – Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

SMNP – Sharr Mountains National Park

UN – United Nations

UNDP – United Nations Development Program

UNESCO-United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

USAID – United States Agency for International Development

WB – The World Bank

Chapter 1: Introduction

This research aims to explore whether natural resources in SMNP are managed in a way that contributes to a sustainable development process combining conservation and development as well as engaging communities to participate in conservation and development activities, such as small scale tourism activities. Further, the study is aimed at analyzing the present day livelihood situation of communities living adjacent to SMNP. It also investigates local people's perceptions and attitudes towards conservation measures and Government policies as well as their constraints to improved livelihoods.

This chapter gives an introduction to conservation and 'sustainable' development problem in the Sharr Mountains National Park, 24 years after its designation. It also includes problem statement, research questions and objectives as well as structure of the thesis.

Protected areas (PAs), including National Parks (NPs) and forest reserves, represent the cornerstones of biological conservation and their establishment has expanded over the past few decades at the global level. According to Zimmerer et al. (2004), from less than 3.5% of the world total land areas in 1970, the percentage of protected areas was estimated to be about 8.8% in 1997. Following this trend of expansion up to 2008, the conserved areas may amount to about 12% of the world total land areas (Chape, 2005).

Historically, PAs were established due to the concern of over-exploitation of natural resources by local people (National Park Service, 2007). This involved in certain cases, eviction of people who have been residents inside these areas and prohibition of certain activities such as consumptive usage of the resources (Hutton et al. 2005).

Over the years, strategies related to conservation have shifted in nature, mainly due to pressures that natural resources face (Tumusiime 2006). Nowadays, it is becoming widely recognized that PAs should play an important role in sustaining local communities living adjacent to them. The impact of PA establishment on local livelihoods is considered as the most important factor that determines local attitude towards these areas (Tumusiime 2006). Hjerpe and Kim (2007) consider that the relationship between a national park and communities living adjacent can at best be symbiotic, but can also be perilous if the costs that are borne locally become too big.

There are two main arguments that are commonly raised about communities living adjacent or inside National Parks. Access to forest products is a primary source of livelihood that provides income to these communities is the first argument (Vedeld et al., 2004) and the second is that park income may reduce income inequalities at micro level (Fisher, 2002).

A recent World Bank (WB) meta study (Vedeld et al. 2004) reveals that dependence on natural forest resources has been fairly studied as has been the cost of living adjacent to such areas. On the other hand, this study also reveals that there is a general lack of studies on the impacts of PA establishment on livelihood issues of local communities (Vedeld et al. 2004).

Pavlikakis and Tsihrintzis (2006) argue that the success of the NP management plans depends critically on local communities' participation in the decision-making process and their integration in management approaches. According to them, local people's preferences, social and economic status and perceptions should be investigated and should precede any other action in order to avoid conflicts or tensions (Pavlikakis and Tsihrintzis 2006) between local communities and NP management authorities. During the 1980's, governments and donor organizations realized this impact of local communities considering that integrity of protected areas in low income nations depended mainly in their support (Ferraro 2002).

Field observations related to conservation issues suggest that the establishment and management of PAs have had negative effects on local livelihoods resulting in a lack of local support and a negative attitude of the local communities towards conservation (Ferraro 2002). Referring to many academics and practitioners, Ferraro (2002) posits that detailed assessment of local impacts of protected area establishment is a missing component in the international debate over conservation policies. Further, Ferraro refers to Kramer and Sharma who have noted that:

“Just as the failure to measure the benefits of biodiversity protection can lead to suboptimal development policies, the failure to measure the local costs of protection may lead to unworkable conservation strategies...those who bear the costs of conservation typically are poor and those who enjoy the benefits typically are rich”.

(Kramer and Sharma 1997, in Ferraro 2002:262)

1.1 Background

The Balkan Peninsula is considered a global biodiversity hotspot owing to high levels of endemism (USAID 2003). The Sharr Mountains are a mountain system, covering two countries of Balkan Peninsula: Kosovo to the south and Macedonia to the northwest. This study was conducted at Sharr Mountains National Park (SMNP) in Kosovo, officially gazetted as first national park in 1986 (Law on NP “Sharr Mountains” 1986) in Kosovo. When SMNP was established, Kosovo was an integral part of Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) (USAID 2003).

The varied elevations, climatic influences, and soils in Kosovo provide the necessary conditions for habitats of many different plant and tree species, as well as animal species comparing to its relatively small area (10887 sq km) (USAID 2003). Its terrain is varied, with high plains (around 500 m above the sea level) and hills and mountains that reach an altitude of up to 2656 m above the sea level (USAID 2003).

Forests cover about 40% of the total area but only about one-third is considered ecologically healthy and economically productive (KFA 2003). Uncontrolled illegal logging is an alarming issue. Informal estimates suggest that approximately 100000 m³/year are cut illegally (KFA 2003). Around 62% of forests are publicly owned; the remaining part is in private hands (KFA 2003). The high demand for fuelwood in the aftermath of the conflict of the late 1990s has brought the forest ecosystems at risk mainly due to poverty and power shortages which have made the population reliant on wood for heat (ibid).

Several species of plants and animals are threatened by extinction due to anthropogenic actions and firewood harvesting increased during and after the conflict in the late 1990s. Most of the remaining diversity of plants and animals is found in Sharr Mountains National Park which is officially managed by Park Directorate under the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (MESP), but due to political problems, one-third of its area is actually managed by the former Serbian park staff who report directly to Serbia’s authorities (USAID 2003).

Kosovo has only one national park which according to Kosovo legislation is a protected area with the following aims: (1) conservation of rare plants and animals biodiversity; (2)

conservation and development of natural environment and specific natural values; (3) conservation of cultural-historic monuments, promotion of scientific research, and development of culture, education and science (Law no. 11/1986). Economic activities within the Park should be harmonized with the abovementioned aims (ibid).

The SMNP is extremely rich on endemic, rare, and threatened flora and fauna which ranks it among the richest regions of biodiversity in Balkans and Europe (IUCN 2009). The area of SMNP is around 39000 hectares and encompasses lands from four municipalities: Prizren, Shterpce, Suhareka and Kacanik (Park Directory/MESP 2008). The park is surrounded by 38 settlements with more than 40000 inhabitants of different ethnicities within 4 kilometers. Forests cover 11000 ha (48%), pastures 11100 ha (49%), meadows 360 ha (1.6%) and cliffs 320 ha (1.4%). Most of the territory (over 80%) belongs to state property and the remaining part (less than 20%) is in private hands (Park Directory/MESP 2008).

The Park includes not only the Sharr Mountains but also Oshlak, Koxha Balkan and Pashallare mountains, which can be considered the center of Balkanic endemic biodiversity (Park Directory/MESP 2008). There are four small, strictly protected areas containing rare plant and animal species. The only regulated ski area is located in Brezovica and in the past, it attracted a large number of skiers from other parts of SFRY and is still popular for winter recreation of Kosovars (MESP 2009).

The SMNP has no permanent inhabitants but the mountain meadows were traditionally grazed prior to its establishment as a national park. Traditional uses such as summer grazing and collection of wild plants, mushrooms, and berries are still permitted in the park but there is a significant reduction of these activities (MESP 2009). The reduction of grazing was primarily because of the conflict in late 1990's which reduced the number of livestock, and to some extent because of the growing mass tourism in the Brezovica region, particularly during the 1980's and early 1990s, which has replaced the former sustainable uses of the Park's resources with more intensive development. In addition, the reduction of grazing is a result of the regional low prices for milk products, which prevents cattle owners from producing sustainably (MESP 2009).

Mushrooms, herbs, wild berries and fuel wood may still be gathered under regulation, but skiing still remains the main visitor activity. Furthermore, the existing ski resort and other recreational places such as Brezovica and Prevala have a negative influence on most of the local population and benefit only a certain group of people who have monopolized the tourism industry in the region. What has continued to persist is the initial focus on ecosystem conservation, as opposed to participation (USAID 2003).

When Kosovo was part of the SFRY, 5-year management plans were written for the Park by the Institute for the Protection of Nature, but there is currently no plan applicable to the whole park. The boundaries of the Park are not marked on the ground and it has been suggested that they should be reevaluated (MESP 2009).

Institutional weakness is one of the reasons for incomplete reforms and the difficulties in implementing them. Limited institutional planning and weak implementation mean that at present local communities concerns are given little attention. Public participation in decision making is enshrined in a number of local laws but implementation and enforcement of these laws have been very slow, the public is not informed about their legal rights, and officials are often not aware of the obligation to share information with the public. The Park is supposed to be managed according to a 10-year plan, but the plan due to be implemented years ago, has still not been completed (USAID 2003).

Not only the establishment of the Park, but also changes in management authority and the replacement of management officials as well as those operating in the field, has had important impacts on local people's ability to access and manage Park resources for their livelihood. The management of the park is very weak and additional regulations are required to ensure that economic benefits are captured by society (USAID 2003).

In the past, collection of medicinal plants and herbs from the forest was the basis of an industry and wild mushrooms and berries were also collected for sale. Hunting was also an important source of revenue for some communities. With improvements in the management of the park, nature-based tourism could be an important source of income for local communities (World Bank 2007).

Ghimire (1994) argues that agricultural and rural development programmes promoted together with conservation measures in national parks are rather ‘experimental’ than designed to offer sustainable livelihood alternatives for local people. Usually local people are not involved in planning process and the benefits from implementing such programmes are not distributed to the local people (Ghimire 1994).

Eventhough the Park area is well noted for its high recording in tourists’ arrivals, particularly in the past, due to the presence of natural resources and attractions, the region experiences high poverty rate and tourism does not seem to have improved local people livelihoods (USAID 2003). After establishment of the park and investments in tourism, it was expected that the revenue will flow to the communities living adjacent to it in order to assist them improve their living conditions and reduce their poverty (ibid.). The villages surrounding the Park are not exempted from the poverty incidence in the region.

This study examines some of the interrelated socio-economic issues and processes associated with the planning and management of the Park, focusing particularly on the impact of Park on local livelihood systems and local people’s perceptions of conservation and local landscapes.

1.2 Problem Statement and justification

Understanding the management system in the Sharr Mountains National Park is crucial for providing insights into impacts on local people. Establishment of National Parks is normally done in order to pursue goals of conservation or preservation of natural resources (Svarstad et al 2007). However, in most cases, the governments are not seen to take into account the needs nor traditional rights of local communities when establishing such protected areas (ibid).

The problems related to the relationship between people and protected areas are particularly pronounced in developing countries (Svarstad et al 2007). Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger and ensuring environmental sustainability are two of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (2009). According to Svarstad (2007), protected areas may help reduce poverty if effectively managed, but may also increase poverty by restricting access to resources local communities depend on.

Local participation comes at a cost (Vedeld 2002). While devising new policy, existing traditional practices or rights of local communities living adjacent to the Park were not taken into account and this has made local management more complicated and more conflict-ridden. Since SMNP is unsustainable at present, with its relative low visitor figures and small revenues, particularly due to delays in privatization process and lack of investments in touristic capacities, the Park itself and its management system rely critically on external funding, which remains in a low level because of the lack of international recognition of the Park due to recent political processes and new state formation (USAID 2003).

This research aims to explore some of the interrelated socio-economic issues and processes associated with the planning and management of the Sharr Mountains National Park in Kosovo, focusing particularly on impacts on local livelihood systems. Further, the research is aimed at analyzing the present day livelihood situation of communities living adjacent to SMNP. It also investigates local people's perceptions and attitudes towards conservation measures and government policies as well as their constraints.

The main objective of this study is to explore whether the local communities are actively involved in decision-making process with respect to natural resources of Sharr Mountains National Park in Kosovo, a post-conflict country where division in ethnic lines has also led to problems in effective management of the Park. Existence of three entities involved in management and control of the Park (Park Directorate in Prizren (operating under MESP), Park Directorate in Shterpce (reporting directly to Serbia-Belgrade) and Kosovo Forest Agency) and therefore, unclear functions, including roles, responsibilities, and objectives of these entities, have created space for actions that degrade the Park and benefit only a certain group of people (World Bank 2007). These external actors manage their respective areas differently and contribute to differentiation of the people based on ethnic lines.

It is argued that the lack of consideration given to conflicting policy goals of key ministries makes it difficult to manage resources efficiently (Maganga et al., 2004). According to Article 12 of the Law on National Park Sharr Mountains (1986), Park Directorate is the competent entity for governing with all resources of the Park. On the other hand, Article 7 of the Law on Kosovo

Forests defines that it is the Kosovo Forest Agency (KFA) which manages with all forests in Kosovo, including forests within national park.

Moreover, during the transitional period in Kosovo, lack of institutions and lack of implementation of existing institutions, lead towards a situation where many of specific natural resources are at risk of extinction (USAID 2003). Therefore, this study also seeks to explain the reasons behind a weak management of the Park, generally through an investigation of its establishment as a national park, the political and institutional context of Park management and the divergence between institutions and practice. The gap between what institutions provide and the actual reality of implementing them is wide.

Due to the highlighted problems, the Park is not effectively managed which has led to a higher level of poverty among communities living adjacent to the Park, resulting in activities within the park such as cutting the forests in order to sustain their livelihoods. This study thus has broad relevance, both to other forest areas planned to gain the status of national parks, but also to countries contemplating to impose conservation regimes in non-protected areas or stricter conservation regimes in already protected areas.

1.3 Objectives and Research Questions

This research aims to explore whether natural resources in SMNP are managed in a way that contributes to a sustainable development process combining conservation and development as well as engaging communities to participate in conservation and development activities, such as small scale tourism activities. Further, the study is aimed at analyzing the present day livelihood situation of communities living adjacent to SMNP. It also investigates local people's perceptions and attitudes towards conservation measures and Government policies as well as their constraints to improved livelihoods.

Specific objectives and corresponding research questions are as follow:

- 1. To understand the management and planning process of Sharr Mountains National Park and local community participation**
 - a. Which are the entities governing with Park resources?

- b. Is there a conflict between managing entities and/or institutions in relation to management of the Park and what are the potential pitfalls?
 - c. To what extent is local community involved in management of NP and how do the present institutional/organizational structures impact on participation?
2. **To assess the present day livelihood situation of communities adjacent to NP**
- a. What are the livelihood conditions among different groups of households?
 - b. Which livelihood activities do households pursue and how these activities contribute to their total income?
 - c. What is the relationship between household income and access to park assets?
3. **To estimate household constraints**
- a. Which are the key constraints to improved livelihoods through development of park area?
 - b. What problems do households face as a result of living close to the national park?
4. **To identify perceptions and attitudes towards conservation and development**
- a) What are local people's perceptions on forest conservation in their locality?
 - b) What are local people's perceptions on recent developments inside or adjacent to the park?
 - c) What are local people's attitudes towards the management entities and towards the park?

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is presented in five chapters. Chapter 2 presents theoretical perspectives on management, planning and participation issues of NPs, and livelihood analysis. Third Chapter gives insight to the study area with details on climate, natural resources and management organizations as well as socio-economic conditions. It also describes methodology and techniques used to conduct this research. The fourth Chapter presents results and findings which are being examined in relation to objectives presented in the introduction. Finally, Chapter 5 provides an overall review of the research aim, objectives, findings and conclusions.

1.5 Summary

The aim of the chapter was to introduce the background of the study, the research questions and objectives as well as the problem statement. This chapter ends with a brief discussion of the structure of the thesis.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Analytical Framework

The research problem of this study is to explore whether natural resources in SMNP are managed in a way that contributes to a sustainable development process combining conservation and development as well as engaging communities to participate in conservation and development activities, such as small scale tourism activities. The following sections will provide theories and literature addressing protected areas management, conservation and development in order to build concepts underlying the empirical work.

Overall, the focus will be on a review of research that explores the theoretical debate and traces the linkages to wider debates on protected area management paradigms and various concepts of sustainable development, community and participation. The characteristics of different approaches are briefly sketched. Later, the chapter presents a household economic model in order to understand and estimate implications of natural resource endowment on livelihoods of the communities. I will also discuss about activities, access to assets, constraints and attitudes of rural households towards the park.

2.1 Protected Area Management Paradigms (PAMPs)

Natural resources management systems are dynamic, where resource use is controlled by a set of management prescriptions through institutions (Vatn 2005). The action to protect and preserve natural resources resulted in the establishment of many forms of protected areas. The logic behind the establishment of such protected areas before the 1960s was the belief that local communities would exploit resources without restraint due to the fact that they rely on such resources (Agrawal and Gibson 2001). This policy was supported by international donors and conservation organizations such as IUCN, UNESCO and The World Bank (WB).

Raik et al. (2008:731) argue that in natural resource management, there is a tendency –whether intentionally or unintentionally-to exclude, dominate or marginalize some groups. Phillips (2003, in Zimba 2006) categorizes management paradigms of protected areas into two depending to their period of evolution. First, is the so called ‘*Yellowstone model*’ which is the classic paradigm of protected areas (1860-1960s) and second, is the modern paradigm of protected area management (from 1970) (ibid).

2.1.1 The Classic Paradigm

Before the 1960s, protected areas were established and run as top-down approaches favoring exclusionary views in relation to local communities. Therefore, management emphasis was on creating parks which people did not hunt, fell trees, gather, herd, farm or collect medicinal herbs. This form of management, often called the ‘*Fortress Management Approach*’ or ‘people versus parks’ did not prove to be successful. Kamugisha *et al.* (1974:4) posits that this conventional “...isolationist approach...succeeded in bringing attention to the issue of setting aside areas as protected wildlife areas (national parks), (but) it never altered the people’s mind”.

In many cases, local people have systematically been evicted from the protected areas and denied access to the natural resources. Apart from negative impacts on local livelihoods, traditional conservation practices were abandoned in the established protected areas resulting in illegal activities that degraded them much more. As Steven points out,

“...subsistence practice became clandestine activity and traditional local resource management institutions and other conservation practices were abandoned in the areas that became managed as protected areas”.

Steven (1997:32-33)

The activities local people used to pursue prior to establishment of such areas became criminalized. Fences and armed patrols were in place in most of the cases to prevent resource use. This ‘*exclusive*’ use concept resulted in resistance of local people and their attitudes changed towards the natural resource. Infield (1992) as cited by Nagasha notes that

“...the rural people have come to view conservation as something negative, something that excludes them from resources and lands that they formerly used...(they) are only waiting for the chance to get rid of the park or reserve they live next to”.

Infield (1992, in Nagasha 2007:24-25)

Nonetheless, by 1960s the need for new modern approaches in managing protected areas came up (IUCN 2009). Governments came to acknowledge that long-term sustainability of protected areas depends on the support of adjacent communities. Therefore, new approaches were to value

people as worthwhile stakeholders and beneficiaries of those protected areas (Nagasha 2007:25). The community-based Natural Resource Management Approach emerged as a possible solution to these problems.

2.1.2 Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM)

The experienced unsuccessful management of protected areas under the classic paradigm has over the last two to three decades gradually lead to various types of '*Community-Based Natural Resource Management*'. These new approaches aim at achieving both economic and social development as well as conservation goals.

The CBNRM concept draws on ideas about the need of local communities to be more involved in planning and implementing public policies. Adams and Hulme (2001) point out that CBNRM comes in varied forms so that it must be recognized as representing a range of options and not as a single approach. A great shift from 'government centered' towards 'people centered' has been noticed (ibid). While the classic paradigm viewed protected areas and people as incompatible, the new approaches view this relationship as entirely compatible if the communities become involved in management from the beginning. This approach believes that a sustainable conservation and management of the national parks or other protected areas depends on support and cooperation of the local people and by enabling local people to get benefit from such conservation (Kiss 1990:5). Thus, it puts the needs of local people above the others and it acknowledges that without cooperation and support of locals, conservation efforts would be doomed.

In this regard, community-based conservation is an advanced strategy to safeguard the environment by involving local people and considering their needs. However, if local people accept CBC because of its economic benefits, there is a risk of rejecting it at some point in the future if a better economic alternative is shown. (Zimba 2006:41). Hence, CBC approach may work in improving park-people relationship, but it may not produce a more secure future of protected areas because only a considerable improvement in the livelihoods of local communities may provide this security. An important critique of this approach has been the fact that different advocates imagine the 'community' in CBNRM differently resulting in an 'abstract idea' very

difficult to implement (Kumar 2005:275). Hence, contrary and mixed results have been experienced in the field which has led to negative reactions from various quarters.

Different advocates imagine CBC differently. Some advocates of CBC argue that this bottom-up approach is effective because it makes local people an integrated part of conservation efforts and it is similar to traditional conservation practices they used to pursue before establishment of protected areas (McNeely and Pitt 1985). Others argue that it is effective because it gives local people a strong voice in land-use decisions instead of imposing these decisions from above (Western and Wright 1994). Donor agencies aim to promote CBC for 'sustainable' management of natural resources and rural development. Indigenous people's representatives argue for respecting local rights, knowledge and culture (Croll and Parkin 1992, in Kumar 2005:279). As Kumar (2005:279) notes:

“CBNRM programmes are based on the presupposition that local populations have a greater interest in the sustainable use of resources than does the state or distant corporate managers; that local communities are more cognizant of the intricacies of local ecological processes and practices; and that they are more able to effectively manage those resources through local or 'traditional' forms of access”.

Kumar (2005:279)

The integration of local people in management of protected areas is achieved in three ways by CBC programs: (1) by allowing local people living adjacent to PAs to participate in management policies and decisions; (2) giving people ownership over natural resources of PAs; (3) deriving economic benefits to local people from PA conservation (Zimba 2006:42). The co-existence of local communities with nature as distinct from protectionism and segregation is the central concept of CBC (Kumar 2005:280). Decentralization of PA management from central government to local communities is considered a key towards a successful CBC program (Zimba 2006, Kumar 2005).

Below is given a table which presents in more details characteristics and distinctions between the two paradigms, namely the classic and CBNRM paradigm.

| CLASSIC PARADIGM | CBNRM PARADIGM |
|--|---|
| Excluding local people, generally planned and managed against the impact of people (except for tourists) | Local people are seen as active partners, initiates and leaders in some cases |
| Government knows best, ion of government | People centered |
| Local people are given little or no attention, they are rarely consulted on planning and management intentions | Managed with regard to local people who are considered beneficiaries of such policies |
| Managed by central Government as ‘islands’ – without considering surrounding areas | Managed by many partners (local communities and indigenous groups, different tiers of government, the private sector, NGOs) – a function of decentralization and devolution |
| Gazzeted mainly for scenic protection – emphasis on how things look | Established to achieve economic and social objectives, as well as to conserve natural resources and for recreational purposes |
| Managed mainly for tourists | Managed to meet the needs of both local people and tourists |
| Viewed primarily as a national asset | Viewed primarily as a community asset |

Table 1: The characteristics of classical and CBNRM paradigms (Adopted by Philips 2003, in Zimba 2006:40)

2.1.3 The Concept of Community

The concept of community in natural resource management is not new. It traces back in the 1950s and 1960s (Kumar 2005:277). However Kumar (2005:277) argues that the popularity of ‘community participation’ has become evident and started to gain prominence from the establishment of participatory projects in 1980s and onwards.

The concept in itself is a complex abstraction which stands for many things lacking specificity and it has been subject of much discussion by a range of academics. The term ‘community’ is usually used to refer to a physical concentration of individuals in a territory-designated area (Minar and Greer 1969:10). This group concentration is often called a ‘spatial community’ (ibid:3).

As Young (1990) points out, there is no universally shared concept of 'community'. According to IIED (1994:4), the concept can be approached in spatial, economic and socio-cultural aspects. As such, when defining 'community', geographers emphasize spatial aspects; economists emphasize work and markets whereas sociologists point out social interactions (Kumar 2005:277).

Hillery (1995:111) considers that community "*consists of persons in social interaction within a geographic area and having one or more additional ties*". However as Cost (1976:208) notes, "*No term which might have had a useful role to play has been more beaten into senselessness than community*". Kumar (2005:276-277) points out that "*many now regard the notion of 'community' as myth and have abandoned it...community participation projects are also found to be ambiguous*". He adds that "*it is useful to follow its (concept of community) use rather than lexical meaning*". A critical aspect of 'community' is that its notion is intrinsically good (Kumar 2005:277). Kumar (2005:277) explains this by giving an example of how NGOs and to some degree academicians, now use the notion of 'community' with impunity to legitimize project proposals.

In this study the term 'community' and 'local community' or 'local people' are used interchangeably and especially as it applies to community-based natural resource management projects. The concept of 'community' is adopted by Agrawal's (1999, in Zimba 2006:42-43) definition which combines spatial, economic and socio-cultural constructs of 'community'. Agrawal (1999, in Zimba 2006:42-43) draws the concept of 'community' as an entity living in a defined area with clear boundaries, having a common interest in the resources of that area and socially bound by a common identity.

The resilience of community solidarity is influenced by different factors such as changes in the resource itself, environmental changes, political changes, technology changes, globalization and modernization (Zimba 2006:44). It depends on communities ability how they endure alterations to the environment where they live (ibid:44).

Shlager and Bloomquist (1998, in Zimba 2006:44) argue that heterogeneity can both enhance and decrease the commitment of individuals for collective action. As such, if an individual

believes that other users are committed to a common goal, he is also more likely to remain committed as well (ibid:44). If there are cultural or other differences between the community members, an individual may be convinced that it is ok to break the rules because the only ones that would be hurt are those from a different group, or those who are wealthy (ibid:44). Individuals or groups within a community may not be equally concerned about the same problems (Vedeld 2002). The existence of sub-divisions as age, race, gender, class and ethnicity within the 'community' can be both dividing and binding (ibid:44). These social differences break up the community interpreted as a static entity.

However, the absence of conflicting desires, needs and differences within community members are identified as strengths contributing towards the success of regimes involving such communities (Ostrom 1990, Vatn 2005).

Hulme and Murphree (2001) define four characteristics needed for a community in order to successfully carry out collaboration:

Cohesion determines the membership in the community with shared interests and identity which makes the community members willing and able to collaborate for common goals.

Demarcation reflects the boundaries of the community's jurisdiction, usually defined spatially on a designated area. Demarcation is crucial for efficient management of such an area.

Legitimacy is regarded as the power and authority internally based on socio-cultural and socio-economic criteria.

Resilience is defined as the capacity to adapt to changes in cohesion, demarcation and legitimacy evolving over time in a society.

2.1.4 The concept of Participation

Participation concerns have long-term historical roots, stemming back in the 1940s and 1950s (Zimba 2006:45). UN (1981) defined participation as

“the creation of opportunities to enable all members of a community and the larger society to actively contribute to and influence the development process and to share equitable in the fruits of development”

(Midgley 1986, in Zimba 2006:45).

According to Narayan-Parker (1996, in Zimba 2006:45), participation as a concept includes the notions of contributing, influencing, sharing, or redistributing power and control of resources, benefits, knowledge and skills to be obtained as a result of involvement in the decision-making process.

In the past two to three decades, many conservation initiatives are emphasizing community participation as a strategy of graded devolution of authority, powers, rights and resources from state to local levels of governance and then to civil society and individuals. In cases where such initiatives have taken place, this approach has had varying degrees of success (Sletten et al. 2008:9).

The degree of community participation falls in a spectrum which includes participation in policy formulation, planning implementation and evaluation (Sletten et al. 2008:8, Zimba 2006:45). Within this spectrum, on the one end there is increased control or empowerment and efficiency issues are on the other end (Zimba 2006:45). This argument is widened by Pretty (1995:166) who identifies two schools of thought and practice on communities' participation. One views local participation as a means to increase efficiency. This is explained by the argument that local people involved in decision-making are more likely to agree with and support conservation and development effort. The other views local participation as a right-a goal in itself, in which people should be involved not primarily as customers, but as citizens (Pretty 1995:167).

According to Pretty (1995:169),

“governments both need participation and fear it, because a larger involvement is less controllable, less precise and so likely to slow down planning processes. But if this fear permits only stage-managed forms of participation, distrust and greater alienation are the most likely outcomes”.

Below is presented a table with an overview of different levels of participation based on Pretty (1995:173).

| Typology | Characteristics of each type of participation |
|---|---|
| 1. Manipulative participation | Participation is simply pretence. |
| 2. Passive participation | People participate by being told what has been decided/what is going to happen/has happened. |
| 3. Participation in giving information | People participate by answering questions to researchers and they do not have the opportunity to influence the proceedings. Findings are not shared/checked for accuracy. |
| 4. Participation by consultation | People participate by being consulted. Agents define problems and solutions and they control analysis. |
| 5. Participation for material incentives | People participate by contributing resources, such as labor, in return for food, cash or other material incentives. |
| 6. Functional participation | People participate, usually after major decisions have been made, by forming groups to meet predetermined objectives relative to the project of an external agency. |
| 7. Interactive participation | People participate in joint analysis, development of action plans and formation/strengthening of local institutions. People have a stake in maintaining structures or practices. Participation is seen as a right, not just a means to achieve goals. |
| 8. Self-mobilization | People participate by taking initiatives independent of external institutions to change systems. They develop contacts with external institutions, but they retain control over resource use. |

Table 2: A typology of local participation in decision-making (based on Pretty 1995:173)

Through current emphasis on local governance, participation of local communities in management of PAs becomes a prerequisite for effective management of these areas. However, its critics have increased in recent years naming this approach with the phrase ‘*tyranny of*

participation' (Cooke and Kothari 2001:1) where outcomes turn out to unfavour those whom should be favouring in first place.

As Vedeld (2002:16) has observed, the highest level of participation is not necessarily what is important. He suggests that different levels of participation are required in different instances and that *“the level of participation must be seen relative to the issue in question”* (ibid:16). In some situations, mere information to people may be appropriate, while in others, local participation must be the target. Hence, despite its critics, the participatory approach remains the best mechanism available for resource management in order to gain local legitimacy and practical support, and it should be seen as a way towards increasing its practical implementation (Vedeld 2008).

2.2 Rural Household

2.2.1 Key concepts

Household A household is defined as a social unit consisting of the members of a family who live together along with nonrelatives (such as servants) under the same roof, share the same hearth for cooking and a common stake in improving their socio-economic condition (Ellis 2000, Chambers and Conway 1991:4).

Livelihood (Sustainable) A livelihood comprises people, their capabilities, assets, and activities required as a means of earning a living. These can include natural resources, technologies, skills, knowledge and capacity, sources of credit and so on (Chambers and Conway 1991:4). A sustainable livelihood is considered to be the one which can cope with and recover from vulnerabilities and maintain or improve itself without undermining the natural resource base, thus providing for future generations (ibid:5). It is based on the ideas of capability, equity, and sustainability, each of them being both end and means (ibid:3).

Livelihood Strategies Livelihood strategies are considered the ways in which people combine and use their assets to achieve their goals (Chambers and Conway 1991).

Vulnerability is regarded as uncertainty in the well-being of individuals, households, and communities in context of externalities including shocks, seasonality, trends and changes (Johnson 2004).

Endowment bundle refers to a combination of all resources legally owned by a person or a household which includes both tangible and intangible assets (e.g., land, labour) (Devereux 2001).

Entitlement bundle comprises of a combination of all possible goods and services that a person or a household can legally obtain by using the resources of his endowment bundle (e.g. crop production, employment) (ibid).

2.2.2 A household Economic Model

A household economic model (Fig. 1) is used to investigate local livelihoods based on sources of entitlements each household has in the study area. The underlying assumption here is that households control endowments, including land, labor capital and forest resources and each household can have various sources of entitlement which comprise its livelihood. The household's entitlement bundle depends on its resource endowments. Sen (1981) defines endowments as a person's original bundle of legally owned resources. Entitlements constitute a set of commodities a person can legally generate through various transformation processes of the endowments (Sen 1981, Ditiro 2008:6). Entitlement mapping (E-Mapping) consists of a set of rules and processes needed for transforming endowment bundle into entitlements. These processes create possibilities for consumption, savings and investments. Both access and mapping relate to processes of inclusion. As De Haan (2005) points out, "Endowment is right in principle and entitlement is what one actually gets".

One of the important variables for this research is forest resource endowment, which represents the total amount of forest products one can use under the existing regime. Hence, the entitlement approach is significant to analyse effects in terms of change in SMNP management, and its impacts on people's wellbeing as a result of changes in their livelihood options.

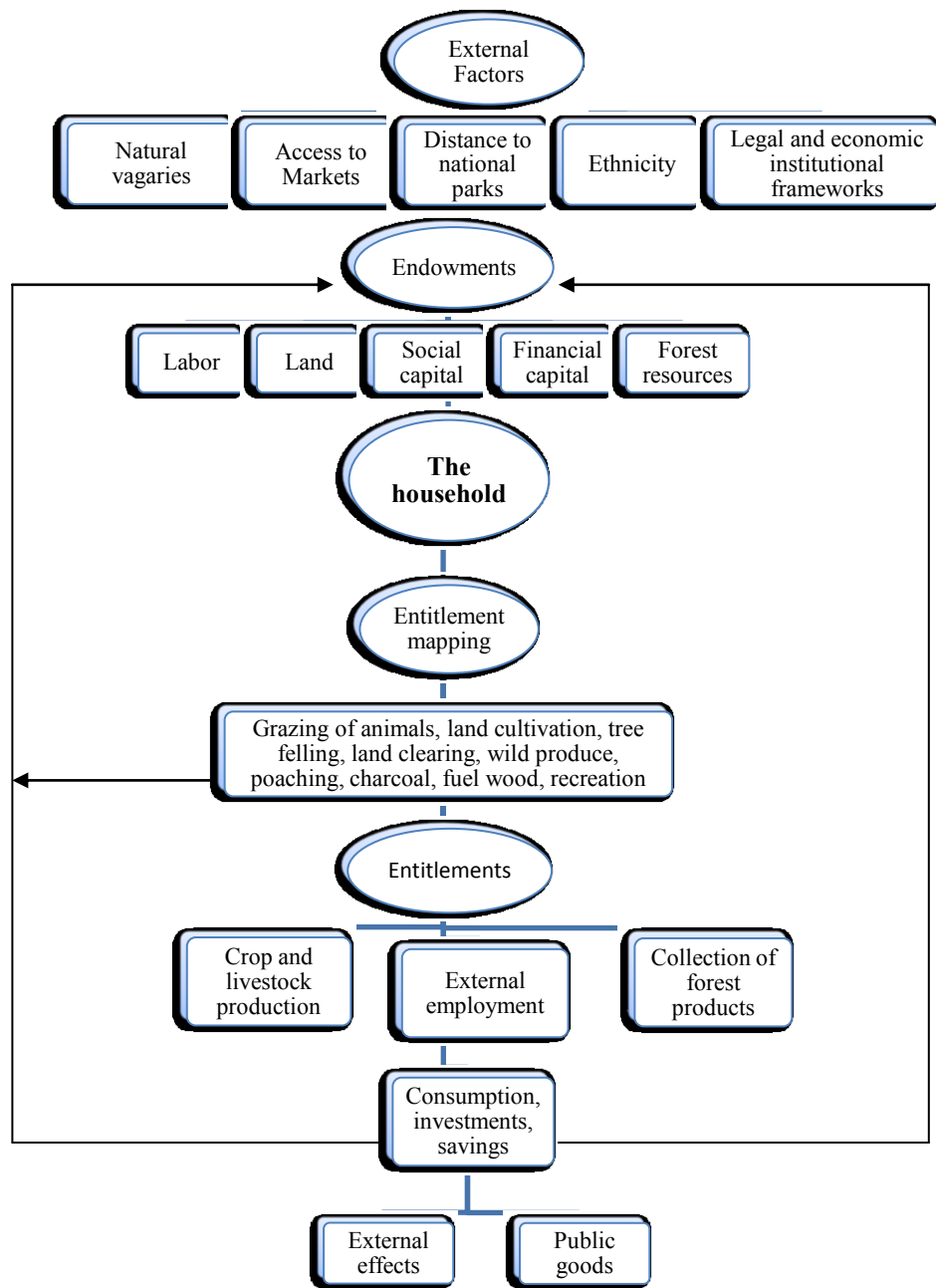


Figure 1: Household economic model (Based on Vedeld 1995, 2002, Ditiro et al. 2008 and Sen 1981)

2.2.3 Household Strategies and Diversification

Rural households are typically heterogeneous, possess different sets of resources and have a diversified portfolio of livelihood activities. Ellis (2000:15) defines rural livelihood diversification as “...*the process by which rural households construct and increasingly diverse portfolio of activities and assets in order to survive and to improve their standard of living*”. According to Ellis (2000:18), each household as a general rule, pursues at least two livelihood activities, as a result of either ‘pull’ or ‘push’ factors. However, in diversification, the level of dependence on each activity is a factor of key importance, rather than the number of activities a household pursues (ibid.).

There are various reasons why households pursue a set of different activities but as Kinsey et al. (1998) emphasizes, diversification can be an important means of reducing uncertainty and shocks, but it does not make household completely immune to them. Ellis (2000) lists four categories of uncertainty which affect household decisions: (1) natural hazards, (2) market fluctuations, (3) social relations, and (4) state actions. Perceptions and attitudes towards risk are also important.

2.2.4 Income contribution from different livelihood activities

Animal husbandry and subsistence agriculture typically provide the bulk of household incomes for many rural households in developing countries. Forest activities are often important to such households and provide timber and non-timber forest products. These products are important for cash generation, construction, food security and health.

The total household income comprises the total income generated by a household by combining all livelihood activities available. As Vedeld et al. (2004) noted, forest income contribute significantly to the total share of incomes generated through non-farm activities.

2.3 Household Constraints

Communities adjacent to protected areas frequently face constraints which are mainly external and general in nature. From the household economic model, a number of household external factors are hypothesised to influence the choice of livelihood activities. Such factors include the

occurrence of natural vagaries, legal and economic institutional frameworks, ethnicity, distance to the park etc.

Other important constraints emanate from limited access to land or financial services. Human capital of low quality is another constraint due to minimal investment in education.

2.4 Costs/Benefits Related to Living Close to the Park, Household Attitudes Towards the Park and Perception of Conservation

It is widely recognized that cooperation and support of local communities constitute the most important factors for a long-term integrity of national parks. Due to the restricted access to resources of national parks, usually adjacent communities have negative attitudes toward the protected areas as they carry out much of the conservation costs while deriving no or few benefits. Such communities often live in abject poverty and favour degazetting protected areas. They usually perceive protected areas as restricting their ability to earn a living. In order to gain the support of local communities, a greater responsiveness to their concerns, aspirations and needs is required.

Therefore, many approaches are considering conservation along with promotion of sustainable development by providing local people with alternative income sources, aiming at poverty mitigation through development activities.

Household perception of conservation can be affected by socio-demographic variables such as age, gender, education and income. Various studies in US and in Africa show that illiteracy rate along with the age tend to influence negatively conservation, which means that the more educated and younger a person is, the higher is the positive conservation attitude (Newmark and Leonard 1990, Buttell and Flin 1974). Increased income was also found to correlate with more positive conservation attitude (ibid.).

Inevitably, involvement of local communities in decision-making is important both for economic gain and to avoid bias in perception of conservation.

2.5 Distribution of Park Income

2.5.1 Wealth categories, location and gender

Small wealth differences among the households can significantly affect dependence on forest income. Poor households usually depend more on forest income because they have limited ability to invest in other activities, whereas wealthier households tend to pursue more stable livelihood activities.

Households in different locations in their choices of livelihood activities and incomes they gain as a result of such activities are influenced by different factors. Gender may also have an impact on activities different households pursue.

2.6 Summary

The theories and concepts analyzed above will set the foundation of this research. In particular, the household economic model will be used in analyzing local livelihoods in the study area. Protected Areas Management Paradigms will provide an insight in the analysis of the management system of SMNP, local people's participation, rights and responsibilities, and attitudes and perceptions of the local people towards the park. The active participatory approach aims at devolving much of the control in decision-making process over park resources to the community level (Zimba 2006). Further, this approach brings in the element of empowerment as a real goal of participation (ibid). The Pretty's typology of different levels of participation is also very useful to understand the current level of local participation in the study area.

Chapter 3: Study Area and Methodology

The main research objective is to explore whether the natural resources of Sharr Mountains National Park in Kosovo are managed in a way that contribute to sustainable development and improved livelihoods of local people. The research was set out to investigate issues related to management of the Park, livelihood activities and constraints and also perceptions of communities living adjacent to the Park. A fieldwork in Sharr Mountains National Park in Kosovo was required to complete this study, to provide insights into impacts for local people and to include findings for achieving the objectives of this study.

This chapter presents condensed background information on the study area, climate, flora and fauna and socio-economic conditions. Thereby follows a presentation of the methodology and techniques used in achieving the objectives, as well as some reflections about some problems experienced during fieldwork and data analysis. Discussion on choices made regarding the methods and types of data selected for the study will be also provided.

3.1 Study Area

3.1.1 Location

Research was conducted primarily in the four villages located adjacent to National Park Sharr Mountains in Kosovo: Mushnikove, Sevce, Mushtisht and Gllobocice. The villages fall under the jurisdiction of 4 different municipalities: Prizren, Shterpce, Suhareke and Kacanik. The study area is about 70 km from the capital of Kosovo, Pristina. The Sharr Mountains outstretch 80 km long and 10 to 30 km wide and are located in the central part of the Balkan Peninsula. It is a cross-border mountain mass between two states, namely Kosovo and Macedonia, where northern part of the massif belongs to Kosovo with an area of about 1100 km² or 1/10 of the Kosovo total area.

The Sharr Mountains National Park represents Kosovo's only National Park, gazetted in 1986. Located in southern Kosovo, it covers an area of about 39000 ha of land area and it constitutes around 3,58% of the Kosovo's total land area, contains a great diversity of habitats and is the Kosovo's most important conservation area. The relief in SMNP is formed by mountain ridges

intersected by mountain rivers. Altitudes range from 842 to 2,651 m where the peak of Bistra Mountain is the highest one on the Kosovo side of Sharr Mountains.



Figure 2: Geographic position of SMNP (in green) in Balkans (source: MESP 2007)

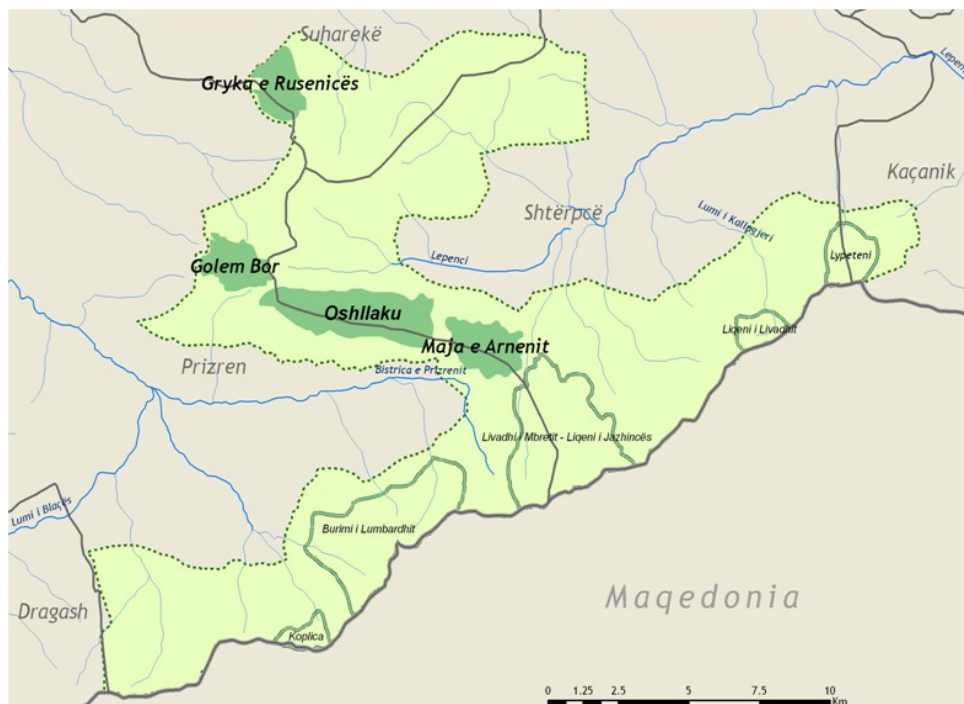


Figure 3: Map of Nature Reserves (in green) within SMNP (source: MESP 2007)

3.1.2 Climate and Hydrology

In SMNP, east continental and alpine climate prevail, which are often influenced by middle continental climate. There is only one meteorological station within the area of SMNP in Kosovo in the ski center Brezovica, with an altitude of 860 m above the sea level. The mean annual air temperature is about 8,4 °C. The climate is characterized by quite low air temperatures, notably during the winter. The coldest month is January, with an average temperature of -1.8 °C. Extreme climate temperatures have been registered in 1963 with a minimum temperature of -33 °C.

The SMNP is abundant with precipitation, most of which is snowfall. The snow level in this region has reached the altitude of 3m in 1956. It is normally characterized by 149 days under snow cover beginning in September and lasting until May or even June.

Sharr Mountains are well known in Balkans for their abundance with water resources. Almost the entire territory of SMNP belongs to the two largest river basins: Lepenc and Lumbardh. Apart from water-rich mountain streams and rivers, with a considerable number of waterfalls and ravishing flows, the mountain region is also rich with glacial lakes which represent one of the greatest splendors of the SMNP, with an altitude of above 1900 m.

The largest lake is Livadica lake, which lies below the Livadica peak (2173 m). In the summertime, the water temperature sometimes reaches up to 20°C, which allows the excursionists and shepherds to go swimming in it.

3.1.3 Flora and Fauna

The SMNP area is one of the biodiversity hotspots in Kosovo. It is characterized by numerous species of fauna (about 165), ornithofauna (200), butterflies (147), flora (above 2000), and phytocenosis.

With respect to flora, it represents a treasure of plant species not only for Kosovo, but also for the whole Balkan Peninsula. This is because of the high number of endemic, relict, rare and threatened species. Overall, the mountains contain more than 2000 vascular plant species which

represent about 65% of Kosovo's flora, over 30% of the Balkan's flora and about 15% of Europe's flora. The true trademarks are the forests of endemic and relict Bosnian pine (*Pinus heldreichii*) and Macedonian pine (*Pinus peuce*).

The park also abounds in a great number of animal species. It provides habitats for about 165 animal species and 200 bird species, which represent 50% of the fauna in Balkans. From those species, more specifically significant are considered to be: Eurasian lynx (*Lynx Lynx*), brown bear, chamois, wolf, roe deer, and wild boar. The Rusenica Nature Reserve covers an area of 300 ha and is home to lynx.

3.1.4 Demographic and Socio-Economic Conditions

Due to the political circumstances that characterized the period of 80's and 90s, there is no population census in Kosovo from 1981. There is no (permanent) resident human population inside SMNP, but around 40000 people live in a vicinity of about 4 km from SMNP, in 38 villages.

There are three main ethnic groups surrounding the mountain area, namely the Albanians, Serbs, and Bosnians. In the villages of Shterpce Municipality around the SMNP, the majority of residents are ethnic Serbs, around 66.9%, in the villages of Prizren Municipality around the SMNP there is a diversity of three ethnic groups: Albanians, Bosnians, and less Serbs, whilst in two other municipalities: (Suhareka and Kacanik), Albanians constitute the absolute major ethnic group. A characteristic of these households is that most of them are large traditional families with more than 6 members.

The rural economy is heavily based on livestock keeping and smallholder subsistence agriculture. Construction works provides another important source of income for many households in the area. Other sources of livelihood depend on natural resources such as: fuel-wood, beekeeping and timber. Major crops produced are wheat and maize. Dairy products, especially fresh cheese known as "Sharr cheese" is well known internationally.

The protection of agricultural land is a main concern presently facing the SMNP. In recent years, specific areas of agricultural land have been destroyed by gravel quarries and sand excavations under the soil. In order to prevent further unlawful destruction of this agricultural land, the

Municipal Assembly has recently approved the regulation for appropriate exploitation of stones, gravel and sand from the ground.

Tourism has great potential to develop in SMNP based on its geographical location, traditional sites and comfortable climate conditions. SMNP has the potential to develop: Summer tourism, Winter tourism, Village tourism

3.2 Park Management Institutions

At the state level, the MESP and MAFRD are responsible for crafting policies, drafting management and spatial plans with regards to SMNP. Particular departments within these two ministries are responsible for managing the park, namely Park Directory (Located in Prizren) and Institute for Spatial Planning – ISP (under MESF) and Kosovo Forest Agency –KFA (under MAFRD).

In the table below, the main characteristics of SMNP are presented.

| Characteristics | SMNP |
|--|--|
| Year of establishment | 1986 |
| Territory | 39000 ha |
| Morphology of the territory | Mountain |
| Number of municipalities | 4 |
| Park management organization | Organizations spread on the territory: Park Directory in Prizren (under MESP), Park Directory in Shterpce, Kosovo Forest Agency, Municipality Governors |
| Park management system | Fragmented system |
| Human presence and infrastructure within the park's borders | Relatively high. No village within the park borders but many restaurants, cabins, weekend houses and big villas |
| Human impact | Many damages to the landscape (many cabins, restaurants, small hotels), but also untouched areas |
| Tourism projects directly promoted by the park | Very few |
| Park's attitude towards the | Passive |

| | |
|---|--|
| tourism industry | |
| Communication through Internet | Official website of MESP providing few institutional information |
| Communication towards tourists and residents | Very little |

Table 3: The main characteristics of SMNP

3.3 Methodology

3.3.1 Research Methods and Techniques

Due to its complexity, an inter-disciplinary and integrated approach is required to address issues concerning management and planning of SMNP vis-à-vis the livelihood situation of communities living adjacent to it. The research questions and objectives created a challenge to methodology, entailing an in-depth quantitative assessment of people’s assets and benefits or losses they have experienced, but also an understanding of how people perceive the impact of conservation and/or development in their lives, and how they communicate about the park and its meaning to their livelihoods, in a relatively short period of time.

It is argued that mixed method gives flexibility of combining different sources and methods at various stages of the research process by obtaining both quantitative data that are considered to be accurate, credible, and scientifically rigor; and qualitative data considered to be constructed, nuanced, comprehensive, and contextual (Trochim 2006; Bryman 2004). Moreover, a multi-strategy research approach is able to reveal much more than an approach alone since except that it allows strengthening of different type of data collection and minimises the disadvantages of using one particular approach, it also can enhance both the validity and reliability of data analysis as virtues of good quality research (Bryman 2004). According to DFID guidelines, a research work aimed at investigating livelihoods requires a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods (DFID 1999: Section-4, p:16)

Hence, a use of mixed methods was employed for this research in order to obtain both qualitative and quantitative information on processes and institutions pertaining to livelihood systems and natural resource management. Qualitative data enabled obtaining data about opinions, beliefs,

constraints, attitudes and perceptions, while quantitative data enabled establishing patterns of association between variables through obtaining data related mostly to household activities, assets and incomes.

The research followed a mixed pattern of case study and cross-section design in order to establish variation and patterns of association among variables. In this research, Creswell's definition of case study is used:

"...the researcher explores in depth a program, an event, an activity, a process, of one or more individuals. The case(s) are bounded by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time".

Creswell (2003:15)

Case study involves an empirical investigation of a particular phenomenon within its real life context using multiple procedures of data collection (Robson 1993:143). According to Robson (1993:143), *"...if your main concern is understanding what is happening in a specific context, and if you can get access to and co-operation from the people involved-then do a case study"*. Therefore, I chose to do a case study of Sharr Mountains National Park in Kosovo as I wanted to understand the issue in contest and I would get co-operation and access to the involved people.

3.3.2 Data Collection

The methods used in order to satisfy data requirements included both primary and secondary data collection. The primary data collection methods included focus group discussions, key informant interviews and household survey. Secondary data collection included official documents, reviews and reports from NGO's, articles in national newspapers as well as academic publications. Combination of various data collection methods is important because it may reduce the probability of biases, and increases possibilities for triangulation.

In order to maximize the benefits of different sources of evidence I made attempts to follow three important principles (Yin 1989). First principle was to use multiple sources of evidence in order to address a broad range of historical, observational and attitudinal issues (ibid). Second principle was to create a case study database in the form of notes that could take different forms such as handwritten, typed or audiotapes (ibid). Finally, the third principle to be followed was to

keep a chain of evidence that could enable an external observer to follow the derivation of evidence (ibid).

The methods of data collection are elaborated in the following sub-sections.

3.3.2.1 Sample group selection

As indicated above in the subsections of the study area, SMNP encompasses land of four municipalities: Prizren, Shterpce, Suhareka and Kacanik. In my research, four villages that border the park, one for each municipality, were purposively chosen. This is a process often used in case studies in which researchers use their judgement as to serve the purpose of the study (Robson, 1993). Primary stakeholders (local communities) are those directly affected by different activities within the park. Thus, the target population for this study were all households that use SMNP. Household was the observation unit used to collect data through household survey.

The technique used to identify the sample group of households was stratified random sampling. Focus group discussions were also held in two sample villages where the number of participants varied from 4 to 8. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were conducted with various stakeholders such as government officials, park management officials operating in the case study site and other relevant organizations such as NGO's operating in the area.

3.3.2.2 Document Review

My first step in the research process was to obtain documents dealing with natural resource management, conservation, spatial plans, management plans, and/or development plans, and implementation. Throughout the fieldwork many documents were collected, summarized and subsequently analyzed. These documents provided important background information about SMNP and included suggestions and recommendations from park management, policies dealing with natural resource management, academic and research papers, articles in national newspapers, and a variety of journals and publications by international NGO's related to biodiversity conservation.

According to Merriam,

“the data collection techniques used, as well as the specific information considered to be ‘data’ in a study, are determined by the researcher’s theoretical orientation, by the problem and purpose of the study, and by the sample selected”.

Merriam (1998:70)

The collected material enabled understanding of perceptions and views of key stakeholders and persons responsible for SMNP management, without altering their opinions due to my presence as in the case of interviewing. As Merriam (1998:126) emphasizes “...one of the greatest advantages in using documentary material is its stability...the presence of the investigator does not alter what is being studied”. These documents were used to compare and compliment data on the political aims and strategies for management of SMNP with a particular focus on its history, management styles, power and participatory processes.

3.3.2.3 Courtesy Calls

After collecting the documentary material, reconnaissance survey was carried out in order to introduce research project, establish important contacts, extract basic information on study area and to book some of the appointments for various data collection activities.

This initial round had the dual importance of introducing myself and the study to local leaders at the field site as well as gathering information to assist in the design of household survey and FGDs that followed.

3.3.2.4 Household Survey

The household survey preceded the rest of primary data collection techniques and it was carried out using a structured questionnaire. As mentioned above, stratified random sampling technique was used to select households from 4 villages of different municipalities for interview. For each sample village, households were categorized according to the wealth ranking into three categories: rich, medium and poor. From each of these wealth categories, five households were randomly drawn. This stratification ensured full coverage of the range of livelihood situation for each sample village and also enabled classification of households according to their dependence on the park resources to maintain their livelihoods. The underlying assumption is that there is

more variation between these three wealth categories (strata) within a village than within a given wealth category in different villages.

The technique used to identify the sample villages was purposive sampling. Hence, the sample villages were selected based on my perception about what I thought were the most important villages affected by SMNP management and planning issues, and based on distance of different villages from the park borders.

Selection of the sample households within strata using information from the voter's register was attained by assigning numbers to households in a sample village within strata in pieces of paper and shuffling those pieces within a small box. Five papers were randomly drawn from each box containing the numbers assigned for households in a sample village within strata. As a result, a total number of 60 households, 15 in each village, were interviewed (4 villages, 3 wealth categories, 5 households per category).

The questionnaire (see appendix) included both closed-ended and open-ended questions and the target respondents were household heads, but since in most of the cases the households were headed by males who were at home when the interviews were carried out, I started to actively search for female interviewees in the end. In cases where the head of household was unavailable, interviews were held with the available adult of the household. The interviews were conducted at the respondent's home. On average, each interview took 40 minutes to 1 hour depending on interviewee's capacity to respond and interest in contributing towards the research.

3.3.2.5 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Focus groups complemented household survey by bringing the areas of interest in a group setting and creating an open and flexible forum where these topics could be further developed as a group. This enabled understanding the reason behind certain actions or feelings of different actors, things that were not revealed by household survey.

In total two FGDs were held, in two sample villages. Both FGDs commenced simultaneously and lasted between one to two hours. Questions revolved around local participation, state vs. local control of natural resources, distribution of benefits from tourism and use of resources in protected area including issues of compensation. The turn-out of women was lower and most of

the time, women chose to remain silent and men took the centre lead. However, in general, participants were found active and well motivated.

3.3.2.5 Key Informant interviews (KIIs)

Conducting KIIs was the last part of primary data collection during the course of the fieldwork. Apart from these, numerous informal interviews were also conducted. KIIs were in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted with various stakeholders which enabled gathering special information and reflections on different issues.

For the most part, the interview process with one key informant lasted between 30 minutes to one hour, depending on interviewee's availability and the interest in contributing towards the research. Conducting KIIs shortly after informal interviews allowed participants to feel informed about the type of questions that would be asked.

KIIs were conversations where I, as Marshall and Rossman (1999:108) emphasize, "*explore(d) a few general topics to help uncover the participant's views*". According to Kvale (1983:176), the role of the interviewer is to "*focus upon, or guide towards, certain themes, but not to guide the interviewee towards certain opinions about these themes*".

An interview guide consisting mostly of open-ended questions was used (see Appendix) to frame the topics and keep the interviewees on track.

3.3.2.6 Tools

In the initial phase of the research, I used a digital audio recorder to record the interviews conducted in Serbian and Bosnian language. Permission from the informants was sought beforehand and I assured the interviewees of confidentiality. Using audio recorder helped me to remember and translate properly by ensuring that the informants' speech patterns are kept. I did not use the help of any translator, so audio recording helped me to better understand interviews that were conducted in a language other than Albanian, which is my native language. However, in cases when informants did not want to be audio-taped, I respected this view and took notes instead of recording these interviews. Later on, I felt more confident using field notes since I became even more familiar with specific words in Serbian that I did not understand in the

beginning. When analyzing data, I discovered that the recorded interviews provided richer empirical data than those where I used notes for analysis.

Being a native Albanian speaker and having a considerable knowledge of Serbian (which is similar to Bosnian) was an added advantage for me during the course of the fieldwork. This implied that I did not have to rely on any interpreter and I was able to take questions as far as I wanted. This also contributed to the trustworthiness of the data as information was not lost in translation.

3.3.3 Ethical considerations

This section highlights some important ethical concerns associated with this research prior to the fieldwork, during the course of the fieldwork and thesis writing.

When conducting research, especially in social sciences, it is often imperative that the privacy, rights and welfare of the subjects included in the research must be taken into account (Bryman 2004). One of the main ethical concerns during the fieldwork is the assurance that subjects are informed of the purpose of being interviewed (ibid). I clearly introduced myself to all my informants, indicated the purpose of research prior the interview session commenced. I also made attempts to blend in and become a part of them since I was able to speak their language. Therefore, I consider that the concern of informed *consent* was handled adequately. The informants also allowed the future use of the interviews.

When it comes to protection of the subjects' privacy, removal and sometimes small changes in the subjects' characteristics were used while writing the results of this study to ensure *confidentiality*. During the interview sessions, I asked the informants' permission to use the information gathered in my final report and they all agreed. I also asked in probing further, if they would like their names to be revealed in the report, most of the local respondents accepted and most of the key informants preferred *anonymity*. However, this study has some sensitive revelations, therefore I decided to keep all the interviewees anonymous.

3.3.4 Data Analysis

A descriptive statistical analysis is used to estimate present livelihoods of communities adjacent to SMNP, household's access to resources, the constraints they face, livelihood activities and the

proportionate contribution of the park income to their total incomes. Quantitative data collected using questionnaires were condensed and coded into Minitab. Chi-square analysis was carried out with dummy variables to evaluate the variations among the different groups of the households with diverse experiences in relation to their sources of income and livelihood outputs across wealth categories, thus to show significance of the heterogeneity.

3.3.4.1 *Income Dependency*

Multiple linear regression analysis was employed to investigate the relationship between income dependency and other independent variables such as collection of park products, cultivated area, total livestock, household size, sex of the household head (dummy), distance to the park, location (dummy) and also non-quantitative variables such as access to credit.

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_k x_i + e_i \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Where, Y_i = the probability of income dependence

β_0 = constant term

x_i = quantitative variables

β_k = estimated parameters

e_i = error terms

3.3.4.2 *Income Sources*

Various income sources of households were categorized into: livestock, crop agriculture, collection of park products, business (self-employment), labour, employment and others. Total household income was calculated by aggregating incomes from these various sources. All the income calculations were based on the values of previous year (2009).

Gini coefficient is then used to measure the role of various income sources and the inequality level among different wealth categories.

3.3.4.3 Proxies and their expected signs

| Proxy | Description | Expected Sign (total income) | Expected sign (collection of park products) |
|--------------------------------------|--|------------------------------|---|
| Land Owned | Total amount of land owned by the household (in Acres) | + | - |
| Livestock | Total livestock Units | + | - |
| Household size | Total number of members in the household | + | + |
| Sex | Sex of the household head | +/- | +/- |
| Age | Age of the household head (in years) | + | +/- |
| Education | Education level of the household head (in years) | + | - |
| Collection of forest products | Total amount of forest products collected | + | |
| Credit | Access to credit | + | - |
| Location M | Location: Mushnikove (Dummy: 1 = Yes) | ? | ? |
| Location S | Location: Sevce (Dummy: 1 = Yes) | ? | ? |
| Distance | Distance to the park boundary | + | - |

Table 4: Proxies and their expected signs

The next instance includes interpretation of the findings. Creswell (2008:264-265), maintains that interpretation means that “*the researcher steps back and forms larger meaning about the phenomenon based on personal views, comparisons with past studies, or both*”. In order to provide a better description of people’s perceptions and attitudes, as well as to support and explain some of my findings based on different opinions and actors, I will rely on qualitative data of quotes from interviews as they constitute highly reliable data.

Overall, the information gathered through both quantitative and qualitative data have significantly contributed in establishing relationships between the objectives and research questions set in the first Chapter, and results.

3.3.5 Trustworthiness

The level of validity and reliability of sample data determines the quality of good research. Validity measures the level of systematic errors whereas reliability measures the presence of random errors. Lower the errors – higher validity and reliability (Bryman 2004). Both validity and reliability are of two types, internal and external. Internal validity and reliability depends on the scale of agreement between researcher and similarity between different findings and theoretical base. External validity and reliability depends on the scale to which the findings can be generalized and replicated (Bryman 2004).

This study presumes to be generalizable to other parks to some degree such that the findings may be transferable in similar settings facing similar problems, but interpretations made, may not apply to other national parks (Bryman 2004). The selection of sample villages was made in a population of villages adjacent to park, within a radius of utmost 4 km. The findings can thus be generalized to villages within the same radius.

Employing mixed method approach has some complications, but it gives a flexibility of combining different sources and methods during the whole research process thus, minimizing disadvantages of using one particular approach and enhancing both validity and reliability of sample data (Frechtling et al., 1997).

In effort to obtain valid and reliable data, I tried to make clear the purpose of the research to the informants and explained to them that participation in this study has no legal implications whatsoever. Moreover, one of the main reason for conducting FGDs and KIIs was to validate the information obtained from the household survey. Also, no interpreter was required and this reduced possible distortion of information.

When it comes to representativity, 4 villages were selected out of a total number of 38 villages, which reflects a relative small sample size (for villages) of nearly 10%, but stratification of the households in each village based on wealth ranking ensures full coverage of the range of livelihood situation. This makes the data representative of the sample villages.

Lincoln and Guba (1985), suggest four criteria for judging the trustworthiness of qualitative research: *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability*, and *confirmability*. I will briefly discuss these issues and how they were addressed in my research although some of them were already explained.

Credibility was critical to my study. I tried to be explicit about what I was studying by taking extensive field notes during the course of the fieldwork, data analysis and interpretation.

Attention was drawn also to transferability, as it was mentioned above, as another important criterion for trustworthiness in my study. Transferability depends on the degree to which the findings can be transferred or generalized to other areas (Lincoln and Guba 1995). Including mixed research approach enabled collection of data allowing rich detail regarding specific issues

to emerge. Therefore, this study might provide a deeper understanding of specific issues related to national parks and local livelihoods.

Dependability is related to the possibility of study repetition (Lincoln and Guba 1995). Since the design of the research was a mixture of case design and cross-sectional design, changes over time could be reflected in any prospective study hence, findings and the process could always evolve.

Confirmability asks, 'can the results be confirmed by others?' (Lincoln and Guba 1995). I tried to maintain confirmability by discussing my field notes with one research assistant and afterwards incorporating final notes for each day.

3.4 Summary

This study aims at exploring whether the Sharr Mountains National Park is managed in a way that contributes to a sustainable development process and actively engages communities to participate in conservation and tourism activities. Also, given time and scope limitations, this study concentrated on the community level rather than on government institutions. From data collection and analysis, various themes that form the frame of chapter four on the study's findings emerged.

Chapter 4: Results and Discussion

Chapter four presents the empirical findings arranged according to objectives of the study. In most of the cases, I chose to analyze the content of the interviews as a whole and to present themes in their original form in order to reflect a real-world setting. I use direct quotes in order to report the original words of the interviewees.

This chapter is divided into four major sections. Details about the contents of each section are given at the beginning of that particular section. A summary of main findings is provided at the end of this chapter.

4.1 Background for the Management of SMNP

4.1.1 A Brief Historical Account

This sub-section provides an overview of the history of SMNP management. The aim is to understand the country's efforts and approaches towards the management of SMNP and its implications for local livelihoods. The discussion is presented in a chronological sequence.

Institute for Nature and Environmental Protection (INEP) was established in 1974 by decision of the Assembly of Kosovo. In its decision no 11/1986, the Assembly of Kosovo declared the area of the Sharr Mountains a National Park. Following this Law, on 1988 came into force the Law on Protection of Natural Values (No. 39/1988) which is also important for nature and biodiversity protection.

After the conflict in 1999, several regulations have been drafted. The first approved environmental regulation after 1999 conflict was UNMIK regulation no. 2000/32, which constitutes the basis for the establishment of the Environment Department under MESP.

The Environmental Protection Law which provides the broad legal framework for environmental management and biodiversity protection was passed by the Kosovo Assembly in 2003. The Law on Forests which provides the legal framework for forest management was also passed in 2003.

INEP has been part of the structure of MESP responsible for research, monitoring and assessment of biodiversity, and for establishing a database of natural resources and wildlife. The

findings show that INEP no longer has these responsibilities. A key informant explains that for interests of some political leaders, this Institute has been practically closed down as it does no longer have any competence or authority it had in the past.

Directory of SMNP currently manages the area of 22,230 ha located in the municipalities of Prizren (19,500 ha) and Suhareka (2730 ha). The area of the park that is part of Shterpce Municipality is managed by the informal SMNP Directory located in Shterpce and reports directly to Belgrade, Serbia. The remaining part of the Park that constitutes mostly of forest land in the Municipality of Kacanik is managed by Kosovo Forest Agency under MAFRD.

When Kosovo was part of the SFRY, 5-year management plans were written for the Park by the Institute for the Protection of Nature, but there is currently no plan applicable to the whole park. The boundaries of the Park are not marked on the ground and it has been suggested that they should be reevaluated (MESP 2009). After the 1999 conflict, the Park is supposed to be managed according to a 10-year plan, but the plan due to be implemented years ago, has still not been completed (USAID 2003). The management of the park is very weak and additional regulations are required to ensure that economic benefits are captured by society (USAID 2003).

The interviews with key informants as well as documentary evidence reveal that the major management approach of the MESP and MAFRD has been a regulatory one with licensing as its main component. Licensing regulates resource use through a pricing mechanism by issuing licenses to forest users. This approach reportedly does not seem to have worked well, particularly after the conflict when the need for fuelwood in the aftermath of the conflict was high. Further, the forest guards and rangers were retrenched and split. The forest guards and rangers employed by the informal Park Directory in Shterpce, frequently do not get their salaries on time and consequently are demotivated and uncertain about their future. According to a key informant at the Park Directory in Shterpce, the Directory now only operates at half capacity and this has serious consequences for effective Park management.

The data also reveal that in Kosovo, the chief objectives of Sharr Mountains National Park management have been limited to defining parks' legal status, demarcation of boundaries, fire

control measures, protecting flora and fauna and to some extent, providing visitor services. The role that national park could play in supporting local livelihood systems, has so far been neglected. Local communities are still seen as the principal ‘threat’ to forests so that they have been denied access to most important forest products such as fuelwood. The current tasks are the re-establishment of an effective administration, the drafting of a priority action programme, and the preparation of a long-term strategy for sustainable integrated management.

4.1.2 An Overview of Protected Area System (PAS)

Kosovo’s first PAs were created in the 1970’s by decision of the Kosovo Assembly. The establishment of PAs has continued over 1980’s and 1990’s. They cover slightly less than 5% of Kosovo’s territory. The Protected Area System (PAS) constitutes one national park (SMNP), 38 natural monuments, and two protected landscapes (USAID 2005:9). The bulk of this system is considered to be in SMNP (ibid:9). The criteria used for the selection of areas for national park establishment were: presence of rare species that require special protection, areas where human settlements were absent or sparse and so on. Research to assess the biodiversity value of the area and the rationale of declaring national parks was conducted by Institute for Nature and Environmental Protection (INEP) of Kosovo.

SMNP is Kosovo’s only gazetted national park and covers approximately 39000 ha. It encompasses land from four municipalities and is surrounded by 38 settlements with more than 40000 inhabitants of different ethnicities within 4 kilometers. There are four small, strictly protected areas within the park containing rare plant species. The Law on SMNP provides the purpose of protection, how different stakeholders are to be involved in decision-making and management. It also describes the functions and responsibilities of the main management body (now: Park Directorate in Prizren). The Law on Forests and the Law on SMNP have not developed together like one behind the other. Further, local communities remain largely excluded from forest management, cash benefits and tourism activities that could be derived from park in their area.

A new area is proposed to be gazetted as a national park which would double the PAS area. The proposed Bjeshket e Nemuna National Park is in the western part of Kosovo, near the border with Montenegro and Albania. The area was originally proposed to have a protected area status

in 1985 by the executive Council of Peja. Recently, MESP has proposed that the new national park should have an area of about 50000 ha and this proposal has been conditionally approved by Kosovo Parliament in 2003.

Natural monuments and protected landscapes are gazetted by municipal assemblies and managed by municipal governments. Most of them were declared during the 1980s (USAID 2003:11). Currently, there are 38 natural monuments covering an area of 4867 ha and two protected landscapes covering 1681 ha (ibid:11). The two protected landscapes are the Mirusha River Gorge and the Germia Mountains (ibid:11). The first was protected for its scenic string of pools and waterfalls as well as for plant diversity while the latter were protected for their floral diversity and many rare plant associations (ibid:11).

4.1.3 Roles and Responsibilities

This sub-section analyses the roles and responsibilities of MESP charged with the responsibility of policy formulation and Park Directory in Prizren mandated to enforce regulations in SMNP. It describes how different actors participate in managing SMNP.

Roles and responsibilities with respect to SMNP management lie with the agencies outlined in table 3. Of all the institutions outlined in the table 3, the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning is the most important one. MESP roles embody policy formulation, facilitation and monitoring the implementation of international agreements, conventions and treaties. Another strategic institution is Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Rural Development (MAFRD), whose focus is rural development and forest management.

The Park is managed by a particular entity, namely the Park Directory in Prizren operating under MESP. However, there is also an informal entity, namely the Park Directory in Shterpce which manages the area of the Park within Shterpce Municipality and which reports directly to Belgrade.

At the local level, there are municipalities whose focus is land utilization and development of local spatial and development plans. They are excluded from national parks, but with their decisions, they often affect national park areas.

The data reveals that existence of three entities involved in management and control of the Park and therefore, unclear functions, including roles, responsibilities, and objectives of these entities, have created space for actions that degrade the Park and benefit only a certain group of people. These external actors manage their respective areas differently and contribute to differentiation of the people based on ethnic lines.

The Park Directorate (Prizren) officials on their part identified the root causes of disputes in SMNP management to be related to issues of control over natural resources and decision-making processes. Yet some NGO representatives in the area related the issues of disputes regarding roles and responsibilities to decentralization processes.

About three years ago, Municipality of Prizren has made a decision to build a touristic village in Prevalle. Most of the houses are built with strong material and violating all norms of environmental protection, thus threatening the park.

On the other hand, most of the local communities claimed that the lack of clearly defined responsibilities and duties among different stakeholders, lead to deterioration of natural resources they used to depend on. Intensive development during the last decade with private ‘foreign’ investors occupying land within national park offering seasonal tourism has lead to deterioration of most beautiful sites for visitors in the area. Local communities claim that these developments have benefited only a certain group of people, i.e. private ‘non-local’ businesses. Several respondents stated that the owners of these businesses are the most ‘powerful’ political leaders who are the only ones gaining the benefits from tourism activities. One key informant stated that *“our concern is mainly with the unplanned developments in these tourism hot-spots”*.



Photo: Prevala, Source Park Directorate, Prizren 2010

One of the interviewees points out that despite the lack of co-operation among different institutions, the politicians act against the laws that they themselves have adopted by building villas in the most beautiful places inside SMNP.

“Despite differences, many politicians are united in a common cause. They have already raised their villas in the beautiful forests of Kosovo - in Prevallë. And this is against the laws that they themselves have adopted” (Interviewee 6, NGO representative, male).

Another key informant argues that while they see strong debates in the Parliament of Kosovo between representatives of different political parties with respect to SMNP, only 70 km away from the hall of Parliament, politicians from all parties co-exist in a large ‘touristic’ village which is built in the heart of SMNP.

“Foundations of giant villas are set in contradiction with all laws the politicians themselves have adopted. Construction is strictly prohibited in Prevalle by the Law on Spatial Planning, Law on

Nature Protection and Law on Sharr Mountains National Park. Right there, almost all politicians have built villas”.

INEP, a small institution, prior to building of the so called ‘touristic village’, reacted sharply to the decision of the Municipality of Prizren and MESP itself, which have allowed the construction of villas inside SMNP.

A key informant - former employee of INEP, believes that political influences were the ones that affected the status change of INEP, which according to him is done “*in order to cover abuses of politicians in Kosovo*”. He believes that the 30 years work of INEP presented an obstacle for many politicians. Few months ago, INEP became part of the Kosovo Agency for Environmental Protection under MESP.

A Park Directory official reveals that many proposals have been sent to MESP for approval, but none has been approved so far. He explains that they have proposed, for example to build a hotel instead of hundreds of villas. Further, he explains that in Prevalle, two unlawful plans are being implemented. The first is the building of a touristic village and second is the building of a summer camping. Both of these plans have devastating consequences for nature protection. He adds that dense and massive construction of over 360 private objects (villas, restaurants, hotels) has lead to deterioration of the natural environment. “It should be emphasized that while millions of Euros are being invested in reforestation and rehabilitation of degraded forests by the Kosovo budget, forests are being destroyed to build private facilities” (Interviewee 3, male).

Summing up, the exclusions and overlaps in roles and responsibilities demands close collaboration, also with local communities. The main problems arise due to the lack of co-operation between different management institutions and implementation of regulations and plans in contradiction to positive laws in Kosovo.

4.1.4 Legal Provisions and Nature of Community Participation

This section assesses the legal provisions for community participation in park management by reviewing the policy in order to find out to what extent communities are given authority to exercise power and accrue benefits from the park. The objective is to assess whether Kosovan

environmental laws take into account factors necessary for an efficient participation and decentralization that reaches local communities. Further, this section assesses the nature of community participation in decision-making with respect to natural resources of SMNP.

By Kosovo laws, communities are entitled to take part in decision-making processes regarding existing resources in their area. However, these rights are not promoted by government and local level and communities are not often aware of their rights. Further, no CBNRM policy is in place so far.

As discussed in chapter 3, participation is described as a process where communities influence and share control over decisions and resources that affect them and over development initiatives (Mascarenhas et al., 1998 in Zimba 2006:57). The analysis makes references to chapter 3 where the concepts of participation and local community have been discussed in more detail.

In order to examine the nature of community participation expected by various interest groups in SMNP, respondents were asked questions concerning: (1) the involvement of communities in decision-making, planning and management, (2) the desired form of community participation by different interest groups and perceptions of local communities regarding SMNP management.

With the creation of the national park, different restrictions on access to natural resources were imposed. Hunting of wild animals was prohibited. Although illegal hunting may continue to play a role in local people's livelihoods, they were being denied that chance by restrictions placed over use of park resources. The bureaucracy involved in the operations of management bodies are cumbersome, take long to reach the beneficiaries and local communities don't see immediate action over their reported cases.

The government unilaterally makes decisions about the new developments in the area and sets out the conditions and terms under which communities will intervene. What has been noted during the course of this research are the policies proposing a situation of participation without power for local communities.

The results from the study area indicate a strong support for the idea that local communities should be consulted about issues of new developments in the area. Although support for Park

Directory in Prizren was higher than for the MESP central level in Pristina, local communities preferred participation that was empowering. Most of the respondents preferred to be involved early than later. Some preferred all parties involved to work together with Park Directory in Prizren as a team rather than as independent bodies. Local communities also supported the idea of either being informed or at times being consulted before a decision is taken. As described by Pretty' typology, this view reflects participation by consultation (Pretty, 1995). Most of the respondents do not question the existence of the park, but they request a more active involvement in decision-making as well as in activities within the park, especially where tourism is concerned.

The study also revealed that key informants in the study area preferred Park Directory in Prizren to make decisions rather than reporting to and waiting the central level for major decisions. Only three key informants, from a total of twelve, preferred higher ranks at the central level to make decisions.

Some MESP and Park Directory in Prizren officials as well as some respondents from local communities agreed that the Article 7 of Law on Kosovo's Forests is contradictory to the previous Law on SMNP and therefore they claim that this provision should be removed. This would allow Park Directory in Prizren, operating under MESP to manage and control the forests of SMNP. Several initiatives by MESP and other actors in the National Assembly have taken place to remove this provision but, so far, these initiatives have not received support from the majority of members in the Assembly working groups.

Key private tourist operators in Prevala and Brezovica region were very uncomfortable with the question of community participation. Most of them stated that central government had encouraged them to set-up businesses in the area. One of the operators stated:

"We responded to the government's call to invest in tourism. Private capital was needed to increase tourism development in the area".

The term 'local community' cannot easily be geographically defined due to the fact that communities are not homogenous and comprise different interests stratified by ethnicity, gender, age, class, religion, livelihood, etc. The findings show that there are no community-based

organizations that would interrelate with both the government and the private sector in the name of community.

In the view of the aforesaid, this study found it to be necessary that Park Directorate seeks ways to minimize the negative effects of the restrictions placed on park resources more for poor communities. There is a need for CBNRM policy to be in place. Communities must form community-based organizations as a means towards acquiring their rights in the management of SMNP.

4.2 Present livelihoods of the communities adjacent to SMNP

This section discusses the livelihood situation of the households living adjacent to SMNP. The household endowments and entitlements in these communities are outlined. The livelihood analysis was carried out using a household economic model.

4.2.1 Household Endowments

Basic household characteristics revealed by this study find that the size of households ranges from 1 to 20 people (members) whereas an average household consists of 6.4 people. 85% of the households are headed by males. 7% of the females and 9% of the males were found leading household as either widowers or as single parent households.

4.2.1.1 Household-Level Factors

A World Bank study (2008) reveals that education and health, despite that they tend to be low in rural areas, are very important because they increase the chance of a person being involved in high return non-farm activities and can also increase a person's potential to enhance agricultural productivity. Households with lower incomes are more prone to ill health which also affects their choice of livelihood activities.

The level of education in the study area is found to be low and slightly lower for women than men. Education, as expected is negatively correlated with forest dependence. Better educated households had access to a wider range of income opportunities. Therefore, similarly to findings

in Vedeld et al. (2004), these households do not find it sufficiently rewarding to get involved in forest activities.

Female-headed households were poorer than male-heading ones. This may be due to the fact that the female heads of households are in most cases widowed or divorced and thus, the adult labour force is smaller.

4.2.1.2 Land

99% of the sample population had access to land for agriculture. From the household survey, 93% of the households aquired land by inheritance. Only 5% of the households aquired land by clearing the forest. The remaining 2% of land was bought or rented.

The distribution of land holdings amongst households was uneven within the study area. Some of the communities had larger land holdings than the others. Most of the households occupied land size between 0-1 ha (51.5%). Few households occupied land size above 3 ha (17.7%).

There was variation between ethnic groups in the study area. 60% of land holdings smaller than 2 ha was occupied by the Bosniaks while land holding larger than 2 ha were occupied primarily by Serbs 47% and Albanian 41% reflecting a significant difference between ethnicity and land holding in the study area. This revealed that Serbs are more involved in agriculture than other ethnic groups.

In relation to access to land, households in the study area did not stress this issue as one of their main concerns. This perhaps reflects a dominance of other constraints including the access to forest products issue, which perhaps make the access to land less visible or important to the local communities.

The table below shows the results from the regression model.

| Predictors | Coefficient | T | P |
|---|-------------|-------|-------|
| Constant | | -2.33 | 0.024 |
| Total Household size | 581.56 | 7.78 | 0.000 |
| Age of the household head | 30.22 | 1.23 | 0.224 |
| Sex of the household head (Dummy: Male=1) | 744.6 | 1.18 | 0.243 |
| Education of the household head | 335.33 | 4.19 | 0.000 |
| Amount of land owned | 677.1 | 2.86 | 0.006 |
| Livestock | 232.37 | 1.19 | 0.153 |
| Collection of forest products | -178.6 | -1.36 | 0.179 |
| Access to credit | -393.5 | -0.75 | 0.459 |
| Location: M | 805.4 | 1.5 | 0.139 |
| Location S | 576.2 | 0.89 | 0.38 |
| Distance to the park boundary | 189.2 | 0.55 | 0.587 |

R-sq = 66.9

Table 5: Factors aiding and constraining the household income, survey, Kosovo 2009

4.2.1.3 Labour

In the study area, the labour supply was usually determined by the size of the household. The age distribution in the study area shows that a considerable proportion of people fall within the 18-35 group (55%). However, the questionnaire excluded age group of 1-17 which are considered to contribute substantially to the household labour.

There are few elderly people in the study area. Their contribution to the household labor force is relatively low compared to other age groups.

All the households sampled maximized household labor. They don't hire labor in most of the cases. Many respondents in the study area are self-employed.

4.2.1.4 Capital

There are some NGOs and financial institutions in the study area providing locals with loans for appropriate agricultural projects. Nonetheless, very few have benefited from these projects because they are not always accessible to the local people and because of the concerns related to the interest rates and other adequate information of the local communities.

Having a bank account is relatively common among the households, but the survey revealed that the savings are mostly held in cash by the households. Most of the households do not manage to save money for more than 6 months. Bank account helps them to get access to credit. However, only 8% of the households have access to credit. The main purpose of taking out loan is for business. However, 70 % of the households reported that despite trying, they failed to get the loan when needed. The indicated obstacles of getting a loan varied among the sampled households. Generally, they indicated that banks have very strict policies for giving a loan.

4.2.1.5 Livestock

This study reveals that almost 72% of the total households are currently involved in livestock keeping and crop production/sale activities. Until recently, the area was dominated by large numbers of livestock. However, it is considered that due to the last conflict in Kosovo, large numbers of livestock have lost. Today, on average, livestock holdings are quite low.

4.2.1.6 Forest products

The local people collect fuel wood, thatch grass, stakes and other products from the forest. They are all dependent to some degree upon collection of these products. Many people still follow their traditional rights and practices towards the park resources, regardless of what the formal rules are. Before the establishment of the park, they used to collect a variety of products there. However, with the establishment of the area as a National Park, collection of many products from the park was prohibited. Collection of firewood from inside the park, is prohibited. Only firewood collection in private forests inside the Park is allowed upon licensing. But, even this collection is restricted. Grazing is also restricted and may be permitted against a fee that should be paid to the Park Directory.

The most important forest products were fuel wood for cooking and heating, and timber, but other products were also collected to improve household cash income and food security. I observed that the dependence on fuel wood was much higher compared to most of other forest products. This is mainly because firewood is used for many purposes. It is the main source of domestic energy, used for cooking, heating purposes and so on. Other domestic needs include construction of houses, wooden furniture or wooden doors. Some households also collect firewood from forest and sell it outside.

Besides firewood, thatch grass is used to build roofs and making fences. In general, forest products are mainly used for providing a safety net and as Vedeld et al (2004) argue the importance of these products is not with respect to providing a pathway out of poverty but a safety net and a means to maintain current levels of income. The regression results however, indicate a negative relationship between household income and collection of forest products, which shows that the higher the number of forest products collected, the lower is the income of a household.

4.2.1.7 Other inputs

Sources of income from non-farm activities, account for 38% of an average annual income of the household. These sources include remittances, small businesses, employment and casual labour. Nearly 17% of the households reported engaging in trading and services provision while 3.3 % of the households reported engaging in casual labour work which comprises of activities such as brick-laying/making.

4.2.2 Household Entitlements

The pursued livelihood activities contribute in different ways to total household income. The sample households pursue a number of livelihood activities which contribute in different ways to total household income as shown in the table below. There are various reasons why households pursue a set of different activities but as Kinsey et al. (1998) emphasizes, diversification can be an important means of reducing uncertainty and shocks, but it does not make household completely immune to them.

| Household head occupation | Frequency | Percent |
|--|-----------|---------|
| Production/sale of crops and traditional dairy products | 43 | 71.7 |
| Salary employment | 4 | 6.7 |
| Casual labourer | 2 | 3.3 |
| Crafts and arts | 1 | 1.7 |
| Trading and services provision | 10 | 16.7 |
| Total | 60 | 100 |

Table 6: Reported household head occupation, survey, Kosovo 2009

Household entitlements are achieved through entitlement mapping which include processes such as production, exchange and transfer using household endowments (Ditiro 2008). Entitlements uses are presented in terms of consumption, savings and investments. Almost 65% of the total household production of the last year was consumed, 20% was sold and 15% was stored for later sales or consumptions. On average, agriculture, including livestock production, contributes the largest amount to household total income. Nonetheless, the share of other sources of income is rather high in the study area. The percentage contribution of off-farm income to households, on average, is 34%. Small businesses contribute mostly to off-farm income. The share of remittances is, on average, 10% of the total household income.

| Livelihood activity | Average total income (EUR) | % share of total income |
|----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Agriculture | 1998 | 43.4 |
| Off-farm | 1572 | 34.0 |
| Environmental | 576 | 12.5 |
| Remittances | 463 | 10.1 |

Table 7: Average share contribution of livelihood activities to total household income, survey, Kosovo 2009

4.2.2.1 Livestock production

Livestock production accounts for an important source of agricultural income. Almost 72% of the respondents are involved in livestock keeping activities and crop production/sale. The average livestock holding per household is about 7 units. Nearly 60% of the households keep poultry. Cattle have the highest price, whilst goats have the second highest price. Despite this, the average holding of cattle is only 4 livestock units. Inputs used include feed, labour, water and some medicines. Nowadays, livestock are kept and raised mostly in and around the household compound areas, and away from the crops. This implies that amount of labour required is very low compared to the requirements of crop agriculture.

4.2.2.2 Crop Production

An average household income is about euro 4600 per annum. Crop production is central to improving livelihood and remains an important source of income for the households in the study area. The main sources of agricultural income, other than livestock production are vegetables, fruits and seed crops. The average land cultivated by household was 0.56 ha and the number of crops was 2.1. Typically, all households engage in subsistence form of agricultural production. The vegetables are mainly consumed at home. Despite the subsistence nature of production, households in four villages often have some surplus that they sell to both internal and external markets.

During the dry season households cope with little water by producing vegetables in a small area. There was little variation between the study communities in crop production. Very few households follow ecological farming practices such as crop rotation, residuals usage and so on. This may have negative impact on soil quality and on crop yields. A majority of households (56%) use manual traction as a form of production process. 35% use power traction and about 25% use animal traction which shows tilling with animal or power traction is also common. Overall, the findings show that the major costs of production are related to fertilizers, pesticides and seeds and to power tiller for those who use this production process. Labour is usually provided by the household members.

4.2.2.3 Environmental products

Environmental income combines both park and non-park environmental incomes. On average, environmental income provide 12.5 percent of the total household income. Examples of environmental activities are: grazing, animal hunting, gathering a number of products such as firewood, timber and poles, thatching grass, mushrooms, vegetables, wild medicine, and honey. Share contribution of park income to the environmental income is 25%. The remaining 75% is from outside the park. A total of 31.4% households reported to collect forest products from the park. However, no household deems the collection of such products ‘an occupation’.

The major source of environmental income from both the park and non park area is firewood. On average, the share of environmental income is higher for poor households in the area than for medium households. Contribution of environmental income to the income of rich households is low. Therefore, wealthier households are less dependent on the environment. This is similar to the findings in Vedeld et al (2004) where the studies reveal that communities with high dependence tended to have lower overall incomes.

The study also reveals that there is a significant difference in the dependence on environmental income for the households in Suhareka Municipality compared to other Municipalities in the study area. Local communities in villages adjacent to park in Suhareka depend more on environmental income than others. This also explains the frequent forest damages happening in this region. As Vedeld et al. (2004) point out, people seek these activities because they do not have many other options. Therefore, these activities are important for survival and livelihood of poor people (Vedeld et al. 2004). Further, the authors refer to Angelsen and Wunder (2003) and add that efforts to increase the value of the environmental products that the poor depend on, might be counterproductive (ibid). These efforts, according to Vedeld et al (2004) may cause internal differentiation and overexploitation leading to a situation where more valuable resources are captured by the rich while the poorest of the poor are excluded.

Nonetheless, As Vedeld et al (2004) argue, environmental income can make households better-off where the right conditions are in place and where households do diversify by incorporating environmental incomes in their portfolios.

4.2.2.4 Other sources of income

Contrary to environmental income, the share of non-farm income is higher for rich households than for medium households while the least contribution is to the incomes of the poor households.

Small business represents an important source of income for many households in the study area. Most wealthy households run construction companies. Labour constitutes another source of income that contributes significantly to off-farm income.

Remittances represent another source of income mostly sent by relatives living and working abroad. People from these villages usually migrate to Switzerland or Deutschland. In Mushnikove village, remittances represent a very important source of income. That can also be noticed from the ‘western style of houses’ all around this village. A majority of the households have at least one member abroad, mainly in Switzerland.

In general, remittances are usually in the form of cash, but may be material items. Many households in the study area have close relatives living abroad and pursuing better paid jobs. Being in a better off position, these people usually give a helping hand to their relatives by sending remittances often monthly or once in 2-3 months. The percentage share of remittances in the total household income is about 10% and this income source is primary used for consumption.

4.2.3 Income Distribution

4.2.3.1 Wealth groups

As described in Chapter three, the wealth ranking is based on three wealth categories: poor, medium and rich. The poor households form a large group, covering 61% of the total households. The medium wealth group covers about 30% and the rich group covers remaining 9%.

As expected, poor households depend more on forest income probably because they have limited ability to invest in other activities, whereas wealthier households tend to pursue more stable livelihood activities. The number of forest products collected by the poor households is higher

than the number of these products collected by rich households. Rich households typically run businesses, are more educated and have a larger area of land and livestock.

Income from livestock constitutes a significant share of the total income for the households. However, there is no significant difference in livestock earning between poor and medium wealth groups.

4.2.3.2 Income Inequality

The Gini coefficient is used to measure the income inequality. The study reveals that income inequality among the households is relatively high. In terms of the total income share, the rich group of 9% of the households take the highest share. The calculated Gini Coefficient is 0.395.

4.3 Household Constraints to Improved Livelihoods

This section provides results regarding key constraints of the local communities to improved livelihoods.

The major constraints faced by households in their decreasing order of importance are: lack of available market and low market prices for their traditional products, access to forest products from the park, land access problems and access to financial capital.

Local people are formally not allowed to access most of the national park products. According to Park Directory regulations, local people are allowed to collect some resources for subsistence use. The park however is an important source of basic resources eventhough some of local people are not aware of which products they are allowed to collect. These households take it that they are not allowed to collect any forest product from the park and they regard whatever they access as illegal. In addition, during the course of the fieldwork, I happened to see a table with information about the national park and on which activities are prohibited inside the park. According to this information the following activities are prohibited inside the park: hunting, fishing, parking (except for parking designated areas), collection of medicinal products and collection of park 'products-fruits'.

As Tumusiime (2006:68) points out: *“Insecurity that results from prohibiting use of park resources equally makes access to such resources unpredictable and less economically rewarding”*. Despite decentralization, a majority of local communities in the study area think that they are missing genuine representation in high authority governing institutions such as the parliament.

With respect to agriculture, a majority of the households stated that crop yields are declining and market for these commodities are not always available. Some of the respondents argue that an issue of major concern is the unfair commodities market, where buyers’ set the agriculture product prices. They believe that prices of their own produce are low and that the un-developed markets leave them with lower return for their products. Fallowing land is a luxury many households no longer can afford.

Livestock loss and theft are common incident. One of the local respondents that kept goats and the well know “Sharr Dog”, said that all the dogs he used to have were stolen. The price of selling such a dog varies from euro 250-500. In addition, majority of households have little livestock. The government has not encouraged the local communities so far in forms of providing subsidies for their products or at least, eventhough such programmes by government have been promoted, they have not reached local communities in the study area.

The mountain meadows were traditionally grazed prior to its establishment as a national park. Traditional uses such as summer grazing and collection of wild plants, mushrooms, and berries are still permitted in the park but there is a significant reduction of these activities. The reduction of grazing was primarily because of the conflict in late 1990’s which reduced the number of livestock, and to some extent because of the growing mass tourism in the Brezovica region, particularly during the 1980’s and early 1990s, which has replaced the former sustainable uses of the Park’s resources with more intensive development. In addition, the reduction of grazing is a result of the regional low prices for milk products, which prevents cattle owners from producing sustainably.

As discussed in the previous sections, access to credit is another constraint households face. Due to the lack of access to credit or due to the lack of appropriate information, most of the

households rely on intra and inter-household lending. Trust is very important in these relations. However, the household to household lending is limited by the general shortage of cash. Lenders are often wealthy households that receive remittances. Mushnikove village is well known for household to household lending. Many households are able to lend cash since they have at least one family member working in Switzerland and sending remittances. For these households, remittances represent the main source of household income.

4.4 Local people's attitudes towards the park and perceptions of conservation

With the declaration of SMNP as a national park in 1986, local communities were restricted from resource use extraction as it has been prior to the establishment. This certainly had implications on wellbeing of local people who depended on these resources for their livelihoods.

Differences of opinion regarding conservation and development, particularly in the terms of who has rights and responsibilities for these activities, were identified as a source of conflict in the study area. When asked to describe the government agencies involved in SMNP management, participants exhibited varying perceptions of management bodies-local people relationship. Some participants from Mushnikove village observed cooperation. "*We cooperate with Park Directorate in Prizren*". Many respondents claimed that they were only asked to help to enforce rules coming from MESP or Park Directorate. Many respondents also claim that government (in this case: MESP) did not devolve enough to include local communities as partners in development. There were also a few instances when respondents blamed local communities for their attitude towards the park and the concept of protection.

The respondents underscore the critical role played by the resources from the park in their livelihood security before the establishment of the national park, but also immediately after the conflict when they used much more firewood because of electricity shortages. Some of my informants recalled that during periods of electricity shortages, selling firewood was a means of obtaining an independent source of income.

On the other hand, 61.8% of respondents mentioned a negative relationship with the protected area. It should be noted that many respondents blame SMNP visitors (tourists) for causing fires

in NP territory because of their negligence. The open fires represent a permanent danger to the NP forests.

Further, many of my local respondents claimed that before the gazzement of the park, they were able to earn a living by collecting forest products and hunting with almost no *restrictions*. *One respondent said:*

“I remember when I was a student, I used to buy books by selling the products collected here, but now that is impossible. We have to go and buy from someone else products we need for our subsistence. There is also restriction on collecting medicinal plants, for example, even though these resources are plentiful in the park”.

“We have always been resourceful and have shown great concern and willingness to adjust for protection and sustainability of this area”.

From the focus groups discussions, it was noticed that the grievance of local people started with illegal activities such as illegal construction and logging activities. Despite this, local people are aware of the importance of conservation. Without conservation, these illegal activities will probably take place at high rate and the natural environment will be destroyed.

4.5 Summary

In sum, the data reveal that the major management approach of the MESP and MAFRD has been a regulatory one with licensing as its main component. Local people living adjacent to SMNP do not per se actively participate in management decisions and land-use policy. Participation as reported by respondents concentrated in the three lower levels of Pretty’s typology, up to the participation by consultation (Pretty, 1995). Despite the rhetoric on decentralization and ‘enforcement’ of some provisions enabling community involvement, there is a lack of significant provisions to accommodate key CBNRM principles. No policy has been developed and adopted for CBNRM so far. Therefore these issues are likely to remain a matter for pilot testing. Further, the powers to decide and control are not being transferred or significantly shared with local communities. The government unilaterally makes decisions about the new developments in the area and sets out the conditions and terms under which communities will intervene. What has

been noted during the course of this research are the policies proposing a situation of participation without power for local communities.

From the livelihood analysis, it has been noted that resource endowments and entitlements were unevenly distributed. The average household has access to land, labour and forest, while capital is scarce. Only 8% of the households have access to credit and saving is not very common. Most of the land is inherited, while the level of education is found to be low and slightly lower for women than men.

Agriculture is an important practiced activity, engaging most of the households in the study area. The principal products collected from the forest include fuel wood, thatch grass, timber, medicinal plants and mushrooms.

Key constraints to improved livelihoods were imperfect markets for local products, transport limitation, the restricted access to forest resources, and limited access to credit. This resulted in decreased production and a situation of massive entitlements and exchange failures.

Local communities perceived conservation to have decreased availability of forest products and increased commercialization. Other common factors behind the negative relationship noticed in the field and from focus group discussion are inadequate law enforcement, poor governance, illegal construction, and corruption resulting from poor governance. Poor governance resulted from government failure to effectively enforce and implement the law. The local people believe that being involved in decision-making concerning the forest resources will improve their cooperation with other stakeholders in the study area.

Another problem revealed by the study is the existence of the double legal standards in forest management. That is the coexistence of Law on National Park Sharr Mountains and the Law on Forests. According to the Law on Forests, Kosovo Forest Agency under MAFRD is responsible for managing all forests in Kosovo including those within SMNP. This is contradictory to the Law on SMNP approved in 1986, according to which the Park Directorate is responsible to manage all the resources within SMNP.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Some Reflections

This chapter provides an overview of the research objectives, findings and conclusions of this study. The objectives of this research were stated as being to present the management and planning process of Sharr Mountains National Park in Kosovo and local community participation, to assess the present day livelihood situation of communities adjacent to NP, to estimate household constraints, and to identify perceptions and attitudes towards conservation and development.

The idea of local community involvement in national park management is widely acknowledged as a global issue (Vedeld et al. 2004). I assumed that through participation, local communities will come to have a more positive attitude and perception of the park and its resources, thus leading to a more effective park management. The study found that the major management approach of the MESP and MAFRD has been a regulatory one with licensing as its main component. Local people living adjacent to SMNP do not per se actively participate in management decisions and land-use policy.

If participation is understood as a means to an end, than its purpose is to develop and strengthen the capabilities of the rural communities (Zimba 2006). Participation as reported by respondents in the study area concentrated in the two lower levels of Pretty's typology (Pretty, 1995). Further, the study found that, the participation of local people is enshrined in a number of laws in Kosovo, but it has not been enforced so far. Therefore, it should be noted that the process of local community participation has remained loose. This is indicated where the local people have continued illegal activities, increased land conflicts around the park and lack of interest by some people in protecting the natural resources.

The study also found that despite of Kosovan laws having stressed local people's participation, there is no CBNRM policy in place and the communities in the study area do not have the power to decide and control over the natural resources, partly because the government still retains high degree of control and unilaterally makes decisions. What obtains on the ground in the study area is that the current system ignores the key principles of CBNRM. Therefore, it can be argued that

the management of SMNP corresponds more with classical protected area management paradigm as discussed in chapter 2.

Apart from negative impacts on local livelihoods, traditional conservation practices were abandoned resulting in illegal activities that degraded them much more. As Steven (1997:32-33) points out, “...*subsistence practice became clandestine activity and traditional local resource management institutions and other conservation practices were abandoned in the areas that became managed as protected areas*”.

In selecting a suitable methodology for this study, the benefits and shortcomings of various methodologies were considered and I made a decision to employ a mixed research design: case study and cross-sectional design by also combining both qualitative and quantitative data. Significant sources of information have been collected during the course of the fieldwork. A sample of 60 respondents represented the local community surrounding SMNP area. Key informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions were also part of this study.

Using the household economic model, the socio-economic aspects and the livelihood activities of the local people in four villages have been analyzed. In the livelihood analysis, the main findings of this study are, with some exceptions, similar to some of the studies conducted by several authors, such as Tumusiime. The results indicate variations in asset endowments among communities adjacent to SMNP. The study revealed that the main resource endowments in the study area are land, labour and forest. Labour is mostly provided by household members.

The majority of wealthy households have better access to physical and financial capital driving the poor to depend more on environment. Access to credit is very low in the study area. Different wealth categories in these communities face a number of constraints and experience different types of endowment and entitlement failures.

Although many of the households have diversified their livelihoods, the majority of them largely depend on subsistence production. Agriculture, including livestock, is an important activity of these rural communities engaging most of the households in the study area. Households, except being involved in agriculture and collection of forest products, are also involved in other activities such as commerce, other off-farm activities, artisanal work and so on.

Local communities view conservation as restricting their ability to earn a living and therefore benefiting only the government, some tourism operators and the tourists. They believe that they are left out of the management of the park, and the natural environment which generations used to conserve for centuries, is being destroyed by ‘foreigners’.

Key constraints to improved livelihoods were imperfect markets for local products, transport limitation, the restricted access to forest resources, and limited access to credit. This resulted in decreased production and a situation of massive entitlements and exchange failures.

On the whole, this study is concluding that SMNP is not sustainably being managed towards conservation and sustainable tourism development. This is because most of the local people living near the park are not allowed to actively participate in land-use policy and management decisions. Further, majority of the local people do not accrue any economic benefit arising from tourism or from other developments in the area. Tourism is only benefiting a few people while for the rest, the livelihood options are not increased through employment or better alternatives. As such, poverty may continue to force poor households to access Park and other natural resources illegally.

In the view of the aforesaid, the solution may lie in making local people plan and make decisions over the forest resources in their area themselves. Furthermore, expansion of new protected areas must be examined respecting the needs of indigenous people and local communities. Traditional management principles and practices should be taken into account and should form the basis for collaboration in existing parks. The park and the people can work together to address issues of economic pressures or population growth. In that way, local people would be encouraged to move towards successful collaborative management, and eventually self-management, of parks. The existing legal and institutional frameworks of parks also need to be adjusted in order to empower local communities.

More studies are needed to unravel the roles of local heterogeneity and social differentiation. Similar type of research should be conducted in this area but also in other part of the Sharr Mountains in Macedonia in order to better understand the actual situation of the local

communities living adjacent to national parks. Studying other areas would establish a basis for more information.

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Appendices

Introduction

I am a student from the Norwegian University of Life Sciences, and I am studying International Environmental Studies. I am doing a research for my MSc degree at the University. The research is about how the indigenous people sustain their livelihood in this area, what are their concerns, and what are the impacts of the various park management schemes that have developed in this area. I will be very grateful if you could spend some time with me, answering my questions. Your answers will be totally confidential and cannot be tracked back to you. I will not use your name in my report.

Household Survey

Questionnaire No:

Section 1: General Information

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Date: | Interview period: | to |
| Name of Respondent: | | |
| Village: | Age | |
| Gender: | Duration stayed (years): | |
| Status in the house | | |
| Ethnicity: | Occupation: | |
| No. of family members: | Religion: | |

Section 2: Life History and livelihoods

1. What is your educational background?

2. Do you originally come from this area? 1. YES 2. NO
 a. If not, when and what is the reason behind your migration?

3. What is your average monthly income (per respondent) €

4. What is your average family income per month €

5. How has livelihood changed in this area lately?
 1. Very Much 2. Much 3. Indifferent 4. Not much 5. Not at all

6. What are your income sources:

7. No. and sort of crops grown:

8. Livestock assets no.

Cattle

Goats

Poultry

Pigs

Other

Section 3: Park/Forest products

1. How far is it from your home to the park boundary?

2. Do you or any member of the household collect any product(s) from the park?

a) Yes b) No

2.1 If yes, do you face any problem(s) collecting the products from the park?

a) Yes b) No

2.1.1 If yes, which problems?

.....

3. Do you collect any similar products from outside the park?

a) Yes b) No

8.1 And do you face any problems collecting those products?

a) Yes b) No

8.1.1 If yes, which problems?

.....

9. What do you do in times when you cannot access park products?

.....

.....

10. Apart from collecting forest products, do you get any other benefit from the park?

10.1 If yes, which one(s)?

.....

.....

11. Could you please recall the amounts of forest products you have collected from and outside the park and how they have been utilized?

.....

.....

12. In this household, which products are collected by
Men

Women

7.1 Who sells the products collected by the women?
.....

7.2 Who makes decision on how to use money from such sales?
.....

7.3 How do products fluctuate within and between years?
.....

7.4 What do you do in times when you cannot access those products?
.....

Section 4: Constraints to the local people

1. What problems do you face because of living close to the park, in relation to
Crops
.....
.....

Animals
.....
.....

People
.....
.....

1.1 If crop raiding is a problem, what are the frequent raiders?
.....
.....

1.1.1 What crops do they raid?
.....

1.1.2 How do you fight crop raiding?
.....

2. What impact has the conversion to national park had on the above problems?
.....

3. What constraints do you face in relation to improving your livelihood and how would you
rank them in importance:

| Constraint | Tick if applicable | Rank |
|---------------------|--------------------|------|
| Capital | | |
| Access to resources | | |
| Market access | | |

- Market prices
- Labour
- Political insecurity
- Others

4.7 Have you received any formal credit in the last 4 years?.....

4.8 If yes, from who and what did you use as collateral?.....

Section 5: Information on land tenure, use and productivity

1. Do you have access to land?
2. If yes, how many parcels and what are their particulars?
 - Size
 - Year acquired
 - How acquired
 - Have formal title to parcel
 - Land rights status

Section 6: Remittances

1. Do you have children or relatives not living with you?
 - a) Yes b) No
2. If Yes, do they send money to you?
 - a) Yes b) No
3. If yes, how much do they send each month? €
4. **For retired persons only**, do you get pension funds?
 - a) Yes b) No
 - 4.1 If yes, indicate the amount each month.....

Appendix 2: Focus Group Discussion

| Participants information | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|------------|
| Date: | | | |
| Location: | | Discussion period: | to |
| Names | Village | Age | Sex |
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | | | |
| 4 | | | |
| 5 | | | |
| 6 | | | |
| 7 | | | |
| 8 | | | |
| 9 | | | |
| 10 | | | |

| Agenda | | |
|---------------|---|---------------|
| No. | Items | Duration |
| 1. | Introduction (information about discussion, main topics and guidelines) | 5 minutes |
| 2. | Participants to introduce themselves | 5 minutes |
| 3. | Discussion | 45-60 minutes |
| 4. | Raise other relevant issues or questions | 10 minutes |
| 5. | Concluding comments | 5 minutes |

Introduction

I would like to welcome everyone here. This focus group discussion is part of the research on Sharr Mountains National Park. I would like all the participants to know that their contribution and say is very important for the research and I am very grateful for their participation. I assure all the participants that their names will not be published in any report and their answers will be confidential.

1. Does the current management of the park encourage local participation?
2. What kinds of conflicts exist in the park because of lack of community participation?

3. How would you characterize the role of different groups involved in the park management?
4. Are conflicts resolved, if so, how, if not, why not?
5. How does the present political system affect management of the park?
6. How do you fit in park management?
 - a. What has been your role?
 - b. What will it be in the future?
7. At present what opportunities local communities have in decision making?
 - a. Do people get fair say?
 - b. What is the level of participation of local communities these days compared to past?
8. How effective is the role of Park Directory in Prizren and Forest Agency in managing park resources?
9. Can external authority overrule decisions that are made by current park management?
10. What happens when someone violates any rules of resource access within the park?
11. If there are sanctions, how effective these sanctions are?
12. At present what are the major constraints for improved livelihood in the area?
13. How do park and its management affect livelihoods of the people?
 - a. Which group is particularly vulnerable? Why?
14. Which external factors affect people's livelihood?
15. Which specific policy or action can improve the resources and the livelihood?