

# Interreg - IPA CBC

Italy - Albania - Montenegro



## LASPEH



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## Low Adriatic Species and Habitat

Newsletter No. 1 | April 2020



[www.laspeh.italy-albania-montenegro.eu](http://www.laspeh.italy-albania-montenegro.eu)



## ABOUT THE PROJECT

The National parks of Montenegro are partners in the **LASPEH** project (**Low Adriatic Species and Habitat**), funded under the INTERREG IPA CBC program **Italy - Albania - Montenegro 2014/2020**, which aims to promote and improve the protection of the endangered species biodiversity. The project leader is the Coastal Dunes Regional Park from Torre Canna to Torre San Leonardo 'in cooperation with an Albanian partner, the National Agency for Protected Areas;

a Montenegrin partner, the Public Enterprise for the National Parks of Montenegro; and three Italian partners, the Managing Authority of the Taranto Regional Coastal Nature Reserves, Municipality Ugento and the Municipality of Guardiaregia'. This project was approved by the **European Union** at the beginning of 2018 and is planned to be implemented by the first half of 2020. The project is worth EUR 504,490.00 eur.



## PROJECT GOAL

The project **LASPEH** wants to face the loss of biodiversity, by defining a common strategy to preserve the natural heritage and the landscape in the low Adriatic area. Special attention will be paid to species protected by the 92/43/EEC and 79/409/EEC Directives, typical of these eco-regions and/or threatened by environmental variations, caused by climate changes and wrong management. The project will create a network of organizations cooperating for nature conservation and improvement of **Natura 2000 sites**, by exchanging best practices and developing a common transnational strategy to preserve common species and habitats.

With this project in Montenegro, we want to improve the current state, stop the negative processes and enable the

smooth development of the ***Pinus heldreichii*** as a characteristic endemic species of the Balkan Peninsula. The activities planned for the **NP Lovcen** are directed to a conservation plan, then specific activities that will be related to providing the terrain and stopping erosion, as well as the removal of black pine, or those that threaten ***Pinus heldreichii*** and its development.





## WHO WE ARE?

### Lead Partner

**Consorzio di gestione provvisoria del Parco Naturale Regionale  
'Dune costiere da Torre Canne a Torre S. Leonardo' (IT)  
Contacts: Angela Milone - [info@parcodunecostiere.org](mailto:info@parcodunecostiere.org)**

### Project Partners

**Agjencia Kombëtare e Zonave të Mbrojtura (AL)  
Public Enterprise for National Parks of Montenegro - NPCG (MNE)  
Ente di Gestione delle Riserve Naturali Regionali  
Orientate del Litorale Tarantino Orientale (IT)  
Comune di Ugento (IT)  
Comune di Guardiaregia (IT)**



## WHY PINUS HELDRAICHII?

The research by the PE National Parks of Montenegro (the Service for the Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development) has shown that the endemic habitat of endemic pine forest - ***Pinus heldreichii***, which is included in the European Habitats Directive - NATURA 2000, is threatened at the **Jezerški peak** site in NP Lovcen.

The forest reserve that stands out during the project is the subendemic pine reserve. Habitats are found on the Habitat Directive - **95A0 High oro Mediterranean pine forest**, and this habitat type also includes habitats of endemic ***Pinus peuce***. The European Red List of Habitats - Foresta Habitat Group report states that the IUCN category of this habitat is in EU NT (Near Threatened) countries, while in EU28 + countries it has

the LC (**Least Concern**) IUCN category. There are no precise data on the population trend of the pine, as well as data on (potential) decline in habitat quality in individual countries. The report states that there is a declining trend in quantity in the following countries: Bulgaria, Italy, Montenegro, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina; but there is no sufficiently precise data to assess the vulnerability to criterion A (population reduction).



## STAKEHOLDERS LIST

### **Local public authorities:**

- Lovćen National park;
- Municipalities of Cetinje;
- Municipalities of Budva;
- Municipalities of Kotor.

### **National Public Authorities:**

- Public Enterprise for National parks of Montenegro;
- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development;
- Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism;
- Environmental Protection Agency.

### **Interest groups including NGOs:**

- NGO Green Home;
- NGO Parks of Dinarides;
- NGO CZIP;
- NGO Equilibrium etc.

### **Higher education and research:**

- Forest Administration;
- Faculty of Biotechnology;
- Independent researchers;
  - Students;
- Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics;
  - Institute of Forestry;
  - Highs School “Slobodan Škerović”;
  - High chemical school “Spasoje Raspopović”.

### **General public:**

- Consumers;
- Citizens;
- Local public who live within National Park Lovćen;
  - Tourists;
  - Tourist guides;
  - Nature lovers;
  - Photographers.



## INFO DAY

During the info day organized on June 24, 2019, PE National Parks of Montenegro informed all representatives of the institutions dealing with the protection of nature and the environment about the **LASPEH** project and its goal in the area of the NP Lovcen. It was pointed out that the project was an interregional one, involving Italy, Montenegro and Albania with five partners. The idea of the project is the conservation and protection of habitats in the territories of these countries and the only participant from Montenegro is PE National Parks.



*With this project, we want to improve the current state, stop the negative processes and enable the smooth development of *Pinus heldreichii* as a characteristic endemic species of the Balkan Peninsula.*

**Slobodan Stijepovic,  
Project Manager**

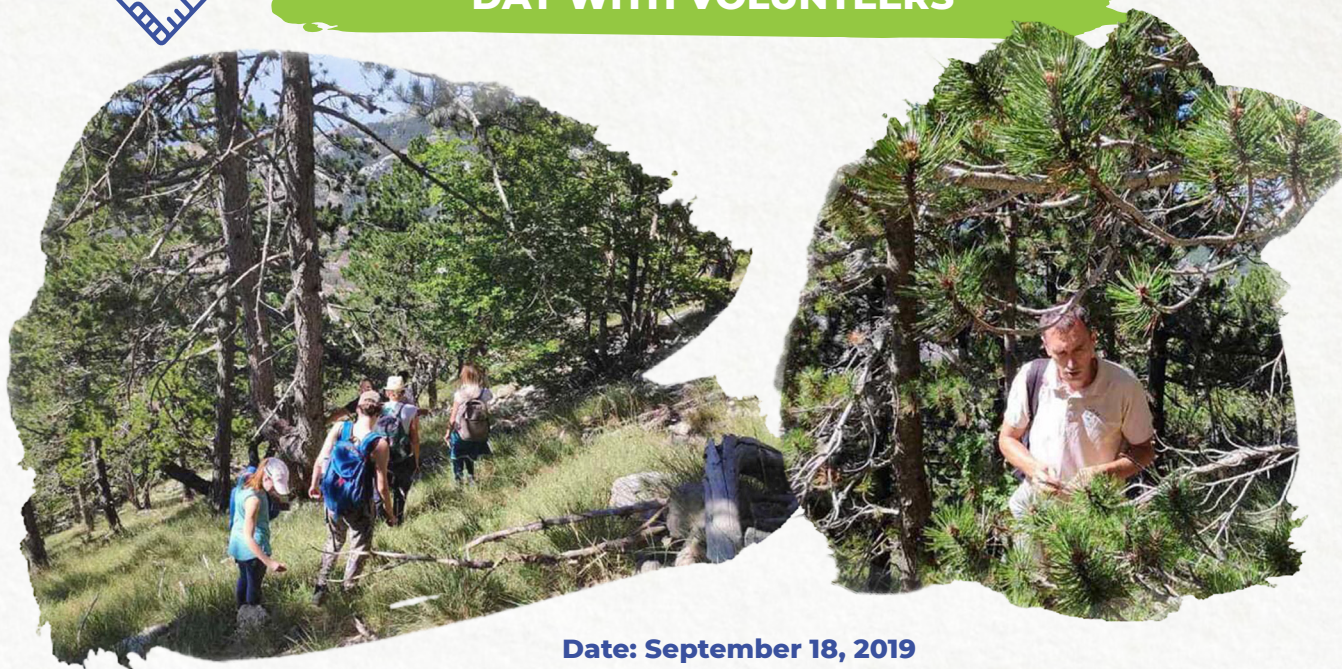
**Date: July 24, 2019**

The Info Day was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Institute of Forestry, the Biotechnical Faculty, the Forest Administration, as well as representatives of the NGO sector. A large number of media also responded, which adequately conveyed to the public the purpose of this project and its benefits to the environment.





## DAY WITH VOLUNTEERS



**Date: September 18, 2019**

The **LASPEH** project team from the National Parks of Montenegro has monitored the general health status and other orographic and ecological conditions of ***Pinus heldreichii*** on the slopes of Jezerski vrh mountain in the National Park Lovcen. On the field visit, experts from PENPCG were accompanied by trainees as well as students of the Faculty of Science, Department of Biology from Podgorica.

The Field Report, among other things, states that the general health condition of the *Pinus heldreichii*, which are mostly located in the southern part of the target area, is satisfying. The largest measured *Pinus heldreichii* tree is **21** centimeters in diameter and **12** meters high, while their average height is about **10** meters. Recorded *Pinus heldreichii* share is **30** percent over the entire **10** acres of the target area. The largest area is covered by black pine (***Pinus nigra***) with **65%**, while the remaining **5%** are other species such as beech (***Fagus sylvatica***), sycamore (***Acer pseudoplatanus***), juniper (***Juniperus communis***), alpine buckthorn (***Rhamnus alpina***), wild rose (***Rosa canina***) etc.

Field visits to the specific area did not show any primary or secondary diseases or harmful insects. However, the absence of ***Pinus heldreichii*** saplings is evident, which is a fact that worries given that this is its habitat and that spontaneous natural regeneration would be more significant than the existing trees. On the site there is as well a number of black pine trees that are broken and dry and need to be removed in order to enable development of surrounding healthy trees.

## A HIKING DAY IN THE NATIONAL PARK OF LOVCEN

NPMNE drafted a campaign plan in order to raise awareness of the importance of preserving *Pinus heldreichii*. In order to involve the **local population, local authorities** and **visitors**, hiking activities were organized in the NP Lovcen where *Pinus heldreichii* is located.

In order to reach target groups of managers of protected areas and park authorities NPMNE made this activity with cooperation with representatives of NP Lovcen. Visitors of the NP Lovcen who are explorers and recreational hick-hikers also participated in this activity.

The attendees learned about the importance of the endemic species as well as the disasters faced by the species in this area. Area, where *Pinus heldreichii* is located, was caught by the fire in the summer months of 2017 and today we are witnessing the numerous consequences of this fire. In order to raise awareness of visitors and locals about the important conservation of the site as well as preventative measures, representatives of NP Lovcen and NPMNE held a presentation on appropriate behavior in national parks in order to suppress the human factor in causing fires.

**Date: September 21, 2019**



Hiking various significant sites on NP Lovcen represented a symbolic act for the conservation *Pinus heldreichii* in the National park Lovcen, '**without diversity, there is no biodiversity**'. And the diversity was largely reflected in the origin of the participants in this activity, who came from many different countries.

It is recalled that the NPMNE is implementing a campaign to conserve this endemic species in order to implement the program, which is funded by the program. Further activities will place great emphasis on the dissemination of measures that will be defined by the **Conservation Plan** drafted by the NPMNE for this species.

*Pinus heldreichii* is one of the internationally significant habitats present on Lovcen, the most valuable is the habitat with pine (42.7 High Oro-Mediterranean pine forests).

*Pinus heldreichii* covers the steep slopes of the highest peaks of Lovcen (Stirovnik, Jezerski peak) at an altitude of about 1600m. The present *Pinus heldreichii* on Lovcen is considered to be a relic of the former forest, which formed the upper part of the forest vegetation. The residents cut it down, and intensive grazing prevented its revitalization, so that it was held only in inaccessible areas. However, after Lovcen's proclamation of the National Park in 1952, the revitalization started again.

*Pinus heldreichii* is a protected by national legislation of Montenegro.







## GROUNDS FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEVELOPING A CONSERVATION PLAN

The object of the tree bosnian pine is made, as well establishment of border and space of areas covered. It was taken sample of damage mushrooms and insects in order to discover all potential threats of community which wanted to be safe.

The Employees of the Department for the Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development, who are also members of the **LASPEH** project team at NPMNE, have conducted **several field trips** and **educational workshops** to protect *Pinis heldreichii*. **Phytocenological recordings** were made in order to determine the composition of the amphibian community on the slopes of Lake Peak during the autumn aspect. **Marking of black pine trees** has been completed and concrete measures are planned to be removed. The survey of *Pinus heldreichii* forest had been made as well as the boundaries and areas of the catchment area were determined. Samples of harmful fungi and insects were taken to identify any potential threats to the conservation community.

Based on the collected data and the analysis of the current situation, it is concluded that the stand is stagnant in its development or the extinction of pine trees and black pine, as a more resistant species, takes dominance over *Pinus heldreichii* forest gradually takes over the habitat.



## SECOND SESSION OF THE LASPEH PROJECT TEAM STEERING COMMITTEE



The representatives of the PE National Parks of Montenegro, as well as partner institutions from Italy and Albania, participated at the Second Session of the Steering Board of the **LASPEH** project team, held in **Tirana** on October 28, 2019.

The second session of the project team was organized with the aim of presenting periodic reports of all partners, as well as work plans in the field of management and communication with a view to the implemented and planned activities.

Also, **individual draft conservation plans** for each area covered by this project were presented.

**“ ” Dragisa Damjanovic,  
External expert**

***Work has been intensified and some staff have been outsourced to ensure the best possible quality of implementation. All PPRs that were delayed were submitted, and financial reporting improved. The first public procurements were realized. The work takes on an enviable dynamic.***

With regard to the activities of PE NPMNE within the **LASPEH** Project, Project Leader and Expert Associate for the Protection of Forest Ecosystems, Slobodan Stijepovic, presented up-to-date activities regarding the protected pine species, the Habitat Protection Plan and the plan for the development of the Transnational Strategy.

Tourism expert Tanja Draskovic informed, among other things, about promotional and educational activities, public awareness campaign, Hiking Day, planned educational workshops tailored to young people and children, Info Day, Communication Plan, and the preparation of the Media Conference. Also, expert associates for wildlife protection, Masa Vucinic and Belma Sesovic, presented activities related to stopping erosive processes, afforestation and habitat revitalization.

External expert Dragisa Damjanovic informed about the Financial Report, future activities and needs regarding the Project budget.

The next meeting of project partners should take place in Montenegro, in March 2020.





## TEA PARTY IN NP LOVCEN

The 1st meeting of the Awareness Campaign of the National Parks of Montenegro took place, organized in collaboration with the Department for Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage. Experts met the pupils of the Elementary-High School of Cetinje in the National Park Lovcen, on the slopes of Jezerski peak mountain, and involved them in several activities aimed at raising awareness on the importance of conservation of *Pinus Heldreichii* and concrete actions carried out to preserve this species thanks to **LASPEH** project.



**Date: February 29, 2020**

Awareness campaigns are the activities foreseen by LASPEH – 'Low Adriatic Species and Habitat', with the aim of sharing conservation measures on endangered habitats and species. One of the species of great naturalistic value involved in the project is the *Pinus Heldreichii*, whose area where it is located in Montenegro was captured by the fire in the summer months of 2017 with disastrous consequences. **Thanks to LASPEH project, conservation measures and actions to preserve this species have been adopted on the territory and shared with the communities.**



The **LASPEH** project, funded by the Interreg IPA CBC Italy - Albania - Montenegro program under priority **axis 3 (environmental protection, risk management and low carbon strategy)**, aims to implement a network of organizations that cooperate for a better management of priority species in Natura 2000 sites. Through the establishment of this network, the organizations had the opportunity to share and exchange their best practices, developing a common transnational strategy to preserve common habitats and species.



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