

VALORIZATION OF NATURAL TOURISM POTENTIALS IN THE BIHAĆ TOURISM GEOGRAPHICAL REGION

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Abstract

Valorization of natural tourism potentials in the Bihać tourism geographical region

The Bihać tourism geographical region is rich in diverse, pollution-free, natural tourism potentials that can be the basis for the development of more specific forms of tourism (mountain, hunting, rural, excursion-recreational, adventure, recreational-sports, fishing and ecotourism) of local and regional as well as national and international significance. This paper will present the most important natural tourism potentials of the Bihać tourism geographical region, their valorization, as well as their possibility of exploitation for tourist purposes. Moreover, the tourist traffic and accommodation capacities of this tourism geographic region will be shown. Finally, it will be concluded how these unique still unpolluted natural phenomena should be treated in order for them to remain the same for future generations.

Key words

Bihać, tourism geographical region, natural tourism potential, tourism valorization, tourism development, protection

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1. Introduction and methodology

The aim of this paper is to give an overview of all the natural tourist potentials of the Bihać tourism geographical region, the possibility of their valorization, which would contribute to the economic development but in case that these development plans and their implementation do not disturb the geoecological balance, that is, to develop only nature friendly tourism. The resource basis for modern tourism in the Bihać tourism geographical region must be methodologically processed on the basis of geographical, economic and socio-cultural research, in order to make a complete tourist offer. In this paper, the following general and special methods of regional geographic research will be used: method of regional geographic analysis and synthesis of tourism geographic factors, homogeneity method in spatial distribution of tourism geographic parameters in order to identify the tourism geographical potentials of the Bihać tourism geographical region, then the method of determining the spatial functional connections and relations primarily driven by tourism activity in order to develop the ones in the best possible way and less disturb natural environment.

In the process of valorization natural tourism potentials, different tourism geographical methods and valorization factors will be applied, with a very complex classification procedure (identification and analysis of attractive properties, spatial coverage, deployment, etc.) and categorization / ranking of tourism potentials (according to importance, seasonality, complementarity, etc). Natural tourism potentials are then divided into two groups: real and potential tourist potentials. In the evaluation itself, special attention was paid to their complementarity, the convenience of their tourist geographic location in relation to emitting markets, tourist routes and competitive reception areas, then existing and potential roads, which enable accessibility from emitting areas, etc. This detailed and complex analysis, classification and categorization of natural tourist potentials is enabled thanks to the use of professional and scientific literature, which consisted of spatial plans at the state, entity, cantonal and municipal level, then development plans and strategies (economic and tourism) of the cantons and municipalities, official websites of municipalities and tourist communities, as well as their own field research.

2. Bihać tourism geographical region

The Bihać tourism geographical region is located in northwestern Bosnia and Herzegovina and has a very favorable tourist-geographical position because it is located near the Republic of Croatia and its Plitvice Lakes, so tourists who visit this region very easily come and are happy to come to this beautiful yet non-polluted tourism geographical region, as well as its Una National Park. The area of this region is 4,374 km². In the territorial sense, the Bihać tourism geographical region consists of eight municipalities: Bihać, Bosanska Krupa, Bosanski Petrovac, Petrovac, Krupa na Uni, Bužim, Cazin, Ključ, Sanski Most and Velika Kladuša. This region according to the preliminary data from the 2013 census has 301,397 inhabitants, and the population density is 68.9 inhabitants/km² (Bidžan 2015, 64; Federal Office of Statistics FB&H, <http://fzs.ba/index.php/popis-stanovnistva/popis-stanivnistva-2013/konacni-rezultati-popisa-2013/>).

It extends over an altitude of 100-1,600 m. The great wealth and recognition of the Bihać tourism geographical region are natural beauties. Significant mountains of this area are Grmeč, Majdanska planina, Sretica, Klekovača and Plješevica. It is

dominated by moderately warm and humid climates, and in the smaller part of the region continental climate. Average annual temperatures range from 8 - 12°C. The average annual rainfall varies from 1,250 - 1.750 mm. This area is abundant with many rivers, among which it is necessary to single out the two most beautiful rivers Una and Sana. This region is rich in larger or smaller watercourses, warm springs, caves and forests that make up exceptional landscape values. They are distinguished by their authenticity, diversity and attractiveness, and the phenomenon of this area are certainly unpolluted waters and forests (Group of authors 1998, 17-21; Bidžan 2015, 64). In the biogeographical aspect, there are present ecosystems of: floodplain forests, mesophilic forests of sessile oak and common hornbeam, montane beech forests, beech-fir forests, dark coniferous forests and mountain pine (*Pinus mugo*) forests (Lakušić 1981, 41-70).

It is connected to the neighboring tourism geographical regions by common natural tourist potentials, as well as it is connected to Banja Luka by the rivers Sana and Una, and to the south-west Bosnian tourism geographical region by the mountains Osječnica and Klekovača (Fig.1) (Bidžan 2015, 66).

The Bihać tourism geographical region is connected to other regions by the main road M-5 (E761), that is to the Travnik and Banja Luka regions, and M-14.2 is connected to the Southwestern Bosnian region. In the area of this region, 468.4 km of regional roads and 344 km of main roads have been built. The northern part of the region is connected to the center by the main road M4-2, and the eastern part to the main road M-14. Moreover, through this region also passes the Una railway which connects the city of Bihać to the capital city, Sarajevo, and which, between these two final destinations, goes partly along the river Una (Spatial plan of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, http://www.vladatk.kim.ba/Vlada/Dokumenti/ppfbih/PPFBih_SKRACENA%20VERZIJA%20-%2016_08_2012.pdf).

Regarding tourist traffic, the tourism geographic region of Bihać in 2017 had 50,297 tourist arrivals, of which 46.8% were domestic tourists and 53.2% foreign tourists. They made 75,976 overnight stays, of which 45.2% were domestic, while foreign tourists accounted for 54.8%. Most tourists come from Croatia, Slovenia, Italy, Germany, etc. (Federal Office of Statistics FB&H, <http://fzs.ba/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Kanton-1-Unsko-sanski-kanton.pdf>).

The Bihać tourism geographical region, according to its functionality, belongs to the regions of leisure and recreation. This tourism geographical region has a modest significance for defining the tourist offer of Bosnia and Herzegovina, out of a total of 626 national monuments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are 47 national monuments in the Bihać region, but its natural beauties can be significantly used in its tourist offer on which one can develop the following specific forms of tourism: bathing, spa, cultural-manifestation, sports-recreational, adventurous, rural, fishing, hunting, ecotourism and others (Spatial Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 1980, 215; Bidžan 2015, 67).

Tourist infrastructure is underdeveloped. There is a lack of sports-recreational infrastructure and tourist signalling. The accommodation capacities are partly renovated, and the quality and capacities partially meet the tourist demand. In the period from 2008 to 2013, the number of beds in accommodation capacities was reduced by 45%, or from 900 beds in 2008 to 490 beds in 2012. In 2018, the situation improved slightly, so the Bihać tourism geographic region had 1,477 beds (33%

increase). The need for quality improvement is particularly expressed in private accommodation in households. Accommodation capacities that meet the required standards are mostly located in Bihać (Cantonal Development Committee USC: <http://www.fzzpr.gov.ba/download/doc/Strategija+razvoja+USK.pdf/96340b2e33af434280c4050513ecbe11.pdf>).

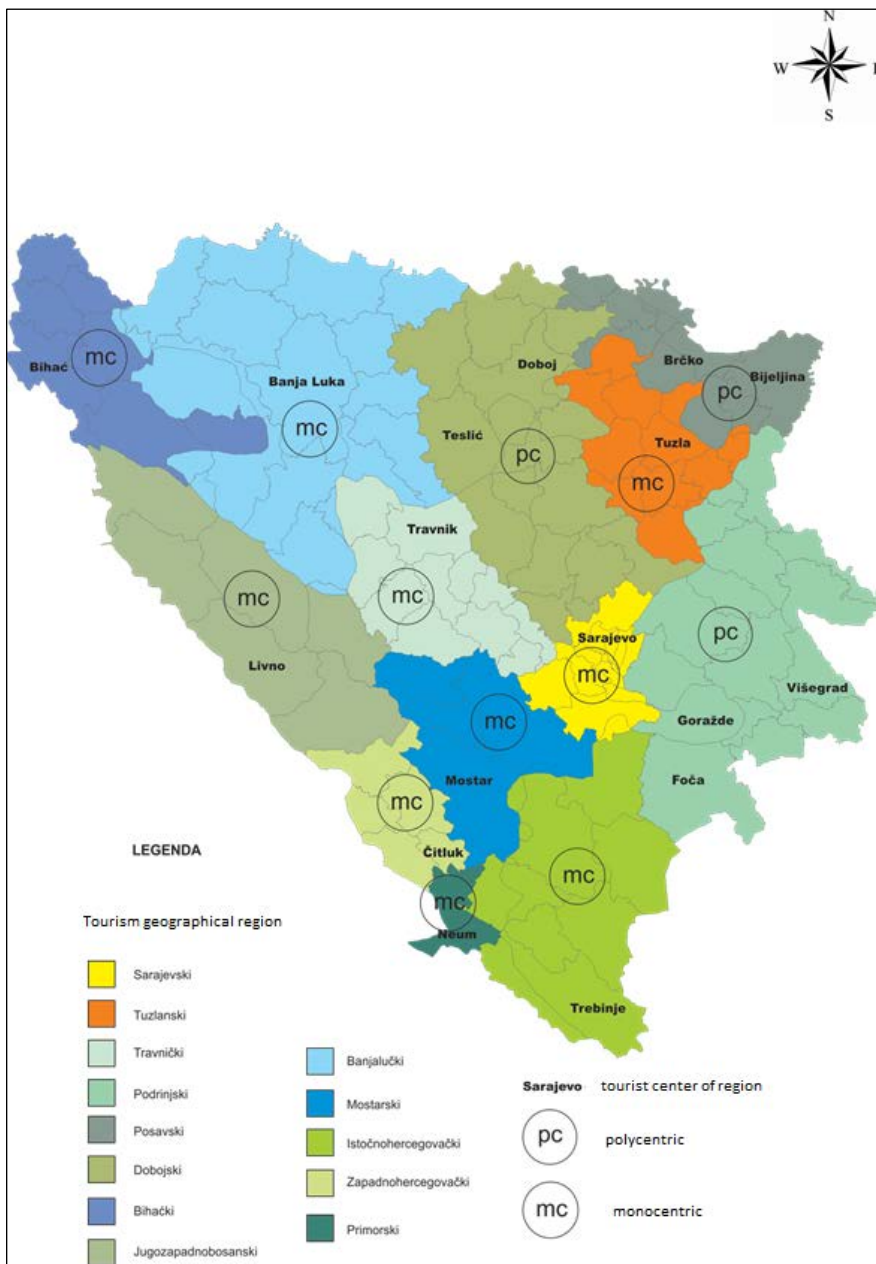


Fig. 1: Tourism geographical regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
Source: Bidžan 2011, 92.

2.1. Natural tourism potentials of the Bihać tourism geographical region

Significant wealth and recognition of the Bihać tourism geographical region is its natural beauty. Namely, this area abounds in many rivers, among which it is necessary, among others, to single out two of the most beautiful - the rivers Una and Sana with numerous tributaries, larger or smaller waterfalls, warm springs, caves and forests that have exceptional landscape values (Tab. 1). The natural values of this region are characterized by authenticity, diversity and attractiveness, and the phenomenon of this area are waters and forests. In the economic sense, the waters of the mentioned rivers are certainly emphasized, which, in terms of quality and quantity, represent a significant potential for multipurpose use. In particular, we should emphasize that this region is adorned by unpolluted soil, forests and various landscapes rich in natural beauties, which are suitable for the development of various specific forms of tourism. It is also necessary to mention the valuable cultural and historical heritage, which supplements this rare natural wealth. In the following table 1, we will present the most important natural tourist potentials of the Bihać tourism geographical region, as well as suggestions on which specific forms of tourism could develop on them (Fig.2).

Tab. 1: The most important natural tourist potentials of the Bihać tourism geographical region.

Natural tourist potentials			The predominant type of tourism
Geomorphological	Mountains	Grmeč	MT / HT / RT
		Plješevica	MT / HT / RT
		Lanište	MT / HT / RT
		Osječnica	MT / HT / RT
		Klekovica	MT / HT / RT
	Canyon	Una	NT / FT / ET
	Cave	Hrustovača in Sanski Most	SPT
		Dabarska in Sanski Most	SPT
Hydrographic	River	Una	ET/NT/ FT/ECOT
		Sana	ET/NT/ FT/ECOT
		Banjica	FT
		Krušnica	FT
		Sanica	FT
		Unac	FT
	Sources and springs	Svetinja in Bosanska Krupa	NT
		Dabarsko in Sanski Most	NT
		Zdena in Sanski Most	NT
	Thermomineral and mineral water	Spa Gata near Bihaća	HLT
		Spa Ilidža near Sanski Most	HLT
	Waterfall and riffle	Veliki slap on the river Una in Martin Brod	NT

		Milančev Buk on the river Una near Martin Brod	NT
		Srednji Buk on the river Una near Martin Brod	NT / ET
		Štrbački Buk on the river Una in Kestenovac – Martin Brod	NT / ET
		Bliha in Sanski Most	NT
Climatic	Moderately warm and humid	Bihać	KM / NT / FT / CT / TT / ST / ECOT
	Continental	Grmeč	MT / NT / HLT / RT / ECOT
Vegetal	Forests of willow and poplar trees		NT / HLT
	Forests of beech and beech-fir trees		NT / HLT
	Humid forests of sessile oak and common hornbeam		NT / HLT
	Forest of pine oak		NT / HLT

Source: Bidžan 2011, 104.

Key: MT- mountain tourism; HT – hunting tourism; RT – rural tourism; NT – nature tourism, ET – extreme tourism; HLT – health tourism; FT – fishing tourism; SPT – speleological tourism; CT – congress tourism; TT – transit tourism; ECOT – ecotourism.

A large part of these natural tourist potentials belongs to the National Park Una. The area of the National Park Una is located in the western most part of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the area of the City of Bihać and belongs to the Una-Korana plateau, and it includes the valleys of the rivers Una and Unac and the orographic slopes of the mountains Plješevica, Grmeč and Osječnica. The Una National Park extends along the valley of the upper part of the Una river as well as around the canyon of the river Unac, the right tributary of the Una, up to the Krka river in the west (National park „Una“: <http://nationalpark-una.ba/bs/stranica.php?id=4>).

This area represents a unique natural entity in this part of Europe, valuable for preserving the total landscape and biological diversity. The vision of protecting the unpolluted Una River and its surroundings in the area of the declared National Park has been created over the decades, as a response of the local population, who has always been aware of the value of the area in which they live, and of threatening to disturb its fundamental natural features. With the adoption of the Law on the National Park Una in 2008, the area of total size of 19,800 ha is protected, which is administratively under the territory of the City of Bihać, and one smaller minor part extends in the territory of the municipality of Drvar. Out of the total area of the National Park, in the regime of strict and directed protection, there is a total of 13.500 ha, and in the directed development regime about 6.300 ha. The Law on National Park Una defines the boundaries, regulates the issues of protection, improvement and use of the National Park, management of the National Park, violations and administrative measures for non-compliance with this Law (National park „Una“: <http://nationalpark-una.ba /bs/stranica.php?id=4>). Below we will give a short description of the most beautiful and most attractive natural tourist potentials of the Bihać touristim geographical region, which are the Una and Sana rivers as well as Grmeč Mountain.

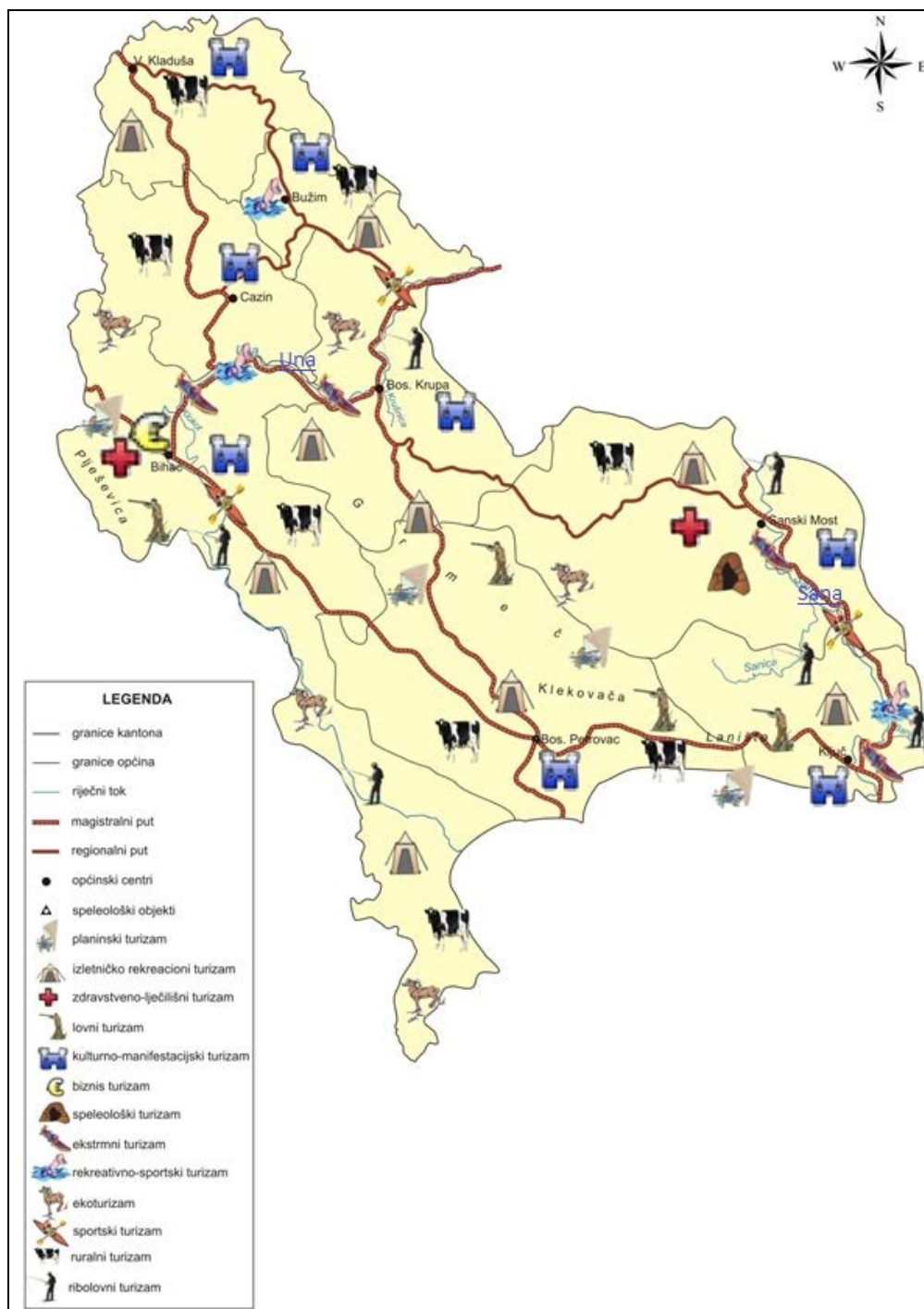


Fig. 2: Specific forms of tourism in Bihac tourism geographical region.
Source: Bidžan 2011, 108.

2.1.1. The river Una

The river Una is the most important feature of the Una National Park, which can rightly be said to be one and only river in Bosnia and Herzegovina which, with its beauty and richness of sedentary creations, stands out from the others. It springs in the village of Donja Suvaja below Stražbenica mountain in Croatia, and after about 12 km of flow, it flows through the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The whole stream has a pure emerald green color of its water. In the upper stream, from the spring to Bihać, the total drop is almost 3 meters per kilometer. In this part, the Una carries the characteristics of a true mountain river and its sedentary overfalls, cascades and waterfalls represent the true pearls of beauty such as: a large waterfall in Martin Brod, Štrbački buk waterfall, Troslap, Dvoslap and Ripački waterfalls. Down the Martinbrod and Štrbački buk waterfalls water collides with a number of smaller and larger overfalls and waterfalls, creating unique sedentary creations that is a characteristic of this beauty. In the Una, there is a particularly interesting living world that contributes to the creation of sedentary creations. Mosses-bryophytes are suitable for keeping the precipitated calcite, making it an indispensable link in the process of creating and growing sedentary creations. The Una is a unique natural phenomenon on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina through its process of creating sedra (river tuff) and its phenomena. The stream of this river is 212.5 km long and ends near Jasenovac, where it flows into the Sava River (National park „Una“: <http://nationalpark-una.ba/bs/kategorija.php?id=6>; Bidžan 2015, 217). Due to the preservation of river tuff creations, the quality of water, the diversity of rare flora and fauna, which is abundant, and the wealth of many natural monuments, the Una River is among our most beautiful and most famous rivers, not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also wider, therefore it has a great scientific, cultural - educational, aesthetic, landscape and tourist significance, and for this reason, it is one and only, unique Krajina karstic beauty. The river Una with its tributaries Unac and Sana is ideal for the development of recreational, sports, fishing, adventure / extreme and ecotourism (Fig.2). Recreational and sports tourism (swimming, diving, rowing, etc.) can be developed in areas that have well-kept city beaches, such as Bihać, Bosanska Krupa and Bosanska Otoka. Due to the richness of the fish fund (grayling, brown trout, rainbow trout, Danube salmon), it is also ideal for the development of fishing tourism. All three rivers are known in international tourism circles for rapids and waterfalls ideal for the development of adventure tourism (rafting, canoeing, kayaking). Due to its strong spring, the Una River water level is suitable for rafting during most of the year. During high water level, the water weight is IV class¹, and its rapids represent a real treat for fans of this sport. During low water levels, tourists can give in to the river and enjoy its crystal-clear waters, sedentary waterfalls, green shores and steep canyons. Moreover, every year at the Una and Sana there are held sports events "Una regata" and "Ključka regata", which gather a large number of domestic and foreign tourists (Una spring of life: <http://www.unaspringoflife.com/en/study-work/6>; <http://www.unaspringoflife.com/hr/una/manifestacije/7>).

Below we will mention the most beautiful attractions of the Una River, and these are certainly its overfalls and waterfalls. The biggest and the most beautiful is the Štrbački

¹ Rafting is divided into six groups ("classes") by weight: Class 1: Quiet river with slow flow. Class 2: Some rapids or a stone, but rafting is not yet dangerous. Class 3: rapids, small waves, smaller waterfalls, but without major danger. Tourist rafting belongs to this class. Class 4: rapids, higher waves, rocks, higher waterfalls or falls, concentration and higher response needed. Only for more experienced rafters. Class 5: rapids, large waves, rocks, large waterfalls, requires very precise and concentrated management. The ultimate rafting class. Class 6: rapids, huge waves, large and extremely dangerous rocks and reefs, numerous pitfalls and falls, requires extremely skillful management of the raft without error. This class is extremely dangerous and with frequent fatalities.

buk, which consists of three sedentary sections, 40 m wide and 23.5 m high. It is located between Loskun and Kestenovac in the gorgeous Una valley. Together with the Great Waterfall is one of the most attractive and valuable monuments of nature. In the zone of waterfalls and overfalls there are interesting tourist activities within the recreational and sports and adventure tourism (Fig.2), such as rafting, kayaking, canoeing, then a special type of diving, so-called speed river diving², and all these activities bring together many tourists from Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, France, Germany, and partially the sport event "Una regata", which has one of the most exciting rafting routes in Europe (National park „Una“: <http://nationalpark-una.ba/bs/rafting.php>). The surroundings of the Strbački Buk waterfall are suitable not only for recreational and sports and adventure tourism, but also for the development of excursion, fishing and eco-tourism. The second in terms of importance and attractiveness is the locality of the sedentary area in Martin Brod, which includes numerous waterfalls including Jala, Middle, Lower, and Great Waterfalls (Jalački, Srednji, Donji, Veliki). The Great Waterfall is the biggest and most beautiful part of Martin Brod. This waterfall has a sedentary barrier of 54 m high, and an average of 63 m³/s of water flows over it (National park „Una“: <http://nationalpark-una.ba/bs/rijeke.php>). Tourists in Martin Brod come mostly for holiday, fishing, but also rich gastronomic offer. The area surrounding the waterfall is suitable for the development of the following specific forms of tourism: excursion, fishing, rural and ecotourism.

2.2.2. The river Sana

The river Sana wells up from three strong karst springs, in the karst plateau near the village of Donja Pecka - Jasenovi Potoci, near Šipovo. After about 1.5 km, these three springs are connected to one stream. In the lower stream, from the spring to Ključ, the river Sana is a very cold and clean river. From Ključ to Sanski Most it can be characterized as a transitional river and in that part of the stream, in the settlement of Vrhpolje, the Sana receives its biggest tributary, the river Sanica which flows from the direction of Grmeč. From Sanski Most and further, the Sana loses all the features of the karst river and takes on the characteristics of a normal river flow. From its spring up to the flowing into the Una, at a length of 138 km, the Sana has a fall of 303.7 m. Part of the stream to Sanski Most, 72 km long, has a drop of 262.5 m, and the rest of 41.2 m is a part up to Bosanski Novi. At the very entrance to Novi Grad there is also the mouth of Sana in the Una, and along with the rivers of Una and Neretva, it is considered one of the most beautiful and cleanest rivers in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It provides opportunities for the development of ecological, bathing, fishing and recreational-sports tourism (Fig. 2). Natural beaches and clean water allow the development of bathing tourism. Numerous rows and their wealth with various kinds of fish, among which the most appreciated is the Danube salmon from the Sana, enable the development of fishing tourism. Many sports competitions are organized at the Sana as well as at the Uni. Canoeing and rafting on the Sana is possible and much less dangerous than on the Una, especially for beginners (Association „Bistro“: <http://www.bistrobih.ba/nova/rijeka-sana/>, Temimović 2011, 90).

2.2.3. The mountain Grmeč

The mountain Grmeč extends along the northwestern part of Bosnia, about 70 km long between the streams of the Una and Sana River. The highest peak is Crni vrh (1,604 m). The legendary mountain Grmeč is famous for its memorial zones in insurrectional Jasenica and Korčanica (World War II), and then for Sanica, the oldest tourist village in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the Grmeč bullfighting, and

² Speed river diving - extreme diving in a clean and fast river - battle with river rapids and underwater obstacles, fantastic and unrepeatable diving experience.

numerous natural tourist beauties, which become more attractive year after year for both domestic and foreign tourists (Bušatlija 1983, 27; Bidžan 2015, 151).

The surrounding municipalities are: Bihać, Bosanski Petrovac, Ključ, Sanski Most and Bosanska Krupa, which gives a very favorable tourist-geographical position to this mountain. There are conditions for development of recreational and sports tourism (skiing, mountaineering, mount biking). Furthermore, the Grmeč Hunting Reserve, which is full of wildlife (bears, wild boars, foxes, tetrao, etc.), is also widely known, and many hunters come for hunting, thus hunting tourism can be developed at Grmeč, too (Fig. 2). This mountain has no accommodation facilities, which is one major disadvantage in its tourist offer. At its base extends the spacious Podgrmeč with the lower mountain slopes of Majdan mountain and Srnetica, and it rests on the surrounding karst fields - Bravsko, Petrovačko, Bjelajsko and Lušci field, and the canyons and valleys - the Una, Japranska and Sanička valley. The wooded slopes of Grmeč are covered with coniferous and deciduous plants sprinkled with meadows and fields. Equally interesting are the various springs of rivers and lakes, as well as a multitude of caves, which complement all this diversity and composition of this relief. The natural balance of this mountain has not yet been disturbed, so ecotourism can be developed, and in authentic villages on its slopes there are ideal conditions for the development of rural tourism (Bušatlija 1983, 27; Bidžan 2015, 152).

2.2. Valorization of the natural tourist potentials of the Bihać tourism geographical region

Valorization of the natural tourist potentials of the Bihać tourism geographic region is a complex process of evaluation of all indicators which make the tourism potential specific and unique, for example, tourist-geographical position, attractiveness, ambience, compatibility, tourist attendance, etc, which are crucial for the development of certain specific forms of tourism, in order to create a complete tourist offer of this region. On the basis of the overall ratings of tourist indicators of some natural tourist potential, the general tourist values of the natural tourist potentials of the Bihać tourism geographical region were obtained, on the basis of which they were further ranked (Tab. 2).

In the tourist valorization of the Una River, the highest rating (5 - excellent quality and high market appeal) was obtained from the criteria of: tourist-geographical position, ambience, attractiveness, compatibility and uniqueness, and the lowest rating (4 - very good quality and very good market appeal) was obtained from the criteria of: degree of utilization for tourist purposes, access to natural tourist motives and tourist attendance. The overall tourist value of this natural tourist potential is very high, amounting to 4.6, which means that the Una River has an international tourist significance (Tab.2).

The largest tributary of the river Una, the river Unac, received the highest grade (4 - very good quality and very good market appeal), from the criteria of uniqueness, and the lowest rating (1.5 - insufficient quality and small market appeal) from the criteria of access to natural tourist motives, which means that the local community needs to urgently improve the traffic infrastructure in this part of the tourism geographical region. The overall tourist value of this natural tourist potential is very low, amounting to 2.8, which means that it has a regional tourist importance (Tab.2), and in order to increase it one would have to improve the tourist infrastructure and tourist offer of this tourist potential.

Tab. 2: Valorization of the natural tourist potentials of the Bihać tourism geographical region.

NATURAL TOURIST POTENTIALS			TOURIST VALORIZATION										
			Tourist-geographic position	Ambience	Attractiveness	Compatibility	Uniqueness	Degree of utilization in touristic purposes	Access to natural tourist motives	Two-season possibility of exploitation	Tourist attendance	General tourist value	Rank
Geomorphological	Mountains	Grmeč	4,5	5	5	3	5	1,5	2	3,5	2	3,5	R
		Plješevica	1,5	4	4	3	5	1	2	2	1	2,6	R
		Lanište	1,5	4	4	3	5	1	2	2	1	2,6	R
		Klekovača	1,5	4	4	3	5	1	2	2	1	2,6	R
	Canyon	Una	3	4,5	4,5	3	5	1	3	2	1	3	R
	Cave	Dabarska, Sanski Most	3	3	3	2,5	2,5	2,5	2,5	2,5	3	2,7	R
		Hukavica, Velika Kladuša	3,5	4	4	3	5	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,5	2,8	R
Hydrographic	Waterfall and riffle	Veliki slap on the river Una, Martin Brod	5	5	5	5	5	4	4,5	2	4	4,4	N
		Štrbački Buk	5	5	5	5	5	4	4,5	3	4,5	4,6	M
		Bliha, Sanski Most	3,5	5	5	4	5	2,5	3,5	5	3	4,0	N
	River	10.Una	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4,5	4	4,6	M
		11.Sana	5	4,5	4,5	4,5	4,5	4	4	4,5	4	4,4	N
		12.Unac	3	3,5	3,5	3	4	2,5	2,5	1,5	2	2,8	R
		13.Sanica	3	3,5	3,5	3	4	2,5	2,5	1,5	2	2,8	R
	Thermo-mineral and mineral water	14.Spa Gata near Bihać	3,5	3,5	3,5	3,5	3,5	2	3	1,5	2,5	2,9	R
15.Spa Ilidža near Sanski Most		3,5	4	3,5	3,5	4,5	2	3	1,5	2,5	3,1	R	

Climatic	Oceanic	Bihać	5	2	3	2,5	2	4	4	4	4	3,4	R
	Warm humid continental	Grmeč	5	2	3	2,5	2	4	4	4	4	3,4	R
Vegetal	Forests of willow and poplar trees		3	3	3	2,5	2,5	2,5	2,5	2,5	3	2,7	R
	Forests of beech and beech-fir trees		3,5	2,5	2,5	2,5	2,5	2	2,5	2,5	2,5	2,6	R
	Humid forests of white oak and ash		3,5	3	3	2,5	2,5	2,5	2,5	2,5	3	2,8	R
AVERAGE TOURIST VALUE			3,5	3,8	3,8	3,3	3,9	2,5	2,8	2,8	2,6	3,2	R

Source: Bidžan 2015, 505.

Key:

- 0 to 1.5 (inadequate quality and low market attractiveness) - are not suitable for tourist presentation and use;
- 1.6 to 2.5 (satisfactory quality and medium market attractiveness) - local tourist significance (L);
- 2.6 to 3.5 (good quality and good market attractiveness) - regional tourism significance (R);
- 3.6 to 4.5 (very good quality and very good market attractiveness) - national tourist significance (N) and
- 4.6 to 5 (excellent quality and high market attractiveness) - international tourist significance (M).

In the tourist valorization of the Sana River, the highest rating (5 - excellent quality and high market appeal) was obtained from the criteria of tourist-geographical position, and the lowest rating (4 - very good quality and very good market attractiveness) was received from the criteria of the degree of utilization in touristic purposes, access to natural tourist motives and tourist attendance. The overall tourist value of this natural tourist potential is high, amounting to 4.4, which means that it has a national tourist significance (Tab.2), and by upgrading the roads and tourist offer it would become international.

Waterfall Štrbački buk obtained the highest rating (5 - excellent quality and high market appeal), from the criteria of tourist-geographical position, ambiance, attractiveness, compatibility and uniqueness, and the lowest grade (3 - good quality and good market appeal) from the two-season exploitation criterion. The overall tourist value of this waterfall is very high, amounting to 4.6, which means that it has international tourist importance (Tab.2).

The waterfall in Martin Brod obtained the highest rating (5 - excellent quality and high market appeal) from the criteria of tourist-geographical position, ambiance, attractiveness, compatibility and uniqueness, and the lowest rating (2 - satisfactory quality and average market appeal) from the two-season exploitation criterion. The overall tourist value of this waterfall is high, amounting to 4.4, which means that it has a national tourist significance (Tab.2).

In the tourist valorization of Grmeč mountain, the highest grade (5 - excellent quality and high market appeal) was obtained from the criteria of ambiance, attractiveness

and uniqueness, and the lowest rating (1.5 - insufficient quality and low market appeal) was obtained from the criteria of degree of utilization for tourist purposes, which means that the tourist board must urgently make a tourist offer of this beautiful unused Bosnian and Herzegovinian pearl. The overall tourist value of this mountain is low, amounting to 3.5, which means that it has a regional tourist significance (Tab.2), but by improving the roads and tourist offer it could be even higher.

3. Conclusion

Regardless of the specific type of tourism developed in the Bihać tourism geographic region, that tourism should take full account of current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, to take care of the needs of the local population, tourists, the sector, the environment and the destination itself. The principles of sustainability refer to the environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development. In order to achieve long-term sustainability in this region, an appropriate balance must be established between all three dimensions.

In order to preserve the pristine intact nature of the Bihać tourism geographic region, the development of sustainable tourism should implement the following:

- 1) To optimally exploit the resources of the natural environment that are a key element of tourism development, while retaining important geoecological processes and helping to protect the natural heritage and biodiversity of this region;
- 2) To respect the socio-cultural authenticity of this region, preserve their built and cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to intercultural understanding and tolerance;
- 3) To ensure that economic activities are sustainable and long-term, and that they bring social and economic benefits to all participants with fair distribution, among other things, employment stability, revenue opportunities in social services in the community, helping to eliminate poverty, greater inclusion of women and youth, and so on.

In order for the Bihać tourism geographical region to reach this level of development that would enable the development of sustainable nature friendly tourism, a longer period of time is needed and this ongoing process requires constant monitoring of the effects and introduction of the necessary preventive and / or corrective measures, if necessary. The goal of such a development of tourism would be primarily the protection of the natural environment, and at the same time the quality of the tourist offer and the competitiveness of the Bihać tourism geographical region in the tourist market, both regional as well as national and international, would be increased.

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VALORIZATION OF NATURAL TOURISM POTENTIALS IN THE BIHAĆ TOURISM GEOGRAPHICAL REGION

Summary

The Bihać tourism geographical region is located in northwestern Bosnia and Herzegovina and has a very favourable tourist-geographical position because it is located near the Republic of Croatia and its Plitvice Lakes, so tourists who visit this region very easily come and are happy to come to this beautiful yet non-polluted tourism geographical region, as well as its Una National Park. The Bihać tourism geographical region, according to its functionality, belongs to the regions of leisure and recreation.

This tourism geographical region has a modest significance for defining the tourist offer of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Tourist infrastructure is underdeveloped. There is a lack of sports-recreational infrastructure and tourist signalling. The accommodation capacities are partly renovated, and the quality and capacities partially meet the tourist demand.

The natural values of this region are characterized by authenticity, diversity and attractiveness, and the phenomenon of this area are waters and forests. In the economic sense, the waters of the mentioned rivers are certainly emphasized, which, in terms of quality and quantity, represent a significant potential for multipurpose use. It is also necessary to mention the valuable cultural and historical heritage, which supplements this rare natural wealth.

A large part of natural tourist potentials belongs to the National Park Una. This area represents a unique natural entity in this part of Europe, valuable for preserving the total landscape and biological diversity. In the tourist valorization of the Una River, the highest rating (5 - excellent quality and high market appeal) was obtained from the criteria of: tourist-geographical position, ambiance, attractiveness, compatibility and uniqueness, and the lowest rating (4 - very good quality and very good market appeal) was obtained from the criteria of: degree of utilization for tourist purposes, access to natural tourist motives and tourist attendance. The overall tourist value of this natural tourist potential is very high, amounting to 4.6, which means that the Una River has an international tourist significance.

The overall tourist value of the river Unac is very low, amounting to 2.8, which means that it has a regional tourist importance, and in order to increase it one would have to improve the tourist infrastructure and tourist offer of this tourist potential. In the tourist valorization of the Sana River, the overall tourist value is high, amounting to 4.4, which means that it has a national tourist significance, and by upgrading the roads and tourist offer it would become international. The overall tourist value of waterfall Štrbački buk is very high, amounting to 4.6, which means that it has international tourist importance. The waterfall in Martin Brod obtained the overall tourist value amounting to 4.4, which means that it has a national tourist significance. In the tourist valorization of Grmeč mountain, the highest grade (5 - excellent quality and high market appeal) was obtained from the criteria of ambiance, attractiveness and uniqueness, and the lowest rating (1.5 - insufficient quality and low market appeal) was obtained from the criteria of degree of utilization for tourist purposes, which means that the tourist board must urgently make a tourist offer of this beautiful unused Bosnian and Herzegovinian pearl. The overall tourist value of this mountain is

low, amounting to 3.5, which means that it has a regional tourist significance, but by improving the roads and tourist offer it could be even higher.